iCharts **Business Model**

Introduction

Purpose of this document is to provide a description of the iChart Value Proposition, Competitive Advantage, Differentiating Competences and Revenue Opportunities provided through the iCharts business model.

Tag Line

The objective of the iChart service is to be *"The best, easiest and fastest way to create, share and update embeddable, interactive charts and tables on the net"*

Value Offered

Today, the process of creating and publishing facts and figures via charts and table in an online context is cumbersome, tedious and, if automated, prohibitively costly:

a. for a manual process, numerous, iterative steps are required (create a chart using Excel, turn into JPG/HTML, upload to your web-site, format using HTML tools, go back to Excel to recreate your chart as the HTML formatting didn't work, upload again, format again, publish)

b. for automation, programming is required (implement a database, a web-application server and a permanent uplink to your web-site)

The resulting charts are of inferior quality and don't utilize the new level of interactivity that web technology is capable of providing.

The iCharts service resolves these issues by

1. providing an easy-to-use, simple and intuitive way for users to create a chart or table by simply uploading an Excel spreadsheet into an online workspace where the chart is constructed

2. allowing the user to place his chart or table anywhere by simply pasting a snippet into any web-site or blog of his choice (similar to YouTube, GoogleVideo or Box.net)

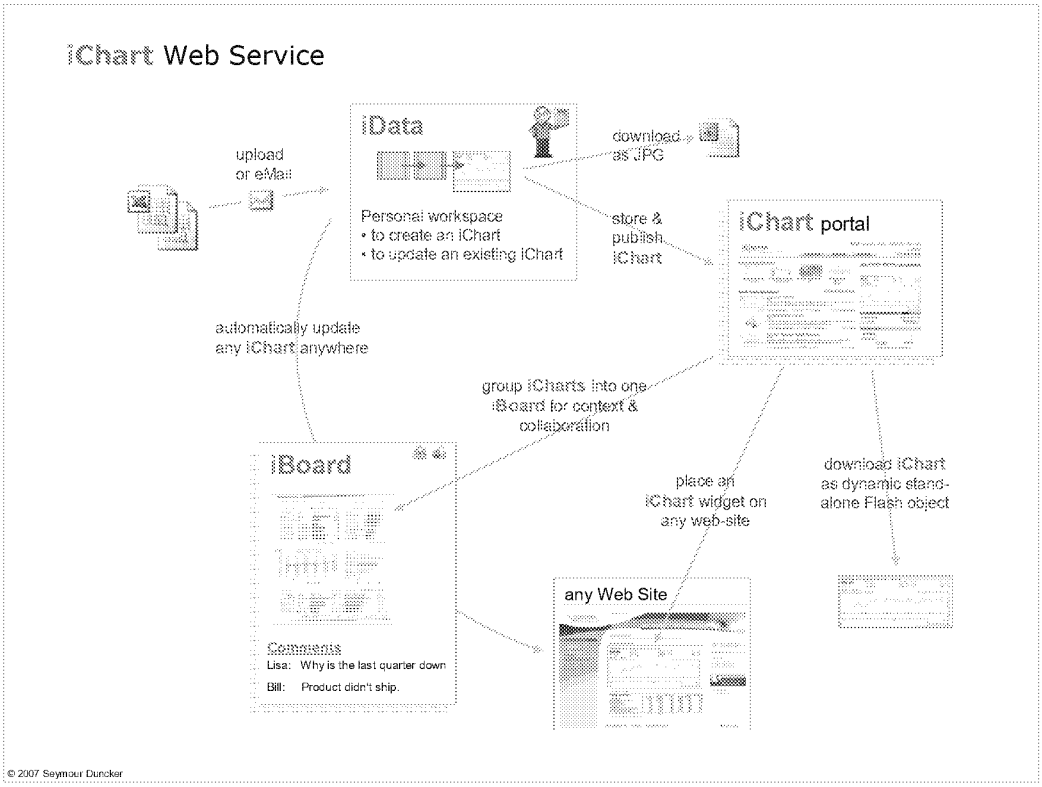
3. enabling the user to instantaneously update that chart or table wherever it is located by sending a new spreadsheet to the iCharts service

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The iCharts service will provide additional value adding features:

- iCharts will be of superior visual quality, feature-rich and interactive (possible features include zoom in/out, mouse-over with additional info, voice-based explanation of the chart, overlay comparisons, download underlying data with charts as PDF, Excel etc.)
- The user can download the chart/table as JPG for use in e.g. Powerpoint
- The user can download the chart/table as a dynamic object for further use, e.g. place as a stand-alone object onto a web-site or a dynamic object that is used offline
- The user can publish his charts and tables in the iCharts portal, a central location for people to access all kinds of statistics
- The user can set up an iBoard collaboration room to collaborate and interact with peers around newly released facts & figures
- An API will be available to utilize the iCharts service to e.g. serve as the analytics module of other on-demand services
- A rich gallery of presets that includes new types of charts (not offered out of the box by MS Excel) and – more importantly - offers predefined structural content (i.e. x and y-Axis already defined) to which the user can match his data

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Competitive Advantage

The iCharts service has a significant, double competitive advantage as it provides

- **a highly differentiated service offering** as well as
- **a low-cost process** that eradicates a cumbersome, prohibitive process today.

