

## WHITE PAPER

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# Success and Value From BI: The QlikView Customer Experience

Sponsored by: QlikTech

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## IDC OPINION

Organizations today have many questions, and employees need answers. Business intelligence (BI) solutions are focused on providing information — whether the exact answer that the user is looking for, or some information that forms part of the answer. This information is generally provided in the form of reporting, dashboarding, ad hoc querying, analysis, and data modeling techniques and technologies.

Delivering reports is a relatively clear-cut and simple task for the IT department. However, providing an ad hoc query and analysis environment with the flexibility and simplicity demanded by end users remains a challenge. Business requirements naturally evolve as the business itself evolves. Software can be difficult for business users to work with. These challenges make it complicated for IT to provide an ad hoc query facility that is flexible and dynamic enough to provide answers to the business in changing times, through internal and external changes — in other words, to support business agility. This leads business users to look outside what IT has provided in order to find information, and IT then becomes isolated from the true information needs of the business.

What organizations need is a way to quickly prototype and build BI applications that are simple and easy to use, yet are powerful enough to supply detailed and actionable information. Once these are in place and end users become accustomed to using them, these BI applications can drive the organization's evolution to a more analytic culture. Such a BI system thereby underpins business agility, because information is available that can support the business strategy even as it changes.

QlikTech is a BI vendor supplying software solutions that meet the need for query, reporting, and analysis with its flagship product QlikView. QlikView's in-memory associative architecture allows business users to associate datasets and explore data without a prebuilt OLAP cube, removing the IT burden of redesigning and rebuilding cubes from scratch.

According to a survey program, conducted by IDC with QlikView customers across the world, QlikView customers achieve significantly higher satisfaction with their BI systems than general BI users. When asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5, 96% of QlikView users indicated the top three levels of satisfaction. This compares very favorably with results from IDC's 2008 survey (carried out in conjunction with InfoWorld) where 70% of general BI users indicated the top three levels of satisfaction with their BI implementations.

## METHODOLOGY

The IDC analysts opinions expressed in this white paper are based on years of market research and consultations with BI technology users and vendors. This white paper also utilizes the findings from two research surveys conducted by IDC for QlikTech: 19 customer telephone interviews, and 809 customer respondents to an online survey. The survey and interviews took place between January and March 2009. See Appendix for the demographic profile of the respondent base.

Generally, gaining success with BI projects is an iterative process, as organizations learn how to make better use of technology and also learn how their organization will benefit from a fact-based approach to decision-making. Because so many organizations have challenges with their BI projects, the costs from BI can run very high. What is coming more into focus is the need for organizations to measure the total cost of ownership (TCO) of their BI projects.

TCO analysis enables organizations to identify, project, measure, and track direct and indirect costs of a BI project. Organizations often estimate a BI project's TCO during the project planning stage to ensure alignment with budgetary constraints and then track costs throughout the project to prevent or minimize cost overruns.

Customers also measure the return on investment (ROI) of BI. The ROI is the net of the benefits of the project minus its costs. From this it is simple to see the linkage between three factors: time, ROI, and TCO. The faster the benefits are realized for a project, the higher the ROI. There is also an inverse relationship between ROI and TCO: the lower the TCO for a project, assuming the benefits remain constant, the higher the ROI.

This white paper is one of a series of four deliverables around the QlikView Customer Experience:

- ☒ **Success and Value From BI: The QlikView Customer Experience** — This paper features data and anecdotes about the customer satisfaction, ease and speed of development, and ease of use for business users of QlikView.
- ☒ **The TCO Of BI: The QlikView Customer Experience** — This paper features data and anecdotes about the TCO of QlikView, relative to traditional BI approaches, categorized into software, services and hardware costs.
- ☒ **Time to Value and ROI From BI: The QlikView Customer Experience** — This paper features data and anecdotes about the ROI of QlikView, categorized into benefits from the time to value of QlikView, revenue and cash flow enhancements, operating cost reductions, productivity gains, and BI and reporting overhead reductions, as reported by customers.
- ☒ **The IDC-QlikView Customer Experience: Survey Findings** — An application developed by QlikTech to analyze the results of the joint survey can be found at <http://www.qlikview.com/value>.

