Business Intelligence Standardization

Selecting the right BI partner

Leading companies understand that BI standardization is the smart choice. Standardizing on a single business intelligence solution provides benefits that include:

- Reduced total cost of ownership.
- Increased responsiveness through reduced system complexity.
- A foundation for managing performance across the organization.

Deciding to standardize BI is an important first step. Next comes the critical question: *Who should you choose as your BI standardization partner*? The right partner and solution should meet your needs today and evolve to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Factors to consider in your standardization partner

Many of the major business criteria for selecting a BI standardization partner are similar to any other strategic partnership decision. You are looking for company stability, industry leadership, and industry focus. When evaluating your BI and reporting partner, you are also looking for:

- **Bias for innovation.** Demonstrated by a solid history of pushing the envelope for new developments, consistency of incremental improvements, and genuine breakthroughs that equate with added value for your business.
- **Proven experience with large deployments.** Demonstrated by customer lists; solution capabilities such as ease of deployment and scalability; and value for money.
- **Future-focused vision.** Demonstrated by a comprehensive road map and vision that shows customers where they are headed.

> *"Over the next three years, AMR Research predicts companies will save between 20 and 40 percent of their operational costs through standardization."*
>
> AMR Research 2004 EPM Spending Study,
> J. Coolidge, J. Hagerty, December 2004

Product considerations

In its white paper, *Standardizing Business Intelligence*, Ventana Research recommends a number of characteristics to look for in a BI standardization solution:

- **Broad coverage.** A standard must meet the needs of as much of the organization as possible. Look for a solution that covers: production reporting, business reporting, ad hoc query, OLAP reporting and analysis, dashboarding, and scorecarding.
- **Modern services-oriented architectures.** Look for technologies that use Web services standards such as SOAP, XML, and WSDL, and that support standards such as JSR and WSRP.
- **Scalability.** Look for vendors who have distributed architectures where load balancing can be distributed across multiple servers. It is best if they can support Unix, Windows, and Linux.
- **Heterogeneous data access**. Your BI standard should be able to model and query against the multiple, heterogeneous data sources within your organization.
- **Global capability**. Since most large companies have employees, customers, and suppliers all over the world, a BI solution must be multilingual. Not all multilingual solutions are created equal. Look for Unicode throughout, not just support for Unicode data sources.
- **Security.** A BI standard should leverage and support your existing enterprise security systems.

Assessing your BI supplier

Does your BI supplier qualify as a standardization partner? Is your supplier willing to become a true strategic partner? To help you in your evaluation, here are key questions to ask:

- Can your BI solution evolve into a foundation for performance management?
- Do you provide a native Web services-based architecture?
- Is your solution scalable?
- Does it provide global, multilingual capabilities?
- Does the solution have centralized metadata that leverages all of my heterogeneous data?
- Does it leverage my existing security infrastructure?
- Does your solution require any downloads, applets, plug-ins, or third-party support?
- Do you provide all enterprise BI needs with one product?

Cognos—the only choice for BI standardization

Cognos 8 Business Intelligence delivers the industry's most comprehensive BI solution—scorecarding, reporting, analysis, dashboards, and event lifecycle management—in one product, on a single architecture.

Web services architecture

Cognos 8 BI provides a single, modern Web services architecture designed from the ground up to minimize development, deployment, and maintenance for lower total cost of ownership. It simplifies your BI environment while servicing all user needs. The benefits:

- Fewer products to learn and interact with means greater business effectiveness, lower costs, and less training.
- A single product with zero-footprint deployment means fewer products to install, maintain, and support.
- Reuse of queries across analysis as well as ad-hoc and professional authoring environments.
- You spend less time evaluating software and more time creating value for your organization.

Leverages your existing infrastructure

Using a single open API and a variety of programming languages, Cognos 8 BI easily integrates into your existing infrastructure to leverage the value you already have. Our software has centralized metadata that can import and update from almost any data source. It works with major application and Web servers, portals, browsers, enterprise applications, and platforms and provides access to every kind of database.

Cognos connects to multiple security systems by leveraging open security sources, rather than a proprietary source. Out-of-the-box Cognos security also encompasses encryption of temporary files, folders, and user credentials.

Complete data integration

Cognos 8 BI is purpose-built to support your heterogeneous data sources and transform them into actionable information. It offers analysis, scorecarding, reporting, dashboarding, and event management, independent of the data source (including ERP, relational, XML, JDBC, WSDL, and LDAP).

