

What

Pandora is one of the leading technical products in the data profiling and discovery market with proven performance, functionality and scalability. Pandora relies on JDBC interfaces for most sources, and native adapters for XLS and delimited files, however it does not provide support for non-relational databases (including NoSQL sources). Although Pandora has been designed for non-technical users, the company does not yet offer any user-specific interfaces (you can tailor them to your own purposes easily enough, but it is not out of the box). In its next release X88 will be adding significantly enhanced graphics and visualisations and we expect that its rating for business use will increase significantly as a result.

Another major feature of Pandora is that it supports prototyping of the sort of business rules that are used within a data quality context or transformation rules within a data integration environment. More generally, Pandora supports global search, full relationship discovery and extensive profiling capabilities. It is also very flexible with respect to both data and metadata that supports customisations such as the construction of a business glossary.

Where

X88 focuses primarily on large enterprises, regardless of industry. The company only has a direct presence in the UK and the United States and otherwise leverages its various partners. Notable partners include systems integrators such as Logica and Atos Origin as well as technology partners like Innovative Software (in the United States).

Who

X88 has a number of government implementations but relatively few of its customers have been publicly announced. Of those that have the most well-known are Vodafone and the Financial Times.

The product is available in three editions: Pandora Data Profiling & Discovery Edition, Data Prototyping Edition and Data Quality Management Edition, each of which is a subset of the edition that follows it. There is also a free to download Pandora Data Profiler that has restricted capabilities.

Technology

Pandora is a Java software product that runs under Windows (client and server), Linux (Red Hat and SUSE) as well as Solaris, AIX and HP-UX. Other Java compliant platforms are available upon request. The product supports JDBC for database connectivity as well as offering support for both flat files and Microsoft Excel.

Pandora is underpinned by a proprietary correlation database. This stores data based on unique values (each value is stored just once) rather than just tables or columns. This means that Pandora uses less disk space than traditional approaches to profiling and discovery, as well as improving performance. As an indication of the latter, Pandora supports as many as two billion records on-screen with full browsing and filtering capabilities. Another advantage that derives from having its own database is that there is no need to embed a third party database engine within it, so there are no bugs, compatibility, or performance issues related to that. As far as functionality is concerned Pandora can distinguish all (sub)types of

Company Details

X88 Software

Merlin House, Brunel Road
Theale, Reading,
Berkshire, RG7 4AB

Phone: +44 (0)118 324 1000

Web site: www.x88.com

Email: info@x88.com

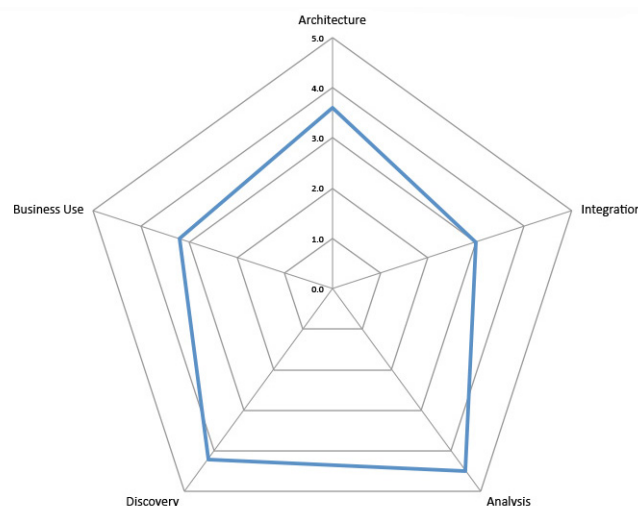


Figure 1: X88 Pandora attribute scoring (scale 0 to 5)

data and one particularly interesting feature is the ability to assign monetary weightings during on-going monitoring. This is useful for justifying and prioritising remediation.

Prototyping of business rules used within a data quality context or transformation rules within a data integration environment is supported. In the latter case the product supports the generation of ETL (extract, transform and load) specifications.

Pandora supports global search, full relationship discovery and extensive profiling capabilities. It is also very flexible with respect to both data and metadata to supports customisations. However, it lacks support for external authentication mechanisms such as Active Directory or LDAP, using its own role-based security instead.

Services

Pandora is intended to be simple enough to use that users do not require much in the way of support after initial training, which is provided by X88. A SaaS solution is not available. Consultancy services are also available but these tend to be limited to the early stages of relevant projects. For more comprehensive service support the company relies on its delivery partners.