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**SIGNS YOU NEED  
A MODERN  
VISUALIZATION  
TOOL**

# INTRODUCTION

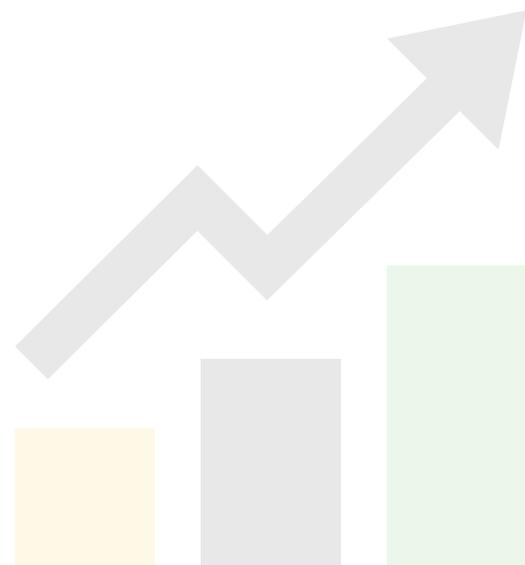
Your organization already made the commitment to make the move to a data visualization tool and for highly valid reasons.

Using charts or graphs to visualize large amounts of complex data is not only more aligned with the way the human mind processes information, it is a much more efficient way to quickly convey dense information quickly to a wide range of individuals. In essence, images are universally understood. The value data visualization brings lies in its wide applicability as a tool. For instance, data visualization can be used to:

- ✓ **Determine which factors may or may not be influencing your customer's behaviors.**
- ✓ **Provide clearer understanding which products and services to place where.**
- ✓ **Identify areas that need attention or improvement.**
- ✓ **Predict sales volumes.**

But, lately, it's been a burden using existing data visualization tools. Creating reports is tedious and time consuming with traditional business intelligence tools such as OBIEE, Business Objects, Cognos, and MicroStrategy. Users are increasingly relying on new tools such as Tableau, Power BI, and Qlik to make up for the gaps in your current data visualization platforms lack.

So, what signs indicate that you need to upgrade your existing data visualization tools? **In this whitepaper, we will look at the top indicators for business leaders and the IT leaders who support the business from within.**



# TOP 3 SIGNS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

## 1 Ad-hoc Analysis is a Challenge

Increasingly, there is a need to manage two separate but coherent styles of work and data in a process Gartner coins as Bimodal – one is focused on predictability; the other on exploration. **Gartner calls these two types of work styles Mode 1 and Mode 2.**

**Mode 1 is optimized for areas that are more predictable and well-understood.** It focuses on exploiting what is known, while renovating the legacy environment into a state that is fit for a digital world. **Mode 2 is exploratory, experimenting to solve new problems and optimized for areas of uncertainty.** These initiatives often begin with a hypothesis that is tested and adapted during a process involving short iterations, potentially adopting a minimum viable product (MVP) approach.



Combining the predictable analytics with the new and innovative analytics is becoming the norm. Organizations that do not combine the two approaches are likely to suffer from stunted capabilities in identifying sales drivers, risks, and truly understanding the motivations and needs of their target markets.

**The key here is to create agile analytical models and avoiding dependence on IT to create those models.**

Traditional business intelligence tools such as OBIEE, Business Objects, Cognos, and MicroStrategy are excellent tools for Mode 1 work styles but lag in Mode 2 work styles. Modern visualization tools such as Tableau, Power BI, and Qlik empower users to perform mode 2 exploratory analysis.

Does your current data visualization platform(s) support both these modes? If your existing tools do not support the Mode 2 approach, then you need to re-assess your current platform and consider upgrading your data visualization tool. Chance are, even if you are not using the exploratory process, your competitors are.

## 2 You Are **Unable to Tap Into New Data Sources**



With the rapid adoption of cloud based applications in organizations, chances are you no longer have all your business data in a single data warehouse. Your data is dispersed in a variety of data sources such as Salesforce, Google, Workday, ServiceNow, Excel, SQL data marts, SharePoint, Box and more. **To run your business, you need to combine your enterprise warehouse data with a variety of data sources. This process is also known as data discovery.**

The new data sources have also transformed the data flow for analysis. Data is no longer consolidated into a single data warehouse because of long lead times and high cost. Users find it more efficient to connect directly to the source applications, combine the data with the enterprise warehouse data, explore new models, and identify new opportunities.

