

The 3 Dimensions of a Bulletproof BI Publishing Engine



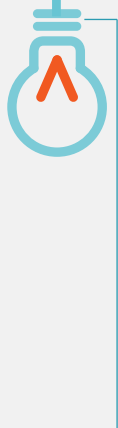


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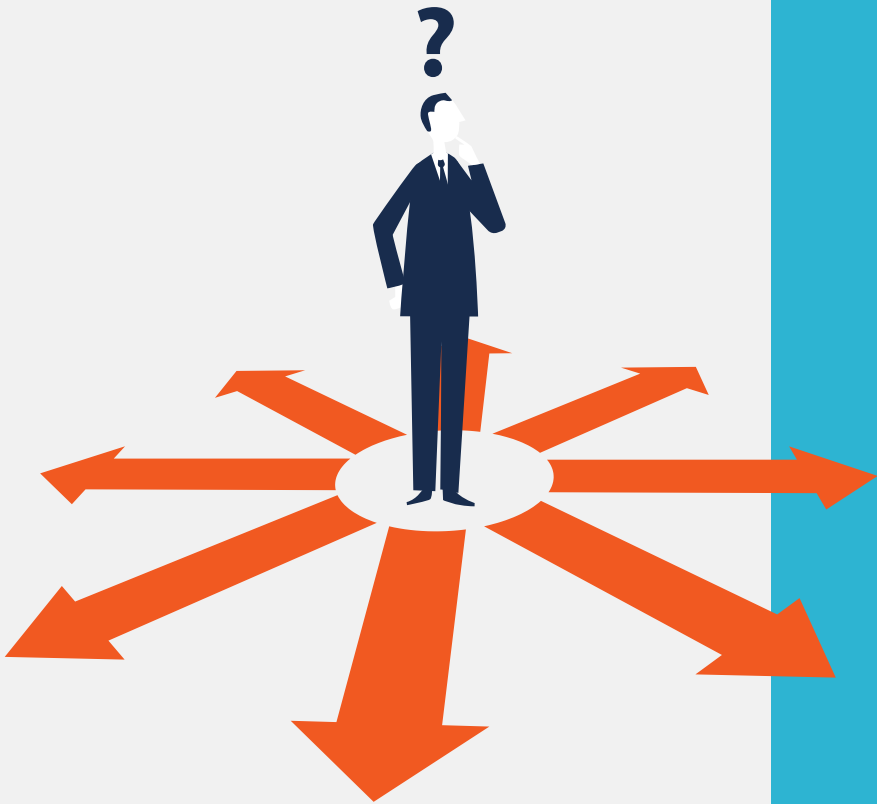
Are You Puzzled by Your Current BI Strategy?

Have you ever considered the similarity between your BI strategy and a puzzle? Yes, it's a simple analogy for a complex topic, but think about it. You have pieces of data—both large and small—in a variety of systems across your enterprise that all contribute to a bigger picture. The value achieved from a complete picture of your business is priceless yet, in reality, most BI puzzles are missing as many sections as the puzzle you and your family started two-summer vacations ago.

Effectively harnessing data from every end point is challenging. Most BI and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems were not designed to easily interface with unlike applications or flexibly adapt to individual workflows. Nor were they designed with cross-functional report distribution in mind. Unfortunately, as with most complex and costly situations the tendency is to leave 'well enough alone' and find a work around. The problem with choosing this solution is that it's really just as, if not more, complex and costly. Manually managing hundreds even thousands of reports from different systems with different protocols and formats is nearly impossible. You're constantly running into administrative bottlenecks when trying to pull 'one off' reports or effectively manage a

BI process failure. Chances are if you actually tallied up the costs associated with operational inefficiency and basing strategic decisions on partial information the sum total would be shocking.

The majority of BI solutions offer publishing capabilities, but the output is limited to the data housed within that particular system. In this eBook we'll explore the three dimensions required of a publishing engine capable of transforming your business and solving your BI puzzle once and for all.



Dimension 1

Make it easy for IT to manage:

Eliminating the need for manually exporting reports, updating databases and operating business processes.

