

# Going from reactive to proactive - What **Business Intelligence** means today



## Table of content

Innovation, Speed, Commitment	<b>3</b>
Do it for yourself	<b>3</b>
Beauty as a Competence	<b>3</b>
Acknowledge the reality of data	<b>4</b>
Wrangle Big Data	<b>4</b>
Integrate with your existing systems – leverage existing investments	<b>5</b>
Conclusion	<b>5</b>
About TRG International	<b>6</b>



## Innovation, Speed, Commitment

The term business intelligence (BI) has been commonly used for the last 30 years. What is interesting however, is that with its maturity, best practices have only emerged in the last 5 years.

Back in the early days, BI implementations were complicated, heavy, expensive and slow. Companies spent millions of dollars and thousands of unsuccessful hours trying to gain access to crucial data that impacted their businesses. Without real-time access to this information, critical decisions could not be made with confidence.

Today, successful companies are maintaining their competitive edge by strategically engaging robust BI solutions that provide them with critical business information in real-time, allow them to merge data from multiple sources into a single report, and transform raw data into valuable information that will support better decision making.

Below are some best practices that organisations are leveraging today to maintain their competitiveness in this space.

### Do it for yourself

Legacy BI systems forced people to answer basic questions about their data in the form of submitting requests to developers who would then prioritize them, write code, and eventually deliver an answer. Changes also went through this same laborious process resulting in lost productivity while waiting for a response. Things have improved with usability enhancements but reliance on IT and technical resources is still a bottleneck.

The solution is simple. The people who can best answer questions are the very people asking them. Self-service business intelligence is crucial to the success of any business that wants to maintain competitiveness in highly competitive markets. Stakeholders need to be able to create ad-hoc reports and analyse data in real time, making critical decisions immediately.

### Beauty as a Competence

Legacy business intelligence systems spent months creating hard-to-use dashboards and analytics tools. End users and developers had to go through vigorous training sessions to understand how to use the tools. This resulted in an inventory of dashboards and reports that people didn't use. The consumerisation of software has taught us that people will use tools that are attractive and usable. People readily adopt new apps on their phones and new online tools if they find them useful.

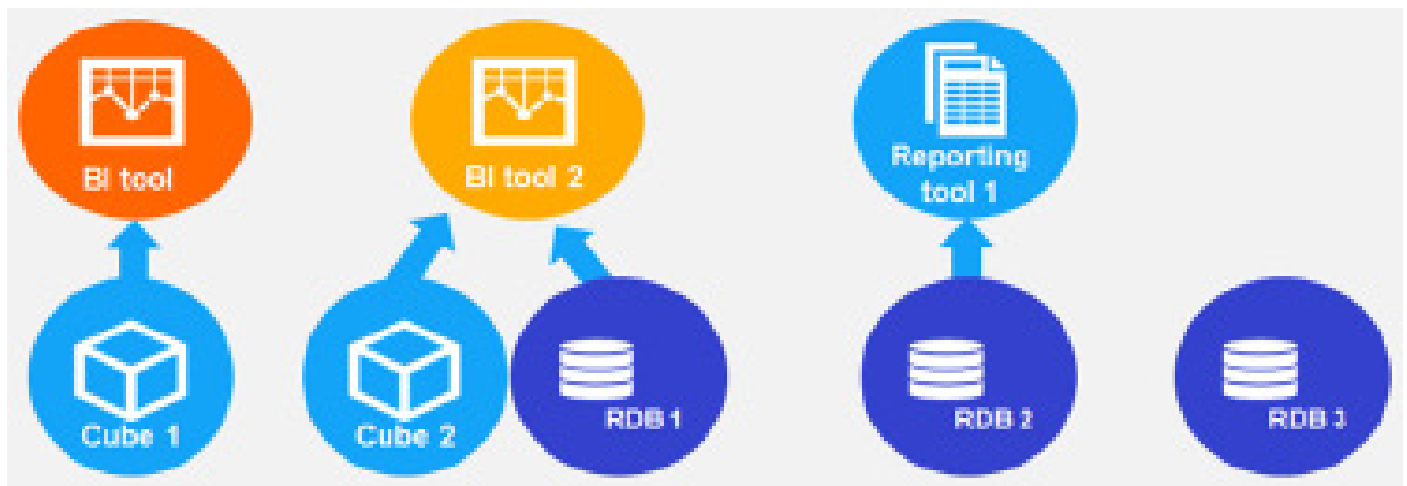
Why should BI be any different? Best-in-class BI solutions include a focus on interactive, beautiful, and easily accessible analytics. New BI systems deliver dashboards and reports conveniently in a web browser avoiding the need for users to jump through hoops simply to see their data. These dashboards are also supported on mobile devices allowing real-time analysis to be done anywhere anytime. No more decisions on the fly! New tools allow people to design dashboards that are both relevant and pleasing to them, subsequently increasing usage.

