

Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value

Companies that adopt five key business intelligence tactics enjoy a far greater payoff from BI initiatives than those that don't. Many receive even more value than they expected.



An exclusive survey and research report

Copyright and Disclaimer Notices

Neither *BusinessWeek* nor The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc. makes any guarantees or warranties as to the accuracy or completeness of this report. Neither *BusinessWeek* nor The McGraw-Hill Companies shall be liable to the user or anyone else for any inaccuracy, error or omission, regardless of cause, or for any damages resulting therefrom. In no event will *BusinessWeek*, The McGraw-Hill Companies nor any of their third-party licensors be liable for any indirect, special or consequential damages, including but not limited to lost time, lost money, lost profits or lost good will, whether in contract, tort, strict liability or otherwise, and whether or not such damages are foreseen or unforeseen with respect to any use of this document. This document, or any portion thereof, may not be reproduced, transmitted, introduced into a retrieval system or distributed without the written consent of The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc.

© Copyright 2006 The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc. All rights reserved.

The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

Electronic Version Available

To see or use an electronic copy of this document in PDF format, please visit these Web sites:

http://mediakit.businessweek.com/Products/Research_Services/White_Papers

http://www.knightsbridge.com/bi_bestpractices

Have a Question? Webcast Coming

A Webcast based on the research project, featuring the analysts who did the research and analysis, will be conducted in the fall of 2006.

Please visit this Web site for more information:

<http://www.knightsbridge.com/webinars/>

Table of Contents

Methodology	4
Executive Summary	5
Introduction.....	6
The Seeds of Success	6
Current Applications	7
Five Practices for Success.....	8
Who's in Charge?	10
Foiling the Culprits to BI Failure	12
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	13
Sponsor's Statement	14

Methodology

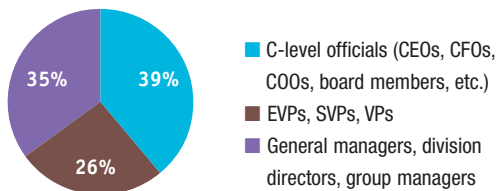
BusinessWeek Research Services (BWRS) launched a research program in the second quarter of 2006 to discover and analyze the implementation practices of organizations that had deployed business intelligence (BI) and analytics systems. In addition, the research program was designed to learn if the organizations had achieved their business value goals from their deployed BI initiatives. Furthermore, BWRS sought insights about the factors that prevented achievement of business value.

This research program included three components:

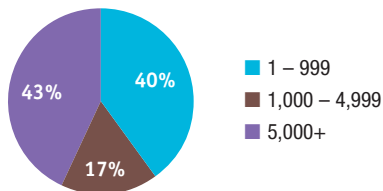
- An online survey of senior executives and managers at large companies who are members of BWRS's Market Advisory Board, a group of 18,000 North American subscribers of *BusinessWeek* Magazine and/or the *BusinessWeek* Web site. There were 359 respondents by the April 26, 2006, cut-off date.
- In-depth telephone interviews with 10 senior officials at large and midsize companies known to be using BI and analytics.
- An analysis of the survey results and interviews with BI/analytics users as well as the incorporation of prior BWRS surveys about BI and general business trends.

Methodology

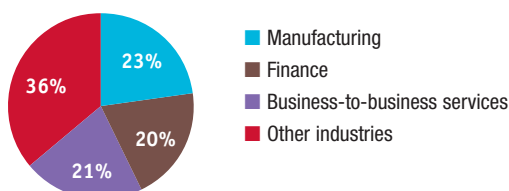
Here are the demographics of the 359 survey respondents by title:



And by number of employees in each respondent's company:



The respondents represented a broad array of businesses:



The 10 North American senior business and IT executives who were interviewed in-depth offered their further thoughts on deploying and using business intelligence and analytics. Their organizations included:

- Allstate Insurance Co.
- Avnet Inc.
- BayCare Health Systems LLC
- The Hillman Group Inc.
- ICO Polymers
- ING Group N.V.
- Jefferson Wells
- Maxtor Corp.
- Sodexo USA
- Travelocity

Triangle Publishing Services Co. Inc. supported BWRS in the development of the questionnaire, the in-depth telephone interviews and the writing, editing and production of this report. BWRS and the authors of this report, Joe Mullich and Larry Marion, are grateful to all the executives who provided their time and insights for this project.

We also would like to express our appreciation to The Data Warehousing Institute, which provided us access to its conferences and research insights. For more information about TDWI, please visit its Web site: <http://www.tdwi.org/>.

This research project was funded by a grant from Knightsbridge Solutions Inc. but was written independently of the sponsor. The editorial department of *BusinessWeek* Magazine was not involved in this project.

