

Leveraging Technology to Truly Hear Your Customer

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Bad deals are made to the detriment of customer relationships because buyers and sellers keep secrets from each other; not because it is in their best interest, but because they are not equipped to share these secrets at the scale, complexity, and velocity required in today's globally wired business environment.



Put On Your Sales Hat

- Pretend
 - You are a new salesperson at our Book Store
 - You spoke with Jane Smith on the phone. She will be coming to the store to be your first prospect in 10 minutes
 - Your orders are to sell Jane from the new "How-To" line
- What do you need to know to close this sale?
 - Jane's demographics?
 - Jane's past transactional behavior?
 - Better product knowledge?
- What will you say first?
- How will you respond to Jane's questions?
- How will you, sell like a top contributor?



"SFA System Says" (Demographics)

- In big flashing letters: Platinum Client
- 58 years old
- Green eyes and blonde hair
- Makes \$52K a year
- Divorced and remarried
- A 34 year-old daughter from her first marriage
- Techno-phobic (no TV, cell phone, or computer)
- Interests: fitness, gardening, and golf



"CRM System Says" (Prior Transactions)

- Buys on average 4 books a month
- Spends on average \$65 per month
- 60% of the time ships ground, 40% overnight
- Always pays with a personal check
- Returns 32% of her purchases
- Has never responded to a direct marketing piece
- We started tracking gift-wrapping requests to identify gift purchases, but no data on Jane yet



"Training Says" (Product Knowledge)

- We have How-To books on
 - Corporate Management
 - Information Technology
 - Marketing and Sales Best Practices
- Lengths range from 240 to 534 pages
- There are 618 different authors
- Printed on high-quality paper
- Ink is guaranteed never to rub off on your hands
- Electronic formats are available



Still Wearing that Sales Hat

- Still the new-guy/gal selling Jane a how-to book
- Given all that is known to help you close this sale
 - Jane's demographics
 - Jane's past transactional behavior
 - Our Sales Training's product knowledge
- What will you say to Jane first?
- How will you respond to Jane's questions?
- How will you sell like a top contributor?
- This is still very hard, isn't it?
- Does it still seem something is missing?



The Moment of Truth

- The boss is waiving you over
- Jane Smith is at the front desk asking for you
- The boss is not stepping away as you shake her hand and say hello
- You got it, this first sales call is also your first personnel review
- You are still struggling with what to say first and then you really look at Jane for the first time...



Meet Jane Smith



- Oops!!
 - She is not blond
 - Those eyes do not look green
 - She won't get off her cell phone
 - I doubt she is 58
- Now what do we say to Jane?
- How do we avoid the "Product Push"?
- WHY would she buy from our new line of how-to books?

Risks of Not Truly Hearing Customers

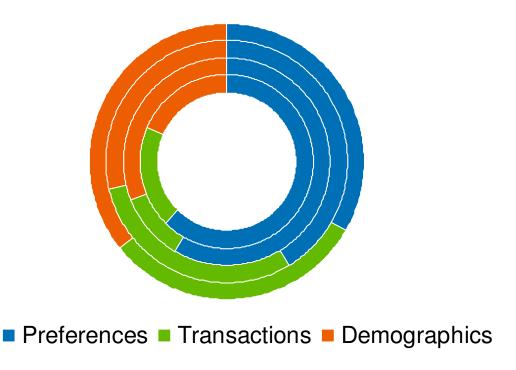
- Acting on missing or outdated demographics
- Assuming future transactions mirror the past, but
 - Economic situations change
 - Perceptions of one's products and brand change
 - Atypical transactions are difficult to identify (e.g. gifts)
 - The past may not apply to our new how-to products
- Removes the tool you have for new clients
- Ultimately, you have to resort to a "product push"
 - Everybody loves our high-quality paper and no-smear ink



The 3rd Source of Customer Intelligence

Just Ask; Get First-Hand, Real-Time Preferences

Customer Knowledge





What if Jane Told Us

- She needs a how-to book to start her own company
- The drivers in her product selection will be:
 - Depth of content (especially legal and accounting)
 - Experience and background of the author
 - Availability of the book in electronic form
 - Liberal use of graphics and charts
 - Case studies of IT consulting startups
 - Availability for overnight shipping
- Our standard product push pitch is useless
 - Jane really does not care about paper and ink