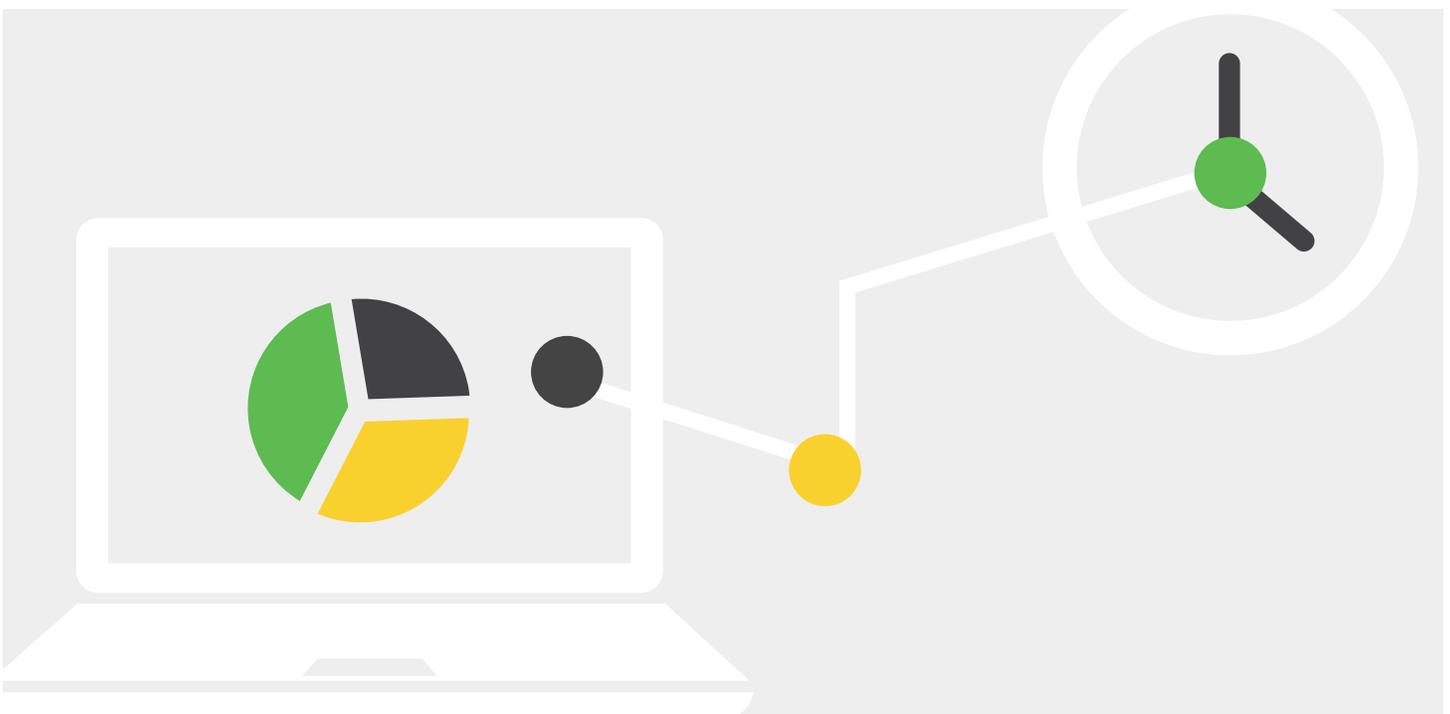
Traditional BI tools excel in providing connectivity to centralized data warehouses. They lag behind modern visualization tools when it comes to connectivity to new data sources. The mash-up of new data sources with enterprise data warehouse is also much easier with modern visualization tools.

So, if you find yourself spending an enormous amount of your time to prepare data from a variety of sources for analysis, it is worth your time to invest in a modern visualization tool. It will allow you to spend more time analyzing and less time collecting data.

