Trip Report

The Gartner Business Intelligence & Analytics Summit 2014 was held on 21 – 22 October, 2014, at the Westin Grand Hotel in Munich. This report summarizes and provides highlights from the event.

Overview

Whether you’re launching your first business intelligence and analytics initiative or leading the next phase of an existing program, the right combination of thought leadership and pragmatism is needed. From BI fundamentals to embracing new technologies — including organizational change, essential new skills and roles, the latest best practices and what it takes to lead the way — the Gartner Business Intelligence & Analytics Summit has covered everything you needed to know to seize the profound opportunities ahead.
Key take-aways

• **Key Trends in Advanced Analytics**: Skills and communication are more important than “architecture” and “strategy”, therefore “analytics leaders” need to be developed or hired to fill the void between IT, business and quantitative data science. Best-of-breed approaches lead to better accuracy!

• **Analytics Capabilities**: Use analytics in combination and build a portfolio of capabilities to address a wider array of business problems in your organization more effectively, and increase your analytics maturity. Help descriptive, diagnostic, and predictive analytics become prescriptive by using decision management.

• **Data Discovery**: Let users drive their own insights: recognize the information analyst role, and establish training programs with certification tiers to grant them privileges based on skill level, embed some of the data integration and modelling skill sets into decentralized teams and establish new information governance rules.

• **Metrics**: To be able to prioritize investments, you need to assess your organization’s BA maturity and the business strategy. You also have to make sure you have a clearly articulated BA road map and use a metrics framework that balances run, grow, and transform activities.

• **Interactive Visualization**: Don’t confuse dashboarding and analytic visualization. Keep an eye on evolution of “smart analytic visualizations” as a way to expand to broader users and ensure that the delivery of interactive visualization is balanced with requirements.

• **Analytics Centre of Excellence (ACE)**: Needs a suitable high-level sponsors that recognize the need for consistent long-term investment and are prepared to help effect change. The ACE must evaluate existing information infrastructures and prepare to incorporate additional federated data models to support the expansion of the volumes, velocity, variety and validity of new information.

• **Data Warehouse**: Action plan for the next 90 days should include reviewing the contested analytics with users asking them if “new data” would help resolve the issues. You should then determine if sources are available to help resolve contested analytics.

• **Digital Ethics**: IT leaders have a special responsibility, providing ethical guidance to the organization — they need to develop a code of conduct, hold an ethical debate, discussing cases and their own organization.

• **Big Data Strategy**: Over the next 12 months, refocus investments and resources away from hindsight reporting and toward diagnostic, predictive and prescriptive analytics and establish methods for quantifying information’s potential and actual economic value.

“Intrigued, inspired, involved. Great time of listening to the experts and discussing with your peers.”

Wout Methorst, Business Information Manager, Cofely Nederland
Keynote sessions

Gartner Opening Keynote: The Future of Your Business: Transparent, Decisive, Personalized
Analysts Neil Chandler, Frank Buytendijk and Rita Sallam took attendees through the impact of analytics on business, society and our own personal lifestyles. Transparent organizations embracing information as an asset have discovered billions of dollars in revenue opportunities already. Predictive analytics have shown entire new levels of precision, allowing the automation of millions of daily business decisions. And the next phase is upon us, where personal analytics start to challenge business analytics, with the same sophistication. But as boundaries are stretched, how far is “too far” when deploying big data analytics and targeted offers? And although algorithms may make better decisions, where is the human measure? How will you seize the opportunity, while mitigating the risks? Rita closed the keynote by asking you to come out of your comfort zone. How much has that been possible since returning to the office? Don’t forget to ask yourself again:
• If you are an evangelist, do you have more of an eye for practical considerations?
• If you admitted to be a skeptic, have you found new ways to grasp the opportunities?
• If you feel you are the pragmatist, could you now take an educated leap of faith?

The Rise of the Smart Machines: Their Technical, Business, Economic and Social Impact
The last IT-driven waves of change displaced low to medium skill workers. The next one will greatly enhance the performance of high skilled workers while obsoleting others. As these autonomous, predictive, NLP, deep-learning capable smart advisors evolve, they will remake work, business, organizations, economies and societies. What are smart machines and how are they different from everything that’s come in the past? Where and how will they appear and what impact will that have? What should you do about it and when? Gartner Analyst Tom Austin gave these recommendations:
• Get smart. This is not a spectator sport:
  – This calls for IT leadership, not just management.
• Engage the business & create a smart machine exploratory initiative:
  – Determine where and when your enterprise should pursue smart machine strategies.
  – Evaluate all areas of potential value added: Replace, assist, advise, extend, observe and help.
• Determine what your competitors could do to your business if they pursue smart machines more aggressively.
• Respect the impact on people:
  – The impact of software and robots on employment, work, and careers of people will be profound

Gartner Keynote: Digitopia: Four Scenarios for the Digital Society and What You Need To Do NOW!
Best practices are the solutions for yesterday’s problems. For the digital world “next practices” need to be synthesized. In his presentation, Frank Buytendijk highlighted four strategic scenarios about how privacy, big data, social technology, cloud, security, smart machines and the digital world at large shape society, and introduced the options portfolios CIOs need to build to deal with any of these possible realities.
Top 5 best-rated track sessions

A7. Maverick Research: Digital Ethics, or How Not to Mess Up With Technology
Frank Buytendijk, Gartner
This was the most dangerous session of the Summit. From Kant to Confucius, what is “good” and “bad” technology? It was fun, as we’ve discussed in Socratic style. It was also practical, because of all contemporary examples. Provocative, asking you to take a stand. Not for the faint-hearted, but a must-attend for those who wanted to push the limits of innovations while avoiding public embarrassment through messing up. Key take-aways were:
- IT leaders have a special responsibility, providing ethical guidance to the organization.
- Hold an ethical debate, discussing cases and your own organization.
- Develop a code of conduct.
- With great power comes great responsibility!

