

TECHNOLOGY AUDIT

GenSight Enterprise v7.2

The GenSight Group

BUTLER GROUP VIEW

ABSTRACT

In recent years, with organisations subject to an increasing variety of corporate pressures and constraints, the portfolio-based management of projects has become a corporate necessity. GenSight Enterprise v7.2 is a scalable Project Portfolio Management (PPM) solution aimed at organisations seeking to reconcile corporate strategy and critical resources (people and money). The solution enables organisations to synchronise top-down planning with bottom-up execution, align strategies and resources to facilitate the optimisation of investment opportunities, and improve decision making capabilities via enterprise-wide analytics. GenSight Enterprise is particularly strong in the area of analytics, offering: portfolio visualisation and animation, multi-dimensional portfolio analytics, criteria-based decision support, and predictive business modelling. In Butler Group's opinion, GenSight Enterprise should be on the list of potential solutions for any medium or large organisation looking to improve business performance through the adoption of portfolio management tools and techniques.

KEY FINDINGS



GenSight Enterprise delivers against the full range of key PPM functionality.



GenSight Enterprise can be applied outside of the IT Function.



The GenSight Group has a limited partnership network.



The GenSight Group focuses solely on portfolio management solutions.



Portfolio Analyst Workbench has a great depth and breadth of analytics functionality.



The solution is scalable up to 10,000 end users across multiple sites.



The GenSight Group has a long history of providing PPM solutions.

Key: Product Strength Product Weakness Point of Information

LOOK AHEAD

The GenSight Group is leveraging its PPM expertise to address new corporate opportunities such as New Product Development and enterprise-level portfolio management.