For more information about this project, please contact the Director of Primary Research at *BusinessWeek* at chris_rogers@businessweek.com.

Executive Summary

- More than six out of 10 senior executives and managers said their business intelligence and analytics deployments have achieved at least the business value they expected. More than 12 percent of all respondents said their implementations delivered “significantly more” business value than expected.
- More than half the respondents said the belief that data was a valuable corporate asset was pervasive in their organizations—a key precursor of achieving business value from BI.
- Executive sponsorship, business subject-matter experts and IT staff working closely together are the skills and roles most important for BI success, according to seven out of 10 respondents.
- More than half the companies have an enterprisewide BI strategy and data repository in place or in development, plus an aggressive and companywide data quality program. These tactics correlate with BI success and the achievement of business value.
- Myriad reasons are cited by organizations that have not achieved the expected business value from their BI implementations. Lack of user adoption, incomplete or inaccurate business requirements, and business and IT disconnects are the leading culprits.
- More than half of large and midsize organizations are using BI and analytics to support at least six business functions, including customer service, sales, marketing, financial forecasting, operations and budgeting.
- Organizations showed a wide range of the type of business intelligence in use, from basic report generation (80 percent) to Web-based portals (38 percent).
- More than a third of the organizations surveyed are embedding BI and analytics into multiple business processes, while another 44 percent plan to embed BI/analytics in their processes within the next three years.
- 58 percent of respondents already are using dashboards, scorecards and other BI-based tools to manage their organizations, while another 30 percent plan to adopt such tools within the next three years.
- 42 percent of respondents plan to add role-based portals to provide widespread access to BI-supported business functions within the next three years.

Introduction

After more than a decade of investing millions of dollars in a sometimes quixotic quest to use technology to improve business decision-making, most senior business leaders now say that business intelligence and analytics are delivering real business value. And in some cases, they've achieved "significantly more" business value than expected.

Half of the 359 senior officials at large organizations who responded to our April 2006 survey said that the business value of recent BI projects met their expectations. What's more, another 12 percent said those projects exceeded their expectations (see chart 1, BI Business Value Delivered, below).

Scott Hicar, CIO and vice president of worldwide IT at \$3.8 billion hard-drive maker Maxtor, is typical of the responding senior executives in their view of the delivered value of BI: "Our

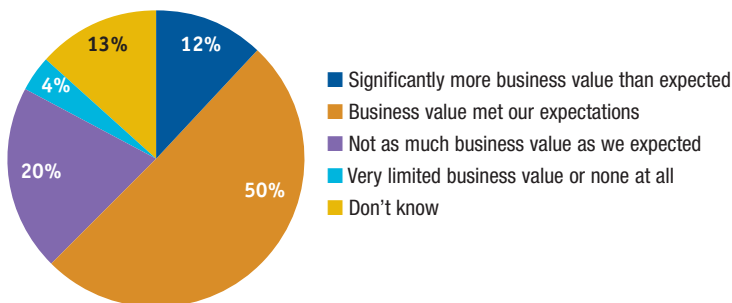
businesses drive the direction of our BI platforms, and increasingly BI is moving from something the businesses *want* to use to something they *have* to use. We are continually honing and refining BI as it impacts activities in all areas of our business, from setting top-line strategy down to looking at why products are returned so we can improve inventory management efficiencies."

While such a high percentage of respondents viewing BI as delivering on expected value may be a surprise, more intriguing still is this statistically valid conclusion: When we drilled down on the management approach, business and IT processes, and other aspects of BI implementation of the 62 percent of companies that derived business value from BI, a consistent pattern of best practices emerged.

Chart 1

BI Business Value Delivered

More than 60 percent of companies received as much or more business value from BI projects than they expected. Here is how companies describe the level of business value achieved by recent large-scale BI projects (note: total is not 100 percent due to rounding).



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, "Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value," September 2006

This report provides an exclusive look at what senior business executives say are the BI implementation practices that lead to achieving business value. In addition, these executives disclosed how they are expanding their use of BI throughout their organizations to realize even more business value.

The Seeds of Success

Ironically, much of the success of business intelligence implementations during recent years may be a result of the foundation built by previous IT efforts that were judged as disappointments or at least ill-timed.

Indeed, the entire IT spending spree in the run up to the Y2K "problem" can be viewed as the costly, but vital, precursor to BI business value. The frantic funding for various enterprise systems in the 1998-2000 timeframe—enterprise resource planning, customer relationship management, supply chain management, etc.—in anticipation of the failure of older systems led to loud complaints that the investments failed to deliver a clear ROI. And those complaints led to the statistics that a high proportion of IT projects failed to deliver substantial value in excess of their costs. However, those past investments and semi-failures created the vital platform for today's BI success.

