



EXPERT INSIGHTS

# OPERATIONS

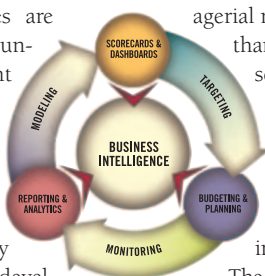
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

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## Driving Strategy Execution with Integrated Business Intelligence

Having spent millions of dollars on transaction-based technology, companies are now focused on turning their mountains of data into management information that drives bottom-line performance.

Fortunately, Business Intelligence (BI) technology and best practices continue to evolve to address this issue. The turn of the Century brought web-based applications developed to add robust functionality and efficiency to specific business areas such as financial con-



solidations, budgeting and planning and managerial reporting. While dramatically better than the Excel spreadsheets or custom solutions they replaced, these applications were developed largely independent of each other. They failed to leverage development efforts, created inconsistent and sometimes conflicting results and increased maintenance costs.

The next generation BI technology has arrived! Leading organizations can now realize the value of back-end data integration using a com-

mon “one version of the truth” architecture for data and metadata. Maintenance costs are further reduced by the inclusion of Master Data Management tools in today’s packaged BI solutions. Finally, the front-end tools used to deliver information to users have been consolidated to create a seamless portal to financial and operational information that is transparent to users. This new technology can benefit first-time implementers as well as more mature BI environments.

That said, implementations based solely on technology fail to deliver the anticipated business value. Instead, effective business intelligence solutions must include a thorough understanding of associated business processes to deliver the anticipated return on investment.

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## Accelerate IT with Managed Services

When it comes to deploying and managing IT infrastructure for new applications, a directive often heard from senior management is – “get it done”, usually accompanied by “now”, “make sure it keeps up and running” and, of course, “stay on budget”. For organizations with maxed-out IT staffs and flat-line budgets, it can be a challenge to get these environments up and running quickly. The problem becomes more difficult when 24x7 coverage is needed for support and problem resolution.

Many organizations are turning to Managed Service Providers (MSPs) as an alternative or adjunct to internal IT staff to deploy and operate IT systems. Managed

Services helps companies save money, deploy systems faster and maintain higher levels of service availability and performance. Managed Services allow an organization to focus on what they do best – serve their end-user customers and grow their business – while the MSP does what they do best – manage and support IT systems around the clock with a full team of experts.

Managed Services fall into two general categories: Remote Managed Services and Managed Hosting Services. With Remote Managed services, the MSP monitors and manages the customer’s infrastructure in the customer’s data center. With Managed Hosting Services, the MSP delivers a service to the customer

using the MSP’s hardware and software hosted in the MSP’s secure data center. Hosted Services are ideal for deploying both primary and Disaster Recovery (DR) environments. Some MSPs offer both remote and hosted as well as “blended” services.

The benefits of either flavor of Managed Services can be compelling:

- Enforceable Service Level Agreements with financial penalties for non-compliance
- 24x7 coverage for support and problem resolution
- Ability to leverage the MSP’s broad technical expertise and best practices
- Single source of support – no finger pointing between vendors
- Faster deployment and upgrade times – days not months
- Reduce CapEx – IT delivered as a service

To read the full report, go to [www.expert-insights.com/fusionstorm.asp](http://www.expert-insights.com/fusionstorm.asp)



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