If your organization is like most, your IT team is responsible for managing the reporting and report deployment process for each individual system across your enterprise. This equates to a lot of time and effort spent on ensuring the data is accurate, correct, timely and meets compliance requirements. Running a report and emailing it is just one piece of the process. There is also the challenge of keeping pace with the constant need to change information and generate new reports. Typically, if one cog fails in the process either your business has no idea it failed or has no easy way to back track to where it failed.

A bulletproof publishing engine must allow you to consolidate the reporting that originates from all data sources and seamlessly distribute reports based on the recipient's needs and preference. Its 'must have' features should include:

- Dynamic schedules that support exporting multiple instances of the same report with the ability to read the parameters & destinations from your own database;
- Data-driven schedules that determine the delivery type & report format dynamically at runtime;
- Bursting schedules that burst individual report groups & deliver each group to a different destination; and,
- Event-based schedules that fire off reports or automation scripts when a defined system event occurs. It must trigger a report or automation script when a value in a database has changed, or when a new email arrives.

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Beyond its basic functionality, you'll want to ensure it can support both on-premise and cloud environments and scale as your business demands grow. Be sure to ask about capabilities such as:

- System Monitor
- Multi-Threading
- Clustering
- Remote Administration
- Report History Snapshots
- System Constants
- User Constants
- Data Items
- Hours of Operation
- Folder Housekeeping
- Scheduled System backups
- Command-Line Options
- Desktop Application Scheduler
- Windows Service Scheduler
- Secure User Logon Profiles
- Integration with Windows

Freeing your IT staff from mundane, manual processes will enable them to focus on ensuring your infrastructure is continuously aligned with your organization's strategic goals versus being trapped in the vortex of cumbersome and expensive administrative tasks.

Dimension2

Give your end users a break:

Providing a single place for authorized users to obtain both custom and standard reports—on the fly.

One of the greatest contributors to lost productivity is logging in and out of multiple systems to get the information needed to complete a job. Passwords get lost, individuals get locked out of systems, IT staff is bombarded with password-reset requests and everyone is frustrated. This occurs all day, every day regardless of the business process.

Take, for example, an organization using Crystal Reports. A far too common scenario is the organization's core systems—such as their customer relationship management (CRM), enterprise resource planning (ERP) and marketing automation systems- all run different instances of Crystal Reports and none of them talk to each other. A significant amount of productivity is lost when individuals working in different departments are dependent on their colleagues to run and deliver reports they don't have access to. Worse yet is the

team that's in the end of year planning process and completely unaware of data sitting in a system in another department that could potentially change their course of direction.

A bulletproof publishing engine must provide a centralized, agnostic reporting portal where end users can manage and run reports on demand from multiple sources. Users should be able to consume reports with ease anywhere, whether on an iPad in a meeting, or on an Android phone in a coffee shop. Administrators should have complete control over the reporting process, securely serving reports to both internal and external users. It should have the ability to tie into existing systems or serve as a standalone reporting system without limits on users, reports or processors. Finally, it should allow for reports to be assigned to specific groups, while providing features such as parameter prompting to show or hide sections of a report and report pre-caching to prevent any impact to your database's performance.

A bullet-proof publishing engine must provide a centralized agnostic reporting portal where end users can manage and run reports on demand from multiple sources.

Dimension 3

Make your business run smoother

Aligning disparate processes into one based on your organizational strategy.

When you sift through the noise and really listen to the challenges organizations consistently face the same two issues typically surface— 1) a lot of unnecessary effort and, 2) a lot of unnecessary expenses. It's no wonder Deloitte, a leading professional services firm, recently noted that IT's organizational value is increasingly being measured by the overall operational efficiency of the business. Time and again organizations lose their competitive edge or miss their revenue targets simply because of misinformed decisions and redundant processes. This often results from the perception that report distribution and business process automation are two separate entities when, in actuality, they should be intricately connected.

A bulletproof publishing engine is one that was built with a primary mission to combine reporting, processes and alerts into a cohesive universe. It must be modular by design and scale to meet increasingly complex business requirements with little disruption. The system should be sophisticated and robust yet quick to deploy and simple for the entire organization and its customers to adopt.