For other companies, it wasn't just a costly Y2K investment seven years ago that led to BI success today. For them, a long-term vision beginning with three or four years of investment in crucial hardware and software infrastructure right after Y2K has now yielded substantial business value.

Raymond Karrenbauer, group chief architect at ING Group, a \$130 billion financial services firm recognized as a leader in BI practices by The Data Warehousing Institute, traces the seeds of the company's present BI success to 2001. When the stock and bond markets were down, and the financial services providers were weak, ING built its information platform while competitors were reining in costs. The company spent 18 months building an info-structure foundation in data warehouses, other software, enterprisewide data policies and other procedures that are now providing huge competitive advantages.

"We bit the bullet, invested the money and took a lot of arrows in the back from our business partners," Karrenbauer says. "You get initial complaints about the cost, but then the noise level drops."

Now, companies like ING, Allstate Insurance and Maxtor have BI systems that are building on these prior investments in business infrastructure. A combination of trial and error, learning from the mistakes of others, and the insights from outside consultants and other sources enabled these firms to better leverage their prior investments by installing the right processes, culture and BI implementation approach.

Current Applications

Over the past few decades, business intelligence and its predecessor technologies—including data warehousing, decision-support systems and executive information systems—have been applied to a variety of business processes and functions. BI is now commonly used to augment existing systems that aid in financial forecasts, budgets, customer service, supply chain analyses, regulatory compliance and other tasks.

In fact, implementing BI systems has ranked among the top 10 IT goals of C-level members of BWRS' Market Advisory Board for the past several years, according to our annual surveys. A recent BWRS survey found that most organizations say it is important to distribute BI-based tools to key professionals and managers, while almost half say these tools should be accessible to all managers and professionals.

For more information about BI distribution and future implementation plans, please visit this Web site to review the new BWRS report, "Seizing the BI Opportunity."

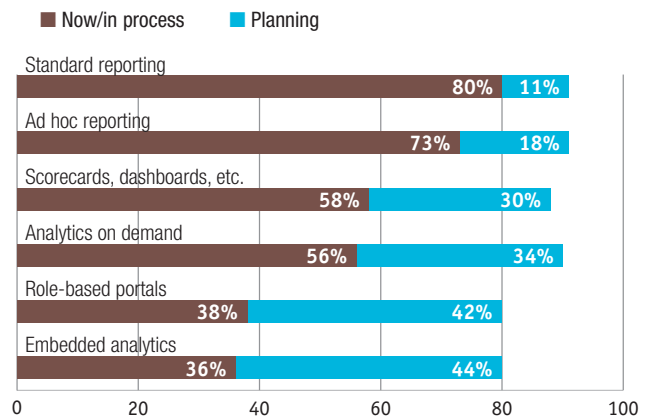
http://mediakit.businessweek.com/Products/Research_Services/

The types of BI currently available to professionals and managers varies a bit by company size and industry, but our survey shows a clear evolution. Most companies produce standard pre-formatted reports using BI tools as well as offer professionals the opportunity to develop their

Chart 2

Many Forms of BI in Use

Percent of respondents indicating BI functionalities in use or in development, as well as which will be implemented within three years.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, "Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value," September 2006

own ad hoc reports. In addition, BI-based management scorecards, dashboards and analytics on-demand are commonplace (see chart 2, Many Forms of BI in Use, page 7).

“Everyone gets excited about dashboards,” says George Herrmann, vice president and chief financial officer at \$400 million financial services firm Jefferson Wells. “But they require more heavy lifting on the business side than most people think. A BI consultant can create a snazzy dashboard in three weeks, but if it’s not tied to the proper metrics and thought through, it does little good.”

The current state-of-the-art in terms of the type of BI implementation focuses on embedding analytics within business processes and systems, such as providing customer service representatives with client insights and up-selling/cross-selling opportunities. As chart 2 indicates, while a third of organizations currently have embedded analytics in use or in development, another 44 percent plan to implement the technology within three years.