FUNCTIONALITY

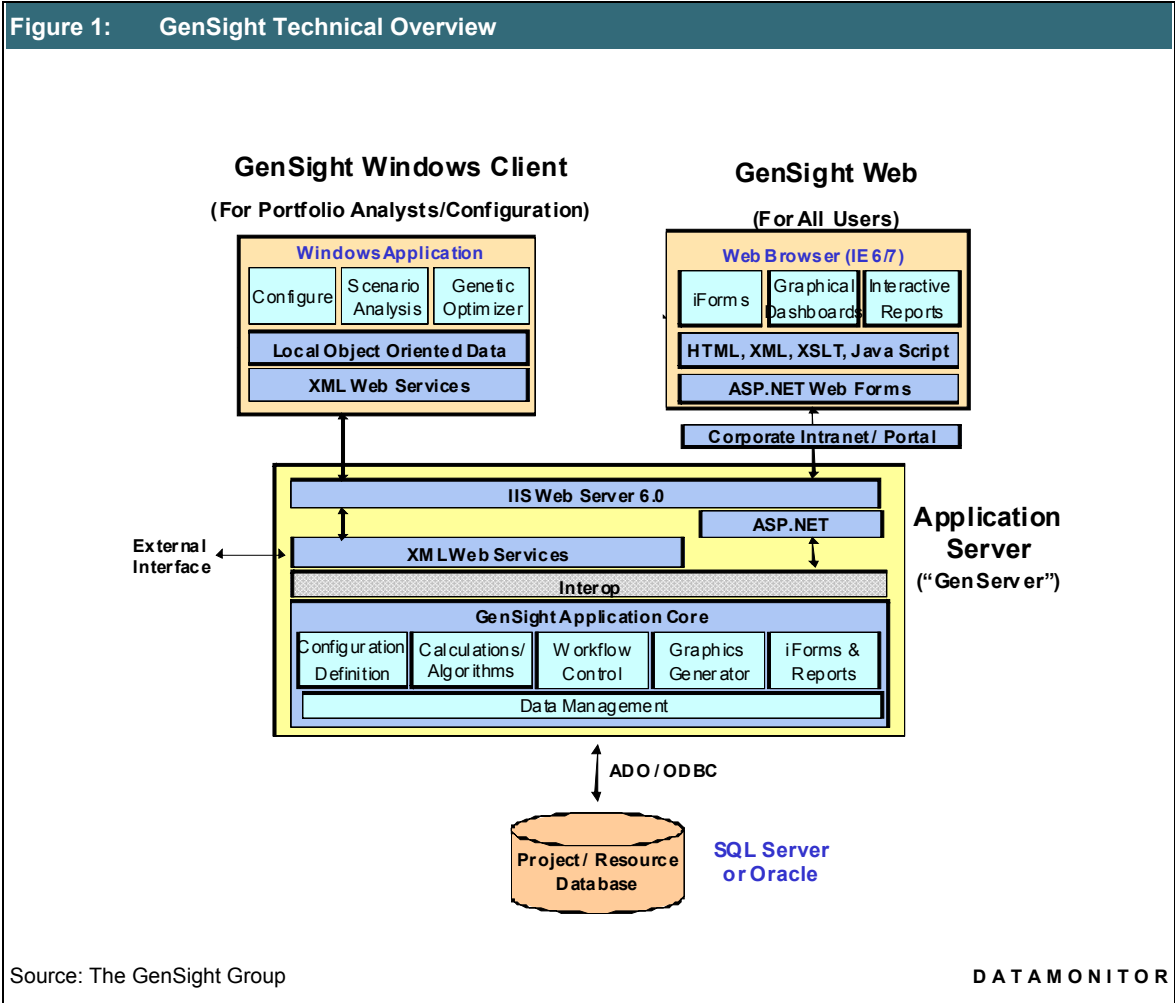
Product Analysis

In recent years, the portfolio-based management of business projects has become a corporate necessity, as organisations are increasingly subject to a variety of pressures and constraints: increased business demand for technology investment (often in times of limited resources); growing complexity of business and IT operations; and the need to provide governance-dictated transparency. To facilitate effective business management, a portfolio management solution must help organisations to synchronise top-down planning with bottom-up execution, align strategies and resources to facilitate the optimisation of investment opportunities, provide a high degree of data granularity, and offer enterprise-wide analytics including dynamic reporting, dashboards, scenario planning and what-if analyses.

GenSight Enterprise is a fully integrated Project Portfolio Management (PPM) solution designed to meet the needs of users enterprise wide – from project managers through to board level executives. It is Web-based, highly configurable and utilises a single data source. Data is collected and managed at a project level, and GenSight offers functionality that supports the effective approval and delivery of projects, resource management, performance tracking, document management, and collaboration. Workflow capabilities automate processes and GenSight data is provided to senior executives through high-level reports and dashboards that summarise the status of the portfolio, with interactive drill down to detail. Resource management features include supply vs. demand planning, named resource allocation, resource optimisation, and time/cost recording.

GenSight Enterprise's business intelligence features enable extensive data mining and analytical reporting. Decision support tools are extensive, and include criteria-based prioritisation, scorecards, financial analysis, Stage-Gate® management, graphical portfolio models, constraint-based optimisation, scenario planning, and simulation. The GenSight solution enables decision makers to analyse the balance, value, and risk of the total portfolio; to objectively make go/kill decisions on individual projects; and to visualise and manage the strategic alignment of activities in the portfolio. GenSight Enterprise is particularly strong in this area and supports portfolio managers, analysts, and senior decision makers through the following techniques: portfolio visualisation and animation, multi-dimensional portfolio analytics, criteria-based decision support, and predictive business modelling. Organisations are able to understand the balance of their portfolio from multiple dimensions and ensure that the portfolio will deliver against the strategic goals of the organisation. Time-based modelling and animation also helps organisations to measure, plan, and track the portfolio over time against criteria such as value, risk, innovation, and other key portfolio indices.

The GenSight solution is not just applicable to IT-run projects. Within large organisations, GenSight Enterprise may be used for the portfolio-based management of R&D, New Product Development (NPD), Product Management, Sales and Marketing, and capital and other project-based investments. An organisation may implement GenSight Enterprise on a modular basis and, in many instances, such a deployment strategy is sensible if the organisation has immature portfolio management processes and/or an absence of historical portfolio data.



Product Operation

The GenSight Group offering comprises three main elements: consultancy – the business process design of decision making criteria, planning processes, portfolio models, prioritisation methodology, Stage-Gate methodology, and performance management metrics; configuration – the setup of the system to meet client process needs; and the GenSight application. GenSight Enterprise is made up of the following software components: GenSight Portfolio Manager (with GenSight Web client licences), Portfolio Analyst Workbench, GenServer, GenSight Configuration Studio, and GenSight Optimizer (an optional module).