B8. HOW TO: Select the Right Metrics
Neil Chandler, Gartner
Organizations that utilize business metrics based on leading indicators consistently outperform their competitors, yet few know how to create and manage a metrics framework. Key advice from this session:
- Assess your organization’s BA maturity and the business strategy to prioritize investments.
- Make sure you have a clearly articulated BA road map and use a metrics framework that balances run, grow, and transform activities.
- Recognize that metrics are an integral part of a wider approach to business analytics — not stand-alone.
- Understand the different types of analytics that users need to fulfill their different roles and look to use a portfolio of analytic capabilities.

C2. Preparing for the Logical Data Warehouse: The Role of Data Federation and Virtualization
Mark Beyer, Gartner
As architectures in support of analytics tend toward the logical data warehouse, approaches for persisting, integrating and provisioning data must evolve. The session examined how organizations need to expand their thinking to augment physical data movement and storage with federated and virtualized approaches.
Mark has proposed the following action plans:
- Short term: Form a multidisciplinary working group; understand current DI and DW gaps
- Mid term: Define a LDW road map on data, people, process, and technology; incorporate data federation and virtualization into your technology infrastructure

A2. Does Your Company Need a Chief Data Officer, Chief Digital Officer or Both?
Debra Logan, Gartner
As information is THE competitive differentiator for modern businesses, new roles relating to the management of information are proliferating and new kinds of information leaders are emerging. The session explored whether businesses needed a chief data officer, a chief digital officer or both. Debra’s recommendations included:
- Design new information-and technology-related leadership roles and titles with care and precision.
- Seek input from CIOs because they will have insight into how gaps should be closed.
- Redesign IT and digital governance for revenue-dependent risk taking.
- Actively embrace and extend digital officer, data officer or similar appointments. Digital and data officers will need the CIOs’ close support.
Top 10 most-attended sessions

The most popular track presentations during the event were:

C1. Big Data Strategy
Douglas Laney

C4. Key Trends and Emerging Technologies in Advanced Analytics
Alexander Linden

A8. HOW TO: Build the Business Case for Analytics
Kurt Schlegel

Dan Sommer

B7. What About the Data Warehouse? Start? Stop? Continue?
Mark Beyer

B5. BICC 2.0 or the Analytics Center of Excellence
Neil Chandler

B3. Business Analytics in the Cloud: BI Heaven or Too Good to Be True?
Thomas Oestrech

C6. In-Memory Databases: A Trend You Shouldn’t Ignore
Roxane Edjlali

B4. HOW TO: Deliver Self Service BI
Kurt Schlegel

B1. Interactive Visualization: Seeing is Understanding
Rita Sallam

“Superb set of sessions, providing the right mix of insights to get the brain turning — helping our organization to evolve.”
Peter Redeker, Manager, Business Intelligence & Analytics, HP

Snapshot of attendees

Who participated in the 2014 conference?

Top 5 job titles
Manager
Director
VP
Architect
CIO

Top 5 job roles
Business Intelligence
Applications
Consultant
Enterprise Architecture
CIO

Top 5 industry sectors
Banking, Finance and Insurance
Technology and Telecom
Manufacturing
Healthcare
Government

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“ In the 2 days, I understood that my company is not the only one struggling to manage our data assets. The presentations and the peers have taught me issues are universal, but there are solutions.”

David Harkness, Program Director, Zurich
Post-event resources

Customizable post-event worksheet
Take a moment to complete your own post-event trip report, a valuable resource for future reference and a great way to share with colleagues what you learned. Click here to access the trip report worksheet.

Learn more with relevant research
Want to learn more about the topics that interest you most? Turn to the end of each session presentation for a list of related Gartner research notes. Select Gartner research is available on demand at gartner.com.

“This event has given me the different views of the business and mechanisms to optimize and improve my processes.”
Mercedes Barrera Molinero, Consultor Senior Business Intelligence, NIIT Technologies

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BI events around the globe

Gartner Business Intelligence & Analytics Summit
9 – 10 March | London, U.K.

Gartner Business Intelligence & Analytics Summit
30 March – 1 April | Las Vegas, USA

Gartner Business Intelligence & Information Management Summit
9 – 10 June | Mumbai, India

Gartner Business Intelligence & Analytics Summit
19 June | Tokyo, Japan

Gartner Business Intelligence, Analytics & Information Management Summit
23 – 24 June | Sao Paulo, Brazil
Gartner
Business Intelligence & Analytics
Summit 2015

14 – 15 October | Munich, Germany | gartner.com/eu/bigdata

Hot topics to be covered
Leading a Digital Business With Analytics
The Evolution of Self Service and Data Discovery
Analytics Finally Embraces the Cloud
Big Data and Beyond
The Impact of the Wider Hadoop Ecosystem