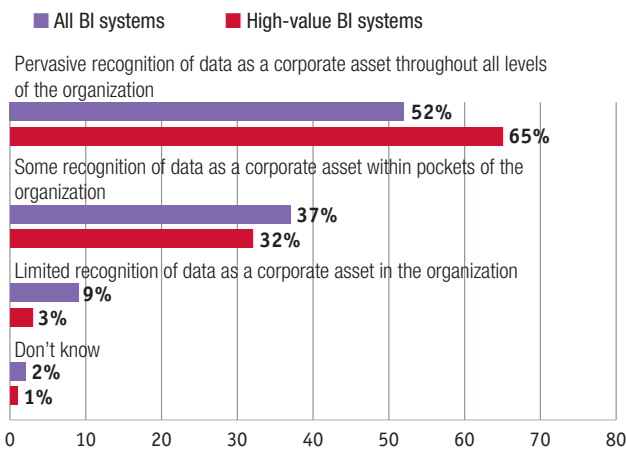
Five Practices for Success

Whether a company derives value from its BI systems depends significantly on how data is viewed: Is it as an asset or just random bits of information? While more than half the survey respondents indicated that data is pervasively viewed as a corporate asset, two-thirds of the organizations achieving value from BI had adopted that approach (see chart 3, Data Is a Corporate Asset, below).

Chart 3

Data Is a Corporate Asset

When asked to describe the extent to which their organizations view data as a corporate asset, this chart shows how many respondents consider data a corporate asset. Also note that the companies with high-value BI systems are much more likely to view data as a corporate asset.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, “Best BI Implementation Practices,” May 2006

Once an organization has adopted the view that data is a corporate asset, there are five aspects of data management that typically characterize the “data as an asset” approach:

1. Business information governance programs.

More than half of companies either have developed programs to govern standards and corporate requirements for data management or have such programs in development. These programs are driven by senior management but executed by a team of stewards. Another quarter of the companies in the survey plan to have such programs completed within three years.

2. Enterprise information strategy.

More than half of companies now either have a corporate-level strategy to organize, structure and leverage information assets or have such a strategy in development. Another 30 percent plan to implement this strategy within the next three years.

Having a coherent and enterprisewide plan for using information is crucial; otherwise, mavericks within departments will spend huge amounts of money chasing ephemera. “All the time, I see people jumping on the data before it’s clear how they’re going to use it,” says Gregg Stocker, director of quality and performance improvement at ICO Polymers, a \$296 million producer of chemical products.

Too often, he sees a knee-jerk overemphasis on competitor information as opposed to trying to determine what information is essential to make the project at hand succeed. “That’s the general tendency of people who view business as a football game or as a war,” Stocker contends. “They just want to pound the competition into the ground instead of figuring out what’s best for the company and its customers.”

3. Information quality programs. Again, more than half of companies have formal procedures in place or in development to identify, fix and prevent data quality problems such as inaccuracy and incompleteness, while another quarter plan to have these formal procedures in place within three years.

Most BI experts say data quality is the number-one prerequisite for delivering BI business value. This is especially true at large companies; they are prone to decentralized systems, which typically have inconsistent definitions of customers, sales, operating income and other key metrics, making it impossible for senior management to get a “single version of the truth.”

Even a technology heavyweight like Maxtor found such problems when it embarked on BI. A few years ago, when the company tried to identify customer ship-to locations for one BI project, “we learned we had not been good about cleaning up one-time shipments and prototype shipments,” Hicar says. “You need a continuous improvement mentality because hundreds of those things come up constantly.”

Maxtor is not the only company to learn about poor quality data the hard way. “There isn’t a day that we don’t think we’ve got filet mignon and find out we have baloney,” says Pablo Azar, assistant vice president of marketing strategy measurement and insights at \$36 billion Allstate Insurance.

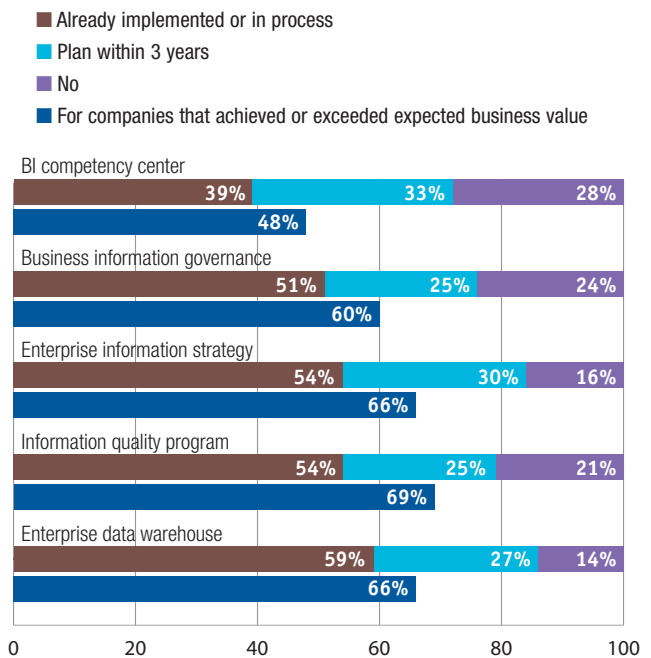
The sources of data quality problems are many, including siloed business applications, inconsistent data definitions and lack of change management standards. When discrepancies arose between the BI and legacy systems at The Hillman Group, a \$440 million manufacturer of fasteners and other hardware products, the IT department had to go through a massive analysis to explain the differences. In almost every case, the BI systems proved more accurate than the spreadsheet analysis the company had relied on before.