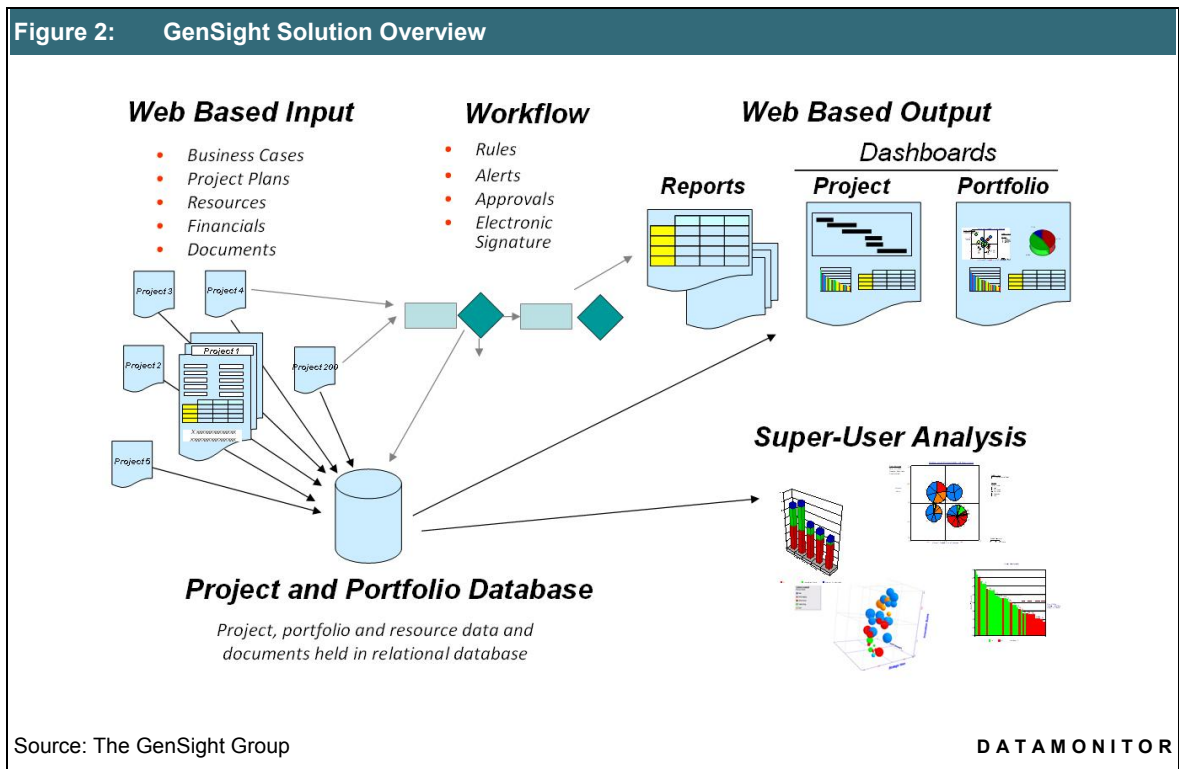
GenSight Portfolio Manager

GenSight Web client licences provide role-based access permissions within GenSight Portfolio Manager. Specific product functionality includes:

- Workflow to manage the approvals process, governance rules, alerts, notifications, and time/date stamping.

- GenSight iForms (wizards) to capture information in the centralised data repository, facilitating online business case management (living documents).
- Project management dashboards for project managers and team members to capture, review, and share key project management information such as status, risks, and issues.
- Task planning functionality such as the ability to create (by project stage), allocate, detail, and track tasks. Overall delivery dates can be calculated from stage delivery dates which can in turn be calculated from expected task completion dates. At each level the solution can compare actual dates versus expected dates, adjust the project status accordingly, and trigger necessary warnings/alerts.
- A suite of resource management features including resource planning, supply and demand management, resource allocation, time recording, and tracking.
- Role-based executive dashboards that summarise portfolio status, strategic alignment, balance, key issues, and overall performance against target.
- Document management facilities to store, retrieve, and share portfolio-relevant documents.
- Analytics and reporting, with real-time business intelligence, reports, and charts available to all users. Financial analysis functions such as sales forecasts, cost analysis, profitability, Net Present Value (NPV), and Return on Investment (ROI).
- Integrated audit facilities to ensure the secure traceability of all data.