## IN THIS WHITE PAPER

In this white paper, IDC discusses the typical challenges faced by organizations deploying BI solutions, and how QlikView customers manage to overcome these challenges. The benefits of QlikView are presented from the point of view of both business decision makers and IT groups charged with supporting BI solutions. The white paper analyzes the experiences of a broad range of QlikView customers to understand their answers to the following key questions:

- Why BI is hard to do
- How satisfied customers are with QlikView
- The reasons customers chose QlikView and the benefits they obtained:
  - Fast development and deployment
  - Ease of use for business users
  - Ease of development

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

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### Why BI Is Hard To Do

Organizations across all industries and of all sizes, whether commercial, nonprofit, or public sector, are increasingly moving away from intuitive or "gut-feel" management, and towards evidence-based decision making. Driven by volatile market conditions, increased competition from globalization, new business models, deregulation, or increased regulation in the form of new compliance requirements, these organizations are turning to BI technologies and services to support decision-making processes. An increasing number of organizations are making BI functionality more broadly available to all decision makers, be they executives, customer-facing employees, line-of-business managers, or even suppliers and customers. However, although BI tools have been in existence since the 1980s, the challenges that BI implementations present mean that many organizations still struggle to deploy BI pervasively. According to a major IDC research study into Pervasive BI carried out in 2008, BI solutions do not seem to be pervasively used in any organization.

#### *Technical Challenges*

There are three primary technology-related reasons that BI technology is not more pervasive in most organizations:

- Many organizations fail to recognize that "**one size does not fit all.**" Organizations need to recognize the differing needs of various end users. For example, the needs of power users are different from those of information consumers. Most organizations have successfully addressed the issue of production reporting, whereby reports are prebuilt and formatted to relatively static specifications. However, the same organizations often fall short in addressing the needs of business end users for ad-hoc information access and analysis. Where these needs are not met, projects run the risk of falling out of adoption as users revert to their previous solution, whether gut feel or spreadsheets.

- ☒ Conversely, **many BI software packages are overly complex**. The time and expense of software acquisition, deployment, use, and support often prevents broader and more effective use of BI solutions.
- ☒ The exploratory nature of ad hoc analysis means that users are often in need of new data sources or metrics or in need of the ability to view data through new dimensions. The BI solution needs to be flexible enough to add these new objects quickly and easily into the application, otherwise the application can fall out of use. IDC uses the term design quality to refer to the extent to which end users' expectations about the speed of adding various BI solution components by the IT group are met. The BI solution **design quality** is key to the rapid response by the IT group to users' requests. A high design quality speeds up the project's time to value.

### *The Limitations of Two Traditional Approaches*

#### **Shortcomings of Standalone Spreadsheets**

Spreadsheets provide the ultimate in flexible data manipulation and formatting. While this flexibility may be appealing to some individual users, it presents several challenges that can affect organizational performance and competitiveness. Standalone spreadsheets have:

- ☒ A lack of support for data quality management and data governance
- ☒ A lack of process support and continuity
- ☒ A lack of user access rights management

#### **OLAP Shortcomings**

Traditional BI software packages, those that support production reporting, data warehousing, and multidimensional analysis based on OLAP cubes, can help overcome many of the shortcomings of standalone spreadsheets. These tools employ various data integration, data management, metadata management techniques that enable centralized management and maintenance of the underlying BI solution platform. Combined with robust data governance practices, this technology can help an organization move toward a single version of the truth in its data management practices. However, specific components of this technology stack present their own challenges and shortcomings. These challenges are highlighted in use cases requiring ad-hoc information access and analysis functionality.

OLAP cubes present a particularly strong example of the inefficiencies of some BI systems, as they require significant upfront investment in understanding end-user requirements, in order to pre-build data models based on anticipated query patterns. It is often hard for the design and redesign, and build and rebuild stages of the OLAP build process to be as flexible and timely, as is required by the evolution of user requirements.

