

## Case Study—Aurora WDC

# Aurora WDC Selects LexisNexis® to Provide News and Social Media Content for FirstLight Market Intelligence Portal



**Location:**

Madison, Wisconsin

**Industry:**

Business Intelligence and Analytics

**Offering:**

Providing corporate clients with human intelligence collection, intelligence systems and technology, and professional counsel to internal business intelligence teams

**Product Summary:**

LexisNexis Newsdesk™

Founded in 1995, Aurora WDC is a leading advisory firm in intelligence and analytics. The firm was created with a vision of establishing the pre-eminent intelligence firm serving corporate clients anywhere in the world. Aurora also operates a Research & Development Lab and Think Tank, the Center for Organizational Reconnaissance.

### Challenge:

#### Provide a cost-effective software platform for business insights

“Aurora’s roots were firmly planted in research, initially as a company that gathered high-value business intelligence by assigning knowledgeable professionals to collect data that wasn’t easy to locate, then consulting with corporate clients on how this intelligence could be used in the development of new products or businesses,” explained Gregory Ervin, chief technology officer of Aurora WDC.

In the early-2000s, the company perceived an opportunity to take this same basic value proposition and translate it to software development. At that time, the company hired Ervin and charged him with exploring the possibility of creating a technology-enabled intelligence system to surface data that wasn’t easy for customers to locate on their own. The goal was to provide a cost-effective software platform to inform companies of business opportunities and new product strategies.

In 2005, Aurora launched FirstLight, a software platform to provide competitive and business intelligence to corporations. FirstLight is a robust market intelligence portal tailored to how an organization aggregates, analyzes, manages and distributes strategic, competitive and market insights.

Another practical challenge the FirstLight team discovered was that most internal business intelligence teams work on fairly lean budgets, which makes it very difficult for them to be able to afford multiple subscriptions for all of the proprietary news and information sources that don’t make their content freely available online. With these criteria in mind, Ervin’s team went in search of a strategic partner to power the news and information content delivered to FirstLight users in a cost-effective manner.

“ Working with LexisNexis to integrate Search Engine Toolkit and Newsdesk has been the ‘Holy Grail’ for our platform. ”

**Gregory Ervin**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Aurora WDC



“The only realistic way for us to meet our needs as software developers and our customers’ needs as business intelligence users was to acquire access to a news database that could be essentially plugged right into FirstLight.”

**Gregory Ervin**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Aurora WDC

## Solution:

### Extend existing software with content from LexisNexis Search Engine Toolkit (SET) and Newsdesk

Search Engine Toolkit (SET) is a search API that enabled Aurora to easily and automatically incorporate news and information from LexisNexis databases right into the FirstLight portal. The API includes advanced search capabilities that allow internal business intelligence teams to search and find content specific to their needs. SET returns results in an RSS feed for quick and easy integration of the latest news headlines and social media posts into company Intranets or other internal applications. It’s a powerful and cost-effective way to surface and share content drawn from:

- More than 4 million new articles and social media posts daily
- Full Boolean search plus over 20 unique parameters to precisely define topics
- Easy-to-integrate search engine returns
- End-user search engine features that can be fully configured by topic and industry

LexisNexis Newsdesk is an award-winning news and research tool, delivering comprehensive access to worldwide media. Leading companies all over the world rely on the service for media monitoring, competitive intelligence, market research and enterprise-wide news sharing. LexisNexis Newsdesk gives internal business intelligence teams a powerful set of tools to turn unstructured mass media into actionable media intelligence that can be shared across the organization.

Powerful search filters and advanced article categorization help ensure delivery of only the most relevant business information. The LexisNexis Newsdesk tool provides near real-time coverage across 55,000 editorially maintained online news sources. It also searches key social media sites including blogs, forums, Facebook®, Twitter®, Instagram, YouTube™ and many more.

## Results:

### Save time and money while offering flexibility and precision

The strategic relationship with LexisNexis has helped Aurora take its FirstLight portal to greater heights and has been instrumental in delivering a number of key benefits to customers.

#### 1. Substantial savings in subscription expenses

“Our relationship with LexisNexis allows us to deliver access to a vast database of content that our customers were previously forced to purchase from multiple individual content licenses,” said Ervin. “Many of these FirstLight customers are able to save tens of thousands of dollars by terminating publication subscriptions they no longer need.”

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**Gregory Ervin**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Aurora WDC

## 2. 1,000 hours of “found time” for professional staff

Aurora’s internal research has found that the FirstLight platform, powered by LexisNexis news and social media content, typically saves an internal business intelligence team approximately 1,000 hours in staff time per year that would otherwise be spent collecting data. “This is a huge amount of ‘found time’ that can now be spent on higher-level use, such as data analysis, business forecasting and strategic planning,” noted Ervin.

## 3. Scalable pricing model

“The LexisNexis pricing structure is very scalable, which has allowed us to integrate their SET API and access to their valuable news and social media content into FirstLight in a way that makes good financial sense for our customers,” said Ervin.

## 4. Precise search results

According to Ervin, the LexisNexis tools are the only ones on the market that allow users to locate the precise information they need—precisely when they need it in the intelligence collection cycle—by surfacing timely content from a vast universe of news and social media information sources.

Since its launch in 2005, FirstLight has become the industry standard for how business intelligence is collected, processed and delivered to decision-makers in order to drive competitive advantage in companies of all sizes.

“Quite simply, working with LexisNexis to integrate Search Engine Toolkit and Newsdesk has been the ‘Holy Grail’ for our platform,” said Ervin. “The SET API was incredibly easy to integrate into FirstLight and instantly made the LexisNexis content accessible to our customers. The bottom line is that LexisNexis offers the most powerful and flexible database out there for delivering premium news and information content to businesses.”

## About LexisNexis®

After nearly 40 years providing solutions that help organizations harness the power of information, LexisNexis remains dedicated to developing innovative media-monitoring tools to support data-driven decision-making. Our commitment extends beyond comprehensive content and outstanding search technology to world-class client service support, ensuring that our clients gain maximum insights—and value—from LexisNexis solutions.

## Connect with us today!

Learn more about Media Monitoring

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