However, the solution does not cover complex task-level planning; this is left to products such as MS Project (Enterprise has a dedicated interface) and others (general API).



Portfolio Analyst Workbench

The Portfolio Analyst Workbench is a licence-based analytical tool kit module for super users. The Analyst Workbench platform enables power users to manipulate and visually present data whilst disconnected from the network, with data changes automatically synchronised with the application database. It provides portfolio analysis, scenario planning, 2D and 3D graphical visualisation, and portfolio animation to simulate portfolio evolution. GenSight classifies the available techniques into four groupings: portfolio visualisation and animation, multi-dimensional portfolio analytics, criteria-based decision support, and predictive business modelling.

Table 1: GenSight Portfolio Analyst Workbench Techniques	
Technique	Features
Portfolio Visualisation And Animation	Multivariate Graphics – plotting up to six different business criteria (X and Y axes, bubble size, pie charting, colour, and inner bubble). 3D Portfolio Bubble Charts – featuring interactive drill down, rotation, zoom, and animation. Timeline Animation – tracking and forecasting portfolios over time. Scenario Morphing – graphical morphing to show the differences between scenarios.
Multi-Dimensional Portfolio Analytics	Hierarchical Relationships – maintaining up to seven levels of parent-child relationship between business elements. Multi-Level Aggregation – using the hierarchy to compute summarised portfolio metrics. Multi-Dimensional Aggregation – supporting dynamic ‘slice and dice’ aggregation with real-time calculations to explore the effects of ‘what-if’ assumptions. Interlinked Portfolios – criteria can be connected between portfolios.
Criteria-Based Decision Support	Relative Importance Weights – supporting pair-wise comparison of decision criteria. Data Normalisation (S-curve, concave, convex, linear, bell curve, and step functions). Qualitative Information Evaluation – utilising structured multiple choice questions. Fuzzy Logic – using fuzzy logic algorithms to classify a set of criteria in combination to produce an overall classification. Scorecard Hierarchy – supporting scorecards within scorecards.
Predictive Business Modelling	Time-Series Modelling – including interpolation, growth forecasting, and time-shift calculations. Multi-Dimensional Calculations – including within and between portfolios. Relative Ranking – rating each element against each other in a given dimension. Scenario Planning – with differing assumptions on portfolio elements and business criteria. Holistic Calculations – structuring and analysing the relationships between elements.

Source: The GenSight Group **DATAMONITOR**

GenServer

GenServer is the application server and database tier that supports all business logic and is configured to client needs. Importantly, configuration is separate from core code so software updates automatically pick up custom configuration settings.

GenSight Configuration Studio

GenSight Configuration Studio is a graphical user interface (GUI)-based toolkit that enables non-technical personnel to manage GenSight Enterprise configuration in-house. It provides layers of configuration management to support different portfolio applications and to enable tailoring to meet client-specific requirements. Users can effect changes to the system to introduce new or changed business rules, business objects, and process workflow logic.

GenSight Optimizer

GenSight Optimizer is an optional module that incorporates proprietary genetic search and optimisation algorithms that find the best combination of portfolio elements to maximise the return from constrained resources or assets. It can rapidly explore a multitude of possibilities, dealing with multiple constraints, resource requirements, interdependencies, and value maximisation goals.

Scalability

The GenSight architecture can support thousands of end users, in multiple locations, with diverse portfolio management needs. Scalability is achieved through an ultra-thin client tier (no ActiveX controls, Java Applets, or add-Ins are required); a fully configurable application tier that also functions as a performance accelerator (by caching data required by the client tier whilst maintaining full synchronisation with the data tier); and a data tier that houses all transactional data, documents, and business planning information in a secure and integrated repository. GenSight Enterprise also uses minimal bandwidth through HTML compression and use of AJAX technologies.

Product Emphasis

GenSight Enterprise is a portfolio management solution aimed at organisations wanting to gain maximum value from project-based investments, keep pace with increasing business demands for greater corporate agility, and meet the burdens of governance and compliance. Using GenSight Enterprise, organisations can achieve greater control over both financial and people resources; strengthen project management capabilities; and deliver real-time analytics to increase cost visibility and facilitate improved decision making.