4. Enterprise data warehouse. Almost half of companies either have central repositories of enterprise data for reporting and analytical purposes or are in the process of establishing such warehouses. Storing all information to be used for analytics and other BI functions in one place and system avoids many of the data quality issues noted above. In addition to preempting the possibility of multiple versions of the truth, an enterprise data warehouse will be less expensive to maintain than a series of smaller repositories throughout an organization. Again, more than a quarter of respondents say they are planning to implement this approach.

Chart 4

Five Techniques to BI Business Value

Here are the data management programs in place or in progress now and the ones planned for implementation within three years. Also note the greater adoption rates by the organizations that have achieved their expected BI business value.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, “Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value,” September 2006

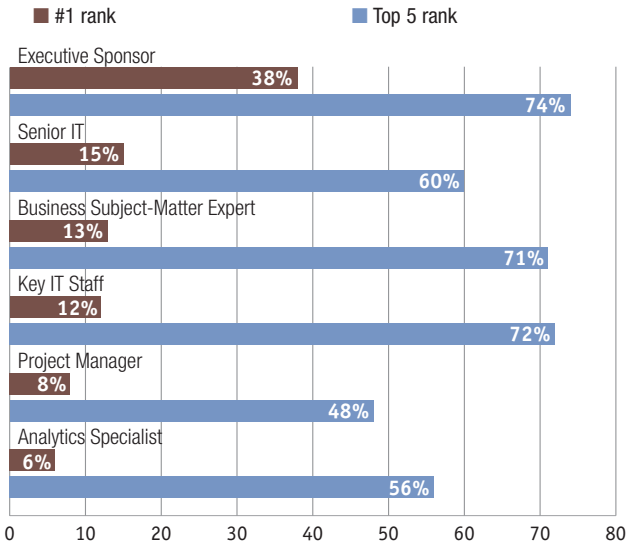
5. BI competency centers. Almost four out of 10 respondents either have a core team to manage BI efforts across the organization or have such a team in development, while another third plan to create one within three years. This is a four-fold increase from Gartner Inc. estimates of less than two years ago.

Interestingly, there's a clear correlation between achieving business value and implementing these five data management techniques. Our survey found that the companies achieving—or exceeding—their expected business value were much more likely to have adopted these techniques. The gap between the overall population's adoption rates for each technique and the adoption rate of the business value subset was between seven and 15 percentage points (see chart 4, Five Techniques to BI Business Value, page 9).

Chart 5

Most Important Skills/Roles for BI Success

Executive sponsorship trumps all other contributors to BI success. Here are the roles/skills that are judged number 1 for BI success, and which are in the top five.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, "Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value," September 2006

Shankar Mishra, director of enterprise business intelligence at Travelocity, the fifth largest U.S. travel agency, notes that these five initiatives have one overriding goal: Keep BI projects aligned with corporate goals to derive the maximum business value. Without an intense and systematic approach to data governance, BI projects often get overwhelmed with a "more is better" attitude to data that can leave decision-makers even more confused about the best course of action.

Mishra chairs Travelocity's Data Advocacy Group, which creates the strategic roadmap for the whole of the company's data assets. This group works in concert with the Data Governance Group and enterprise business intelligence to ensure that BI projects remain efficient and effective. "We are always focused on making sure these projects enhance the customer experience," Mishra says. "Without this kind of precise formal structure, looking at data at every touch point, it's too easy to get sucked into the process for the sake of the process."

This approach requires significant upfront planning in how each function and touch-point will be measured to make sure the company is enhancing final performance metrics. For example, at what point users are leaving the Travelocity Web site without completing an order. "The goals have to be clear and defined. Otherwise, the objective ends up being only to produce a report or dashboard rather than how that report or dashboard can improve decision-making," Mishra says.

At Travelocity, the mantra is three-pronged: report, forecast and prescribe. "If any of these are missing, we don't get the full value of business intelligence," Mishra says.

Who's in Charge?

Adopting the five best practices of business intelligence is not enough to ensure the business value of a BI project, though. Executive sponsorship, having the right team in place, business and IT alignment, and encouraging user adoption of the BI tools also contribute to business value in important ways, according to our survey and follow-up interviews.

