

## Client Profile

**Client:** Business Performance Consulting Company

**Product Lines:** New enterprise software company

**Headquarters:** United States

**Revenue:** >\$30 MillionUSD

## Participating Client Functions

- Managing Partner of the Consulting Firm
- Information Technology
- Software Development

## Expertise Used in Project

- General Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Business strategy
- Inbound Marketing
- Software Product Management
- Usability Testing
- Product Launch Marketing

“When you have a great idea, the challenge is BOTH what to do with the technology and what NOT to do with the technology. You only have so much time and money to get to market....”

GOVIND, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF A CONSULTING FIRM AND SOFTWARE START-UP FOUNDER

The founder of a consulting firm partners with Hiller Associates to transform an idea into a enterprise software company and product.



## Challenge

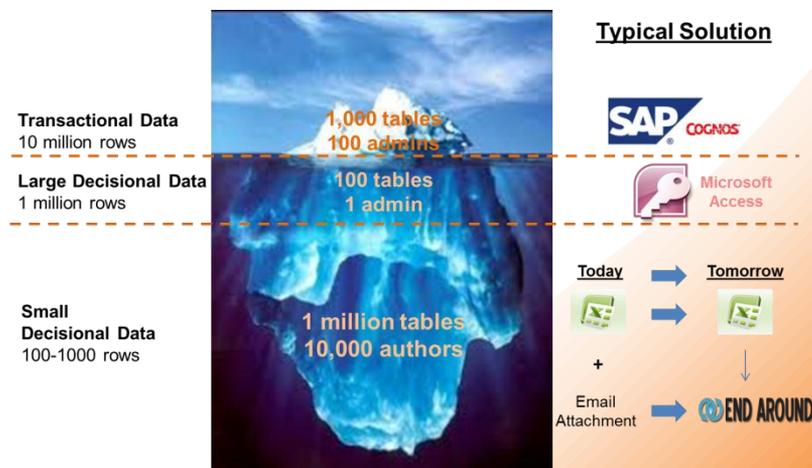
Govind is the managing director of a successful mid-size business performance consultancy. In the past, Govind’s firm had often made custom IT applications for its clients. Govind had an innovative idea for how clients could to relate tables of data to one another, without the constraining limitations of a typical relational database schema. After spending six months having a developer make a prototype of a software platform that would feature Govind’s technology, he was faced with two challenges:

1. **Value Proposition and Target Customer** – Govind’s technology was versatile and could be applied to solve any number of possible problems. Which use would the market value and, what customer would appreciate the technology?
2. **Inbound Marketing and v1.0 Development** – Govind also needed to understand what functionality his target customer wanted, and he needed to bring a meaningful first version to market with limited time and development budget

Hiller Associates was retained to fill the role of both founding CEO of the newly forming software venture and to fill the role of software product management and marketing strategist.

## Discovery and Solution

“Big Data” is a big interest to most of the large enterprise software companies in the world, including the biggest ERP and PLM providers. The first focus of HA was to understand if Govind’s technology was unique enough to compete. HA interviewed potential users from Govind’s firm’s consulting clients from the functions of information technology, engineering, purchasing, finance, and manufacturing.



These interviews revealed that in the corporate world, most value did not come from large tables of transactional data, but from small tables of highly distilled decisional data that were kept in the spreadsheets of

## About Hiller Associates

Hiller Associates is a business performance consultancy that specializes in Product Cost Management (PCM), helping discrete manufacturing companies reduce product cost, whether the product is before or after launch.

Our practice sits in the nexus between design engineering, finance, purchasing, and manufacturing. HA has helped Fortune 1000 clients save tens of millions of dollars through our Product Cost Management engagements. If you have a challenge with Product Cost Management in culture, process, roles, or tools we would like to help.

individual employees. Govind's technology was well suited to helping ordinary (non-IT) employees find and link these previously unrelated tables. The new venture was named "End Around," because it would help non-IT people quickly upload, find, and connect data without getting bogged down in huge Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. Hiller Associates led a small team, partially provided by the client, to specify, develop, test, and market End Around's product. HA provided all aspects of software product management, including user personas, use cases, screen concepts, specifications, and the marketing requirement document.

HA helped End Around recruit a quality assurance team and marketing resources on an inexpensive contract basis. Throughout the start-up phase, which lasted under a year, the team included only one full-time employee (the head of development), plus three outsourced developers from an low cost country, five college interns, and part-time contract experts in usability testing and graphic design.

The first version (v1.0) of the software was released and usability tested with a variety of users from target customers. Usability was very important, because the success of the concept relied on the ease of use of non-technical people to effortlessly upload their excel tables into the cloud or a corporate intranet. The usability testing yielded several easy-to-implement changes that made the next version (v1.5) score much higher in usability testing.

In parallel, HA began leading the marketing preparations to launch the product. This was a challenge because although the technology was intricate and fascinating, it needed to be presented in a simple and compelling way. In addition to sales presentations and marketing collateral, HA led the team in making a series of short demo videos that explained the overall End Around value proposition, and various functionalities of the software that would interest users.

## Results and Impact

In under one year, with a largely part-time team, using less than \$0.5 million, Govind and Hiller Associates were able to transform Govind's idea from a twinkle in his eye and a rough prototype to a focused professional enterprise software application. End Around was poised to go to market, as a product and as a venture.

### Epilogue:

Weeks before End Around was about to go to market and directly sell to its first pilot customers, Govind's consulting firm had the opportunity to purchase another consulting firm with a complementary practice that was the same size as the Govind's consultancy. This opportunity could not be denied, and Govind's firm acquired the other firm. However, this required all of Govind's firm's resources and additional external financing. The firm did not have the time or resources to take End Around to market, so the project has been put on hold... for the moment.



Click picture to view video demo!