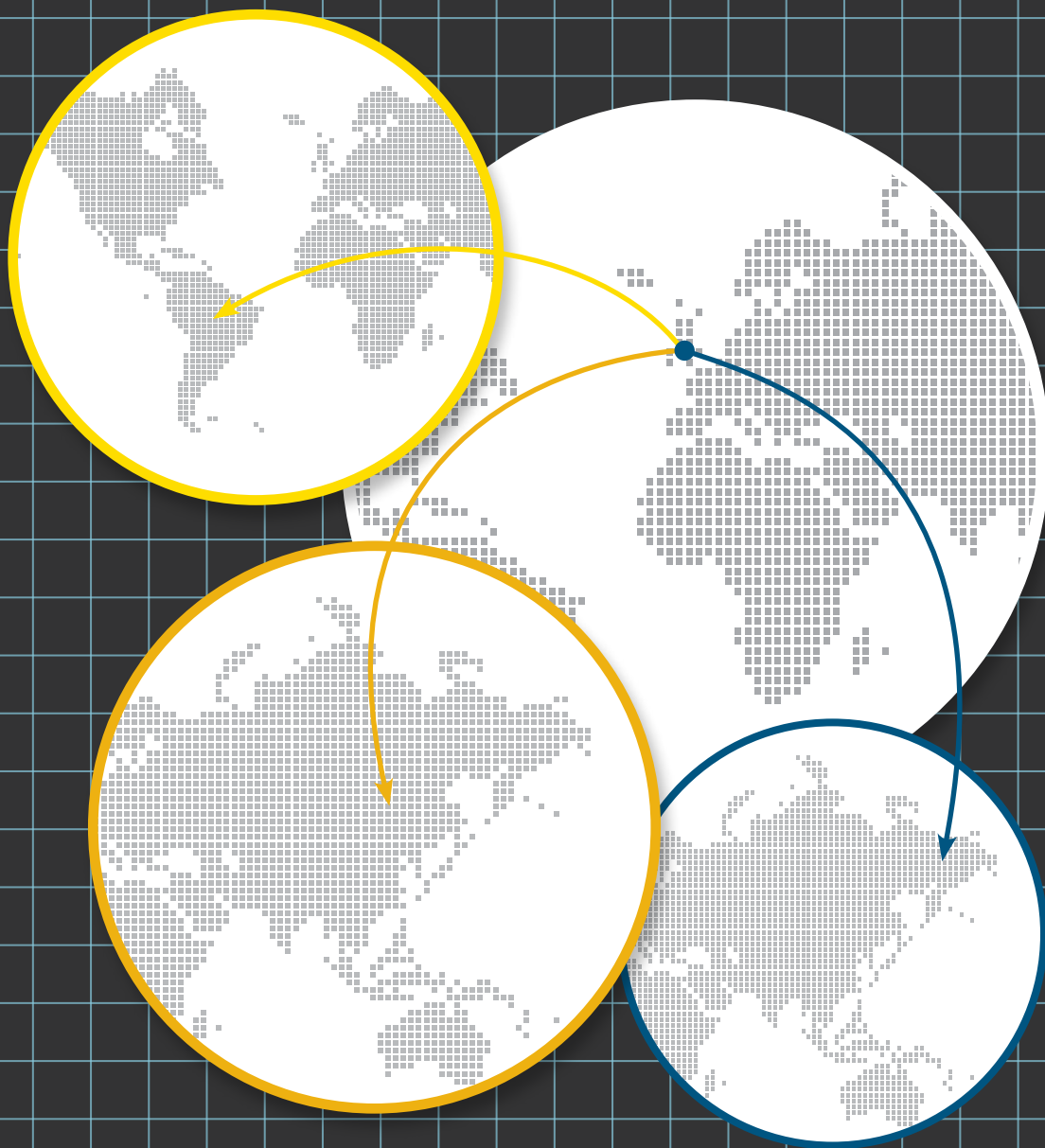


Covering the world: how does a news and business information service keep pace with fast-growing new markets?



SOLUTIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE-DRIVEN PROFESSIONALS

Client Development

Research & Knowledge
Solutions

Practice & Productivity
Management

Risk & Compliance



Executive Summary

With 'emerging' economies growing rapidly, and business becoming ever more globalised, companies constantly need more and more 'hard to get' information. Can they have it? Or will business information firms struggle to provide the range of company, news and opinion information they need? Looking specifically at the demand for content from "emerging" markets, this paper explores how a strategic, partnership-based approach is essential to deliver useful global intelligence.

Finding, choosing and making easily available the most relevant and influential sources is the essential antidote to overload

Can Online News Resources be Demand-Driven – and Stay Viable?

From the first stock-price database to the latest social media monitoring tool, research resources have always, in essence, been driven by customer demand. Yet one could be forgiven for thinking that, beyond a certain point, databases just start to grow source-by-source, adding content almost at random just because it is available. After all, can anyone really use 23,000 sources of information on a regular basis?

Information overload can be the result if, say, the content set is wrong or the search tools inadequate. We see this every day with unstructured web searches, or on websites with ill thought-out search engines.

But it's an inescapable fact that a very broad sweep of content is essential to many businesses today. This scale is necessary for a single database to support the diverse research needs of users in different industries, job roles or geographies. Even the smallest or most localised firms can have suppliers, competitors and customers in many different countries. The web may bring us all much closer to even the very newest 'emerging' markets: but news & business information services continue to thrive because pre-selection – finding, choosing and making easily available the most relevant and influential sources combined with powerful search and alerting capabilities – is the essential antidote to overload.

It's not just about once-obscure geographies of course. Social and "user-generated" media are growing in importance, regional publications can add essential flavour and insight, particularly for B2C companies, and specialist analysts, such as those in compliance teams, require specific content, such as detailed company and executive information.

In recent years, though, there has been a groundswell of demand for more information on the 'high growth' markets of Central and Eastern Europe; the fast-moving economies of Brazil, India and China; and the Middle East and Africa. This reflects the rapid increase in business activity in these geographies. Investment firms need company news and information for due diligence and equity research. Consulting companies will be getting briefed on the full range of issues – country, political, economic as well as company background – for their client engagements. PR firms will want to extend the reach of their media monitoring to encompass new markets. And industrial firms will want to explore market potential or research new suppliers.

However these 'new' markets are complex, diverse, opaque. The challenge for information providers is to satisfy their customers' insatiable desire for ever more hard-to-get sources, accurately, all whilst remaining commercially viable. Is this possible?

The 'Emerging' Opportunity

Only ten years ago, 'emerging markets' genuinely were still emerging. However since 1999, Brazil, India and Russia's stock markets have more than trebled in value, whilst indices like the FTSE 100 and S&P 500 have been travelling in the opposite direction. And whilst in 1999 'emerging' markets accounted for 20% of global GDP, by 2010 it will be close to 50%.

As Jim Hammond of emerging markets specialist ISI says: "What used to be way out on people's radar is now much closer. Open up a newspaper and you can't get around the term BRIC. What was once exotic is now mainstream." He also cautions against the term 'emerging market', suggesting it's probably had its day. "To a Brazilian, you're talking about the market. As far as he or she is concerned, it emerged a while back! 'High growth' would be a better term."

Current awareness specialist Esmerk, which also has a focus on emerging – or 'high growth' – markets has watched the demand for information from a broader range of countries grow. Esmerk's Derek Cox observes: "Whilst demand for information from emerging markets is nothing new, the last 4-5 years have seen a strong focus on Central and Eastern European countries, and we've expanded our coverage accordingly. There is now constant demand for more and more information from China – and increasingly, we're being asked about Africa too."

"Jim Hammond of ISI notes that, "Developed world firms – say from the US and UK – are now far more active in places where they may not have done business at all just ten years ago." And he sees this trend accelerating: "It's easy to grow fast from a smaller base with few competitors."

For UK-based businesses, this rapid development means new competition – and new opportunities. To deal with the former and take advantage of the latter, information is of course key. Firms need to understand the activities of their new competitors and perform due diligence on potential suppliers in markets that may be entirely unfamiliar. There are some very specific challenges – for example understanding Islamic banking rules and how they affect business. And the question of risk is key: the issue of 'know your customer' becomes vitally important in new markets, as does a full understanding of potential political risks.

