



Inside:

- Overview
- Who is Meta4?
- The Meta4 Difference
- Prognosis

A Special Report from Vital Analysis

Meta4:

- And Now the North American Marketplace -

Overview

Meta4 is a well-known and successful software firm outside of the United States. The company has been quite successful in Western Europe, South America and recently added capabilities to address the Asia Pacific region.

Meta4 is making investments in personnel so as to expand its footprint in the North American marketplace. The company already has significant clients in Mexico but its penetration in the United States and Canada has been limited to date.

Given their market successes in other parts of the world, Meta4 should possess the resources and products needed to win in the North American marketplace. How well they succeed here will be a function of their ability to compete on the terms of fierce competition from the North American HR solutions marketplace.

Who is Meta4?

Meta4 is a Spanish software company that has created a human and intellectual capital management solution called PeopleNet. The company has more than 1200 clients worldwide. Their clients are predominantly multinational firms and use Meta4 in more than 80 countries.

The company has distinct offerings for HRO, medium-to-large companies, government and public administration organizations and firms seeking a global HR solution. The

company has a significant number of partners and customers in Southern Europe and Latin America including running payroll in 25 legislations in the Pan American region alone. Meta4 does have some customers in the United States as well.

The Meta4 Difference

Meta4 possesses a very global software solution. Multinationals or global firms requiring a relatively robust and complete solution may want to evaluate their latest suite - PeopleNet 7. The software contains a significant number of modules and support functionality for:

- Job Evaluation
- Career Planning
- Workforce Assessment
- Learning and Development
- Skills and Competency Management
- Employee Induction
- Bulk Staffing
- Recruitment
- Jobsite
- Key People Management
- Collaborative Environment
- Management By Objectives
- Succession Planning
- Time Management
- Time and Attendance
- Payroll and Financial Interactivity
- Loans
- What-If Payroll Scenarios
- Document Management
- Executive Information System
- Relocation & Expatriate/Repatriate Administration
- Organization Charts & Resource Management
- Corporate Directories
- Workforce Planning
- Health and Safety
- Digital Signature
- Budgeting
- Flex Benefits
- Variable Compensation

The software also comes with workflow management, mobility solutions, portals and self-service modules as well as links to service providers and outsourcers.

In an interview with a Meta4 executive, we learned that Meta4 sees growth in the mid-market as key to their success in North America. Nationalistic solutions are now passé in the marketplace as virtually all companies are becoming (or have become) global firms. Even mid-market companies need more agile and nimble solutions as they enter and exit new world markets. As mid-market firms go globally, they do not want to be encumbered with acquiring unique HR technologies within every country they operate. Meta4 sees this as a market opportunity.

The Meta4 executive also indicated that Meta4 is developing a next-generation product line. This product introduces the concept of Active HR and is positioned to significantly enhance the employee and manager experience. It delivers the ability for HR to become more active in guiding operations or line management with the analysis and application of Human Capital. No other information regarding this product was disclosed at this time.

Prognosis

There is no doubt that Meta4 has been a successful HR provider. They have partnered with some of the biggest HR providers in specific markets globally. These firms include Deloitte, Hewitt, EDS, Cap Gemini and others. We believe Meta4 has approximately 20 HRO clients. This makes their solution one of the more successful HRO products in the marketplace.

Success outside of North America does not always guarantee market success in North America. The history of the US software marketplace is littered with the remains of European firms who have attempted to cross the Atlantic. One of the major reasons these firms failed is that they did not understand the ruthless nature of competition in this market nor did they comprehend the criticality of marketing in this space. Just look at the recent HR Technology Conference in Chicago last week. There were over 225 HR vendors clamoring and vying for prospective customers' attention. To have an impact in this marketplace, HR solution providers must be more than technically solid, they must be loud and proud and concise in their marketing and messaging. To do less in North America is to fail.

Summary

We believe Meta4 has a very good chance for succeeding in this marketplace. Their product line is quite extensive and their multinational support capabilities are quite solid.

We would recommend that Meta4:

- Utilize a North American indigenous marketing team
- Ratchet up the quantity and velocity of its messages within North America

About Vital Analysis



Vital Analysis is a very different kind of technology research organization. We are the intersection set where exceptional technology market knowledge meets the executive suite. Where other 'analysts' replay vendor press releases, we give you the:

- impact new technologies will or won't have on your business
- reasons why you should or shouldn't care about specific emerging solutions
- business justifications why you may or may not want specific solutions

Vital Analysis was carved out of TechVentive, Inc. in 2007 as a new, but complementary business. As designed, Vital Analysis is the publishing, research and analytical arm of that company.

Our reach, like our blog readership, is truly global. We've consulted with top technology executives in Australia, Brazil, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States. We've been briefed by technology providers from virtually every corner of the planet.

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