

## High Level BI Requirements, Solution Architecture and BI Roadmap

To implement a successful BI program, the most important step is to establish the proper foundation: one built on solid business objectives.

Defining the High Level BI Requirements, Solution Architecture, and developing a BI Roadmap ensures that your company will focus on the core BI goals and components first and subsequently expand from there. Without a well-thought out roadmap, companies will find it more challenging to measure success, prioritize next steps or simply know how BI fits into your overall Strategic Vision.

### High Level BI Requirements Gathering

BI focuses on information demands from different areas and departments of the company, rather than a single department. . For example: an accounting system will serve the finance department, making it primarily a departmental or line of business system, while BI is cross-organizational. Therefore in the case of BI, the process of collecting business requirements is more complicated and challenging than in the case for non-integrated line-of-business system BI requirements also change faster and more frequently than operational requirements, so it is important to concentrate and deliver on a specific area before expanding, while at the same time ensure that the BI system is designed in a robust and flexible manner to support future requirements in the same and different area.

To ensure that the business requirements are well understood, and to enable the definition of priorities for a subsequent more detailed and focused requirements analysis effort, our approach is to split the process of business requirements gathering into a high level analysis phase and a detailed analysis phase.

The focus of the high level BI requirements gathering phase is to take a more strategic and investigative approach. First, we support you in defining the business objectives and goals for BI. Subsequently, we investigate and document the business processes; identifying the key questions and information needs around each business process. This analysis serves as a basis for defining a high level BI business model (architecture), and enables business sponsors to understand and champion the benefits to be delivered by the BI solution. During the requirements gathering phase the functional and non-functional requirements, as well as specific lists of data elements and desired reports, are identified on a high level. The subsequent detailed requirements gathering (subject to a separate effort) will cater for the deeper analysis and design of functionality and reports once priorities have been defined.

## **High Level BI Solution Architecture**

The high-level solution architecture provides a conceptual design of a solution that meets the identified business requirements. It defines and explains the guiding principles behind the solution, and identifies the key components and interfaces. Additionally, we also identify systems for immediate and long-term needs, and create the architecture to ensure that the final solution can be extended to meet future requirements.

Several options may be presented in terms of software and hardware platforms, together with a strengths and weaknesses analysis for each option, and our recommendation for a preferred solution based on your business needs, IT environment, and overall budget. This enables business and IT stakeholders to understand the differences between options, and to make an informed decision in terms of preferred approach considering both the business objectives as well as the strategic IT direction of the organization.

## **BI Roadmap**

The Business Intelligence Roadmap is a tool that shows a company how to leverage their enterprise information to lead to better business decisions. The BI roadmap delivers project planning, a prioritized timeline and approach, proposed governance and organizational structure, as well as estimates for required deliverables, resources, and details for project closure.

Normally the BI Roadmap covers a period between 1 and 2 years, with initial phases planned in greater detail and future phases in less detail to recognize potential change.

## **High Level BI Requirements, Solution Architecture and BI Roadmap Outcome**

The deliverables from this effort are:

- Management report summarizing the key BI objectives and requirements, proposed solution approach, prioritized BI roadmap, proposed project organization, risks and dependencies. This will serve as a basis for BI Business Case and future Project Definition Document;
- High level business requirements specification document – to serve as a basis for detailed requirements analysis;
- High level solution architecture document providing the foundation of a detailed design specification;