The **design quality** of a BI solution can therefore be viewed as a measure of the system's flexibility and the organization's agility in responding to ongoing decision support demands. What organizations need, therefore, is for a BI toolset to be:

- ☒ **Simple** — A simple interface and simple infrastructure mean that users find it easy to get started with the tools and applications. An overcomplicated interface

can deter users from exploring the data, while an overly complex infrastructure can mean that users are unable to evolve their usage as they gain in experience.

- ☒ **Powerful** — For users to learn and grow with the tool, the tool needs to allow them to follow their natural decision-making process from aggregated data down to detailed record-level information.
- ☒ **Flexible** — It should be easy to make changes to reports and analyses quickly, whether these changes are done by IT or by the business itself. The BI system thereby underpins business agility, because information is available that can support the business strategy even as it changes.

## THE SOLUTION: NEW APPROACHES TO BI

A BI solution must be able to meet the needs of various business user groups and the needs of the IT group as it works to support the ongoing BI needs of end users. When a BI solution is well designed and exhibits the appropriate functionality, it provides end users with a self-service environment that matches their decision-making processes. At the same time, such a solution frees IT groups from ongoing report or OLAP cube development and enables IT personnel to focus on systems management and maintenance issues as well as broader, enterprisewide data integration and data quality issues.

QlikTech is one of the BI software vendors that focuses on addressing these needs.

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### QlikTech Overview

Headquartered in Radnor, Pennsylvania, with development offices in Lund, Sweden, QlikTech is an innovative and fast-growing BI software vendor. Privately held and venture backed, the company has had the highest revenue growth rate of the leading BI software vendors over the past four years, according to IDC research.

Founded in 1993, QlikTech released its first product in 1995. As of October 1, 2009, the company had over 559,000 users and 12,430 customers in 95 countries covering a multitude of industries, and according to company executives, is adding an average of 15.5 net new customers each day. QlikTech has more than 800 partners that include application software vendors and resellers worldwide. The company's flagship product is called QlikView.

#### *QlikView's Functionality*

The QlikView BI offering provides self-service, ad-hoc information access and analysis functionality to business decision makers. These decision makers may be inside or outside the organization, online or offline, and require interactive reports, data visualization, and ad-hoc query support. QlikView technology is based on a patented in-memory associative data model. This technology comprises three primary components:

- ☒ High-speed query engine for querying as the user clicks through the data
- ☒ An analysis or calculation engine for multi-dimensional analysis
- ☒ End-user visualization layer for displaying interactive charts and lists

QlikView can integrate data from transactional systems, existing relational data warehouses or other data sources such as spreadsheets with no need to create OLAP cubes.

**Customer Satisfaction With QlikView**

QlikView speeds up the path to BI success by being easy and quick to use, implement, and learn for both IT and business users. However, all BI vendors claim this. Accordingly, we asked the QlikView survey respondents how satisfied they were with their QlikView implementation on a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), and compared the results to those from a general survey of BI users run by IDC and InfoWorld in 2008. Figure 1 gives their responses.

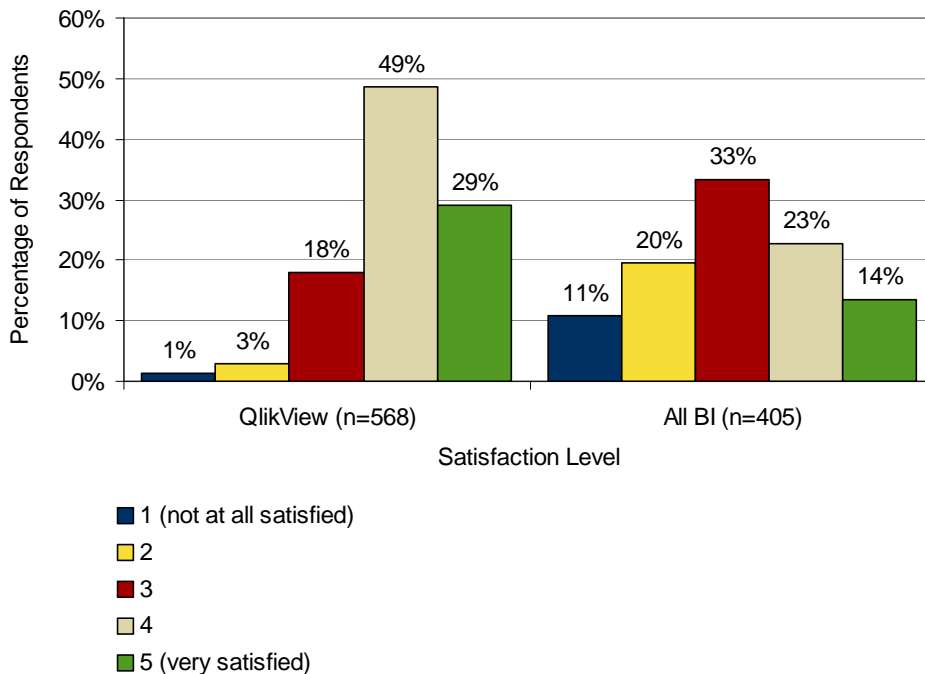
The average for QlikView was 4.0, while the general BI responses averaged 3.0. This shows the significantly higher satisfaction of QlikView customers, compared to satisfaction in general with BI.