### 3 Steep Learning Curve and Time Consuming to Create Visualizations

When you use Excel you can create the desired visualization in just a few minutes. But many business intelligence tools are difficult to use because they have a steep learning curve. Users often have to depend on an army of IT engineers to bring in data and create visualizations, which may take between several weeks to months. Visualizations that were deemed so critical in the first place are often outdated by the time that they are available.

If your visualization platform has a steep learning curve which forces you to depend on your IT or a few experts to create visualization, it is likely time to take a look at alternative data visualization applications. Modern visualization tools are so easy to use, require little to no training and are designed for self-service visualization by both common users.



Finding a user-friendly analytics application that is compatible with your company's data sources takes time and financial investment. But, a little financial and time investment is well worth the effort because self-service access to reports -- facilitated by applications like Tableau, Power BI and Qlik -- frees up both business and IT from having to spend their time sharing data with business executives.

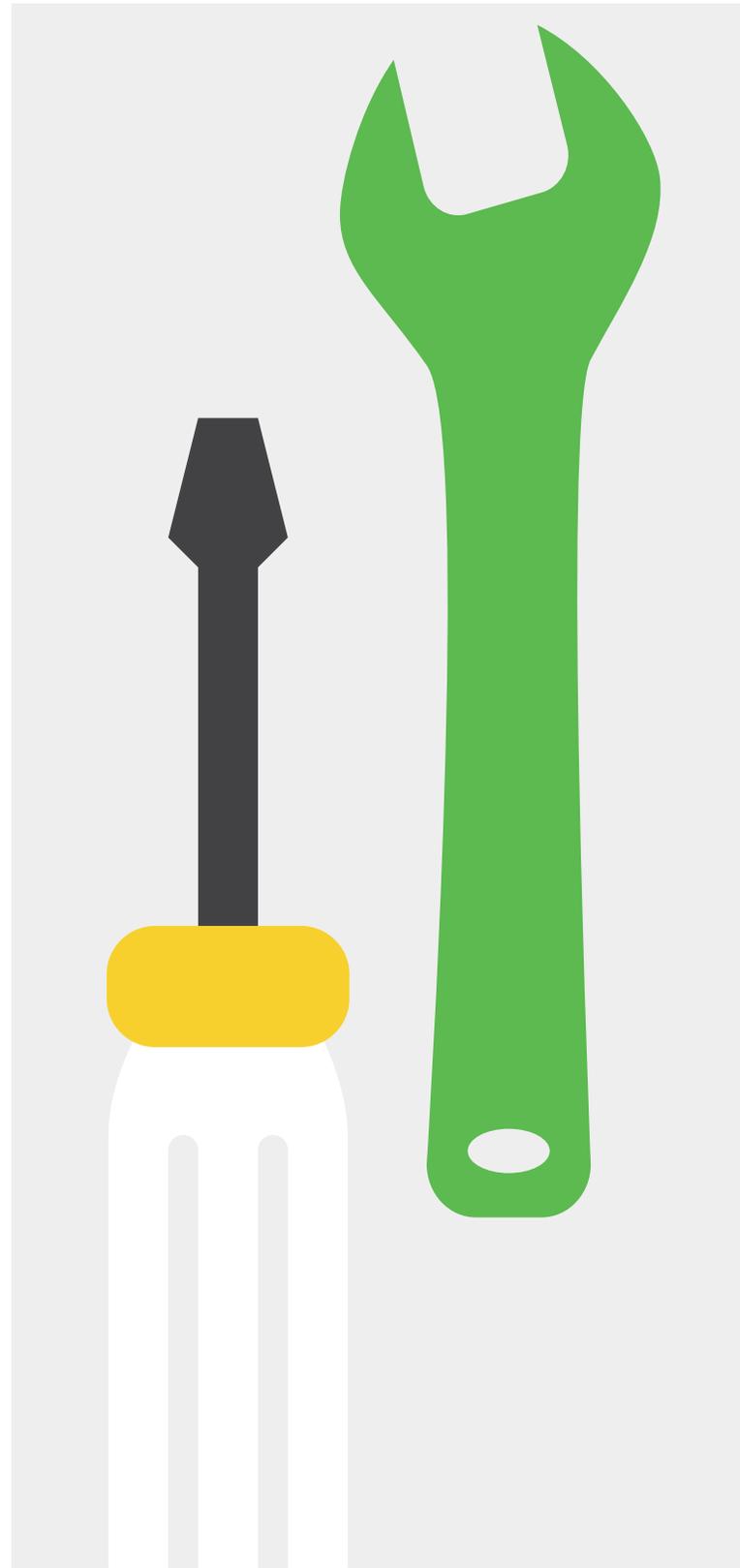
# TOP 3 SIGNS FOR IT LEADERS

## 1 Your Business Users Are Adopting New Tools

Whether it's due to potential backlogs or a need to develop models faster to get critical insights about key revenue drivers, **you see your business users increasingly start to adopt new BI and data visualization tools—at the same time that you are working within existing platforms.**

This experience may prove frustrating and your initial reaction may be to convince the business department to stay true to existing platforms such as OBIEE, Business Objects, Cognos, and MicroStrategy. However, the adoption of new tools points to a larger issue: your current data visualization platform is not meeting your business team's objectives, timing or expectations in terms of data performance or analysis on a practical day-to-day level.

Sometimes, the need to stay with a platform may be driven by concerns over the cost increase to switch to a new platform. However, staying with an existing platform that is not performing effectively can be even more costly in the long run.



## 2 Your BI Backlog is Building Up

An increasing BI backlog can be a sign of several things, including that your current data visualization tool is not efficient enough to handle the velocity, size and ever-changing form of data.

If that is the case, there may serious costs that your company is incurring by sticking with a data visualization platform that is not performing as expected for your data requirements.

For instance, even if an IT analyst spends an average of five work days per month attempting to deal with BI backlogs associated with a data visualization platform, that time commitment can add up to significant costs over a