The iCharts service differentiates itself by

1. the ease-of use and simplicity of the service
2. providing a continuously evolving gallery of presets with structural content allowing users to select structure to match their data
3. providing a simple way of publishing statistical content in one central location for everyone to access (which will become increasingly attractive, the more users publish)

The iCharts services is a low-cost process by

1. effectively being a self-service internet-based application
2. replacing a complicated, tedious and, if automated, costly process with a simple three step approach: Create, Share, Update
3. having a radical low price-point based on the assumption that there will be mass-adoption

Differentiating Competences

The following core competences are required to deliver a high value service and maintain a competitive advantage:

- Solid knowledge of Flash/Flex technology to implement the core service
- Architectural know-how and capability to deliver an ultra-fast, highly scalable service
- Segment knowledge to be able to build or review relevant presets per segment
- Analytics expertise and high quality data visualization skills to design an effective process that takes a user from data to high quality charts/tables
- Superior design skills to produce an intuitive, easy-to-use and superior user interface

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Sources of Revenue

According to an estimate by Edward Tufte, the leading global expert in data visualization, "each year, the world over, somewhere between 900 billion ($9x10^{11}$) and 2 trillion ($2x10^{12}$) images of statistical graphics are printed".

Even if only a fraction of these are relevant for online purposes, a huge revenue opportunity exists.

In publishing data, the principle modes are:

- Open publication of data (i.e. anyone can access, no fees)
- Private circle publication of data (i.e. only limited circle can access data, no fees)
- Commercial publication of data (i.e. anyone can access against fees)

The pricing philosophy is based on the following assumptions

1. Anyone who has free data to publish should be able to do so at rock-bottom prices:
   - Charge of 1€ per chart covers consumption of online resources (chart creation, hosting of widgets, updating mechanism) and is miniscule against today's required effort
   - Users will leverage iCharts portal as additional distribution channel, making the iCharts portal a valuable asset for online statistics
   - Charging keeps the junk out
2. Anyone who has a greater context in which they need to publish data to a circle of interested people will most likely also require collaboration features, richer interactivity and custom branding:
   - iBoards bundle relevant features into one offering
   - Over time segment specific iBoard bundles (i.e. IR iBoard, Associations iBoard, League iBoard etc.) can be created to meet segment specific needs
3. Anyone who has proprietary data to offer for which they want to charge for access has a need for global distribution:
   - iCharts portal is global platform for distributing statistical data, giving access to 3rd party statistical content for charge or free of charge
   - For chargeable statistical content, the pricing model will be a base fee/transaction fee combo allowing for the creation of 2-3 tailored plans

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The following is a table showing a potential launch pricing plan:

	Pay Per Chart		Subscription Plans		
Product	iChart Classic	iChart Dynamic	iChart Widgets	iBoard standard	iBoard professional
What it is	Download static charts for offline usage	Download dynamic charts for offline usage	Place & update your charts anywhere	Set up collaboration room around your charts	Earn money from distributing your data
Price	FREE	1 € per chart	1 € per chart per month	25 € per month	On request
Number of Charts/Tables	1	1	1	4	Unlimited
# of updates per month	-	-	1	Unlimited	Unlimited
List in public iCharts portal	-	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Integrate into any website/blog	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interactive Features Pack I (2nd level voice/visual info)	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interactive Features Pack II (Comparisons, Zoom)	-	-	No	Yes	Yes
Interactive Features Pack III (PDF, Excel downloads)	-	-	No	Yes	Yes
Collaboration Features (Comments, Docs, Links)	-	-	No	Yes	Yes
Custom Branding	-	-	No	Yes	Yes
Charge for accessing data	-	-	No	No	Yes

Table: iCharts Pricing

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Growth Loop

A growth loop for the business model leading to sustainable competitive advantage and superior returns could be as follows:

- In an initial stealth mode, a robust service with an initial set of presets is developed
- At launch time, high profile data owners are solicited to place their content on the iCharts portal
- During launch, dedicated media coverage is to be secured and business development efforts continued to pull content onto the platform
- With initial success, early adopters will start utilizing the platform, leading to first paid customers
- Continued media coverage will lead to increased "noise" around the service, leading to more traffic
- Proceeds from paying customers will be reinvested to a. generate a larger set of presets and b. pull more high profile data providers onto the platform
- Initial first mover advantage based on technology (Flash) is extended by increasing richness of content, making it harder to simply copy the service

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Created: 6/4/2007 7:41:27 AM

Modified: 6/4/2007 7:41:27 AM