

Top 4 Questions to Ask Before Choosing a BI Software

& Tips for a successful Proof of Concept



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Tips for a successful Proof of Concept



Top 4 Questions to Ask Before You Choose a BI Solution

- ▶ 1. How much does it really cost?
- ▶ 2. How long until you can actually use it?
- ▶ 3. What are its limitations?
- ▶ 4. What does it allow you to do?

How much does it really cost?



▶ Licenses

License structure should be scalable to accommodate future growth.

▶ Integrations

Consider the complexity of connecting to different data sources in use.

▶ Hardware

What kind of hardware does the solution require in order to run?

▶ Professional Services

Does the solution need special consultants to implement?

▶ Training

Consider the technical knowledge needed by end users and administrators to use the solution.

▶ Maintenance

How much time and resources will be invested in upkeep and support?

How long does it take to implement?



▶ **Time to production**

The time it takes for analytics to be used in production on regular basis.

▶ **Required technical expertise**

The expertise needed to setup and maintain the BI software.
Do you need to hire or train people?

▶ **End-user training**

The amount of time it takes end users to start using and benefiting from the software.

What are its limitations?

▶ **Size**

The volume of raw data the software can load and digest.

▶ **Capability**

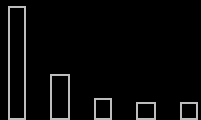
Can the software easily join data from multiple sources?

▶ **Speed**

How fast can the software update and calculate data?

▶ **Scalability**

The ability to handle increasing workloads and scale accordingly.
Does it slow down with more users and queries?



What can you actually do?

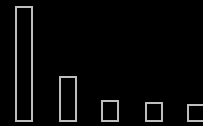


- ▶ **Access data and create new dashboards**
Access the data you need to build interactive dashboards without technical assistance.
- ▶ **Customize existing dashboards**
Easy to use tools to manipulate and visualize data exactly how you want it.
- ▶ **Drill into reports**
Zoom into details and underlying data for enhanced analysis.
- ▶ **Interact from mobile**
Share and analyze with dashboards directly from any mobile device.

How to avoid the pitfalls?

Here's the best piece of advice:

Always ask for a proof of concept (POC)
that connects to your real data sources.





Tips for a successful POC

- ▶ Address future requirements as well as current ones
- ▶ Consult with your own IT professionals
- ▶ Refuse to invest a lot of money in a POC
- ▶ Focus on capabilities – don't get distracted by pretty visuals

Address Future & Current Requirements

Most vendors insist that you predefine your requirements in order to have a successful project or POC. The problem is, it's almost impossible to know your future requirements in advance.

BI requirements are highly dynamic as businesses are constantly changing, and business users always need to refine and adjust their requirements. Today's analysis is only relevant for a short period of time before becoming obsolete.

Bottom line: Focus the POC on the ability to meet ad-hoc requirements, not just a set of fixed reports that may be irrelevant by the time the project ends.

Consult with Your Own IT Professionals

Business professionals that are frustrated by not being able to extract relevant data quickly and independently will often look for a BI solution that cuts IT completely out of the loop.

Though you should look for a solution that requires minimum IT involvement, it is still highly recommended to consult your IT professionals about technical topics, such as scalability, integration cycles and so forth.

Bottom line: The vendor has no interest in sharing the technicalities that make their solution more complicated, and these are some of the issues that can trip up the success of any project.

Refuse to Invest A Lot of Money in a POC

Some vendors promise you the world, but demand significant upfront investment to prepare the projects, hardware and software for a POC – all before you even run one report on your actual data.

Don't agree to this. Demand to have at least one solid report or dashboard running over your own data before you agree to any financial commitment.

Bottom line: If a vendor is not willing to work with you before you put money down, it's probably because they'd have to spend weeks on development before delivering anything. Meaning, this vendor is either selling archaic technology or is misleading you about the capabilities of their BI tool.

Focus on Capabilities– Don't Get Distracted by Pretty Visuals

The biggest mistake buyers make is to judge a vendor based on their shiny and pretty dashboard samples. Visualization software components are a dime a dozen.

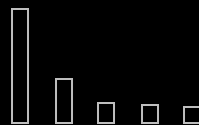
The real challenge is easily creating and customizing dashboards that show your own data – no matter how big your data is, and even when it's scattered across multiple data sources.

Bottom line: If a vendor can't get your own data to display in dynamic and creative ways within just a few days, you should probably find a better one.

How to avoid the pitfalls?

And again, most importantly:

Always ask for a proof of concept (POC)
that uses and connects to your own data sources.



Get a Free Proof of Concept

www.sisense.com/get/test-drive

