

The BI & Analytics Survey 26

The voice of the BI & analytics community

Sample, Products, Methodology and KPIs

This document provides background information to help gain a clearer understanding of The BI & Analytics Survey 26



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Data Decisions. Built on BARC.

BARC is the leading analyst firm for data & analytics, AI, corporate performance management (CPM) and ESG with a reputation for unbiased and trusted advice. Our expert analysts deliver a wide range of research, events and consulting services for the data & analytics community. Our innovative research evaluates software, vendors and service providers rigorously and highlights market trends, delivering insights that enable our customers to innovate with data, analytics and AI. BARC's 25 years of experience with data strategy & culture, data architecture, organization and software selection helps clients transform into truly data-driven organizations.

Research

BARC user surveys, software evaluations and analyst advisory services along with expert driven content such as research notes, trend analysis and blogs give organizations the confidence to make the right decisions. Our independent research gets to the heart of market developments, evaluates software, vendors and service providers thoroughly and gives valuable ideas on how to turn data, analytics and AI into added value and successfully transform businesses.

Consulting

The BARC consulting practice is entirely focused on translating companies' requirements into future-proof decisions. The holistic advice we provide helps companies successfully implement their data & analytics strategy and culture as well as their architecture and technology.

BARC's research and experience-founded expert input sets organizations on the road to the successful use of data & analytics, from strategy to optimized data-driven business processes.

Events

At BARC events, leading minds and industry experts come together to share insights and drive innovation. Our conferences, roundtables and online webinars attract over 10,000 participants annually, offering a unique blend of information, inspiration and interactivity. These events provide a platform to exchange ideas with peers, explore emerging trends and gain expert perspectives on market developments.

By engaging with thought leaders and industry practitioners, participants discover actionable strategies to enhance their business and stay ahead in the evolving world of data & analytics.

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Survey background

The BI & Analytics Survey 26 is the most comprehensive and fact-based analysis currently available on the BI and analytics software market. Unlike much analyst research, it is not based on anecdotal evidence or personal opinion, nor is it intended to measure market share. Instead, it focuses on identifying market trends and offering meaningful comparisons of competing products across a broad set of critical software and vendor-related criteria. The BI & Analytics Survey also delivers a detailed, data-driven analysis of why customers choose BI and analytics tools, how they use them, the challenges they face, and how successful those tools are in practice.

This is the 24th edition of The BI & Analytics Survey. It has been conducted annually since 2000. Based on the real-world experiences of 1,010 respondents, much of its value lies in the effective analysis of such an impressive, well-distributed sample.

The BI & Analytics Survey 26 features 18 BI and analytics products from 16 different vendors. It includes not just products from well-known global giants such as IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP, but also tools from smaller vendors that ordinarily don't get much press but which, in many cases, offer outstanding value to customers.

After data cleansing and removing responses from participants unable to answer specific questions about their use of BI and analytics products, we were left with a sample of 707 end users, 122 consultants and 62 vendor and reseller employees. Participants from all over the world took part in The BI & Analytics Survey 26.

The findings from The BI & Analytics Survey 26 are presented in several documents, each focusing on a specific set of the survey results.

Document	Description
The BI & Analytics Survey 26 - The Results	An overview and analysis of the most important product-related findings and topical results from The BI & Analytics Survey 26
The BI & Analytics Survey 26 - Sample, Products, Methodology and KPIs	Provides information about the sample and an overview of the survey methodology. It also includes descriptions of the KPIs we use in The BI & Analytics Survey, as well as details of our calculation methods.
The BI & Analytics Survey 26 - Vendor Performance Summaries	A series of executive reports on each product featured in The BI & Analytics Survey 26. Each report contains a product overview by BARC's analyst team plus a summary of the relevant product-related results from The BI & Analytics Survey.

The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer contains information on all The BI & Analytics Survey results and key performance indicators (KPIs). This online tool allows users to carry out their own analysis. The entire sample can be analyzed and it is also possible to filter results by region, company size and other criteria.

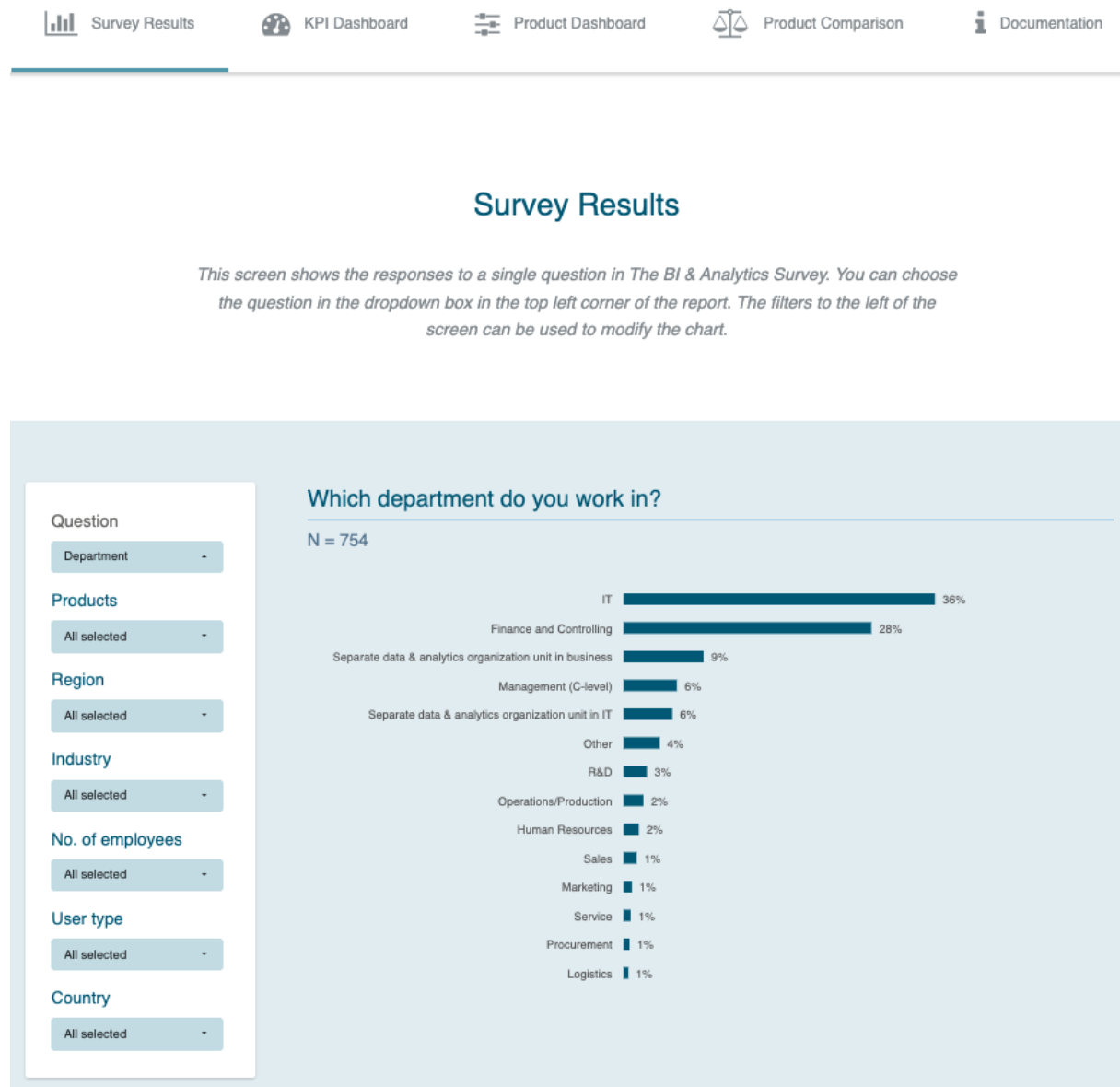


Figure 1: Screenshot from The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer online tool