**Average work days per month per analyst**



**Work days per year per analyst**



**Total BI backlog cost per analyst\***

*\*Based on a \$100,000 analyst salary and an average of 260 working days per year.*

In total, **\$22,272 in costs** go towards addressing BI backlogs when those costs can be avoided altogether by making the move to a more modern data visualization platform.

### 3 Your Business Users Are **Adopting a More Agile Perspective**



**Is your current data visualization tool not keeping up with the demands to move to a more agile business model?** If so, it may be time to consider a data visualization tool that is more aligned with agile business methods.

While agile is not an approach specifically intended to reduce direct project related costs, cost efficiencies can happen through increased overall project delivery speed.

Since an agile approach uses a platform to demonstrate development results more often, feedback is constantly incorporated from the stakeholders, allowing for a better chance to complete delivery on-time. Thus, in an agile environment, cost efficiencies happen due to the schedule and timing—not resources.

However, the move to agile processes is rarely just about cost -- it's about staying competitive and ensuring your

company is delivering products that get the maximum amount of traction and customer engagement in the marketplace. Cost savings are often secondary to the relevancy and quality that the agile process products as agile first and foremost helps deliver the highest and most relevant user value or a sprint toward a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). Incidentally, the prevention of a reworking of a product is often why agile is the more cost-effective approach in the long-term.

In many cases, the benefits of moving towards an agile business model are clear and significant. When it comes to choosing a data visualization platform that is aligned with agile methods, it's important the solution be able to demonstrate visualizations quickly and easily, with minimal frustration.

# CONCLUSION

It should not be a burden to use your company's data visualization platform. Nor should creating reports be a tedious and time consuming task.

Traditional business intelligence tools such as OBIEE, Business Objects, Cognos, and MicroStrategy offer unrivalled metadata and security capabilities. However, they can make creating reports unnecessarily inefficient and labour intensive. But it does not have to be this way.

In order to stay cost, resource, and time- competitive and to speed up understanding of critical revenue drivers, companies are increasingly adding new data visualization tools such as as Tableau, Power BI, and Qlik to their Analytics toolkit.

Moreover, with the need to adopt a bimodal approach to data analytics, process new forms of data across multiple sources and move towards an agile business model, using more modern data visualization tools is not just a 'nice to have' option but, rather, a necessity in today's fast-paced and demanding business climate.





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