What used to be way out on people's radar is now much closer... What was once exotic is now mainstream.

Jim Hammond, ISI Intellinews

Why Quality Coverage is Hard to Get – Even in the ‘Information Age’

Surely there’s no issue finding information on any market these days? Many print publications, however small and local they may be, have an online counterpart – and there is of course a huge variety of online-only content. However when even information specialists like LexisNexis, ISI and Esmerk consider gathering reliable sources from ‘emerging’ markets to be a tough task, firms attempting to do business there are faced with a major research challenge.

From an information provider’s perspective, when it comes to selecting and licensing content, it’s not just a question of gathering any source available. It’s essential to ensure that there is genuine customer demand for coverage of a particular market. To do this, LexisNexis will look at usage statistics to see what people are searching for, talk to customers individually and also survey opinion through customer advisory board meetings. Then there’s a process of commercial analysis; bringing on new content has to be backed by a business case to ensure that adding this content makes sense to the publisher as well as to customers.

In emerging or ‘high growth’ markets, there are many challenges in going through this process and getting content to the customer. In some markets, media companies have little online presence or technical capability. Print continues to dominate – and it’s a powerful symbol of literacy in markets where leisure and discretionary spending is growing. Where information isn’t always available online or in a format that’s easy to deal with, specialists like ISI and Esmerk can provide vital access and extra reach. Their content also provides insight that’s easily digestible, distilling key ideas and issues.

Then there’s the language barrier. Whilst it’s extremely important for some information requirements, such as investigative due diligence, to see full-text, original-language coverage, few companies have the language skills to cover the diversity of, say, Central and Eastern European countries. Often, translation is essential too.

Sourcing Information Through Partnership

So how do you make 'hard to get' sources available and meet the clamouring demand for more information on newly active markets? Partnership is one answer, as the modern information landscape is simply too complex for one provider to cover alone. Even a service like Nexis – which already contains over 23,000 sources – cannot license local market content with the same depth in all markets, and in a manner that best suits customers. Partnership is essential. Specialists like Esmerk and ISI can reach into markets and publish targeted and high-value content in areas where it either complements local market licensed content, or where the direct licensing of local content would be too onerous. These firms bring English-language content, offer a measure of editorial control and understand the end-consumer's requirement for timeliness, integrity and reliability.

Being on Nexis gets us in front of a lot more people, especially in a country like the US

Derek Cox, Esmerk

Esmerk

Esmerk's speciality is providing daily current awareness so its clients get a 'heads up' on the market, industry or topic they are interested in. All of its content is both abstracted and translated, giving readers accessible and easily digestible insights into the markets it covers. LexisNexis was the first online service to license Esmerk's Eastern European content, which joins Esmerk's Northern European news on the Nexis database. Esmerk translates from over 30 languages including Chinese and Russian: offices in Kuala Lumpur and St Petersburg service Asia/Pacific and Russia, whilst its Latin American and Central European sources are added by specialists based in the UK.

With translated coverage from far-flung markets like Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, the Esmerk content – which is packaged into country feeds on LexisNexis – has proved popular with Nexis clients and Esmerk's Latin America feeds have just been added to the service.

Far from competing with Esmerk's own business, the LexisNexis relationship is proving to be an excellent complement. As Derek Cox points out: "Being on Nexis gets us in front of a lot more people, especially in a country like the US where we have no active presence."

ISI

ISI's IntelliNews information feed was originally designed to give fixed-income traders a daily update on events that impact credit markets. Timed for the 'morning call', it gives heads of desk the background they need to brief traders for the day ahead. Covering 15 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa, IntelliNews aims to pick up the stories the wires miss, providing added reach into specific markets. Its contributors are all based in the countries they write from, so they provide incisive local insight into the market.

The daily overviews from IntelliNews are of use to any organisation doing business in a particular country, not just traders and financial firms.