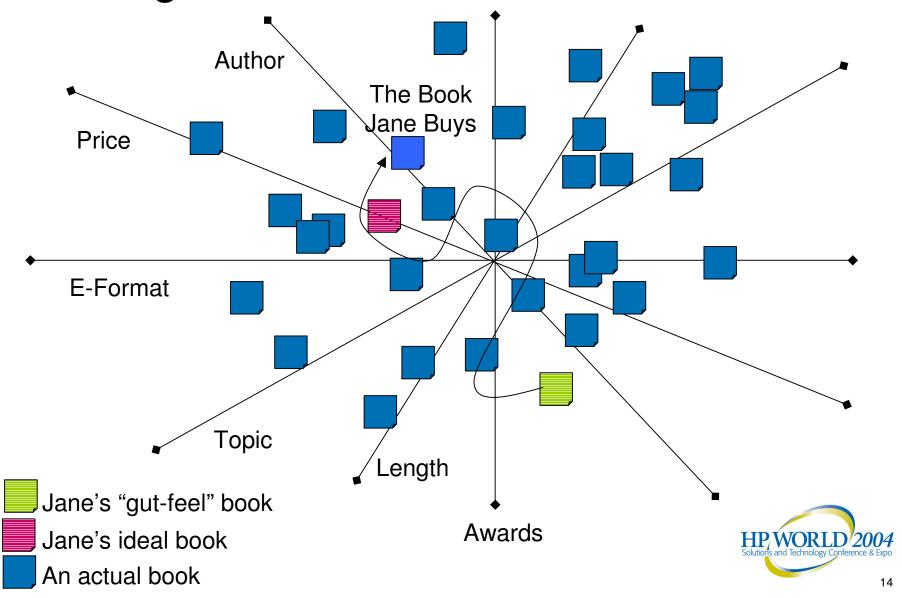


What if We Hear Jane, Listening for

- How important is each product feature?
 - Education may be required
- How important is each feature value?
 - How much more preferred is electronic over printed
 - How important is one format vs. another
 - How much more valuable is the best author vs. 2nd best
- Analyze the fit
 - Do client needs/preferences align with product value?
 - Where do they align best?
 - Those are "hot buttons" to push in the sale.



Guiding Jane; What Sales Pros Do

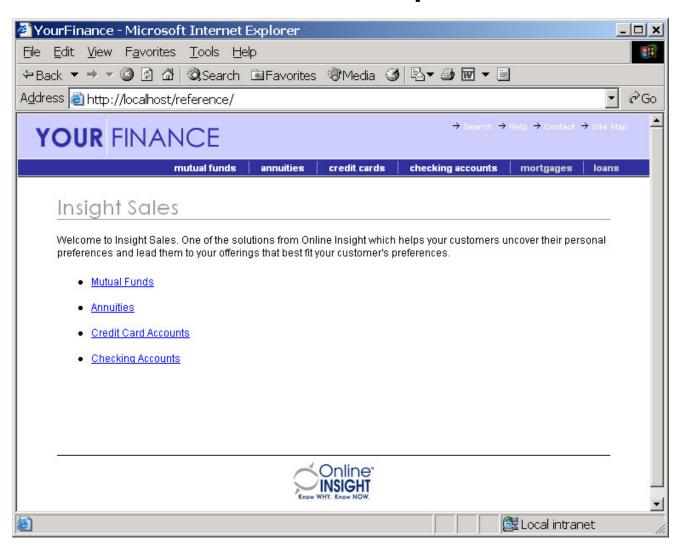


Optimizing Preference-Based Selling

- Avoid the ad-hoc with techniques that are:
 - comprehensive (across market campaigns & sales calls)
 - multi-channel (face-to-face, web, call center, kiosk)
 - real-time (adapting to constantly changing perceptions)
 - first-hand (without the error of statistical guesstimates)
 - detailed (measuring precise levels of preference).
- These five requirements demand automation
- Let's see an example of software that facilitates this "Collaborative Customer Conversation"