Of course, most IT technologies need strong executive sponsorship to be successful. However, this is particularly true for BI, since these efforts tend to ripple throughout different parts of an organization.

Jim Honerkamp, CIO at The Hillman Group, noted that a handful of the company's vice presidents only paid "lip service" to BI initiatives—until the CEO began quizzing them on revenue figures from the BI-generated reports. "Having that kind of strong high-level sponsor made all the difference," he notes. "Otherwise, it can be very hard to get people to change their habits and processes."

Reflecting on the growing recognition of BI's importance throughout the uppermost executive levels, our research indicates the key players in BI success are not just IT executives but other C-level executives as well. Survey respondents voted on which roles were important to have as part of the BI implementation team and which role or skill was most important (see chart 5, Most Important Skills/Roles for BI Success, page 10).

Steve Phillips, senior vice president and CIO at Avnet, a \$13 billion distributor of electronic products, notes that, "overall, the allocation and percentages from the survey are very much in line with our experience."

At Avnet, executive sponsorship provides the visible leadership and funding to achieve the program's goals. Senior IT leadership contributes the talent to fully understand the difficulties and the keys to success. The business subject-matter experts form the necessary business knowledge foundation as part of a data stewardship program. That foundation is rounded into shape with the key IT staff providing understanding on how to use and implement the technology, while project managers understand the iterative development cycle of BI initiatives.

So who are the executive sponsors? The key decision-maker is the CEO. The CFO and the CIO, along with the CEO, are most likely going to be the top three decision-makers. Note that the responses from companies that achieved—or exceeded—their expected value from BI were not statistically different from the survey population as a whole (see chart 6, BI Decision-Makers, right).

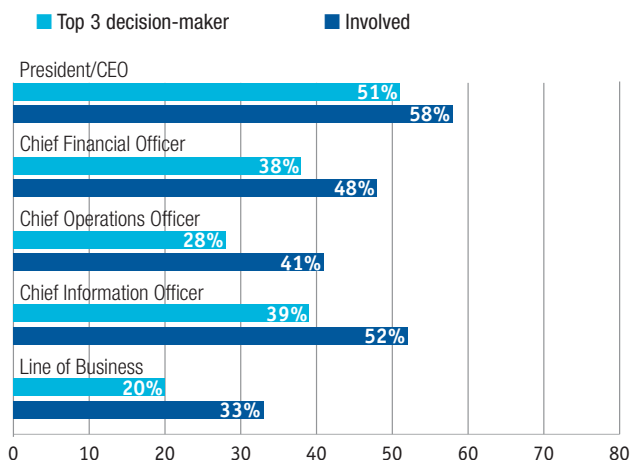
These executive sponsors bring more than budget authority and political clout to the effort. They keep the project focused on the business issues that drive their compensation and careers. Companies that derive business value from business intelligence align BI solutions with business processes that support organizational goals. Once users see the connection between existing processes, BI and the overall objectives, they can easily recognize the value of this technology and spur rapid adoption.

Avnet, for example, designed a BI application that supports the Quarterly Business Reviews it conducts with its customers. The application allows presentations to be produced for sales and supplier managers in minutes rather than the days required in the past. When the pay-back is that obvious, users gravitate to technology quickly.

Chart 6

BI Decision-Makers

CEOs and CFOs are critical players in BI decisions, but other executives are involved as well.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, "Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value," September 2006

Foiling the Culprits to BI Failure

Having the right sponsors and other key skills involved in a BI project, along with the five business intelligence best practices, are not the only prerequisites for BI success. Survey respondents also provided insights as to why they think their disappointing BI projects failed to deliver.

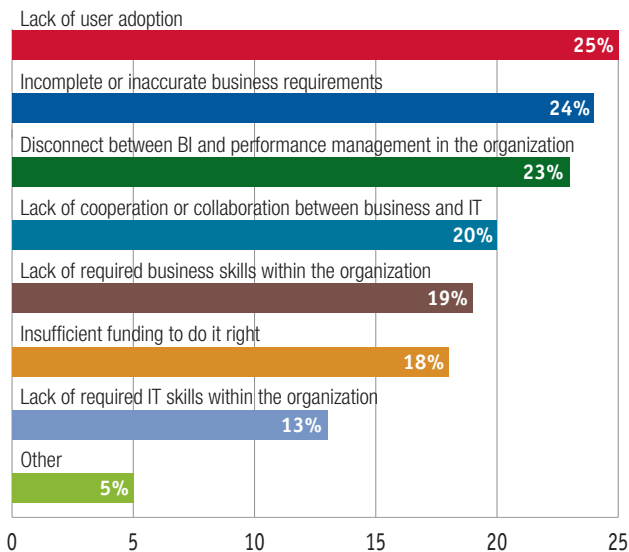
The reasons for BI failures are pinned to a hodgepodge of often-overlapping and interrelated factors. It will come as no surprise to anyone that lack of user adoption leads the list of the attributes of failure. The other obstacles that can derail BI projects are familiar to most executives, too. As chart 7 shows, though, it is interesting to note that inadequate funding was not a primary cause of BI failure.