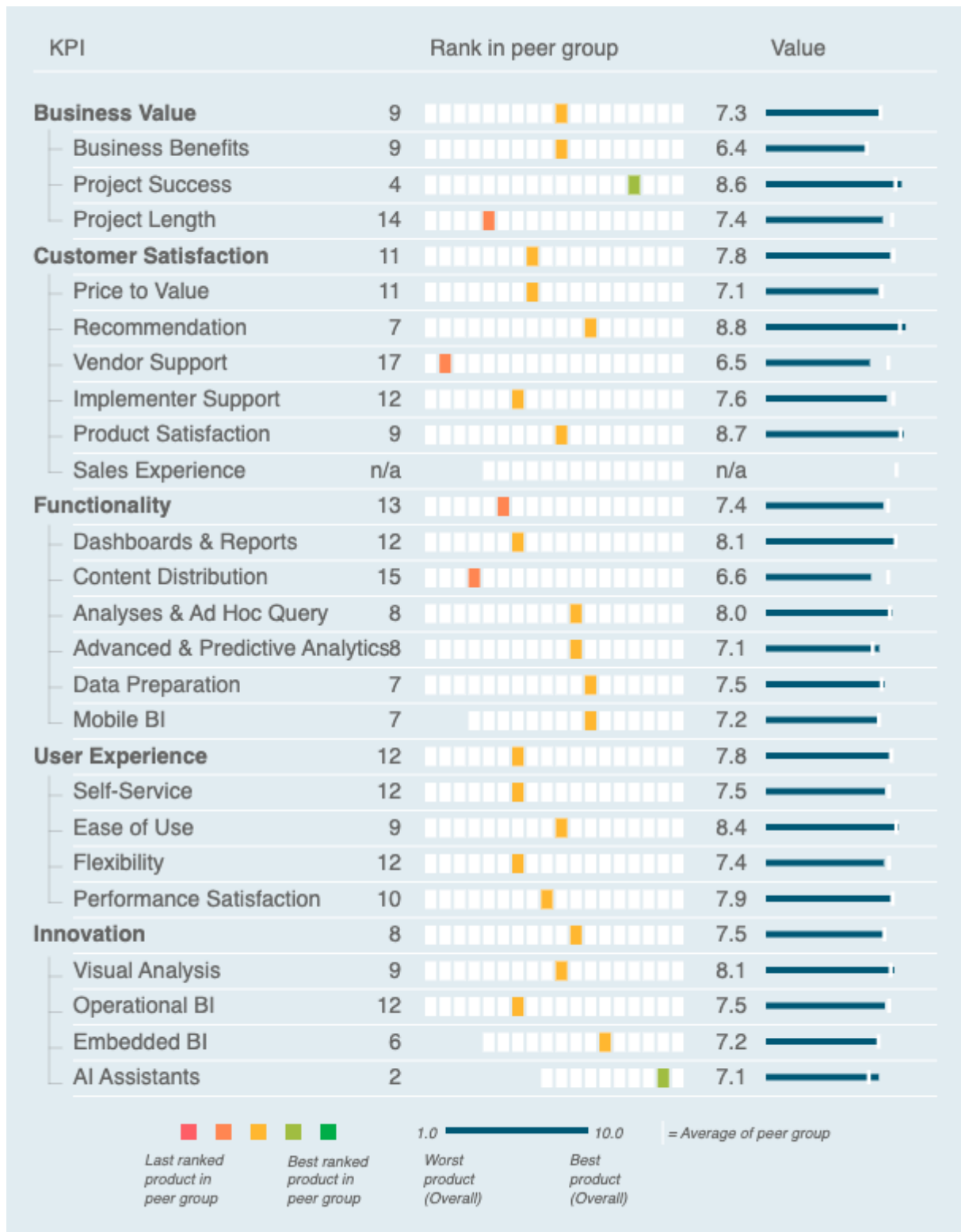


Figure 2: Screenshot from The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer online tool

The BI & Analytics Survey documents do not need to be read in sequence. *The Results* and the *Vendor Performance Summaries* can be read independently.

The *Sample, Products, Methodology and KPIs* (this document) provides additional background information.

The sample

Most surveys are conducted or sponsored by an organization based in, and focused on, one country. However, BI and analytics is a worldwide market and we wanted, as far as possible, to capture a large international sample. This not only presents a more accurate global picture but also allows international variations to be analyzed.

The three largest BI and analytics markets are the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom, so The BI & Analytics Survey 26 was produced as a collaboration between organizations in each of these countries, and in partnership with publishers and vendors in these and other countries. It features not just the well-known US products, but also products from other regions including Europe and Asia.

Sample size and make-up

Many thousands of people around the world were invited to participate in The BI & Analytics Survey 26 using social media, dozens of email lists, publications and websites. As in previous years, the questionnaire offered different sets of questions for vendors and users (or consultants answering on behalf of users). This seems to produce better quality data as, in the past, some vendors pretended to be users when they saw they were not being asked relevant questions.

Last year's participants who indicated that they would like to be part of our panel received a pre-filled questionnaire with their answers to last year's questions. They were asked to update their responses and then to answer the new questions in this year's survey.

The results of the online data collected are shown in the following chart, with the numbers of responses removed also displayed.

Table 1: Responses removed from the sample

	Responses
Total responses	1,010
Filtered during data cleansing	-77
Remaining after data cleansing (total answering questions)	933
Not yet considered buying	-42
Total answering questions	891

The number of responses is split between users, consultants, vendors and non-users. Vendors answered a different set of questions to those answered by end users. This document focuses on the analysis of the user results.

Table 2: Total responses analyzed in The BI & Analytics Survey 26

	Responses
Users	707
Consultants	122
All users	829
Vendors/Resellers	62

Geographical distribution

One of the key objectives of The BI & Analytics Survey is to achieve a geographically balanced sample that reflects the current global market for BI and analytics products. Therefore, the online questionnaire was published in three languages: English, German and French.

Having a geographically balanced sample has two major benefits:

Firstly, the results are more closely representative of the world market, rather than being largely based on US experience, as is the case with many other surveys.

In regions where knowledge of English is sparse, such as South America and much of Asia and southern Europe, it is difficult to obtain a good level of feedback and the BI and analytics market is less mature in these countries. Since the fourth edition of this survey, we have significantly boosted the German sample by specifically targeting users in German-speaking countries, using a fully translated online questionnaire. We also used a French questionnaire, further increasing our European coverage.

Organization sizes by headcount

BI and analytics products are most commonly found in large organizations and a high percentage of the responses we receive are from users in companies with more than 2,500 employees.

Nevertheless, mid-sized companies make up nearly half of this year's sample.

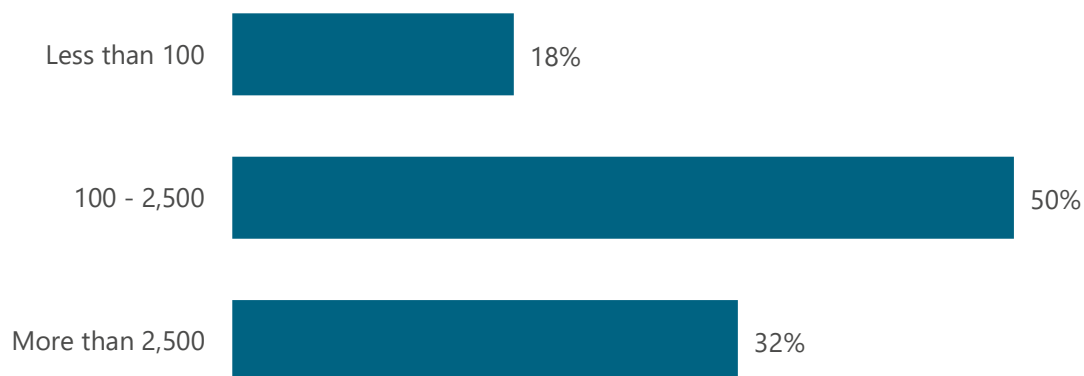


Figure 3: How many employees are there in your entire organization, including all of its branches, divisions and subsidiaries? (n=881)



Figure 4: How many employees are there in your entire organization, including all of its branches, divisions and subsidiaries? (n=881)

The following chart (Figure 5) shows the median headcount of respondents' companies analyzed by the product they answered questions about. Most of the products have a wide range of deployment sizes.

