

# Your Own Automated Market Analyst

Equipment Data Associates (EDA) provides manufacturers and dealers with data that can identify key customer behavior and locate serious prospects in your territory.

BY MARY SEDOR

As competition heats up in the marketplace, dealers who know how to retain current customers and successfully develop new prospects are the ones that will survive.

In an ideal world, a full-time, dedicated market data expert would keep you constantly apprised of the purchasing behaviors and equipment needs of your customers and prospects. How far could your company go if you knew when customers had bought another brand, or even when your prospects are ready to buy?

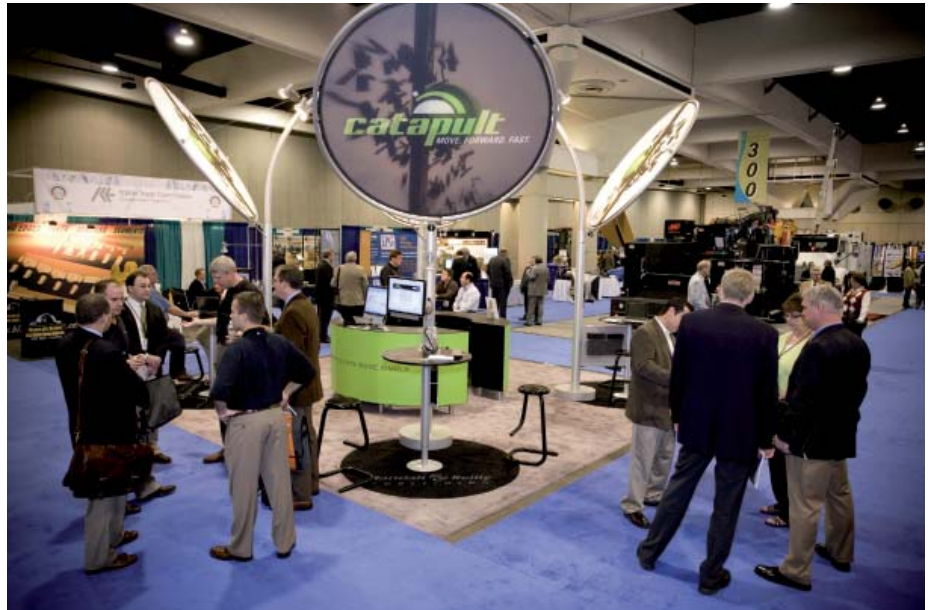
Well, welcome to the ideal, and more.

Equipment Data Associates (EDA) works to provide its clients with the information they need to optimize their businesses. EDA is a supplier of UCC-1 market intelligence to a variety of industries including agriculture, construction, lift trucks, logging, machine tools, trucking and woodworking.

Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., EDA is the brainchild of Bill Howell and Frank Manfredi, president of Manfredi and Associates. Before starting EDA, Howell worked for Dun & Bradstreet (D&B), a company that also provides UCC data. D&B provides the debtor and finance company information on the UCC form but does not provide the asset purchased. Howell recognized the value that asset information would provide, and thus a business opportunity was born. EDA was formed in 1988 and was acquired 10 years later by Randall-Reilly Publishing.

## Key Information and Analytical Tools

EDA's market intelligence, as well as the wide range of metrics and analytical tools it offers, empower the company's clients to harvest new leads, maintain a



EDA introduced its new market data reporting system, Catapult, to dealers attending AED's Annual Meeting & CONDEX show last month in San Diego.

higher level of service, measure ROI of marketing strategies and identify new product opportunities.

"The key difference that EDA brings to the table is that, unlike any other company, we have user-friendly tools, provide information that is transactionally driven, and we provide detailed information right down to the make, model and serial number for end users throughout the United States," said David Schwartz, EDA vice president of sales and marketing.

UCC data is filed everyday throughout the U.S. Each UCC data filing statement has three components: the debtor or in most cases the contractor, the secure party or financing company, and what the debtor purchased, including make, model and serial number. Once the data is filed, EDA's more than 50 employees manually review each filing to identify assets in line with the industries EDA serves. After this human

review, EDA captures and manipulates data and delivers it to customers through a system called Catapult, just launched Dec. 15, which replaces its former product, Rainmaker.

"UCC data captures between 40 and 70 percent of equipment consumption," said Schwartz.

When a customer logs into Catapult at [www.edadata.com](http://www.edadata.com), (s)he is immediately notified of new machinery that has been financed in his or her market, which, says Schwartz, will be particularly vital in the coming months as markets continue to shrink.

EDA offers three ways to receive its data: a Catapult subscription to receive detailed data, a Catapult subscription to the mailing list only, and custom research projects.