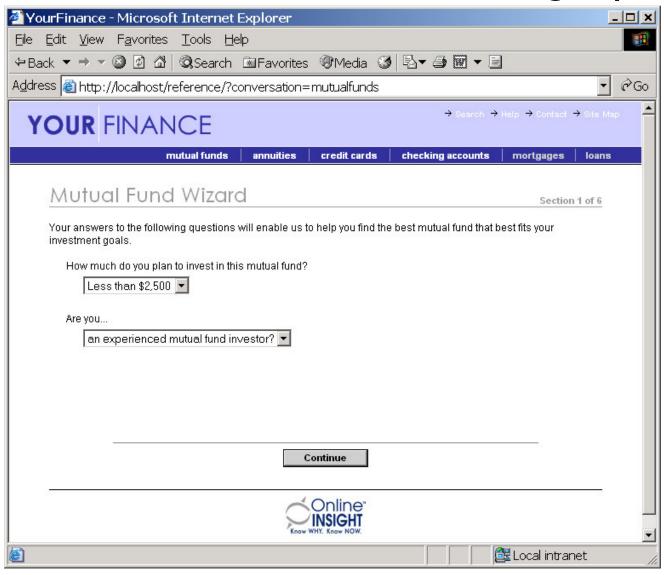


One Solution, Multiple Product Lines



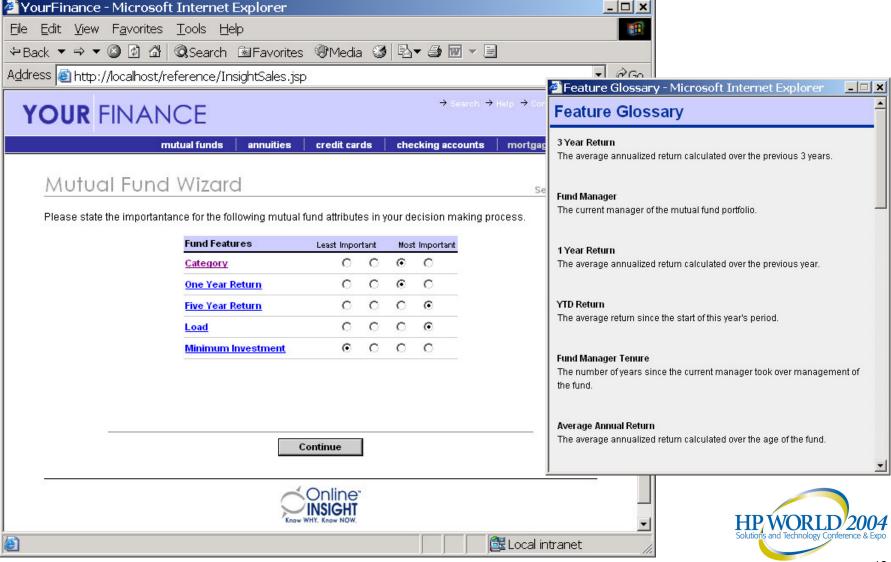


Refresh & Validate Demographics

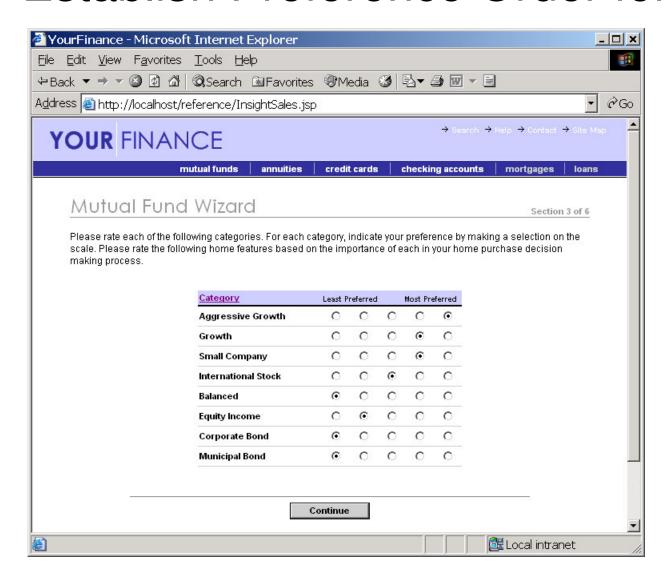




Get a Gut-Feel and Educate

