

# Competitive Intelligence

A quarterly eBulletin from the people who bring you the Competitive Intelligence Executive MindXchange

March 2009 Vol 2 / Issue 1

Strategic Competitive and Market Insights to Propel Profit and Growth

## EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

*EnCana, the largest independent oil exploration and production company and the largest natural gas producer in North America, grew its total gas and oil production by about 6% in 2008. EnCana's director of business intelligence, Douglas Kuwahara, has more than 22 years experience working for EnCana and one of its predecessor companies in positions in corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, corporate accounting, corporate risk and portfolio management. Frost & Sullivan's eBulletin Editor, Erin Lindholm, recently connected with Kuwahara to discuss business intelligence, competitive intelligence and sustainable growth strategy.*

### **Erin Lindholm: What is the relationship between business intelligence and competitive intelligence at EnCana?**

Doug Kuwahara: I started the business intelligence team at EnCana in January 2004. The small, corporate BI team services all functional areas and divisions. We are supplemented by business unit competitive intelligence teams in a hub-and-spoke arrangement. The CI teams do the "deep dives," while we provide an AWAC's view of the competitive landscape — looking at the bigger picture. We have significantly contributed to the competitive intelligence culture at EnCana.

### **EL: How does business intelligence contribute to the development of a growth strategy at EnCana?**

DK: EnCana's growth strategy is focused on maintaining a sustainable, profitable, long-term growth profile. Business intelligence supports the growth strategy by providing tactical intelligence to key decision-makers. More specifically, we are on the lookout for emerging North American resource plays where we might want to gain entry, and potential acquisition targets.

### **EL: One of the greatest challenges in your field is the dissemination and application of intelligence to actual business processes. How does EnCana's BI team ensure relevancy?**

DK: In the Internet age, individuals have access to boundless data, but to mine useful information takes experience, tools and insight. At EnCana, knowledge and intelligence sharing are embedded activities of all teams, contributing to the collective knowledge of the company.

Specifically, the BI team focuses on gathering intelligence from publicly available sources that will influence tactical decisions, as opposed to long term strategic decisions or day-to-day operational decisions. We look for emerging threats to and opportunities for our businesses, including, but not limited to, economic, technological, social, political, legislative and environmental prospects.

### **EL: EnCana is using innovative new technologies to tap its unconventional resources. How has business intelligence and competitive intelligence contributed to the evolution of processes and technology at EnCana?**

DK: We monitor the performance of our peers, including the use and the performance of their technologies. Their successes or disappointments are immediately passed on to our internal clients. EnCana not only learns from our own successes, but also those of our competitors.

### **EL: Last year, EnCana committed \$50 million Canadian towards energy efficiency initiatives across your operations. Did business intelligence have any role in the reduction of EnCana's overall environmental footprint?**

DK: Yes, the business intelligence team's mandate also includes monitoring evolving environmental issues that could impact our businesses, such as alternative energy sources, environmental legislation and environmental lobbies.

### **EL: What is the top priority for EnCana's growth team in 2009?**

DK: Given the current economic environment, EnCana's 2009 priorities are to maintain financial strength and flexibility. The BI team's 2009 priority is to continue to be a source of competitive advantage by disseminating relevant, timely and actionable tactical intelligence to our decision makers and strategists.