For the QlikView-only respondents, responses in the top three boxes were 96%, and responses in the bottom two boxes were 4%. For the All BI respondents, the responses in the top three boxes were 70%, and the bottom two boxes were 30%.

**FIGURE 1**

**Customer Satisfaction With QlikView**

Q. How satisfied are you with your implementation of QlikView, on a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied)?



Note: QlikView results from IDC survey of QlikView customer base, Jan–Mar 2009

Note: All BI results from IDC and InfoWorld BI Survey February 2008

Source: IDC, 2009

### ***QlikView's Net Promoter Score***

An alternative measurement of customer satisfaction is net promoter score (NPS). This is a metric used in marketing that classifies an organization's customers into three groups: Promoters, Passives, and Detractors. The classification is simply based on the customer's response to the question: "How likely are you to recommend product/service X to a colleague or a friend?" on a scale of 0 (not at all likely) through 5 (neutral) to 10 (extremely likely). Customers who respond in the 0 to 6 range are Detractors, those who respond 7 or 8 are Passives, and those who respond with 9 or 10 are Promoters. The NPS is calculated as the percentage of Promoters minus the percentage of Detractors.

IDC's survey on behalf of QlikView asked this question and calculated QlikView's NPS score as 48%, with 566 respondents (60% Promoters and 12% Detractors). This is two points higher than Adobe, which, according to the creator of the NPS methodology, SatMetrix Inc., was the leader of its 2009 NPS benchmark tests in the Technology: Computer Software segment (at 46%). (See the press release of these benchmarks at

[http://www.satmetrix.com/satmetrix/news\\_events.php?page=1&pid=72](http://www.satmetrix.com/satmetrix/news_events.php?page=1&pid=72)).

## **BENEFITS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

Organizations of all sizes around the world have had positive experiences using QlikView. Most use case scenarios involve companies that had inadequate information access and analysis tools and needed to improve the decision-making capabilities of end users inside and outside the organization.

QlikView customers came to QlikView at one of three stages of BI usage. 57% of respondents were looking to move on from spreadsheets and personal databases, 17% wanted to replace an existing BI system, and 25% intended to complement an existing BI system.