In terms of market positioning, Butler Group considers the GenSight Group to be one of the smaller players in the PPM arena, but it is one of the few vendors focused entirely on this space and wins business from the larger players based on the functionality of its solution. GenSight's relative strengths include the depth and breadth of analytics functionality, the application of its solution outside of the IT function, its long history in the portfolio management arena, and its independent status.

DEPLOYMENT

Depending on scope and complexity, a GenSight Enterprise deployment will typically take three to six months – from starting the process design work with the client through to system go-live – and involves the following stages: process design, GenSight configuration, GenSight in-house testing, install on client test servers, client testing and configuration feedback, install on client staging servers, training, install in client production environment, and go-live. Installation, deployment, and ongoing support require the following roles within the client organisation: Oracle or SQL Database Administrator, Application Server Support, Active Directory/Network Administrator, and GenSight Administrator/Portfolio Manager. The latter role is typically resourced from the business (rather than IT), often from the Project Portfolio Management team. They are responsible for user setup and the maintenance of role-based permissions and implementing and activating ongoing configuration changes such as Web reports, variables and categories, time periods, and business rules (iForms and e-mail notifications).

Table 2: GenSight Enterprise Resource Overhead		
Role	Number of days support needed per month	
	First month (installs in Development and Production)	Ongoing support needed post roll-out
Database Administrator	2 days total	0.5 days
Application Server Support	3 days total	0.5 days
AD/Network Administrator	2 days total	<0.5 days
GenSight Admin/Portfolio Manager	10 days total	1-2 days

Source: The GenSight Group **DATAMONITOR**

Training is provided to GenSight Administrators/Portfolio Managers via a two- to three-day training course either on-site or at GenSight premises. A train-the-trainer approach is used to provide half-day training sessions to GenSight Web users. Context-based help is available in iForms and ongoing customer support is provided via telephone, e-mail, the corporate Web site, and Web conference covering European and US business hours.

GenSight Enterprise is available for Microsoft Windows 2003 Server (IIS 6.0) and comprises: a relational database, an application server, two types of client licence – Web and Windows, and a configuration toolkit. The Web client is for all users and provides all core functionality (data management, graphical dashboards, multi-criteria decision support, portfolio analysis, performance management, reports, workflow, etc.). The Windows client is for small numbers of advanced portfolio analysts who require more sophisticated forms of analysis functions, plus the ability to work with data offline (with synchronisation). The configuration toolkit is also incorporated into the Windows client by means of an extra security level and XML Web Services are used for two-way server/Windows-client communication. The product is dependent upon Oracle 9i/10i or SQL Server 2000/2005, Microsoft .NET 2.0 framework, and Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or 7.

The GenServer includes multiple features that enable two-way data integration with other enterprise systems:

- A Web services tier, built upon industry standard protocols of eXtensible Markup Language (XML) and Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP), enables data exchange and synchronisation with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), budgeting, and accounting systems.
- A legacy system interface that can extract data directly from systems that do not support industry standard protocols such as XML. This interface is fully configurable and can run as a batch process or on demand.
- A data mart that enables other enterprise applications to access GenSight data to deliver flexible and fully synchronised reporting and integration capabilities.
- A fully integrated interface to Microsoft Project Server.
- Integration with standard office productivity tools such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel, as well as support for universal formats such as XML and PDF.

The main risks applicable to a GenSight Enterprise deployment are common to all portfolio management technology deployments: lack of a consistent, organisation-wide understanding of the business objectives for the solution; lack of executive sponsorship; and lack of widespread user adoption.

PRODUCT STRATEGY

GenSight's primary target market is large organisations with many thousands of employees (Fortune 1000). It has no vertical or sector bias but has seen the strongest traction in pharmaceuticals, healthcare, consumer goods, chemicals/industrials, financial services, telecoms, and government. Within large organisations, the GenSight PPM solution is applicable to multiple corporate functions – IT, R&D, NPD, Product Management, Sales and Marketing, and capital and other project-based investments. As an emerging market opportunity, the GenSight solution is also able to address the growing requirement for portfolio management to facilitate better decisions around balancing strategy with scarce resources at the enterprise-leadership, rather than project, level.

GenSight Enterprise is sold direct as a full service solution offering. The average project value varies according to client need for process design and configuration, and the scale of software roll-out – typical installations range from US\$200,000 to US\$1,000,000 per application (some clients install multiple applications to support separate divisions within the corporation or functionally differentiated types of project). GenSight currently supports 50 to 1,500 users per installation across 50 to 2,000 projects per year. Annual maintenance and support is 20% of software cost and includes software upgrades and technical support. New releases are every 18 months for major releases, with minor releases in between.