## Acknowledge the reality of data

Legacy business intelligence solutions were developed based on the concept of a single data architecture that was fast, scalable and held only clean data. It's a wonderful idea. The problem is that no business exists with this ideal data architecture. Real businesses have multiple data sources of varying types and capabilities. The data source that is perfect and complete is most likely also obsolete.

The best practice for the next generation of BI tools is to let you work with all of your data, from spreadsheets to the most sophisticated databases and data warehouses. It also means embracing new technologies that bring new capabilities to the enterprise. And it means bringing any new data sources into compliance with your data governance practices, so that data can be maintained properly and shared across the organisation.

What if you could incorporate new data sources on the fly? The answer to a question is rarely going to be found in a single database. Blending sales data with operational and finance data yields answers that are much more valuable, robust and useful than analysing single data silos. Publishing this combined data allows for multiple users to benefit from this individually by providing an opportunity for each of them to run their own analysis from this one combined data source.



## Wrangle Big Data

Here are the promises of big data:

- To find intelligence in the outliers that aggregated data loses.
- To understand new customer behaviours with new sources of data like sensors and web analytics.
- To work with all of your data, rather than reduce it into a schema that might prevent you from asking new questions in the future.
- But if legacy BI force the normal user into a queue waiting for a report; working with big data is certainly worse. It means big projects, new data warehouses and considerable time and money; in addition to IT- driven schemas that don't give users access to all the data they need.

Best practice BI provides tools for working with big data just like any other data. Direct querying of big data sources, fast in-memory extracts that anyone can define, and intelligent filtering means that users maintain the ability to ask and answer questions—even when the questions are big.



## Integrate with your existing systems – leverage existing investments

A traditional business intelligence implementation was such a grand undertaking that companies would either rip out their existing system or they would accept painful tradeoffs that limited the potential of their BI solution. Sometimes they would invest thousands of dollars into custom development and integration, so that everything worked perfectly—at huge cost.

Best practice BI systems do not involve any of these drastic measures. A good business intelligence platform is friendly—it plays well with your existing security and data architecture by allowing you to:

- Work with your existing security systems, like Active Directory
- Choose whether you want to query live data or work in-memory
- Provide metadata management without locking you into a certain model
- Enable users share data connections and dashboards easily
- Author once and share on multiple devices

Don't get stuck in a cycle of unending report building without ever getting to the actual data. It is impossible to achieve best-in-class analytics when you're too busy implementing the solution.

## Conclusion

Today's business intelligence builds upon and enhances prior investments to succeed. Successful companies are going from good to great and staying competitive by leveraging solutions that provide them with the data they need to make better decisions anytime anywhere.



## About TRG International

TRG International—a Gold Channel Partner of Infor—is an independent provider of IT business solutions, and supports thousands of users in 70 countries. Clients range from small domestic companies to large global multinationals in both the public and private sectors.

Our activities focus on enabling business and people to perform better.

- Business applications solutions for accounting, strategy, planning, budgeting, retail, hospitality, ERP, business intelligence, golf and virtualisation.
- People solutions to select the right people and develop them to their full potential.

[trginternational.com/solutions](http://trginternational.com/solutions)

## Follow us



[linkd.in/TRGInternational](https://linkd.in/TRGInternational)



[facebook.com/trginternational](https://facebook.com/trginternational)



[@TRG\\_INTL](https://twitter.com/TRG_INTL)