Failure to get users involved in any IT project, but especially a BI project, can usually be traced to a myopic love of technology by the IT department that leaves end users in the cold. Too often in the past the technological aspects of BI were emphasized over the user aspects, so the users—concerned with how it would change their jobs—tended to bristle against the technology.

Chart 7

BI Pitfalls to Watch

Lack of user adoption is the top reason BI projects fail, but there are a host of interrelated obstacles to avoid. Here are the culprits companies blame for weak BI value.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, "Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value," September 2006

For many years, ING has taken the philosophy that projects get approved after engaging in a rigorous financial analysis based on NPV, IRR and ROI thresholds. Projects are often characterized as customer-facing improvements or demonstrate an ease of use to interact with their systems and information stores. This stance raises design constraints and the ability to model an architecture with often abstract concepts. In addition, ING sacrifices richer and fuller technology for ease of use. "Most BI packages have all kinds of attributes, like 3D graphics or best-fit plotting, that we don't necessarily use at first," Karrenbauer says. "Instead, we start with the basics and roll out these more advanced features incrementally, typically on a quarterly basis announced well in advance."

Getting end-user buy-in is not just a matter of restraining the techies. Just as BI connects divergent parts of an organization, successful BI initiatives result from forging new alliances. At The Hillman Group, Honerkamp attributes much of the success of the company's BI initiatives to the contribution of the vice president of materials, who was a CIO himself at another company.

After completing proposals and ROI models for BI projects that ensure executive sponsorship, Avnet identifies key players in the business who were already doing data collection and reporting, integrating these people into the process from the outset.

In the same way, for his BI teams, Maxtor's Hicar says, "I stole some people." One "spreadsheet jockey extraordinaire" from a business unit, for instance, now creates reports on behalf of the organization because he knows what the executives at the company want. He also acts as an advocate for BI.

Intrinsically, BI causes people to look at information in new ways and from new perspectives to generate new insights that can be leveraged into a business advantage. “We need to open the minds of people,” Allstate Insurance’s Azar says. “The reason that many business intelligence projects did not meet the expected ROI in the past was that organizations remained siloed, reducing the value of the information.”

Partly, this adjustment requires a thorough enterprisewide understanding of how BI changes everyone’s view of the world. “The better we get at BI, the more unstable the world gets,” Azar says. “As they say in hockey, we can’t skate to where the puck is but to where we anticipate the puck is going.”

This also requires a cultural mindset that BI—and the capabilities it delivers—is essential. It almost always means tearing down those silos that stymied earlier BI efforts. “In the past, there was a lack of cooperation between IT and business,” ICO Polymers’ Stocker notes. “Service areas like accounting and IT didn’t feel like they were really there to serve.”

Tellingly, as BI matures, ownership of these projects is shifting beyond IT. While roughly one-third of companies report that the BI systems are still owned by IT, about a fifth say finance owns BI, while 17 percent say marketing is in charge of it. Disturbingly, 16 percent of companies surveyed said “no one” owns BI (see chart 8, Who Owns BI?, right). Not surprising, these companies express a disproportionate dissatisfaction with their BI initiatives.

Note that BI ownership is a relatively controversial issue within most organizations. In part, it tracks their relative level of centralization or decentralization. The more centralized a company, the more likely it is to have IT own the BI systems. Also, larger organizations are more likely to centralize BI systems in the IT department.

Conclusions and Recommendations

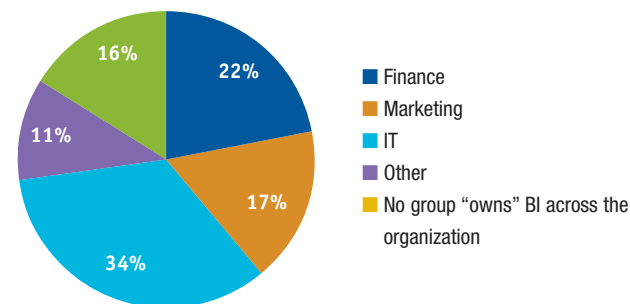
In sum, the survey and telephone interviews demonstrate that organizations are realizing the value of past BI investments. Moreover, companies continue to evolve their BI capabilities through the adoption of best-practice techniques and philosophies:

- The five key business intelligence best practices, including enterprisewide data quality and strategy.
- High-level executive, financial and IT involvement.
- Engaged end users.
- Business and IT alignment.
- A pervasive appreciation for the value of data throughout the organization.

