

# INCREASED BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE: TURNING CUSTOMER DATA INTO A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Applying Business Intelligence Capabilities Enables Organizations to Transform Customer Data into Actionable Intelligence and Maximize Business Efficiency, Growth, and Customer Satisfaction

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### **WHAT GOOD IS RAW CUSTOMER DATA?**

For years, companies have been amassing sales, service, and marketing data. Now, however, many – driven to further increase their competitive advantage and market share – are utilizing business intelligence (BI) tools to transform customer data into actionable intelligence to improve organizational efficiency, business growth, and customer satisfaction.

Of course, BI tools have been available for years, so why is there increased interest now to adopt them for increased CRM benefits? Implementation time is one factor. Previously, such efforts required at least seven to nine months of effort to build a data warehouse from scratch. In addition, business users had to rely on technical staff to manually create BI reports – a lengthy process. Even then, data collection and metrics often differed across business units, which led to incomplete analyses or extensive reworking prior to producing useful information.

Recently, however, major software vendors – including Salesforce, SAP, and Oracle – have begun bundling integrated data warehouses, BI tools, and numerous ready-made reporting dashboards with their enterprise applications. As a result, with proper planning, an organization employing enterprise CRM can now begin using BI capabilities quicker than ever before. Furthermore, organizations can easily embed data warehousing information directly into the modern user interfaces of the business applications their employees use every day.

Altogether, these changes have transformed BI from providing weekly or monthly reports, to providing real-time data analyses and actionable intelligence for decision-makers and customer-facing resources. Such information improves employee efficiency by driving them toward tasks that demonstrably improve customer satisfaction and revenue. In addition, BI tools rapidly determine which marketing, sales, and service techniques are most effective for maximizing revenue; enable managers to more efficiently allocate resources; guide future product strategies; and provide senior executives with more accurate revenue predictions.

Even with the new generation of BI tools integrated into enterprise CRM applications, however, deploying such tools for optimal advantage first requires a BI plan. Based on its extensive experience in helping organizations apply BI capabilities to enhance their CRM results, Innoveer recommends developing a Roadmap that defines desired business outcomes, relevant data and metrics to track, appropriate product functionality to utilize, and required project skills and infrastructure enhancements. With such a plan, organizations can advance beyond simply capturing raw sales, service, and marketing data, to generating the deep insight needed to maximize business impact, while also ensuring a consistent approach to these issues across the entire organization.

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### FOLLOW THE BENEFITS

On a practical note, definitions for BI abound, how does Innoveer define this term? Simply put, BI tools allow business managers to apply data mining techniques and various algorithms to raw sales, marketing, and service data to predict customer churn, the most effective cross-selling techniques, and brand uptake, among other activities. While previous generations of BI tools required technical experts to create reports, today's tools allow business managers to design their own reports, rapidly drill down into data, and explore any interesting trends. As a result, managers can quickly transform raw data into actionable intelligence, and rapidly deploy customer-facing teams accordingly. For example, BI dashboards can schedule optimal field force itineraries, guide in-progress marketing campaigns based on initial results, identify high-value sales leads, alert call center managers to service problems in near-real time, and help employees become more productive.

### ROADMAP TO READINESS

Precisely where should organizations begin to ready themselves for BI? Innoveer recommends that organizations consider six best practices when designing a BI Roadmap:

#### 1) Specify Business Outcomes:

Start by defining the business case and desired business outcomes for the project.

#### 2) Pursue Metrics:

Next, determine which metrics or BI dashboards the organization should measure; what types of information senior executives, and sales, marketing, and service managers are demanding; and then consistently analyze all metrics.

#### 3) Standardize Processes:

Following that, evaluate sales processes and related terminology across customer-facing business units to ensure consistent definitions.

#### 4) Locate Data:

Organizations must then verify that the data needed to track desired metrics is consistent, being collected, and of sufficient quality, and also identify each data entity's location and business owner.

#### 5) Build Infrastructure:

Next, identify the correct infrastructure for supporting consistent BI capabilities.

#### 6) Identify Skills:

Lastly, gather the necessary BI, CRM, and data warehouse skill sets.

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By pursuing these six strategies, organizations will create a Roadmap tailored to their specific business needs. They can then implement the plan via small stages, with each phase tied to delivering a specific business outcome, to improve efficiency, growth, and customer satisfaction.

### PURSUE THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITIES

Many companies turn to BI to determine how to most effectively direct their sales forces. For example, one leading manufacturer that regularly receives a massive list of all local construction projects, wanted to understand which of the thousands of sales opportunities its 25-person sales force should pursue, to have the best chance of closing deals and generating maximum revenue.

To answer that question, this company turned to Innoveer to implement BI tools to predict which sales opportunities will produce maximum revenue, and then automatically e-mail a BI report, which identifies the 10 sales opportunities each person should pursue to its highly mobile sales force. As part of this initiative, Innoveer also defined relevant manufacturing industry metrics, identified the data necessary to track them, and helped implement the required infrastructure improvements. The result: By directing its existing sales team to focus on the most lucrative opportunities, this manufacturer has already increased its revenue by 20 percent.

### IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

Another Innoveer client, a leading financial firm, utilizes desktop-based BI dashboards to provide account managers with color-coded feedback on a number of key performance indicators (KPIs). These dashboards compare each account manager with their peers – including the number of clients contacted daily, the average time required to close a sales opportunity, projected quarterly sales, and customer satisfac-

### Top BI Business Goals

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- *Maximize marketing campaign and sales force effectiveness*
- *Increase sales opportunities and pursue key decision-makers*
- *Refine tracking of relationships and consumer buying habits*
- *Ensure sales force adherence to established sales methodologies*
- *Optimize territories*
- *Improve capital resource allocation*
- *Accelerate the R&D process*
- *Identify more innovative techniques for delivering products to market*
- *Improve sightlines between managers/representatives and their responsibilities*
- *Close the gap between best- and worst-performing sales representatives*
- *Demonstrate compliance with various regulations*

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tion scores. This organization believes that these BI dashboards drive its salespeople to be more competitive with their peers, thus increasing their efficiency.

At the same time, the BI dashboards also simplify account managers' roles. In particular, the BI-driven CRM interface provides just-in-time task suggestions to help close all open sales opportunities, as well as useful supplemental information, such as annual contract renewal alerts or service problems.

### **INCREASE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

Many organizations are turning to BI to create a single view of each customer and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction. For example, a leading online information broker grew rapidly over five years via a number of acquisitions, which resulted in business divisions with disconnected sales processes and silos of customer data. Ultimately, customers grew dissatisfied because multiple salespeople from different divisions would offer inconsistent pricing and dissimilar product bundles, and furthermore, could not definitively confirm which licenses the customer had already purchased.

To solve these problems, the company's sales vice president wanted to create a "360-degree view" of each customer. For assistance, the company turned to Innoveer to help implement an out-of-the-box data warehouse, and consolidate three different reporting tools to one. As a result, the company can now more easily track sales activities across the entire organization, and coordinate sales and marketing efforts for maximum efficiency. These efforts have also enhanced up- and cross-selling activities, increased revenue, minimized customer turnover, and improved customer satisfaction levels.

### **JUST-IN-TIME INTELLIGENCE**

One particular benefit from pursuing BI is the ability to standardize processes and terminology across the entire organization. For example, senior sales executives at one leading software company wanted to generate more accurate revenue forecasts for the upcoming six–12 months. Yet each division employed different sales processes and tracked different metrics. To standardize multiple business units' previously disjointed sales processes and terminology, Innoveer – after designing a BI plan – helped the company implement a single CRM application, which included a built-in data warehouse, plus BI tools. Today, having a consistent, company-wide approach to sales has improved business efficiency, and has also allowed executives to much more accurately predict revenue.

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### **JUST-IN-TIME GUIDANCE**

In addition, the data warehouse now provides this company with just-in-time information to guide its sales expansion into new countries. By using BI, the vice president of sales can study the effectiveness of early efforts, test multiple approaches, and then refine headcount, sales processes, product focus, and target accounts. Previously, honing such efforts would have required guesswork, followed by 12–18 months of data collection and subsequent analysis. By using a single CRM application and bundled BI capabilities, however, this company has gained near–real time visibility into trends, to rapidly and effectively direct sales expansion.

### **THE DATA-DRIVEN ADVANTAGE**

Maintaining a competitive advantage in today's marketplace requires the transformation of data into actionable intelligence to continually improve customer-facing strategies. Accordingly, many organizations are now adopting BI tools to more effectively direct their sales, marketing, and service efforts. Even with out-of-the-box tools, however, organizations require a BI plan to consistently and efficiently transform raw sales, service, marketing, and customer data into useful information, beyond just creating a 360-degree view of each customer.

An effective BI Roadmap begins by defining an organization's precise business outcomes; consistently utilizing related metrics, business processes, and data gathering techniques; creating an infrastructure to further ensure BI consistency; determining the required skill sets; and implementing the project in stages, with each phase tied to achieving a specific business goal. By undertaking a BI plan, organizations can produce the actionable intelligence they need to deliver insightful information to employees via BI dashboards and reports; make more efficient use of existing resources; ensure high levels of customer satisfaction; and direct employees toward those tasks and sales opportunities which yield maximum revenue.

### **ABOUT INNOVEER SOLUTIONS**

INNOVEER SOLUTIONS, an award-winning CRM consulting firm, provides advanced services to life sciences, high-technology and insurance companies, among others, in the areas of planning and strategy, technology implementation and optimization. The company's deep industry knowledge, broad technical skills and Multishore Methodology enable organizations to address their critical customer-facing issues and achieve an integrated view of all customer information. With an exclusive focus on customer management since 1998, Innoveer has worked with more than 400 organizations to increase their overall business growth, improve internal efficiency and enhance the customer experience.