



Business Intelligence Tools

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Business Intelligence (BI) encompasses the use of data to drive insight and gain a competitive advantage.

Some of the business drivers for BI implementation are:

- Make decisions based on facts (eliminate guess work)
- Insight for operational and strategic planning
- Monitor plans execution (how are we going)
- Customer knowledge – identify new marketing opportunities; customer retention
- Insight for service/product innovation
- Standards compliance and auditing.

The main objective is to enable business users to analyse and pinpoint what drives their business activity. This can then result in a number of tangible benefits such as reduced cost, increased revenue, improved customer satisfaction as well as intangible benefits such as improved communication throughout your organisation and improved employee satisfaction.

But how do you go about selecting the right BI tool for your organisation?

First you need to decide what you are looking for (evaluation criteria list). When coming up with a list of your requirements, look outside the technical aspects. While a BI system is a key component of a company's IT framework, it includes more than just its technology platform.

An organisation consist of many levels that have different occupational groups or internal cultures and each of which has a characteristic decision-making style. An effective BI system fits into an organisation's human and cultural dimensions as well as technical platform.






The human and cultural dimension should be especially considered when planning how information is delivered to end users and coming up with a list of requirements for the BI tool.

Once you have your 'must have/nice to have' list you can start your BI tool evaluation process. Avoid issuing and making decision based on RFP responses. On paper most of the BI tools in today's market look exactly the same.

Look for live demos, movies and/or webinars to get started, and then proceed with evaluating tools on your own data. Only once you connect the tool on your own data and start discovering your own business, you can truly judge the power and suitability of the BI tool for your organisation. By trying the tool out yourself, you will be able to find out how complex the tool is and if your business users will be able to make their own discoveries and create dashboards/reports without technical assistance. If a vendor cannot provide you with an evaluation copy and assistance with setting it up in your own environment, the chances are their platform is overly complex and difficult to work with.



In addition to the features review, it is important to take the following considerations into account:

-  **Cost.** Do not look solely at the licencing cost. Find out what the average implementation time is (days, weeks or months). How easy is it to use the tool?
-  **Training.** How much training will be required? What is the impact on your existing infrastructure?
-  **Platform.** How easy is it to upgrade and/or expand? What are your deployment options? Can you start small then build on your platform?
-  **Access.** What are user access options: desktop, web (browser support), mobile?
-  **Vendor.** Does the vendor or reseller have a local presence? What support/training do they offer?

Our recommendation is QlikView.

QlikView has topped the list of a number of independent surveys such as IDC and TEC. It has been consistently shown at the top of Gartner's visionary and leaders in BI quadrant.

QlikView has just been also been named as the most requested BI product in Technology Evaluation Centre (TEC)'s 2011 Market Survey Report: What Organisations Want in BI Systems.

Want to see it for yourself?

Attend one of our webinars (to register go to: <http://www.pa.com.au/promo/qlikview.htm>)

or contact us:

email: enquiries@pa.com.au

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About us

Professional Advantage is one of Australia's most awarded solutions providers, with over 20 years experience in helping organisations improve their business systems through industry leading software solutions. Our 250-strong team in 6 offices across Australia and internationally has successfully worked with over 1000 organisations.

For more information

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