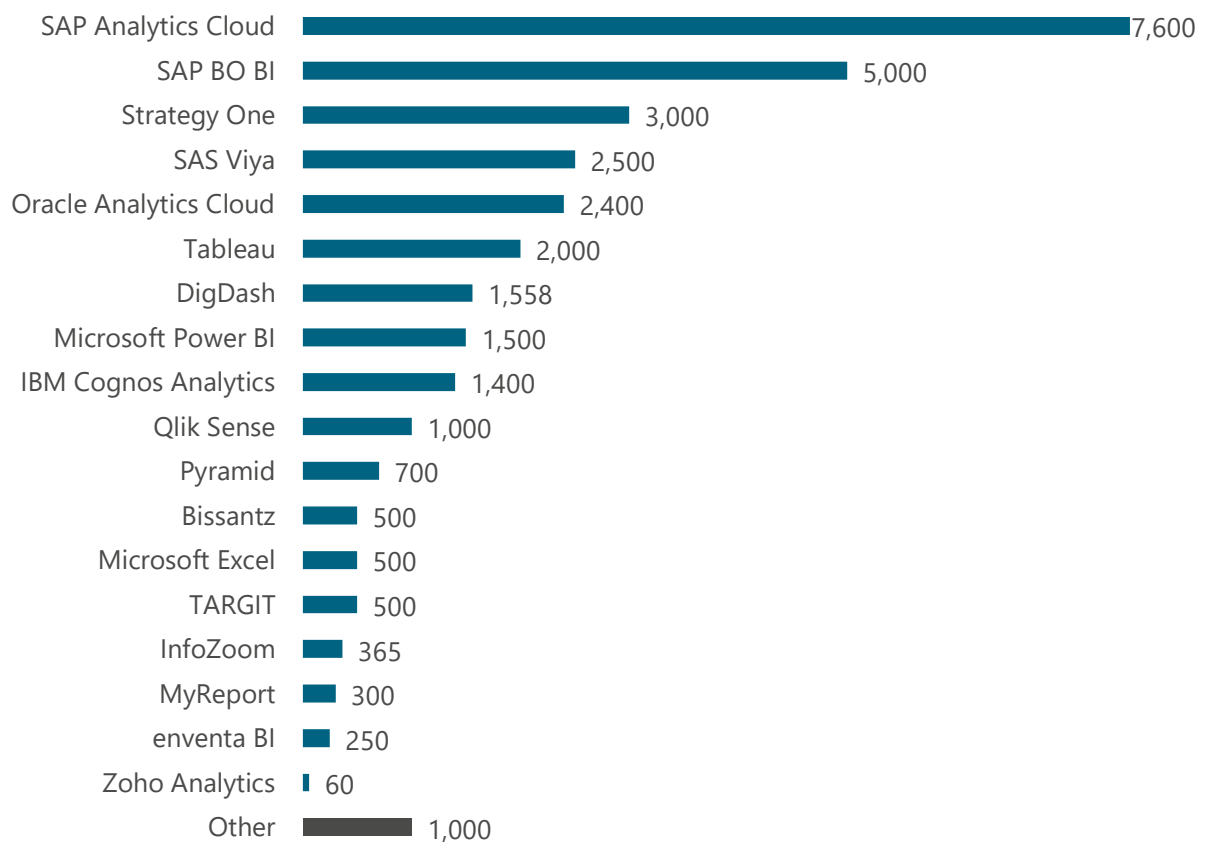


Figure 5: Median employee count of user organizations analyzed by product (n=819)

Vertical markets

We asked all respondents their company's industry sector. The chart below shows the results of this question and only includes data from respondents who answered product-related questions in The BI & Analytics Survey. Manufacturing tops the list this year, followed by financial services, retail/wholesale and services.

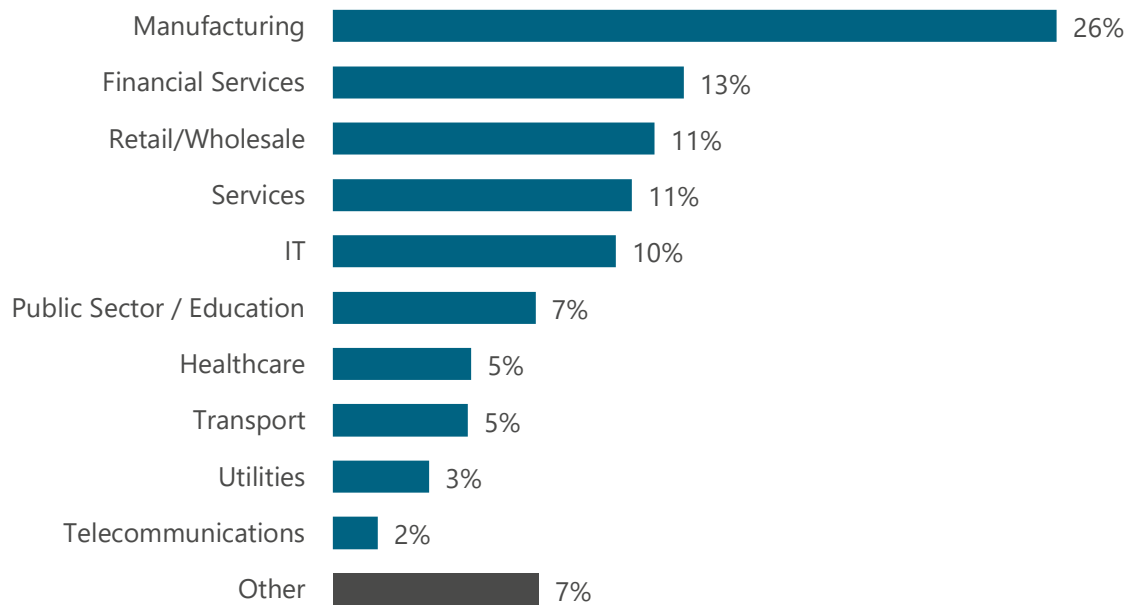


Figure 6: Which of the following best describes your organization's industry sector? (n=871)

Featured products

When grouping and describing the products featured in The BI & Analytics Survey, we do not strictly follow the naming conventions that the vendors use. In some cases, we combine various products to make analysis more convenient. In those cases, we have labeled the groups of products as shown in Table 3. Note that the names we use in this document are our own and are not always the official product names used by the vendors.

One of the key reasons for this is that the products we analyze are not necessarily the latest version of the software. Vendors will often change a product's name between versions, making it difficult to have a single official name for several versions of the same product.

Another reason is that we sometimes bundle related products into a single group to increase the sample size, even if the vendor prefers to view them as distinct for marketing reasons. In both these cases, the point is not to challenge the naming conventions of the vendor, but simply to reduce the complexity of the survey findings for the convenience of the reader. In some cases, we also shorten the names of the products to improve the formatting of the charts.

We asked respondents explicitly about their experiences with products from a predefined list, with the option to nominate other products. This list is updated each year and is based on the sample size of the products in the previous year, as well as additional new products in the BI and analytics market. Our predefined list can be found at the end of this document. In cases where respondents said they were using an 'other' product, but from the context it was clear that they were using one of the listed products, we reclassified their data accordingly.

We solicited responses on all surviving products with more than a minimal response in last year's survey, plus a few others whose numbers have potentially grown to the point where there is enough data to be analyzed.

The following table shows the products included in the detailed analysis. The number of the 'other' responses is also included in this chart.

Table 3: Products included in the sample (excluding 'don't know')

Product label	Product name	Respondents
Microsoft Power BI	Microsoft Power BI (Microsoft Fabric)	139
SAP Analytics Cloud	SAP Analytics Cloud (SAP Business Data Cloud)	49
Qlik Sense	Qlik Sense	45
InfoZoom	InfoZoom	44
TARGIT	TARGIT Decision Suite	39
DigDash	DigDash	33
Microsoft Excel	Microsoft Excel	33
Pyramid	Pyramid Analytics	33
Tableau	Tableau	33
SAS Viya	SAS Viya (Visual Analytics, Visual Statistics)	32
Bissantz	Bissantz DeltaMaster	28
enventa BI	enventa BI	25
MyReport	MyReport	24
Strategy One	Strategy One (formerly MicroStrategy)	24
Zoho Analytics	Zoho Analytics	22
IBM Cognos Analytics	IBM Cognos Analytics	22
Oracle Analytics Cloud	Oracle Analytics Cloud, Oracle Analytics Server	21
SAP BO BI	SAP BusinessObjects BI	21

The last few years have seen an increase in the proportion of German respondents. This is partly due to cooperation with German vendors and the presence of strong German subsidiaries of international vendors, reflected through providers such as SAP.

