

## BI Competency Center Is Core to BI Success

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The business intelligence competency center is essential to an enterprise's business intelligence strategy. It can effectively address critical challenges such as staffing, planning and resource acquisition.

## ANALYSIS

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Business intelligence (BI) can enhance and extend an enterprise's business applications, resulting in a better-managed enterprise. Choosing and implementing the right BI tools and technologies is only one part of the formula for success. Most BI projects must integrate the requirements, data and priorities of the IS organization and multiple business units, which requires unique skills. However, most enterprises have difficulty finding people with the right skills, situating them in the right place or leveraging available skills across projects and business units.

The BI competency center's (BICC's) role is to champion the BI technologies and define standards, as well as the business-alignment, project prioritization, management and skills issues associated with significant BI projects. In "The Business Intelligence Competency Center: An Essential Business Strategy," we explored the many challenges of planning and aligning the BICC in an enterprise.

BI success depends on the formation, organization and staffing of a BICC. As BI projects continue to gain strategic importance, we again explore the issues surrounding the planning, staffing and politics of the BICC. Two case studies show how the BICC can deliver a business solution to a business challenge.

Most organizations lack the skills and organizational commitment for managing, implementing and supporting significant cross-functional BI projects. If they have the skills, they're spread throughout the organization, with priorities placed on efforts other than BI. The results are projects that do not achieve their full potential and that cause a great deal of organizational strife.

Many enterprises have found that a BICC increases their likelihood of success with BI projects. The BICC helps IS organizations understand the BI technologies and applications that users will need to meet their varied analytical needs of BI. In addition, the BICC plays a critical role in managing the alignment of "BI activism" — that is, the ambition and determination of the enterprise's desire to promote BI by providing communication across lines of business to prevent the creation of new BI application "silos."

### Features

"Readiness for BI: Toward the BI Competency Center" — Before embarking on a data warehousing and business intelligence initiative, enterprises should perform a self-assessment to determine their degree of readiness, the challenges ahead and the likelihood of success. **By Ted Friedman, Frank Buytendijk, Fabrizio Biscotti**

"Minimizing the Politics of Cross-Functional BI Initiatives" — Enterprises that follow tactical guidelines for the leadership of the BI competency center can minimize the impact of politics, a major hidden cost, on a BI initiative. **By Bill Hostmann**

"Using an External Service Provider to Build a BICC" — External service providers can assist enterprises in developing and implementing the BICC to overcome gaps in skills and to address differences among constituents. **By Alex Soejarto**

"BI Competency Center Is the Best Medicine for This Hospital" — A hospital discovered that the business intelligence competency center was the prescription to turning its BI challenges into a business success. **By Bill Hostmann**

"'Insuring' a Successful BI Competency Center: Case Study" — A major North American insurance company concluded that it needed a centralized approach to BI to meet the strategic objectives of the enterprise. **By Howard Dresner**

This research is part of a set of related research pieces. See "Determining BICC Readiness and Best Practices" for an overview.

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