The GenSight Enterprise licence is perpetual; although there is also a Software-as-a-Service hosting option where the client can opt to pay a monthly fee that bundles both licence cost and hosting services. This is typically beneficial where companies are new users of portfolio management tools and techniques and they can rapidly develop a pilot implementation that is often subsequently moved in-house. For GenSight hosted solutions, login access is password controlled and all data communication over the network is encrypted using a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) connection with the HTTPS protocol. If required, additional security mechanisms can be deployed to analyse the identity and network location of users and to restrict access as appropriate.

In early 2008 GenSight achieved 'Stage-Gate Ready' certification which authenticates and guarantees the company's ability to support best practice in the application of globally recognised Stage-Gate processes for NPD and PPM. The certification process tests innovation productivity tools across areas including Idea Management, Idea to Launch, and Portfolio Management. GenSight is quoted as the only vendor to score 100% in the Stage-Gate certification tests; it is also listed as a Red Herring 100 Top Technology Company.

In terms of market direction, Butler Group believes that GenSight is strongly aligned to the growing customer requirement for PPM solutions. In the current financial environment, the need for enterprise-level portfolio management is more evident than ever – GenSight Enterprise delivers against this, in particular with its very strong analytics proposition.

COMPANY PROFILE

Originally trading under the name Strategic Dynamics Ltd., the company was founded in 1994 in the UK. It spent its initial years building a sustainable niche position as a specialist developer of strategic decision support software (the GenSight brand) and, in 2001, it was merged with the portfolio management consulting division of The Atlantis Group, Inc. (founded in 1997 in Pennsylvania). Since then, product functionality has been extended from strategic decision support to project delivery and resource management.

GenSight is privately held, backed by Susquehanna Private Equity Investments, and has offices in Hampton in the UK and Doylestown, PA in the USA. It employs 32 employees split evenly between the USA and UK. The functional breakdown of employees is: R&D 30%, Sales & Marketing 30%, Support & Services 30%, and Administration 10%. GenSight anticipates a 20% growth in employee numbers over the next year.

As a private company, GenSight does not disclose detailed financial information. In terms of product sales, its largest geographic region is the USA (60%), followed by the UK (30%), and other parts of Europe (10%); with approximately 10,000 users across 30 customer sites as at October 2008. Example key client implementations are detailed in Table 3; other clients include BT, Coca-Cola, McNeil, RTI International, Talecris Biotherapeutics, and Georgia-Pacific. The DEFRA deployment is particularly interesting, as it is not focused on ROI prioritisation but on strategic alignment and achieving multiple objectives (diverse business units across eight strategic areas).

Table 3: Example GenSight Enterprise Clients	
Client Name	Client Usage
Sun Chemical	Used worldwide for all R&D projects. Approximately 1,500 users and throughput of 2,000 projects per year.
Johnson & Johnson Group of Companies (Multiple Business Divisions)	Deployed across multiple Global Business Units in multiple companies within the Johnson and Johnson corporation. Applications include IT/Information Management projects, New Product Development, Sales and Marketing projects, and Operations projects. Deployment extends to more than 20 sites across North/South America, Europe and Asia.
DEFRA	Used for a six-monthly Portfolio review of £4 billion of project expenditure.

Source: The GenSight Group **DATAMONITOR**

SUMMARY

PPM processes and supporting tools are now a business imperative for larger corporate IT functions. However, big-bang deployment approaches are often inappropriate – alternatively the procuring organisation must ensure that their choice of vendor and product will deliver the right speed of change (balancing organisational needs with benefits realisation); avoid common implementation pitfalls; and result in a business-integrated solution.

The GenSight Group is a comparatively small vendor relative to its competitors, however the functionality of its PPM product offering allows it to compete on a level playing field with the larger vendors in the portfolio management arena. GenSight Enterprise is a fully functioning PPM solution that helps organisations to synchronise top-down planning with bottom-up execution, align strategies and resources, and improve decision making through its wide range of analytical features.

Table 4: Contact Details	
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Source: The GenSight Group	DATAMONITOR

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