Partnership with Nexis gives ISI added reach, as Jim Hammond explains: "It's expensive to produce valuable material like ours and we need to maximise our return - so it's helpful to be able to reach a broader customer base with Nexis."

These content partnerships are mutually beneficial. In this case, Esmerk and ISI get the audience reach that a broader, bigger, more generalist information service can provide. LexisNexis is able to provide customers with specialist content that would be too expensive and difficult to obtain directly from local sources. And customers can tap into specialist local content without having to increase their range of subscriptions or their language skills. Everyone wins.

Conclusion

Demand for information is only going in one direction. Even if economic conditions remain depressed, the pace of globalisation and development plus the rapid increase in new information sources mean that businesses will constantly want more. This is a clear opportunity for information providers to take a pragmatic, partnership-based approach and satisfy their customers' demands for high-value intelligence from around the world.

LexisNexis

LexisNexis provides business information to thousands of companies worldwide, including the world's top financial institutions, PR firms, media companies and law firms.

With 35 year's experience in business information provision, LexisNexis can provide research tools, media monitoring and specialist search interfaces.

For more information about LexisNexis solutions, please call us on **020 7400 2984** or visit **www.lexisnexis.co.uk/nexis**.

About our Author

Paul Al-Nakaash

Now Senior Manager of Content Alliances at LexisNexis, Paul Al-Nakaash joined two years ago from Factiva, where he spent four years working with strategic and competitor information and three years on content licensing. Paul's Content Alliances Team at LexisNexis manages relationships with publishers as well as LexisNexis' content licensing teams around the world to support the needs of UK and Irish customers.



Coverage available through LexisNexis:

Esmerk:

Latin America:

Esmerk Argentina News
Esmerk Bolivia News
Esmerk Brazil News
Esmerk Caribbean News
Esmerk Chile News
Esmerk Colombia News
Esmerk Costa Rica News
Esmerk Ecuador News
Esmerk El Salvador News
Esmerk Guatemala News
Esmerk Honduras News
Esmerk LatAm Regional News
Esmerk Mexico News
Esmerk Nicaragua News
Esmerk Panama News
Esmerk Paraguay News
Esmerk Peru News
Esmerk Uruguay News
Esmerk Venezuela News

Europe:

Esmerk Albania News
Esmerk Armenia News
Esmerk Azerbaijan News
Esmerk Belarus News
Esmerk Bosnia News
Esmerk Bulgaria News
Esmerk Croatia News
Esmerk Czech Republic News
Esmerk Denmark News
Esmerk Estonia News
Esmerk Finland News
Esmerk Georgia News
Esmerk Hungary News
Esmerk Latvia News
Esmerk Lithuania News
Esmerk Kazakhstan News
Esmerk Kyrgyz Republic News
Esmerk Macedonia News
Esmerk Moldova News
Esmerk Norway News
Esmerk Poland News
Esmerk Romania News
Esmerk Russia News

Esmerk Serbia News
Esmerk Slovak Republic News
Esmerk Slovenia News
Esmerk Sweden News
Esmerk Tajikistan News
Esmerk Turkmenistan News
Esmerk Ukraine News
Esmerk Uzbekistan News

ISI:

Poland Today
Poland This Week
Albania Today
Albania This Week
Baltic States Today
Bosnia Herzegovina Today
Bosnia Herzegovina This Week
Bulgaria Today
Bulgaria This Week
Central Asia This Week
Croatia Today
Croatia This Week
Czech Republic Today
Czech Republic This Week
Hungary Today
Hungary This Week
Kazakhstan Today
Macedonia Today
MENA Today
MENA This Week
Montenegro Today
Romania Today
Romania This Week
Russia Today
Russia This Week
Serbia Today
Serbia This Week
Slovakia Today
Slovakia This Week
Asia Today
Africa Today
Turkey Today
Turkey Sectors and Companies Today
Turkey This Week
Ukraine Today
Ukraine This Week

AVAILABILITY SUBJECT TO SUBSCRIPTION TERMS.

SOLUTIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE-DRIVEN PROFESSIONALS

Client Development

Research & Knowledge Solutions

Practice & Productivity Management

Risk & Compliance

 LexisNexis®