The following table contains the products that generated responses but are not included in the detailed analysis. In The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer, these products are grouped together under the label 'Other'.

Other Products

Amazon QuickSight

Board

Dimensional Insight Diver Platform

Domo

Entrinsik Informer

GoodData

ibi WebFOCUS (formerly Information Builders)

IBM Planning Analytics (formerly IBM Cognos TM1)

InsFocus

Jedox

Looker, part of Google Cloud

Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)

QlikView

Sisense

Peer groups

Peer groups are used to ensure that similar products are compared against each other both in fairness to the vendor and for the benefit of the end user. The groups are essential to allow fair and useful comparisons of products that are likely to compete. They are primarily based on the results from the survey, how customers say they use the product and our knowledge of the products.

Peer groups act as a guide to the reader to help make the products easier to understand and to show why individual products return such disparate results. They are not intended to be a judgment of the quality of the products. Most products appear in more than one peer group.

The peer groups are defined using the criteria described in the following table. These peer groups are used in a consistent way in our analysis as well as in The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer.

Table 4: Peer group descriptions

Peer group	Description
Report & Dashboard Focus	Includes products that mainly focus on the creation and distribution of standardized and governed content such as dashboards and reports.
Analysis Focus	Includes products that mainly focus on ad hoc query, data navigation and analysis (creation of new information and insights).
Midsize/Departmental Implementations	Products in this peer group are typically (but not exclusively) used in small and midsize scenarios and/or departmental implementations with a moderate number of users and data volumes.
Large/Enterprise-Wide Implementations	Products in this peer group are typically (but not exclusively) used in large scenarios and/or enterprise-wide implementations with large numbers of users and data volumes.
International BI Giants	Includes products from companies with annual revenues of \$400m+ and a truly international reach (partner ecosystem, on-site locations, global installations and revenues).

Table 5: Products by peer group matrix

	Report & Dashboard Focus	Analysis Focus	Midsize/ Departmental Implementations	Large/Enterprise-Wide Implementations	Inter-national BI Giants
Bissantz	X	X	X		
DigDash	X		X		
enventa BI	X	X	X		
IBM Cognos Analytics	X	X		X	X
InfoZoom		X	X		
Microsoft Excel		X	X		X
Microsoft Power BI	X			X	X
MyReport	X		X		
Oracle Analytics Cloud	X	X		X	X
Pyramid	X	X		X	
Qlik Sense	X	X		X	X
SAP Analytics Cloud	X	X		X	X
SAP BO BI	X	X		X	X
SAS Viya	X	X		X	X
Strategy One	X	X		X	X
Tableau	X	X		X	X
TARGIT	X	X	X		
Zoho Analytics	X	X	X		

Overview of the key calculations in The BI & Analytics Survey 26

Measuring business benefits

Business benefits are the real reason for carrying out any BI and analytics project and The BI & Analytics Survey has been studying them directly for years. We ask respondents the extent to which they realize a list of benefits.

For each potential benefit, respondents are asked to indicate the level of achievement, if any, with five levels (+ "Don't know"). We use a weighted scoring system, as shown in the table below, to derive a composite score for each of the possible benefits, based on the level of benefit achieved. We call this the BBI (Business Benefits Index).

Table 6: The Business Benefits Index weighting system

Level of benefit reported	Weighting
Fully	10
To a large extent	7.5
Somewhat	5
Little	2.5
Not at all	0

This rating system is the basis of the most important index in The BI & Analytics Survey. It is a dimensionless number with an arbitrary value, but as long as the weighting system remains constant it can be used for comparisons between segments of the sample, such as the sample for individual products or regions, to name just two.

Participants were asked to rate each benefit. Business benefits are calculated by counting the number of each reported level of benefit and multiplying this number by the corresponding weighting. The products are then divided by the number of responses for that particular benefit to find the average response.

The figure below shows an overview of the answers we received to the business benefits questions.

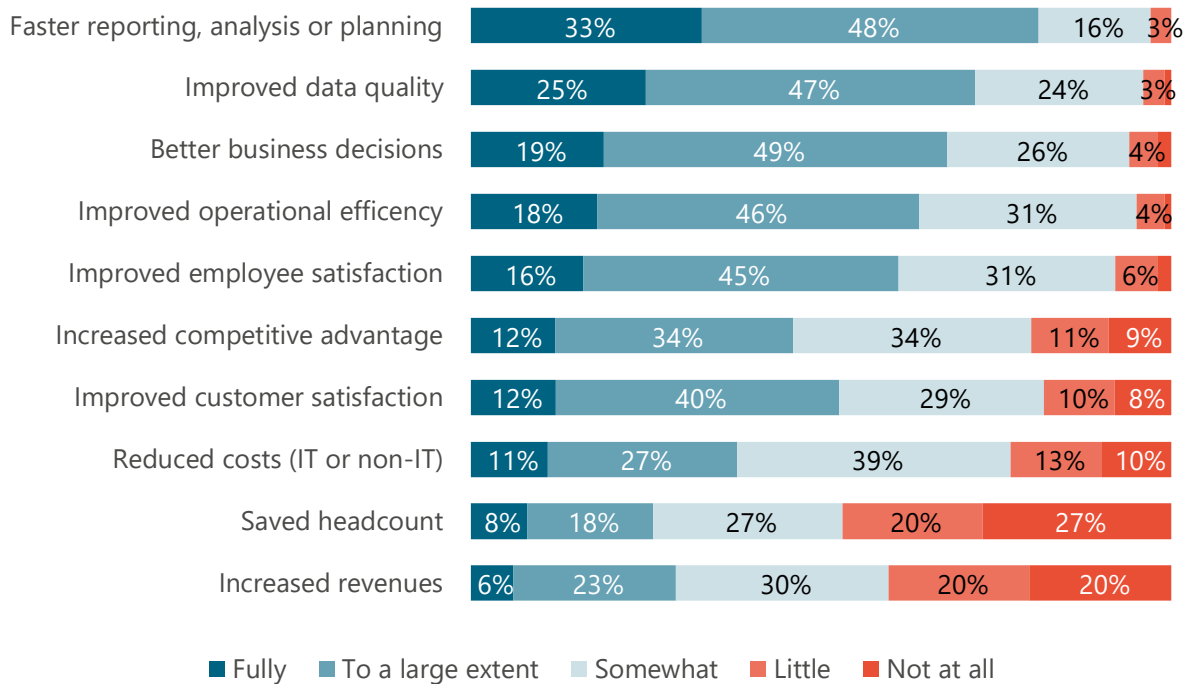


Figure 7: Benefits overview (n=792)

'Faster reporting, analysis or planning' is the benefit most likely to be achieved. This is a similar result to previous years and we would expect this of any system whose primary purpose is to deliver analysis and reports. A large majority — around 97 percent — said that this benefit had been achieved to some degree. However, it could be argued that improved reporting is not in itself a business benefit; it is how the improved reports are used that determines whether business benefits are achieved.

'Improved data quality' overtook 'better business decisions' this year to become the second most likely benefit to be achieved, with around 97 percent claiming to have done so to some extent. We expect all BI and analytics projects would hope to achieve this benefit, but it is not possible to predict this outcome while planning and attempting to cost-justify a project.

Project success

We asked participants to rate the success of their implementation project, considering aspects such as the implementation of business aspects, the technical implementation and completion within the timeframe and budget originally set. The responses are weighted to calculate the *Project Success* KPI.

The weightings of the possible responses are shown in the following chart.

Table 7: Responses and weightings for *Project Success*

Level of project success reported	Weighting
Very good	10
Good	7.5
Satisfactory	5
Poor	2.5
Very poor	0

Means and medians

This survey makes frequent references to different forms of averages — means and medians. Just in case your statistical knowledge is a little rusty, here is a quick reminder of the definition of the terms:

The mean is the usual arithmetic average. Its value is affected by every value in the sample, so a single large outlier can materially affect the mean, particularly with small samples.

The median is the value in the middle of the sample; that is, half of the sample is larger than the median and the other half is smaller. It could be regarded as the 'typical value' and is affected by the number, but not the value, of outliers. One or two large or small outliers therefore do not affect the median.