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Finally, it will have the ability to measurably improve your business environment in four critical areas:

- **Cross-team information distribution:**
Ensuring everyone across the organization is making informed decisions;
- **Brand consistency:**
Maintaining the same look and feel and consistent distribution of items like, invoices, packing slips, sales slips, vendor reports, inventory and more to your customer base;
- **Operational efficiency:**
Eliminating redundant processes and unnecessary spending with the least number of solutions as possible; and,
- **Risk Management:**
Establishing an early warning system when exceptions occur in the business that drives proactivity and reduces avoidable costs.

Summary

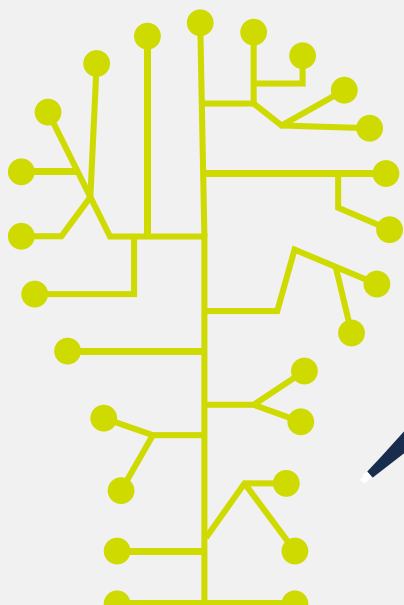
Now more than ever, organizations are recognizing the value their data provides in driving better strategic decisions and gaining a competitive edge. The challenge they face is the cost and complexity of harnessing it from disparate systems across their enterprise. Often the tendency is to leave 'well enough alone' and find a work around. The problem with choosing this solution is that it's really just as, if not more, complex and costly.

The majority of BI solutions offer publishing capabilities, but the output is limited to the data housed within that particular system. One viable solution is to consider a stand-alone publishing engine. To ensure the publishing engine is bulletproof and capable of transforming your business it must possess three fundamental dimensions that include the ability to:

- 1. Consolidate the reporting that originates from all data sources and seamlessly distribute reports based on the recipient's needs and preference;**
- 2. Provide a centralized agnostic reporting portal where end users can manage and run reports on demand from multiple sources; and,**
- 3. Combine reporting, processes and alerts into a cohesive universe.**

Attributes:

1 <http://deloitte.wsj.com/cio/2013/04/25/how-to-increase-operational-efficiency-in-it/>



About Christian- Steven Software

With the CSS BI Solution, you can eliminate administrative bottlenecks with self-service business intelligence. Sophisticated yet simple, the CSS BI Solution is flexible, scalable, and application agnostic enabling you to connect to multiple data sources across your enterprise and centrally manage all of your report distribution.

During implementation, which typically is complete in 60 days or less, we work with you to easily configure the system to mirror the workflows in your environment. Once operational, the solution can talk to any database or system. In fact, you can have thousands of reports talking to thousands of databases. The CSS BI Solution works behind the scenes to ensure your data is accurate, secure and delivered on time with the same look and feel regardless of native application.

For individuals who need immediate access to information, the CSS BI Solution offers an easy to use portal that allows users to log in, create and run reports themselves from their laptop, tablet or phone. Depending on your organizational needs, our solution can be used as your complete BI infrastructure or as a complement to your existing investments in hardware, software, email and other applications. We're experts in helping organizations automate BI processes so that meaningful information can be delivered at the precise moment it's needed. Rather than spending days worth of time and resources exporting BI reports, updating BI databases and executing manual BI processes, let CSS handle the BI grunt work.

Key Values:

- Ensure quick set up and simple use
- Minimize and eliminate repetitive tasks and manual processes
- Reduce costs and cut labor by automating business processes and reports from one application
- Improve customer satisfaction through mass personalized distribution
- Provide reliable data, and SOX Compliance, through automated report generation
- Experience a browser-based Rich Internet Application interface
- Leverage existing investments in hardware, software, email and other applications
- Sustain low training and implementation costs
- Deliver low total cost of ownership

Contact us today for a complimentary BI Assessment:

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