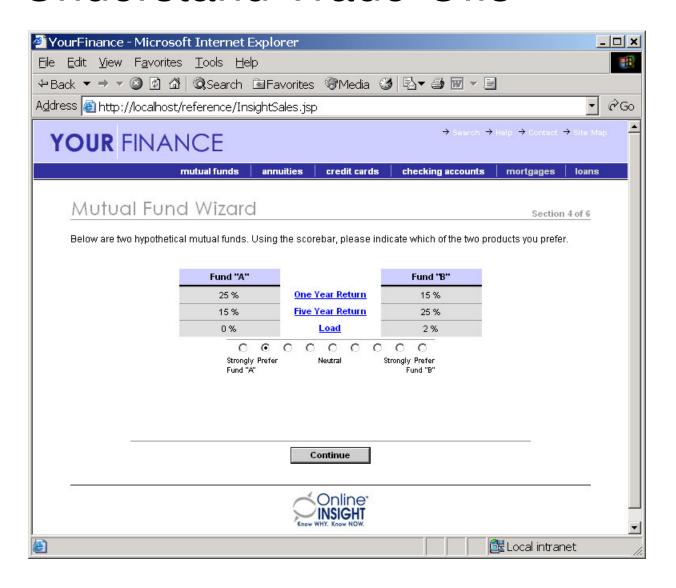


Establish Preference Order for Features

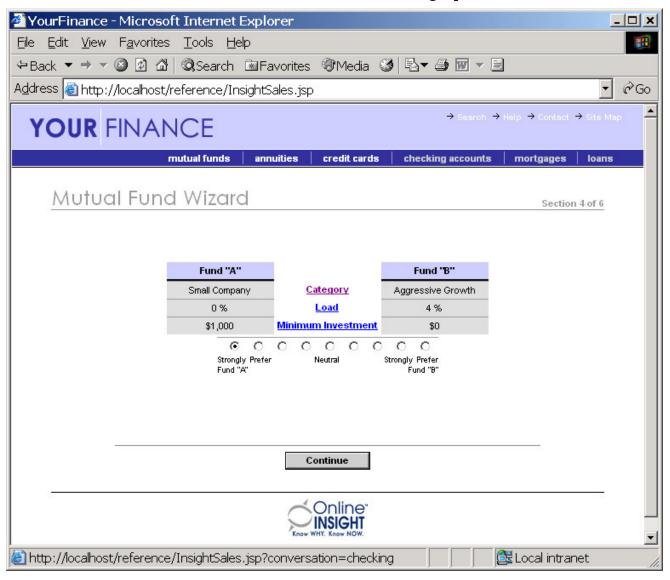




Understand Trade-Offs

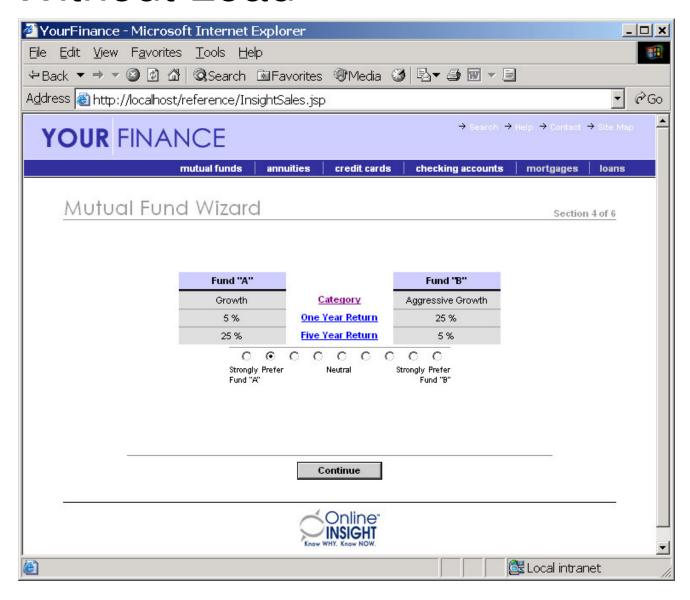


Another "Realistic Hypothetical"