Understanding multiple response questions

Several questions in The BI & Analytics Survey 26 allow the user to make multiple responses. For example, we asked users what problems (if any) they encountered in their projects. Because many users had more than one problem, the number of responses is larger than the number of respondents.

This means that there are two ways to calculate the percentage of a given response: based on the total number of responses or based on the total number of respondents. We present The BI & Analytics Survey results based on the number of respondents.

Calculating percentages based on the number of respondents tells us how likely a given respondent is to have the problem but results in percentages higher than 100 percent when all the problems are added together. Conversely, calculating percentages based on the total number of responses would result in a total of 100 percent.

Survey data collection

The BI & Analytics Survey 26 was conducted by BARC, with data captured from mid-March to early June 2025. All data was captured online from a total of 1,010 respondents.

Respondents were solicited individually from several vendors and via independent lists and websites from a number of countries.

At our request, most of the vendors notified their customers about The BI & Analytics Survey using either their regular newsletters, social media or websites. We also asked some bloggers to mention the survey. Each list and website had a different URL, though in all cases, the same questionnaire (in English, German and French) was used.

Product picklist used in The BI & Analytics Survey 26

Amazon QuickSight	Oracle Analytics (Cloud, Server)
Bissantz DeltaMaster	Pyramid Analytics
Board	Qlik Sense
DigDash	QlikView
Dimensional Insight Diver Platform	SAP Analysis for Office
Domo	SAP Analytics Cloud
Entrinsik Informer	SAP BO Web Intelligence
Enventa BI	SAP Crystal Reports
GoodData	SAP Lumira
ibi WebFOCUS (formerly Information Builders)	SAS Visual Analytics and Visual Statistics
IBM Cognos Analytics (formerly IBM Cognos BI)	SAS Viya
IBM Planning Analytics (formerly IBM Cognos TM1)	Sisense
InfoZoom	Spotfire
InsFocus	Strategy One (former MicroStrategy)
insightsoftware Logi Symphony	Tableau
Jedox	TARGIT Decision Suite
Looker, part of Google Cloud	Tellius
Microsoft Excel (Excel only and Power Pivot)	ThoughtSpot
Microsoft Power BI	Yellowfin
Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)	Zoho Analytics
MyReport	

Understanding the KPIs

The goal of this document is to help the reader spot winners and losers in The BI & Analytics Survey 26 using well designed dashboards packed with concise information. The BI & Analytics Survey includes 5 aggregated KPIs, which can be absorbed at a glance. It also includes a set of 23 normalized KPIs, which we refer to as 'root' KPIs for each of the 18 products. The 'aggregated' KPIs are aggregations of these root KPIs.

This year we have calculated a set of KPIs for each of the 5 peer groups. The values are normalized on the whole sample. Peer groups are used to enable fair and useful comparisons of products that are likely to compete.

The KPIs all follow these simple rules:

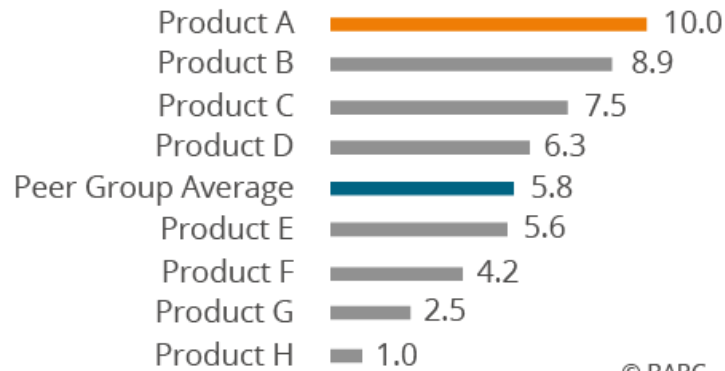
- Only measures that have a clear good/bad trend are used as the basis for KPIs.
- KPIs may be based on one or more measures from The BI & Analytics Survey.
- Only products with samples of at least 15-30 (depending on the KPI) for each of the questions that feed into the KPI are included.
- Each KPI is measured on a scale from 0 (lowest possible value) to 10 (highest possible value).
- In some instances, adjustments are made to account for extreme outliers.

KPIs are only calculated if the samples have at least 15-30 data points (this varies from KPI to KPI) and if the KPI in question is applicable to a product. Therefore, some products do not have a full set of root KPIs. It is important to exclude KPIs based on small (and therefore not representative) samples to ensure that the graph scales are not distorted by outlier KPIs. In such cases, the product is still shown in the tables, but with a blank KPI value and no bar in the bullet graph or bar chart.

Reading the KPI charts

We provide two different types of dashboards for viewing the KPIs. The first type is the Product Dashboard. A Product Dashboard displays all the KPIs for a single product. The second type is the KPI Dashboard, which displays the KPI values for each product in a peer group.

The KPIs are presented using simple bar charts.



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This chart represents the results for one KPI in one peer group and includes only a subset of the products featured in the survey.

Figure 8: KPI Dashboard used for displaying KPIs

Products are sorted by value in the KPI Dashboards. The better the product, the higher the value. The scale starts at zero and the KPI score of all the products in the chart is indicated. The sample average in each chart is represented by a blue bar.