"Our intention behind Catapult is to create an automated marketing analyst for manufacturers, dealer principals and field sales representatives,"

said Schwartz. "Catapult's automated watch tools are one of our key differentiators and are a major part of our value proposition."

### Powerful Tools

Each of Catapult's five watch tools can be viewed either in Catapult or e-mailed to the user.

The first, **CustomerWatch**, enables users to keep a pulse on their territory, providing immediate notification when a customer has financed any new or used competitive machines. For example, EDA's subscriber could input the date on which (s)he wants to begin identifying activity among Hyundai customers. The system then finds and files everyone that fits within the specified parameters – each day Catapult sends new data to the subscriber on all of the Hyundai customers that have financed equipment, explains Schwartz.

**LeaseWatch** is a proactive tool that allows a subscriber to receive an alert notification when a machine may be approaching the end of a lease term. For example, the client can enter in a 60-month lease period, and Catapult notifies the client when the machine reaches 54 months of age.

**ProspectWatch** is important for clients to not only maintain their existing customer base but also to know when the time is right to approach the prospect, says Schwartz. ProspectWatch allows the client to define the audience on whom (s)he intends to call and to receive alerts of all related UCC activity. For example, if the EDA client works for Hyundai and wants to target Doosan buyers, (s)he could tell Catapult to look for anyone who financed five or more Doosan units since January 2003, said Schwartz. The client would then get alerts on any new activity.

"If one of these target accounts refinances the fleet," said Schwartz, "it means they likely have cash and are perhaps preparing for another capital acquisition. Or, if they are brand loyal to Doosan, in this case, and you see another transaction come through with another manufacturer, then perhaps

they've lost loyalty to their dealer or manufacturer. It can be an indication that they are open to change."

Catapult's **ServiceWatch** is ideal for preventive maintenance and allows dealers to receive alerts when one of their units in the field reaches a certain age. For example, if a unit has been in the field for a year and the OEM recommends oil filter changes at 12 months, ServiceWatch triggers notification to the dealer's parts manager, who can then alert the field rep with an opportunity to serve the customer.

The final and newest feature is **EventWatch**, which enables subscribers to monitor leads generated from a particular event. An "event" can be the dealership's entire house list, a demo day or a trade show. The subscriber simply uploads the list and then receives notification when anyone on it makes a purchase.

"You can completely eliminate that question of: 'What is the return on our CONEXPO investment?'" said Schwartz.

EDA data is integrated with the badges for World of Concrete, CONEXPO, ICQUEE, World of Asphalt and AGG1.

"EventWatch can make a major change in an organization's efforts simply by monitoring attendees or prospects of any given event," said Schwartz. "It has the potential to be a change-maker for marketing companies."

### See Where the Action's At

With the release of Catapult, users can now generate queries on the fly with greater ease and view their territories using Google Earth.

"The query feature is flexible and allows users to get the information they need," he said.

Any data from Catapult can be viewed in Google Earth, which has the benefit of showing the location of all of recent transactions with pinpoints on a map. Users can then click on the pinpoint and see that company's contact information and fleet size. Double-clicking on the pinpoint can give that user a bird's eye view of the company's building – even the

equipment in the yard.

"This feature is useful for organizations trying to determine activity in their territory," said Schwartz. "They can represent the market activity visually on the map and even send the sales guy there with directions."

Catapult also makes it easier to create reports using Catapult Analytics, an EDA program that harnesses the power of Microsoft Excel. Using Catapult Analytics, for example, a user can easily find every kind of construction equipment owned in Illinois – a report that would take hours – or even days or weeks – to complete manually.

Hot spot analytics is yet another tool designed to help dealers balance their sales territory, which Schwartz says, can be organized geographically to ensure that sales people are assigned properly.

### Bottom Line

The bottom line cost to dealers for EDA's sophisticated data tools is calculated using a 60-month historical average. It's a 24-month subscription, and users are given 53,000 historical data records, plus daily updates.

The cost is \$2,642 per month, calculated at \$3.30 per record over a 60-month average (\$2,543) plus a \$99 license fee.

"To put that in perspective, if the average selling price of a piece of equipment is \$150,000, and the dealer's margin on the sale is 15 percent, the dealer would have to sell one additional unit every eight and a half months to break even," said Schwartz. "When you put it in perspective you can see it's very affordable. And it's critical for dealers to be aware of the activity in their markets."

Once a company subscribes to Catapult, they can decide how many users they want – typically it's one administrative and one standard user. The administrative user receives a two-hour training session as well as access to a full EDA library of online learning tools and group training sessions as needed. ■