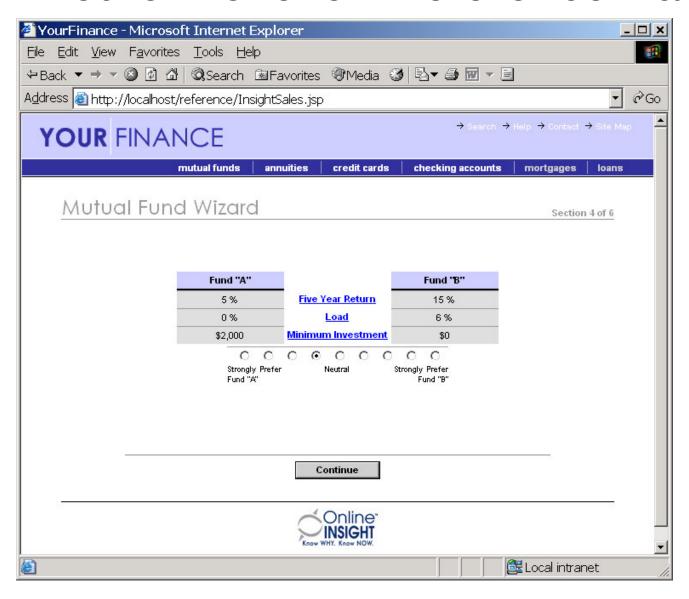


Without Load



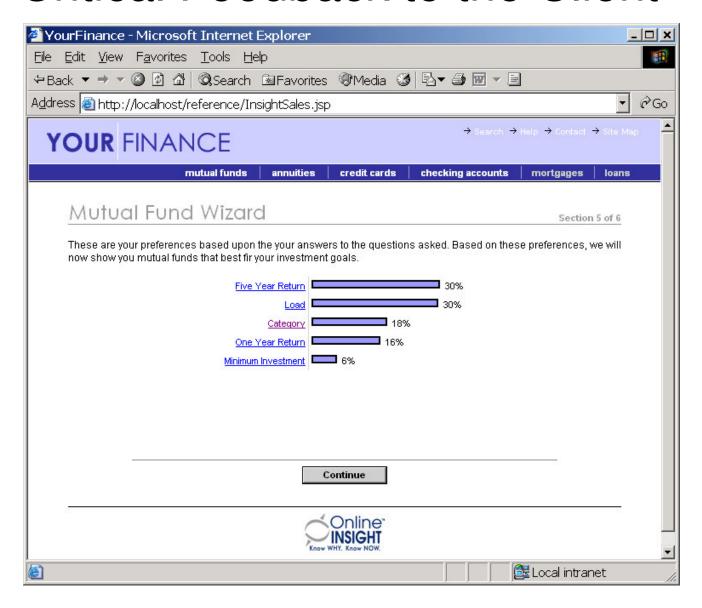


Another Level of Preference Validation



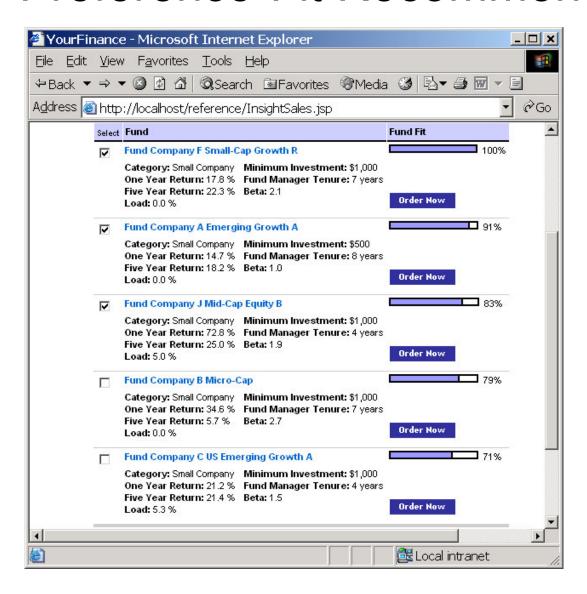


Critical Feedback to the Client



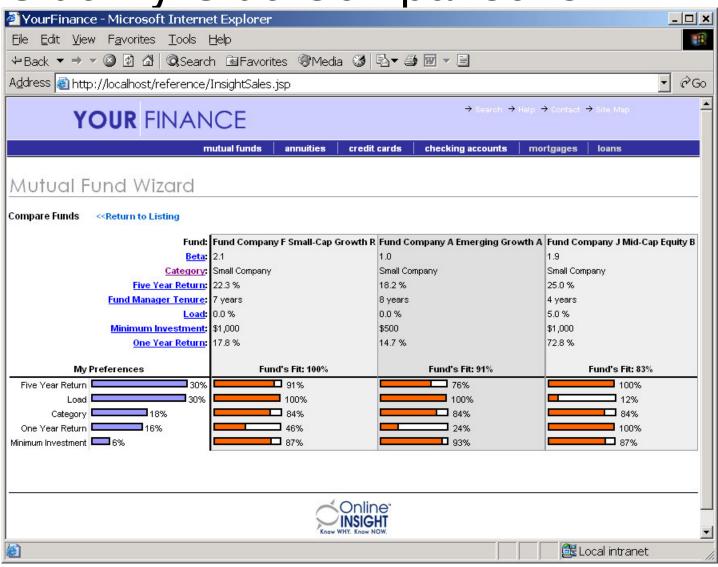


Preference-Fit Recommendations

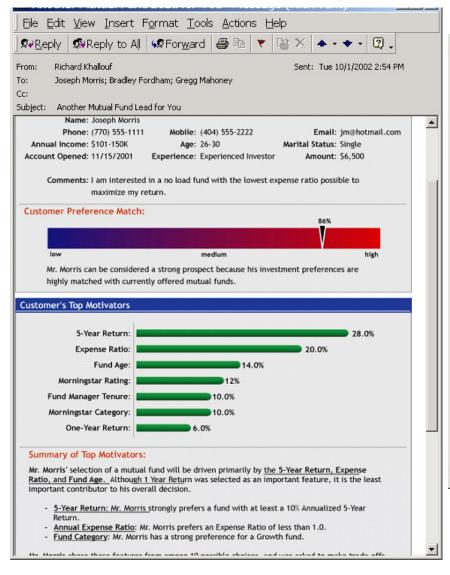