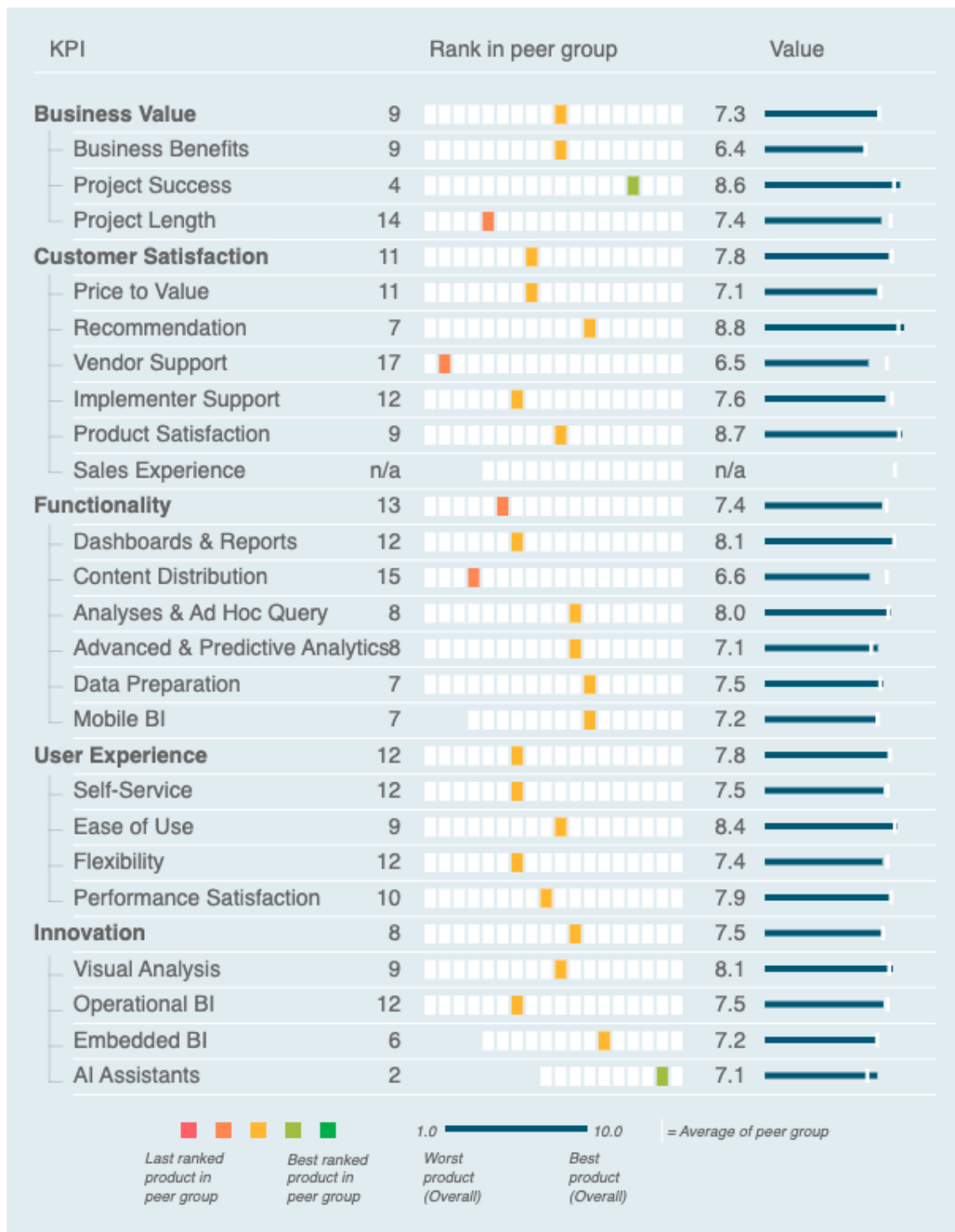


Figure 9: Product Dashboard used for displaying KPIs in the Analyzer

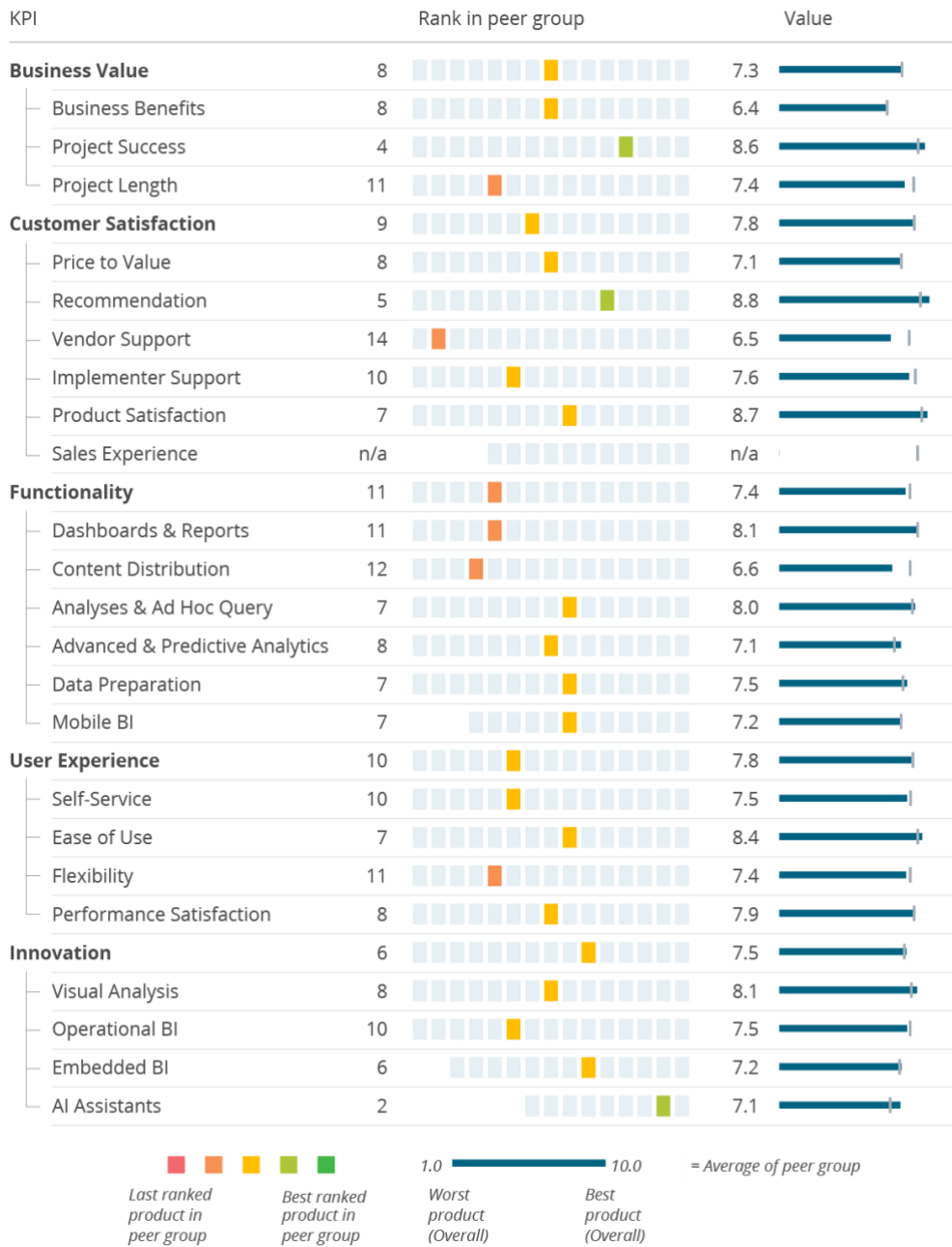


Figure 10: Product Dashboard used for displaying KPIs in the Vendor Performance Summaries

In Figure 9 and Figure 10, the blue bars on the right represent the KPI values for the product in question in each KPI. The gray/white vertical line represents the peer group average. The colored squares/bars in the middle represent the product's rank in the peer group for each KPI.

The aggregated KPIs

The calculation of aggregated KPIs is described in the following table. The aggregates are based on a weighted scoring of the root KPIs according to the importance of each root KPI to the aggregated KPI.

Table 8: Aggregated and root KPIs

Aggregated KPIs	Root KPIs
Business Value	Business Benefits
	Project Success
	Project Length
Customer Satisfaction	Price to Value
	Recommendation
	Vendor Support
	Implementer Support
	Product Satisfaction
	Sales Experience
Functionality	Dashboards & Reports
	Content Distribution
	Analyses & Ad Hoc Query
	Advanced & Predictive Analytics
	Data Preparation
	Mobile BI
User Experience	Self-Service
	Ease of Use
	Flexibility
	Performance Satisfaction
Innovation	Visual Analysis
	Operational BI
	Embedded BI
	AI Assistants

How to use the KPIs

Different readers will have their own views on which of these KPIs are important to them. For example, some people will regard *Ease of Use* as very important, whereas others may regard *Recommendation* or *Innovation* as more important.

The aggregated KPIs above provide a good selection from which readers can choose those that they regard as key to their requirements.

Peer groups

Complete sample

We use responses from users of all products to calculate product-independent analyses. A typical question might be: What proportion of all your organization's employees currently makes regular use of BI and analytics software? This question can be analyzed per product, but it can also be analyzed without reference to any specific product to provide insight into the market as a whole.

Products with less than 20 data points are included in the 'others' group.

In The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer, you will find the results for the complete sample in the 'Survey Results' tab.

The KPIs (overview)

The following section contains the entire list of KPIs calculated for The BI & Analytics Survey 26, as well as a description of the calculations.

KPIs are only calculated if the samples (from The BI & Analytics Survey) have at least 15 data points (depending on the KPI), so some of the products do not have a full set of root KPIs. It is important to exclude KPIs based on small (and therefore unreliable) samples to ensure that the graph scales are not distorted by outlier KPIs based on small data samples. In such cases, the KPI is displayed in Product Dashboards with a blank value and the product is excluded from the relevant KPI Dashboards. For example, the sample of responses to our question in a previous edition about data preparation from Looker users was too small to assign a *Data Preparation* KPI value to Looker. Therefore, a blank KPI value was assigned to Looker in the Product Dashboard bar chart and Looker did not appear in the *Data Preparation* KPI Dashboards.

All the KPIs are presented in The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer web application, both as Product Dashboards and KPI Dashboards.

Business Value

Every BI and analytics project should be conceived with the idea of bringing value to the business, maximizing its direct impact on the company's performance. The *Business Value* KPI is possibly the most important KPI of all as it captures the bottom-line impact of BI and analytics initiatives. Business intelligence that does not deliver a return on investment is superfluous.

The *Business Value* KPI reflects the measurable benefits customers can enjoy from the successful, timely implementation of a BI and analytics solution. The KPI is an aggregation of the *Business Benefits*, *Project Success* and *Project Length* KPIs.

Business Benefits

What we measure

We assess the tangible benefits of BI and analytics projects post-implementation from multiple perspectives. The primary purpose of BI and analytics products is to process company data and deliver the information needed for informed decisions. The potential benefits are broad – ranging from improved decision-making to operational efficiencies that affect employees, as well as enhanced customer satisfaction.

