Business Intelligence Assets: Can You Use Your Data to Get Quick Wins?

Most large organizations are sitting on a gold mine they haven't figured out how to access. The data is there. Terabytes of it. Sales figures, customer behavior, operational metrics, financial performance. It gets collected, stored, and largely ignored while executives make important decisions based on gut instinct, outdated reports, or whatever someone cobbled together in a spreadsheet last Tuesday.

About a third of businesses consider themselves truly data-driven organizations, meaning two-thirds of companies are collecting data without extracting meaningful value from it. For large organizations especially, that gap represents a significant and addressable competitive disadvantage.

The good news is that you don't need a multi-year transformation initiative to start seeing results. There are specific, practical ways to use your existing data to get quick wins that improve performance right now.

Stop Reporting on the Past, Start Seeing the Present

Most organizations have reporting. What they don't have is reporting that's actually useful in the moment. Batch reports that run overnight, dashboards that pull data from last week, spreadsheets that someone updates manually every Monday morning. By the time decision-makers receive the information, it's already outdated.

Real-time analytics provide immediate insights from live data, allowing organizations to respond to events as they happen to improve operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and crisis management.

The quick win here is replacing your most critical lagging reports with live dashboards that show what's happening right now. Not what happened last month. Not last week. Today. When your CFO can see real-time cash position, when your operations team can monitor inventory live, and when sales leadership can track pipeline movement as it happens, decisions that used to take days start taking hours.

This isn't a massive undertaking. Identifying your three or four most important operational metrics and building live visibility around them is a focused, achievable project that delivers immediate impact.

Break Down the Silos That Are Hiding Your Answers

Here's a pattern that shows up in almost every large organization. Finance has their data. Operations has theirs. Sales has theirs. Each team has visibility into their own corner of the business but nobody has a complete picture. Questions that should have obvious answers require days of back-and-forth between departments pulling numbers from different systems that don't match each other.

BI systems consolidate data from multiple sources, providing a single unified view with improved data quality and consistency. For users across the organization, this ensures that decision-making is based on accurate, up-to-date information, which minimizes analytics errors and discrepancies while eliminating information silos.

The quick win here is consolidating the data sources your teams rely on most into a single, trusted view. Start with the ones that drive your most important decisions. When different departments stop arguing about whose numbers are right and start working from the same accurate data, productivity improves quickly.

When used correctly, BI can increase profit by up to 8%. That improvement starts with giving the right people access to reliable, consolidated data rather than making them chase it across disconnected systems.

Turn Operational Data Into Cost Savings

Every large organization has inefficiencies hiding in plain sight. The problem is that without proper data governance and analytics, nobody can see them clearly enough to fix them systematically.

Your operational data already contains the answers to questions like: Where are we losing time in our fulfillment process? Which customer segments have the highest support costs? Where are budget overruns consistently happening and why? What inventory is sitting too long and tying up working capital?

By analyzing large and diverse datasets, organizations can identify inefficiencies and bottlenecks in their operations. This insight enables them to streamline processes, optimize resource allocation, and improve overall operational efficiency, ultimately leading to cost savings and increased productivity.

The quick win here is picking one operational area where you suspect there's waste, pulling the data together properly, and actually analyzing it. This doesn't require a massive BI deployment. It requires good data governance around a specific problem and the analytical tools to surface what the data is telling you. You can also take a sample of data over a short period of time and extrapolate that to estimate the impact of the issue. Understanding the impact helps you to understand the business cases (benefits vs costs) of addressing the issue.

Organizations that do this consistently find that the savings from a single operational improvement often fund the broader data initiative.

Where to Start

The organizations that successfully use their data for quick wins share one common characteristic. They don't try to do everything at once. They identify the two or three highest-impact areas, build proper data governance and reporting around those areas first, and use the early wins to build momentum and organizational confidence.

64% of BI users say they see an increase in business performance metrics as a result of using business intelligence tools. That improvement is available to your organization too. The data you need is already there. The question is whether you're set up to use it.

Do you need to help analyzing and structuring your data? SPX is highly experienced in helping firms just like yours increase their business performance.