Side-By-Side Comparisons



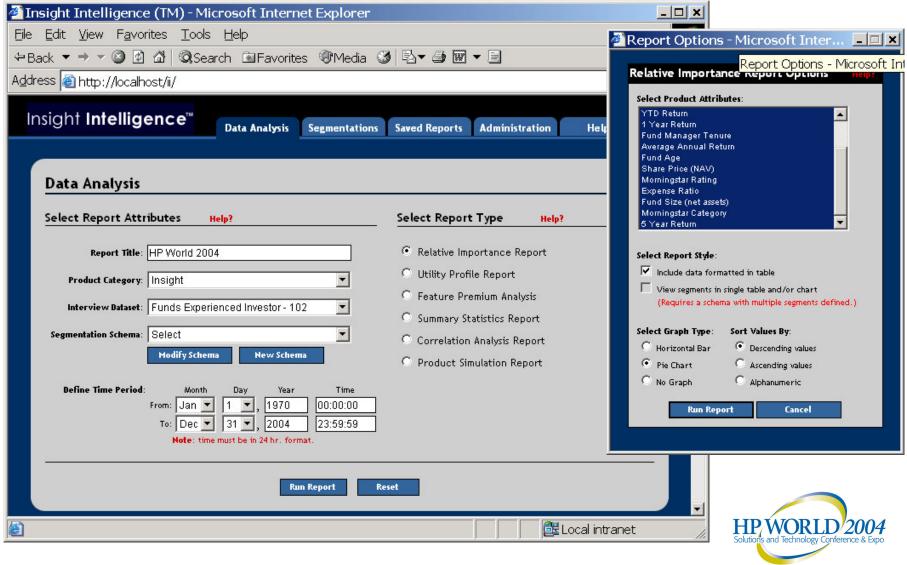
Warm-Start a Sales Agent, Changing Up the Sales Channel When Needed



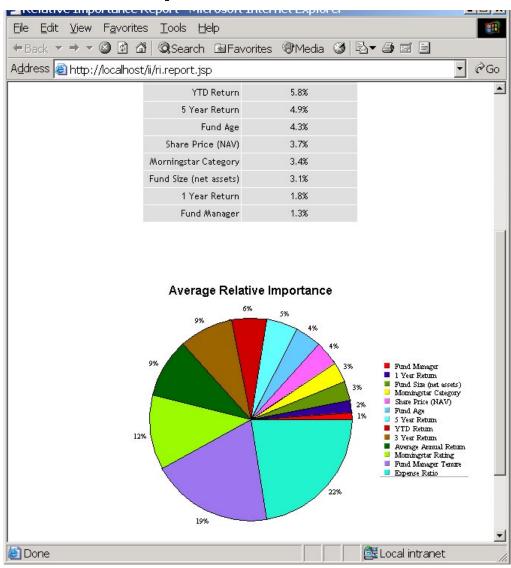
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What Can We Learn on the Backend?

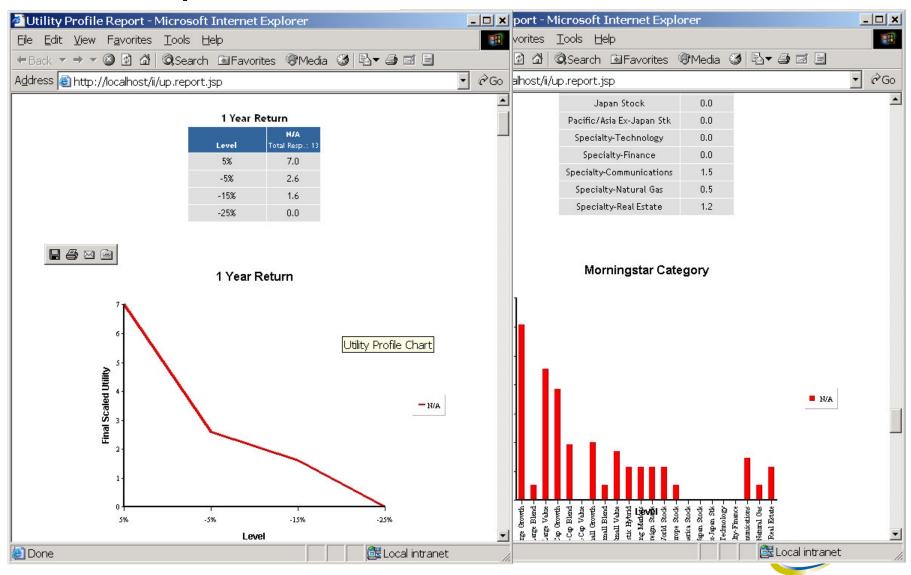


How Important Was Each Feature?

