

# ANALYTICAL TEAMWORK AT ITS FINEST: LINE-OF-BUSINESS AND IT UNIFIED

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At their worst, IT and business users can spiral into analytical despair with poorly aligned tools, irrelevant data, and never-ending queues of meaningless report requests. At their best, an effective partnership can blossom where IT simplifies and accelerates access to data and line-of-business users apply their learned expertise toward game-changing decisions.

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As equally important cogs in today's most effective analytical machines, IT professionals and line-of-business decision makers have the opportunity to join forces and deliver data-driven business results.

Aberdeen Group's 2015 business analytics survey explored how some organizations were able to create a strong bond between IT and line-of-business users. Defined as Best-in-Class companies, these organizations were measured by their ability to excel in three critical areas:

# 73%

**of Best-in-Class companies saw an improvement in knowledge sharing and collaboration.**

- **Data relevance & availability.** A mass influx of business data could be a tactical problem or a strategic advantage. Best-in-Class companies are able to draw out the most critical decision-supporting information and make it accessible to the right business users. Top companies are 3.6 times more likely to be satisfied with their access to data and its relevance to their job role.
- **Portability of information.** Rarely does a critical business decision depend on information solely from one

area of the organization. The ability to share information across business functions is a vital capability driving success with analytics. Best-in-Class companies are 30% more likely to see improvement in their ability to share and collaborate with data.

➔ **Self-sufficiency of business users.** IT professionals might be able to generate a snowflake schema or integrate dozens of disparate data sources, but most probably wouldn't understand the mechanics of a discounted cash flow analysis, nor should they. Business users with the ability to engage with analytics in a self-service capacity can exploit the power of data-driven decisions without the requirement of deep technical expertise. Best-in-Class companies, on average, are able to empower 54% more users with self-service analytics.

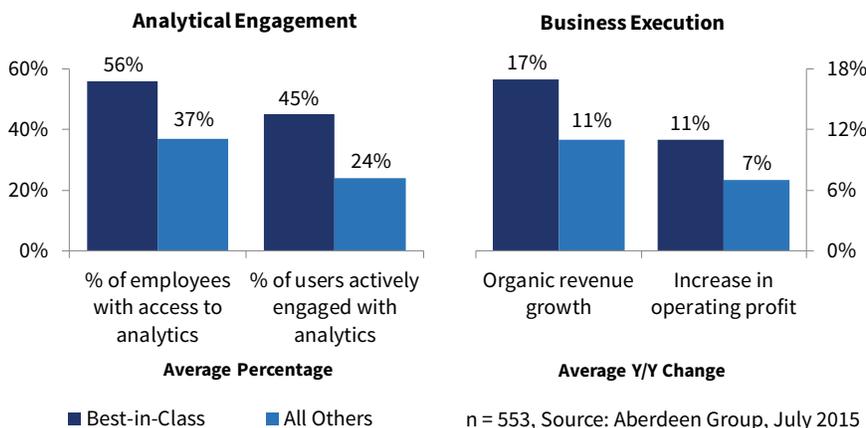
➔ [Related Research, “Analytics in the Modern Cloud: Soaked with Data, Raining Insight”](#)

➔ [Related Research “Interactive Dashboards: When the First Answer Just Doesn't Cut It”](#)

### United for the Greater Good

Best-in-Class companies were able to leverage this effective partnership to drive their organizations forward. In addition to the performance discussed above, these top companies enjoyed a higher level of analytical adoption and engagement, and ultimately delivered tangible business results (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Reaping the Benefits of an IT-Business Partnership**



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**Today's data-savvy organizations put the right oversight in place while at the same time allowing cross-functional information sharing to facilitate more user interactivity with data.**

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What separates the best from the rest, outside of just their usage of the right tools and technologies, is their commitment to organizational maturity. Best-in-Class companies experience the following progression on the path to performance with analytics:

- **Data layer is accessible and reliable.** There has long since been somewhat of a chicken and egg conundrum when it comes to users and their ability to access data. Are the users shying away from the data environment due to a lack of skill or a lack of faith in the quality of data, or are they prevented from accessing and manipulating data out of fear that they will cause more issues with quality? Today's data-savvy organizations put the right oversight in place while at the same time allowing cross-functional information sharing to facilitate more user interactivity with data.
- **IT becomes a facilitator.** Rather than ad-hoc support for an endless stream of report requests or a dictator-like mentality for thrusting certain capabilities on the business users, today's strongest IT professionals take a different approach. By focusing their efforts on maintaining the quality, reliability, and scalability of the data environment, these IT organizations are released from the shackles of tedious requests for report color changes and are able to repurpose their time for activities more strategically valuable to the organization.
- **LoB takes ownership for analytical activity.** With a more effective and long-term thinking IT organization in place, business leaders are then empowered to leverage their years of experience and functional specific business acumen to make better decisions. These users are able to interact with analytical technology with little or no requirement for IT hand-holding. They are able to access

and manipulate a greater foundation of data at the point of decision rather than stopping the process to wait for support. Ultimately, these Best-in-Class companies make decisions faster, with a higher degree of confidence, and ultimately enjoy a variety of significant performance enhancements as a result.

For more information, join Aberdeen's upcoming webinar:

[Empowering Analytical Excellence, IT & Business Partnerships for Success](#)

### **About Aberdeen Group**

Since 1988, Aberdeen Group has published research that helps businesses worldwide improve their performance. Our analysts derive fact-based, vendor-agnostic insights from a proprietary analytical framework, which identifies Best-in-Class organizations from primary research conducted with industry practitioners. The resulting research content is used by hundreds of thousands of business professionals to drive smarter decision-making and improve business strategy. Aberdeen Group is headquartered in Boston, MA.

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