# Zones, Inc. Looks to digiMine for E-Business Intelligence

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**REVIEWER:** Diane Parks, senior vice president and chief marketing officer for Zones, Inc.

**BACKGROUND:** Zones, Inc. resells computer technology products and services to America's fastest growing businesses, through specialty print and e-catalogs, inbound and outbound account executives and the Internet. From its inception in 1986 to today, Zones' promise to its customers has been service based on choice, convenience and competitive prices.

**PLATFORMS:** digiMine eBusiness Analytics is a managed data warehousing, data mining and analytic reporting solution. The digiMine data center is built on Microsoft Windows 2000 and SQL Server 2000, Compaq servers and EMC storage solutions. digiMine customers access daily business intelligence reports via standard Web browsers.

**PROBLEM SOLVED:** Zones.com is a key sales channel for Zones. Company management recognized that analytic understanding of the company's online business is key to maximizing marketing, merchandising and sales. Our marketing and e-business departments required daily measurement and analysis of how customers are reaching Zones.com, how they are navigating through the site and how efficiently they are being converted from browsers to buyers. Zones found a solution with digiMine eBusiness Analytics.

**PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY:** digiMine eBusiness Analytics provides us with accurate, timely data about our online performance, helping us make the right business decisions that positively impact our bottom line. digiMine operates a hosted data warehouse for Zones and delivers daily, Web-based analytic reports to Zones marketers and e-business managers. digiMine's solution easily integrates with Zones' site architecture and manages the high volumes of Web data generated by Zones each day. Through a better understanding of how site visitors navigate through Zones.com and how they move through the purchase process, our e-business managers are able to continually improve site design to make finding and buying products easier for customers. We are also able to measure and compare performance of various site sections and specific products. As a result, Zones has boosted its browse-to- buy conversion rates. In the future, we will consider using digiMine's data mining offerings, such as user customer segmentation, as well as the Campaign Response Analytics module to track and measure specific promotions.

**STRENGTHS:** For Zones, digiMine's greatest strength is its ability to provide a reliable, comprehensive service to process high volumes of Web data and deliver daily, easy-to-use analytic reports. digiMine takes on the hardware, software and system management, and we have a

flexible, intuitive view of how online customers are engaging with us.

**WEAKNESSES:** While digiMine provides a comprehensive array of reports  more than we require, in fact  the service would benefit from a tool allowing us to build our own custom queries and reports. digiMine has informed us this tool is in development.

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** digiMine's managed service was the ideal way for us to get up and running with the analytics we needed quickly and affordably. With digiMine, we did not have to devote significant time, money and human resources toward building and managing the infrastructure.

**DELIVERABLES:** digiMine provides Zones with an array of graphical reports. The Web-based reports have a standard interface of flexible, detailed graphs, charts and tables, providing immediate insight into Web traffic statistics, user behavior, customer demographics, product and marketing performance and more. Approximately 30 staff members access the digiMine reports directly. The business intelligence they gain is communicated and applied across the company, providing crucial decision support for merchandising, marketing and Web site design.

**VENDOR SUPPORT:** Prior to deployment, an assigned digiMine account team worked closely with us to establish an automated process for delivering Zones' data to the digiMine data center every day. Also, digiMine worked with us to customize the analytic reports to our business needs. Post-deployment, the digiMine team is always available to us for any technical or business issues. The best part of working with digiMine is that they are a service company, committed to ensuring our ongoing satisfaction with the solution.

**DOCUMENTATION:** digiMine provides comprehensive documentation within its online report interface, including a "getting started" section, report-specific instructions and tips, as well as a glossary for terminology within reports. As a result, learning how to use the reports is a fast and easy process.

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*Diane Parks, senior vice president and chief marketing officer for Zones, Inc.*