Chart 8

Who Owns BI?

BI ownership is expanding beyond IT, though a disturbingly high number of companies have “no one” who owns BI.



Source: BusinessWeek Research Services, “Getting Smart About BI: Best Practices Deliver Real Value,” September 2006

The Fundamental Capabilities

With an objective of understanding more about where organizations are today on their business intelligence journey and to support its own findings and experience, Knightsbridge Solutions partnered with BusinessWeek Research Services to explore the topic. We were pleased to learn that so many companies have achieved value from their BI initiatives and have begun to invest in more advanced programs like competency centers, governance programs and information quality initiatives. The study confirms what Knightsbridge has always believed during its 12 years of delivering business intelligence solutions: Smart, strategic investments in BI coupled with implementation best practices enable organizations to reap great rewards in terms of improved decision-making, regulatory compliance, and overall competitive advantage.

The study also confirms Knightsbridge's belief, based upon years of experience delivering BI solutions for clients across many industries, that BI success is a function of three fundamental capabilities: business enablement, information management and program management. The survey demonstrated an explicit link between maturity in these capabilities and the BI business value that companies realized.

A Winning Formula

Business enablement, the first of the three capabilities, refers to the ability to support business needs and solve business problems with BI solutions. Business enablement runs the gamut from serving basic, localized reporting needs to providing analytics embedded within business processes and systems to using intelligence as a competitive differentiator. Business enablement means understanding how the effective use of BI can support the business needs of your organization. A lack of clarity on business enablement leads to disconnects between the business and IT organization that can torpedo the best-intentioned BI efforts.

The study provides ample evidence that companies that focus on building their business enablement capabilities reap greater rewards from BI. Respondents who didn't achieve the expected value from their BI solutions named reasons related to business-IT disconnects as the primary culprits. Lack of user adoption, the top reason respondents gave for weak BI value, often results from IT-delivered solutions that fail to solve a pressing need for business users or take into consideration how business users work. Other top culprits for weak BI value, such as incomplete business requirements and disconnects between BI and performance management, could be avoided with stronger business enablement capabilities.

Fortunately, many survey respondents demonstrated that they are focused on business enablement by naming the executive sponsor as the most important role for BI success. Also encouraging is the fact that so many companies involve executives outside of IT in the decision-making process for their large-scale or strategic BI projects. More than 50 percent said they involve the CEO in BI decisions, while over 40 percent said they involve the CFO and COO.

Information management, the second capability named above, refers to the solutions that deliver the information required for BI, including data warehousing and data integration. At the most rudimentary level, information management is focused on basic data access. Advanced

for BI Success

levels of information management, toward which many organizations are evolving, seek to create a single version of the truth across the organization. The most advanced information management solutions will successfully synthesize structured and unstructured content for intelligent work environments.

Information quality programs and enterprise data warehouses, two of the best practices that emerged from the study, are among the more advanced information management capabilities that seek to deliver a single version of the truth across the organization. The over 50 percent of survey respondents already in the process of implementing these two best practices are demonstrating a clear commitment to evolving their information management capabilities.

Finally, the **program management** capability involves the strategy, program management and resource management skills required for successful BI initiatives. As organizations evolve their BI capabilities, they must move from localized projects to coordinated programs that are closely aligned with the company's strategic objectives. Program management capabilities ensure efficiency, effectiveness and control across the BI investment portfolio.

Among the five best practices that emerged from the study, three are highly related to program management: enterprise information strategy, business information governance and the BI competency center. All of these best practices are concerned with coordinating BI efforts at an enterprise level to maximize business value and ensure control of and efficiency in BI efforts across the organization.

How Knightsbridge Can Help

As exciting as it is to hear about the success companies have achieved with BI and the actions they're taking to evolve essential capabilities, it's important to recognize that BI is a journey and that organizations must avoid becoming complacent. No organization, no matter how successful with BI, will ever reach a point in time when it can sit back, survey its BI environment, and say, "mission accomplished."

At Knightsbridge, we strive to support our clients in their business intelligence journey by serving three key roles:

- 1. As a trusted advisor**, we help our clients define their vision and the practical master plan to get there.
- 2. As a strategic business partner**, we define high-value, innovative intelligence solutions for industry-specific problems.
- 3. As an expert implementer**, we solve the toughest data challenges with proven methods and solutions.

To learn more about how Knightsbridge can help your organization achieve its BI goals, please visit our Web site at <http://www.knightsbridge.com>.