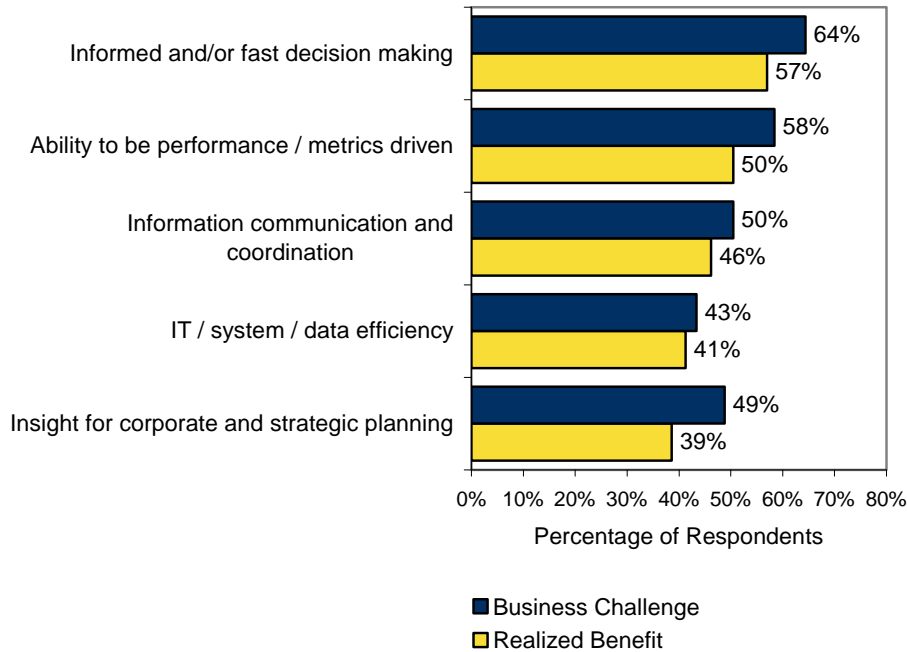
Figure 2 shows the business challenges that led customers to investigate QlikView, and alongside this, the actual benefits that they achieved after implementation.

Informed and/or fast decision making was the most important challenge, and it was also the most widely realized benefit. The ability to be performance/metrics driven was second, and the need for information communication and coordination was third.

**FIGURE 2**

**Business Challenges That Led To The Need For QlikView**

Q: *What were the business challenges that led to your need for QlikView, and the associated benefits realized upon implementing QlikView (multiple responses allowed)?*



Note: n=676

Note: Only the five most widely cited benefits are displayed

Source: IDC survey of QlikView customer base, Jan-Mar 2009

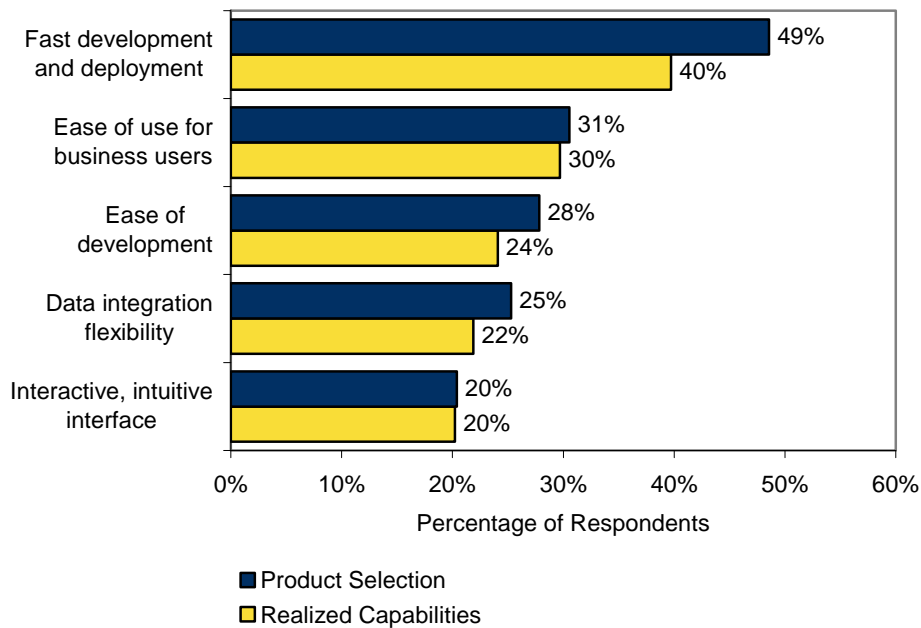
***Why Did Customers Choose QlikView***

We asked customers what product capabilities led them to choose QlikView, and whether they realized these product capabilities after implementation. Numerous factors were involved in this choice, but the top 3 were fast development and deployment, ease of use for business users, and ease of development. These were also the top 3 capabilities realized by the product.

**FIGURE 3**

The Most Important Selection Factors And Realized Capabilities Of QlikView Customers

Q. Which of the following 3 factors were most important in your product selection of QlikView over other solutions? After implementing, which 3 factors were realized as the most valuable product capabilities?