Why it is important

Unlike core transaction systems, BI and analytics projects are discretionary investments. They must demonstrably “pay their way” by delivering business benefits; otherwise, they risk becoming cost centers rather than value creators. The *Business Benefits* KPI makes this explicit by quantifying impact – not just activity. In doing so, it turns BI and analytics from “nice to have” into a disciplined, value-managed capability that ensures investments translate into measurable performance improvements.

How we measure

We ask users to judge project benefits based on real measurements the company has made. Using this information, we combined respondents' answers to calculate the Business Benefits Index (BBI). The KPI represents the average BBI score per product.

The following benefits were assessed by survey participants:

- Better business decisions
- Faster and more accurate reporting, analysis or planning
- Improved (external) customer satisfaction
- Improved data quality & trust in data
- Improved employee satisfaction
- Increased revenues
- Reduced costs
- Saved headcount
- Improved operational efficiency
- Increased competitive advantage

Project Success

What we measure

We ask users to rate the success of their implementation project, taking into account factors such as the implementation of business aspects, the technical implementation and completion within the timeframe/budget originally set.

Why it is important

The initial success of a BI and analytics project is critical for several reasons. Early outcomes strongly influence the long-term business benefits. Past editions of this survey have consistently shown that prolonged projects tend to exceed initial budgets, deliver fewer benefits than anticipated and often create additional complications. Satisfied users become ambassadors who champion adoption and help the solution scale across the organization. BI and analytics initiatives deliver greater enterprise value when more employees have access to governed data and actively use it to make decisions.

How we measure

We ask users to rate the success of their implementations on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". The KPI is calculated by averaging the ratings for each product.

Project Length

What we measure

We measure how satisfied respondents were with the time it took to implement their chosen BI and analytics product.

Why it is important

Rapid implementation is a key measure of project success. Our research over the years has shown that projects with about a three-month implementation time deliver the greatest business benefits.

How we measure

We ask users to rate their satisfaction with the time it took to implement their chosen BI and analytics product. To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is multifaceted and not easily captured by a single number. To provide a robust measure, we aggregate six root KPIs – *Price to Value*, *Recommendation*, *Vendor Support*, *Implementer Support*, *Product Satisfaction* and *Sales Experience* – into a composite *Customer Satisfaction* KPI. These factors are interrelated: when one is weak, the importance of the others becomes more pronounced.

Price to Value

What we measure

We ask participants to judge the price-performance ratio of their chosen product.

Why it is important

Price-to-value is an important metric in today's cost-conscious age. As many companies have found, the cost of buying and supporting BI and analytics software quickly adds up, especially when attempting to cost-justify adding new users. As more BI and analytics capabilities are pushed out to the business, this perception of value becomes even more critical.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate the price-performance ratio of their chosen product on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Recommendation

What we measure

We measure whether customers already using a product are likely to recommend it to others.

Why it is important

No one knows more about how a product performs in the real world than the customers already using it. All too often, they find that products do not live up to expectations, or that the vendor does not support it properly. Therefore, if existing users say they would recommend the product, we regard this as a positive indicator of its value.

How we measure

To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product based on how likely respondents say they are to recommend the product they are most familiar with.

Vendor Support

What we measure

We measure user satisfaction with the level of support provided for the product by the vendor.

Why it is important

The product support provided by the vendor is a key determinant of project success – and its impact goes beyond implementation. Our survey results also show a clear link between realized business benefits and the availability of local support, underscoring its importance. This is an area where there are major differences between vendor ratings.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate the quality of the vendor's support on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To arrive at the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Implementer Support

What we measure

We measure user satisfaction with the level of support provided by the implementer.

Why it is important

As noted in the *Vendor Support* section above, the availability of local support benefits not only project success but also the product's overall impact on company performance. Typically, first-level support is provided by implementers, who often operate locally and understand the customer's needs. As with *Vendor Support*, we observe significant differences across products in this area. The implementer's role can be just as critical as the vendor's in ensuring outcomes and sustaining value.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate the support they received from the implementer on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Product Satisfaction

What we measure

We measure the level of satisfaction with the BI and analytics capabilities of each user's chosen product.

Why it is important

Product satisfaction is a leading indicator of sustained value and adoption. Satisfied users log in more often, explore features and embed insights into daily decisions. Higher usage correlates with greater business value.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their level of satisfaction with their chosen product on a scale of "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Sales Experience

What we measure

We measure user satisfaction with the sales and presales activities of the vendor of their chosen product, taking into account factors such as receiving timely and comprehensive answers to product-related questions, the vendor's ability to understand the needs of their business, flexibility in terms of pricing/contract, industry/domain-specific knowledge, the fulfillment of marketing/sales promises and general conduct.

Why it is important

In a competitive market like the BI and analytics software market, a highly professional sales organization is essential in order to become successful and continue to win new customers. In an increasingly complex, competitive and digitalized world, vendors that can quickly understand organizations' needs, provide industry-specific knowledge and offer competitive pricing and contract flexibility are more likely to create a positive sales/purchasing experience for the customer. A positive experience in this regard can be as important to making the right software decision as functional and technical considerations.

How we measure

We ask users to rate the sales and presales activities of the vendor of their chosen product on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Functionality

A BI and analytics platform is designed to support decision-making by transforming data into actionable information. This is typically achieved by offering a broad range of capabilities. To represent product functionality, we aggregate six root KPIs – *Dashboards & Reports*, *Content Distribution*, *Analyses & Ad Hoc Query*, *Advanced & Predictive Analytics*, *Data Preparation* and *Mobile BI* – into a single composite KPI. These dimensions are interrelated: when one is lacking, the importance of the others becomes more pronounced.

Dashboards & Reports

What we measure

This KPI is based on how highly users rate their BI and analytics tool for creating reports and dashboards (functional breadth for formatting, layout, interactivity etc.).

Why it is important

Dashboards and reports are the core content types in most BI and analytics tools. While they often present different levels of detail, they share a common goal: supporting better decisions. Modern decision-makers expect information in their preferred format, on the device of their choice, at the time they need it – so a strong BI platform must adapt to these expectations.

Key capabilities for content creation include data selection, data visualization and formatting/layout. Buyers should assess whether a product's features meet current needs and are flexible enough to accommodate foreseeable requirements as the organization evolves.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product's functionality for creating reports and dashboards on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Content Distribution

What we measure

This KPI is based on how highly users rate their BI and analytics tool in terms of its support for the distribution of content such as reports and dashboards.

Why it is important

BI and analytics tools unlock their full potential by making the information they derive from data available to as many decision-makers as possible. This includes generating personalized content and delivering it regularly to the relevant users. Content – especially reports – is typically distributed via email or through a portal as PDF or HTML documents. Large enterprises, in particular, benefit from robust, scalable distribution capabilities that can reliably reach hundreds or even thousands of recipients.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product's functionality for the distribution of content (print, mail, export, burst, schedule, alert) on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Analyses & Ad Hoc Query

What we measure

This KPI is based on how highly users rate their BI and analytics tool in terms of its support for creating ad hoc queries (usability, semantic model) and for performing analyses (navigation, visual support, automated insights).

Why it is important

Ad hoc query and analysis are essential in today's volatile markets, giving enterprises fast, flexible access to relevant data and the ability to examine it from every angle. Consequently, this is a key capability that buyers prioritize when selecting tools. While approaches to answering urgent business questions and uncovering insights may differ, the goal remains the same: broad, flexible access to data for all users.

Efficiently and effectively querying data requires sophisticated semantic models such as relational semantic models, cubes or proprietary data sets generated through data preparation. Each has different strengths and weaknesses and is destined to support different styles of analyses and ad hoc queries from visual analyses to dimensional (OLAP) analyses and ad hoc queries fired against relational sources.

The flexibility to navigate, slice and dice data, and calculate deviations and KPIs is as important as ease of use for meeting the information needs of a broad business audience. In the era of AI, semantic understanding and natural language interaction with data are increasingly critical to engage less technical users and broaden adoption.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product's support for creating ad hoc queries and for performing analyses on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Advanced & Predictive Analytics

What we measure

This KPI is based on how highly users rate their BI and analytics tool in terms of its support for advanced and predictive analytics (availability and quality of statistical methods, predictive, data mining models and/or ML models).