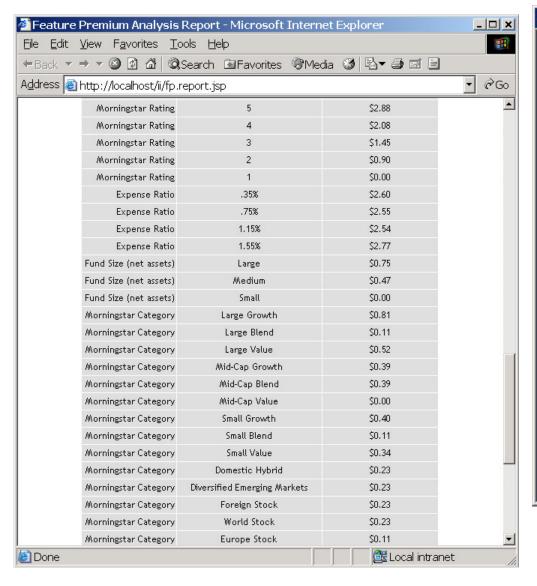


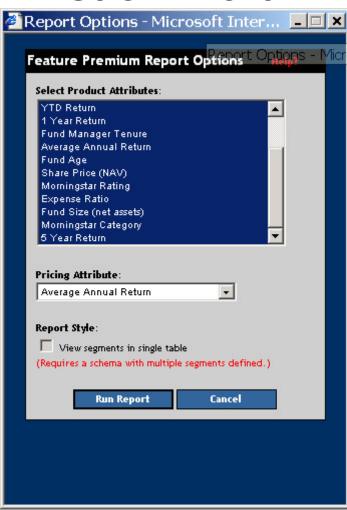


How Important is Each Feature Value?



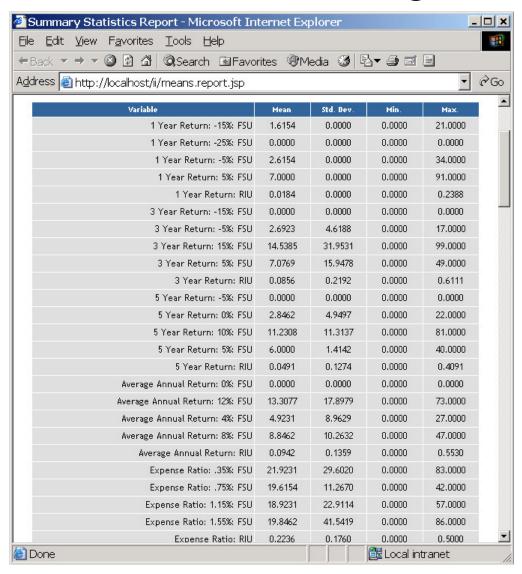
How Much is a "Bell or Whistle" Worth?





