



BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



BI Leaders have been dealing with changes in the technology they manage since the dawn of analytics and the need for strategic insight. The advent of intelligent management tools designed to help BI practitioners do their jobs more efficiently and the movement toward a data-centric mindset offers a chance to shift the focus and gives BI leaders both the opportunity and the responsibility to drive revenue for their company.

Enabling the enterprise

BI teams have an opportunity to apply their expertise in pursuit of driving enterprise initiatives for digital transformation by exploiting the combination of their unique understanding of technology with the growing stores of data their company accumulates every day. To make that transition BI leaders need to work with their teams across the company to do these five things.



Partner with business unit executives

There is often a divide, an ‘us versus them’ in relationships with business unit leaders but with the winds of digital transformation blowing in, BI leaders should strive to work with them to understand their business goals. The shift to the role of business consultant and enabler may not happen quickly but it needs to be at the top of the BI leaders’ agenda so that the value of their experience and knowledge can be leveraged to bring about positive change.

Their first efforts should be to develop a full understanding of the goals of the business unit. This process is likely to require more than a single conversation, and in fact solutions shouldn’t be proposed until both the BI project team and the business project team are comfortable they understand each other’s business issues and even possible constraints.

Business leaders spend their professional careers understanding and optimizing their businesses, so offering quick solutions to persistent problems, no matter how valid they may be, is likely to cause distrust. It’s better to pursue a deeper understanding over a period of time to assure any proposed solution is based on full understanding and mutual respect.

Research and understand the technologies in use within the enterprise

BI leaders understand the technologies they manage but may not know about all the products and services in use by individual business units. Cloud-based and SaaS services initiated by business units as shadow IT efforts can become embedded in business processes without the leadership team even knowing of their existence. Some of these services may even exist in multiple business units but not be connected to each other or serve the same purpose.

BI teams need to dig deep to discover what products are in use and the functions they serve across the business. They need to apply their understanding of available technologies to those in use and develop a full understanding of the enterprise technology landscape. The data being collected in these systems is likely to be useful in the pursuit of larger enterprise goals in ways yet to be discovered.

Research and understand technology opportunities not yet in use in the company

New technologies are introduced daily and the BI team is often uniquely positioned to monitor and understand them and how they might be used in pursuit of business objectives. Most companies are averse to deploying leading edge technology initiatives, but at the current pace of business, new technologies become widely adopted at a frightening pace.

BI teams who grasp the potential and find rational ways to experiment with promising technologies have the opportunity to advance their company by planning a data strategy that moves it to a leadership position ahead of its competitors.

Create a 360 degree view of the company's customers

Data about customers, business efforts, and operational details is collected continuously throughout the enterprise.

Business unit leaders typically concentrate on the status of their own initiatives and while they may have a global perspective on the company and its overall performance they don't have access to or knowledge of data outside their realms. Complicating the issue is that when business leaders compare data from their independent realms, they have different results from what they believe to be the same data.

With digital transformation projects on the rise, the opportunity for BI teams to normalize multiple data sets in ways that can deliver a consistent and comprehensive view of not only the company but of its customers lets BI leaders bring additional value to the company.

One final point, BI leaders should also develop a plan that will allow them to leverage the data already resident (and growing) in the company's servers.



Apply their understanding to advance enterprise business goals

BI teams can take advantage of this combination of activities to work with enterprise stakeholders and create new

initiatives that make a difference to the company and put the BI team in the driver's seat. The transition from managing technology to driving revenue by exploiting data is the key strategy to a successful digital transformation initiative.



Check out the Profisee blog for more helpful resources, best practices, and strategy around Data Management.