Why it is important

BI and analytics originated from using historical enterprise data to generate insights for the future. Today, advanced and predictive analytics enable a proactive, forward-looking approach by applying algorithms to identify clusters, patterns and trends. With the ability to forecast outcomes, companies can tailor more relevant offers for customers and optimize maintenance schedules for greater cost efficiency.

For advanced users – such as data scientists – modern BI and analytics platforms provide integration points for languages and frameworks like Python, as well as Jupyter Notebook environments that offer a familiar space to build and run models and scripts.

Increasingly, advanced analytics capabilities are also embedded in business-user-oriented BI. They power automated insights, guide data preparation and offer visualization recommendations, and are often delivered as prebuilt, no-code functions that broaden access to sophisticated analysis.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product's support for advanced and predictive analytics on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Data Preparation

What we measure

This KPI is based on how users rate their BI tool in terms of its functionality to access and prepare data for use in reporting and analysis.

Why it is important

Efficient, agile data preparation is critical in today's economy. It enables organizations to leverage enterprise and external data at scale – optimizing processes and unlocking new, innovative business models. As the number of data sources and formats grows, this capability becomes even more important and is therefore a core capability of a modern BI and analytics product.

To accelerate agility, data preparation is increasingly performed within business departments. That means tools must be user-friendly for business analysts and include features such as previews, data quality checks, outlier detection, transformation suggestions and other predefined functions that simplify usage.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product in terms of its data preparation functionality on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To arrive at the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Mobile BI

What we measure

This KPI is based on how users rate their BI and analytics tool in terms of its support for use cases on mobile devices.

Why it is important

Mobile BI delivers information to decision-makers whenever and wherever they need it, by supporting the mobile devices they use. It's not just for traveling managers – it's also used on production lines, in hospitals and across many operational, often mission-critical processes. What began as a trend has become standard functionality in BI and analytics platforms. However, reflecting the diversity of use cases, capabilities vary widely – from simple mobile browser output to full support for building mobile applications, native gestures and beyond.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product in terms of its mobile BI and analytics capabilities on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

User Experience

Delivering a superior customer and user experience is more important than ever. BI and analytics professionals don't want to have to spend a lot of time figuring out how a product works, attempting to learn interfaces or waiting around for a query to finish. With the current vogue for agility and self-service capabilities and the increasing need for users to be able to access a variety of data sources, the user experience of a BI and analytics product is an important consideration for many organizations. Therefore, it's not surprising that ease of use for report recipients and report creators are among the top reasons why customers choose their BI and analytics software.

To calculate the quality of customer experience of a BI and analytics tool, we combine the *Self-Service*, *Ease of Use*, *Flexibility* and *Performance Satisfaction* KPIs.

Self-Service

What we measure

This KPI is based on how users rate their BI and analytics tool's support for self-service (i.e., how easily business users can create reports and dashboards).

Why it is important

Self-service is about giving business users the flexibility and speed to turn data into actionable information. Business analysts need data at their fingertips, along with capabilities to create measures and visualize results so stakeholders receive the insights they need to take action. By empowering users directly, self-service BI accelerates processes and reduces reliance on intermediaries. Independence from IT-managed workflows is a frequently cited requirement in BI and analytics projects. Accordingly, self-service tools must be especially easy to use, provide access to the necessary data and offer robust options for sharing results.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their chosen product in terms of its support for self-service BI and analytics on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Flexibility

What we measure

Flexibility is inherently subjective. Our metric captures respondents' perceptions of their BI and analytics software's flexibility for two main user groups: creators and consumers.

Why it is important

With the rise of agility and self-service, both creators and consumers need broad, flexible access to diverse data sources – creators to produce and refine insights, and consumers to apply them in daily decisions. For years, flexibility has ranked among the top reasons why organizations replace software, underscoring its importance to the enterprise.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate the flexibility of their chosen BI and analytics product. To arrive at the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Ease of Use

What we measure

Ease of use differs by audience and skill level. Our metric captures how respondents rate the usability of their BI and analytics software for multiple user categories.

Why it is important

Ease of use is often considered the holy grail of software and is crucial for vendors aiming to expand their footprint within enterprises. Our survey consistently places ease of use among the top reasons organizations choose – or reject – a product. Business decision-makers don't want lengthy training, complex interfaces or the risk of poor user adoption. They want solutions that people can pick up quickly and use effectively.

How we measure

This KPI is based on how various user types (content creators and content consumers) rate the ease of use of their BI and analytics tool on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product in which each user type is given equal weighting.

Performance Satisfaction

What we measure

Measuring performance satisfaction is challenging because it's highly subjective. Each user has a personal definition of "fast", which often makes raw timing metrics (e.g., seconds) less meaningful. In many cases, performance complaints are more informative than stopwatch measurements, since acceptable delays vary by use case and context. We therefore assess user satisfaction with system performance on a scale from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied".

Why it is important

Performance satisfaction is critical in BI and analytics projects and often determines overall outcomes. Our survey data shows that performance issues are both the most common product-related problem and one of the most frequently reported issues overall in recent years. Moreover, poor query performance directly reduces the business benefits realized, making it more than a purely technical concern. In fact, it impacts adoption, decision quality and ROI.

How we measure

We ask participants how satisfied they are with the performance of their chosen product. To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Innovation

New ideas and technologies are the lifeblood of the software industry. However, some vendors prefer to rest on their laurels, relying on existing technologies and lucrative maintenance contracts with loyal customers. If a BI and analytics tool cannot keep up with recent developments, it becomes outdated very quickly and cannot deliver the same level of benefits as rival tools.

The *Innovation* KPI looks at four technologies – *Visual Analysis*, *Operational BI*, *Embedded BI* and *AI Assistants* – to measure a product's level of innovation.

Crucially, we do not investigate whether the vendor has promised to support the above use cases. Instead, we measure how highly customers rate the product's support for them.

Visual Analysis

What we measure

We measure how survey respondents rate their BI and analytics product's support for visual analysis (flexible analysis using interactive navigation in data using visualizations).

Why it is important

Visual analysis enables decision-makers to quickly digest insights on trends through highly visual representations. As data grows increasingly complex, many decision-makers find they can more readily see insights and detect outliers if they are plotted in visual charts and graphs, versus being buried in data tables. This is an important feature that is increasingly being sought by enterprises seeking more effective ways for decision-makers to absorb and act on data.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their BI and analytics product's support for visual analysis on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Operational BI

What we measure

We measure how survey respondents rate their BI and analytics product's support for operational BI (detailed reporting with current or real-time data).

Why it is important

Operationalization of BI is one of the most important trends in the BI and analytics area. In operational BI, insights are derived from data coming directly out of production or operational systems. Analysis results are used directly in operational processes for ad hoc monitoring, the optimization of those processes and the removal of possible process failures. Furthermore, many enterprises are looking for ways to blend archived analytical data within operational data to be able to gain situational awareness of opportunities or issues impacting their businesses.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their BI and analytics product's support for operational BI on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

Embedded BI

What we measure

We measure how survey respondents rate their BI and analytics product's support for embedded BI (having content or a BI and analytics product embedded in other applications, such as a CRM or ERP system).

Why it is important

Integrating intelligence in operational applications is growing steadily in popularity. From dashboards and BI applications to prediction and optimization models, users can access complementary functions directly in their specific operational processes and act on the findings – closing the classic management loop from information to action.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate their BI and analytics product's support for embedded BI on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.

AI Assistants

What we measure

We ask survey respondents to rate how effectively their BI and analytics product leverages the latest AI and ML technologies (e.g., NLQ, agents, copilots) to support user types such as content creators or content consumers.

Why it is important

With the rise of ML and GenAI, more assistance is being embedded into BI and analytics software. Code generators accelerate script creation for data processing and measure calculations, helping data engineers and analysts work faster. Automated analysis assistants help business users detect anomalies and patterns, directing attention to the most relevant insights. Natural language query assistants enable end users to retrieve information without deep technical knowledge. Not surprisingly, increased productivity and efficiency are just some of the most consistently reported benefits of GenAI adoption.

How we measure

We ask participants to rate how effectively their BI and analytics product makes use of AI & ML (including NLQ, agents, copilots) on a scale of "very good" to "very poor". To obtain the final KPI, we calculate an average score per product.



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