With ETL capability, data from multiple systems is integrated, cleansed, transformed, and aggregated to deliver a consolidated historical view that drives analysis. The built-in enterprise information integration (EII) feature provides real-time access to embedded data. As well, Cognos partnerships with data integration leaders allow you to leverage your investments in third-party data systems.

A powerful centralized metadata layer spans multiple data sources, and includes the ability to leverage specific technology (including RDBMS, SQL 99, BW, and stored procedures) as well as importing and updating third-party metadata sources. Powerful time-series calculations and aggregation capabilities also support quick response times, allowing users to get to the data faster.

Usability

Cognos 8 BI provides a familiar, browser-based environment to improve user adoption and help people make decisions faster.

A centralized metadata layer provides a complete and consistent view of the data, for a single business view. Cognos 8 BI is independent of the data layer, and shields the user from the complexities of the underlying data.

Scalability and global deployment

The flexible, Web-centric, and highly distributed Cognos 8 BI architecture provides easy scaling up and out. The multi-threaded, multi-server architecture delivers proven scalability that can be deployed to thousands of users across the enterprise.

Cognos also offers multilingual support to simplify global deployments and ensure information accuracy and usability across all business users.

Extending with Cognos partners

Cognos partners provide products, services, and technology expertise that help customers purchase, deploy, and service their business intelligence and performance management solutions.

Cognos offers a software suite that supports all the components of corporate performance management—from planning and budgeting, to scorecarding and monitoring performance, to reporting and analysis. With their industry expertise and specialized knowledge, our partners extend that offering, helping our clients maximize their technology investments.

IBM

Cognos is a member of IBM's Strategic Alliance Program, IBM's highest tier partner status. The depth of the Cognos-IBM relationship means that Cognos products—along with IBM technologies—are validated to run smoothly, quickly, and reliably.

SAP

Cognos has been an SAP Software Partner since 1999, and has achieved the Powered by SAP NetWeaver™ designation. Since that time, Cognos has built strong relationships with SAP across the organization. This has resulted in the creation of dedicated alliance, research and development, and customer service teams to ensure that any SAP-Cognos implementation runs smoothly and effectively.

Teradata

Cognos BI helps companies realize greater value from their Teradata warehouse by making information easier to access for reporting and analysis. Cognos is a Teradata partner and a participant in the Teradata Partners Center of Expertise. As a member of Teradata's Partner Program, Cognos offers Teradata customers best-of-breed solutions and experience, enabling customers to make faster, better business decisions.

Oracle

For over a decade, Cognos and Oracle have worked closely to help customers maximize their IT investments. Cognos is a Certified Partner in Oracle's Partner Network (OPN) and a participant in the Oracle Applications Users Group (OAUG), which supports the easy integration of these two powerful solutions.

Microsoft

Cognos and Microsoft have established a close, proactive, and strategic partnership. Organizations planning or using a data warehouse on the Microsoft platform can easily implement a Cognos solution that meets their unique needs. By combining technologies from these two market leaders, businesses can deploy BI functionality across the enterprise. Cognos is certified in Query, Reporting, and Analysis Tools category of the Microsoft Data Warehousing Alliance (DWA).

Sybase

Sybase offers a solid infrastructure for Cognos business intelligence because of its scalability, speed and flexibility. A long-time member of the Sybase Business Solutions Alliance, Cognos continues to integrate with and support the Sybase Data Warehousing platform.

Customers choose Cognos for BI standardization

Analysts confirm Cognos leadership for our vision and ability to execute. More than 23,000 customers worldwide experience that leadership first-hand. Nine of the top 10 banks in the US and Europe use Cognos. Seven of the top 10 insurance companies choose Cognos. Over 80 percent of the top 25 pharmaceutical companies worldwide use Cognos. Nine of the top ten consumer goods companies choose Cognos. Government departments covering health, defense, education, and entire state management overwhelmingly choose Cognos.

Cognos developments in online analytical processing (OLAP) software, complete reporting software, dynamic scorecarding, and now complete business intelligence in one product, on one modern architecture, demonstrate the company's bias for innovation.

About Cognos

Cognos is the world leader in business intelligence (BI) and performance planning software for the enterprise. Our solutions let companies improve and direct corporate performance by enabling all of the key steps in the management cycle—from planning and budgeting, to measuring and monitoring performance, to reporting and analysis. Cognos is the only company to support all of these key management activities with a complete solution that spans all of the essential components of CPM—enterprise planning, scorecarding, and business intelligence.

Founded in 1969, Cognos employs over 3,600 people and serves more than 23,000 customers in over 135 countries. For more information on Cognos please visit **www.cognos.com**

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