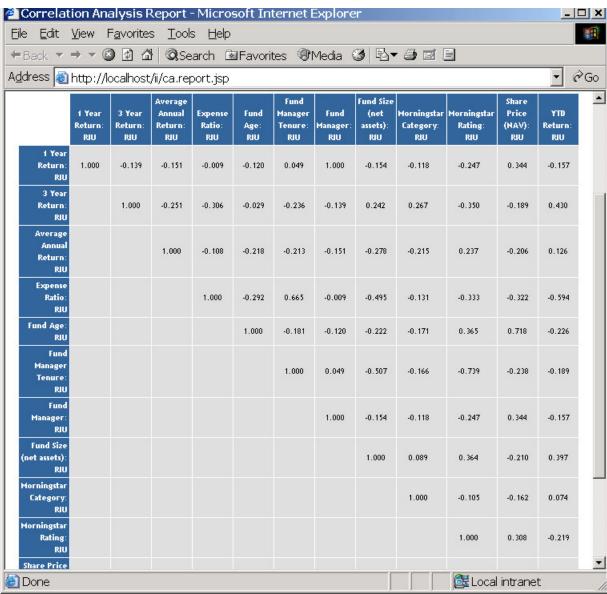


Good Old Marketing Numbers



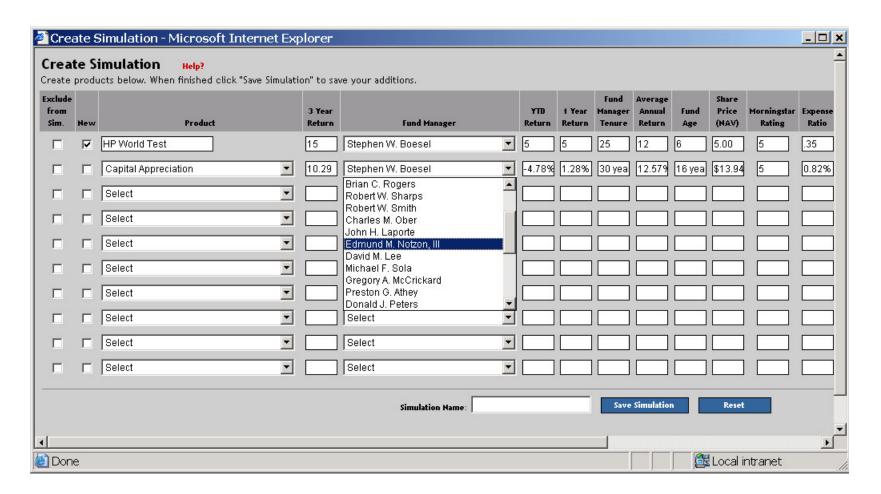


Correlations Among Preferences

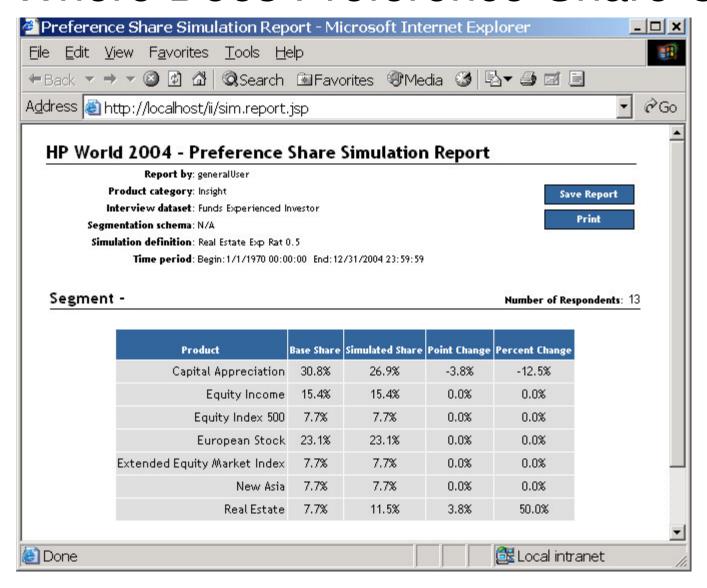




What-If I Rolled Out a New Product?

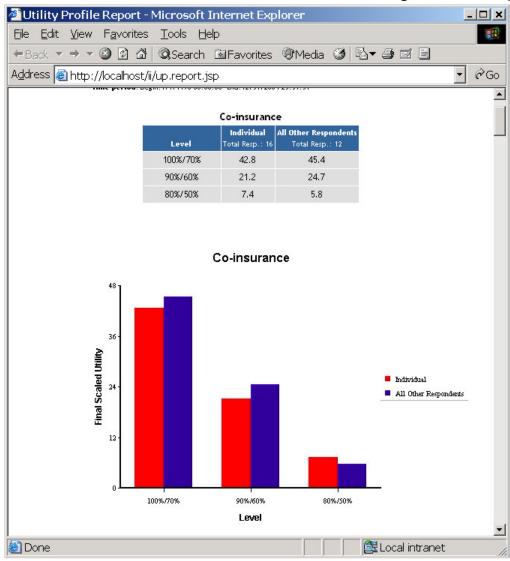


Where Does Preference-Share Go?





And I Can Do Everything by Segment





All with Java Across Most HP Platforms

- Java and XML architecture
- Easy to work with XML API
- Extreme scalability
- Multi-Channel from a single server array
- Database standardization (JDBC)
- Open schema
- Reference or custom interface ready
- Fast implementation time
- Horizontally or vertically scalable



What Makes This Example Ideal?

- Sophisticated, accurate, marketing analytics
- Initially validated in panels and focus groups
- Only needs to ask a few, but the right questions
- Works across sales channels and sales forces
- Executed at the point of sale
- Makes every salesperson an expert
- Integrates sales, marketing, & product development
- Cuts costs in this, now integrated, operational cycle
- Multi-Vertical Solution (FS, CP, HC, HB...)

These Techniques Have Impact

- The first day this technique was deployed on their website, a top health insurance carrier experienced its largest number of individual applications ever.
- A top, national homebuilder went from averaging 15 home showings to 3.2 to close each sale.
- 87% of those that start one of these collaborative customer conversations will complete it.
- The old e-commerce goals of a 1% conversion are shattered when customers truly understand their purchase and its value for them.
- Customer attrition and returns decline significantly.

Value to Customers and Prospects

- Real-Time profile of unique needs and motivations
- Best-Fit product recommendations
- Education that builds confidence
- Shorter sales conversations
- Avoid pitches for products that do not match the holistic set of needs
- Reduce untargeted cross-selling and up-selling



Value to the Enterprise

- Continuous research into customer motivations
- More effective, real-time cross-sell/up-sell
- Evolve 'Best-Practice' selling across channels, products, and segments
- Better product recommendations to customers
- Less client turnover, fewer returns
- Integrated customer intelligence
- Integrate sales, marketing, and product efforts



Sales and Marketing Effectiveness is is not about asking questions. It is about asking the "right" questions of the "right" people at the "right" time. It is also about remembering, recalling, and optimally leveraging the answers every time.





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