Note: n=589

Note: Only the five most widely cited factors are displayed

Source: IDC survey of QlikView customer base, Jan-Mar 2009

**The Benefits Of QlikView**

This section drills into the expected and realized benefits of QlikView and describes customers' experiences.

***Ease of Use For Business Users***

Claims of 'ease of use' abound in the software market. Yet, we find that what is easy for one user maybe highly complex for another. For some financial users, the most complex Excel pivot tables are intuitive, while operational staff might require explanation of the data and layout for a simple report. One of the metrics for evaluating ease of use of any given tool is to measure the time it takes to train users. When a tool is truly easy to use, training times are short and users are able to use the tool after training, as opposed to forgetting about it at the end of the training session.

All 19 customers interviewed found the QlikView software was easy for their users to use. They generally found QlikView to be highly intuitive and conducive to exploratory interactivity with the data. The visual interface provided additional benefits in

understanding the information. Importantly, organizations reported very short, one-time training sessions for their users.

QlikView allows users to combine their own sets of information dynamically. Not all customers roll this functionality out to their users, but the in-memory associative architecture makes this functionality available for any customer.

**Eddo de Vries, UWV (Netherlands, public sector):** "We had the feeling that QlikView is a generation advanced from other BI tools. It hits the spot between Excel, which is for simple use, and data warehousing for complex use."

**Michael Korin of Superior Graphite (U.S., manufacturing)** simply stated: "If it takes a user longer than 5 minutes to learn how to use QlikView, we know they aren't paying attention."

**Jan Nangle of NWCAA (U.K., healthcare)** said, "We needed a tool that could be very simply used by non-technical people who could drill down quickly and identify areas they wanted to look at, and see the data how they wanted to see it."

**The CEO of a U.S. manufacturing company:** "I always thought QlikView would work for our users — the 'light bulb moment' was when it was demonstrated to a particular team who aren't great with spreadsheets. When these guys get it you know it's easy to use."

**A German financial services company** said, "We don't even train on the tool, we just give a short presentation on some aspects of its use."

There is a caveat here — for business users, the BI tool itself is not distinct from the data that underlies it. Using real data shows the business exactly how the tool will work in their daily life. This was a lesson learnt at a **U.S.-based life sciences company:** "When we did the training we assumed the tool was so intuitive people would pick it up easily. Some did, but some only did when the tool incorporated the data they cared about. A lesson learnt was to **train on the data in the user's application at the same time as training on the tool.**"

#### **Actionable Information Allows Evolution Towards Analytic Culture**

Customers described how, once QlikView provided an accessible single version of the truth for company data, users were able to focus on managing the business better, thus making better use of the time that had previously been taken up with trying to understand what was happening.

Those who believe in the benefits of BI claim that the use of BI leads to better organizational performance. However, this is only the case if users take appropriate action based on the information they see, regardless of how well designed or broadly deployed the BI solution may be.

Companies and departments that are using BI successfully have the opportunity for the business to evolve from monitoring what is happening to using information to manage the business.

**Ulf Carlsson, Bring Frigoscandia (Sweden, consumer products, retail and distribution):** "Before QlikView, the manager's job was to ask all the staff what was happening, and try and make sure the staff had an accurate picture. Now, the

manager knows what's happening because of QlikView, so the whole interaction is different. The manager asks the staff why the situation is as it is."

**Keith Edmonds, Aon Asia (Singapore, financial services):** "[With QlikView] people can sit at their desks and say 'I wonder...' and find an answer, then say '...and then what?'"

**A U.S.-based life sciences company:** "There has been a huge maturing of the business since we implemented QlikView. Before, we were digging into why orders were missed and it took so long for us to get through them all that we were usually looking at orders that were about 60 days old. Now, the historical data is available to us instantly and our focus has shifted to improving our 90-day forecast accuracy."

End-user evolution is another key element to achieving BI adoption. When users have worked in an environment that provides them with information on paper or spreadsheets, they are often not very interested in relinquishing their old way of working to change over to a BI system. IT or BI people can explain the benefits of taking time out to learn a new tool, and this sometimes works but is often met with cynicism — "I don't have time to play with new toys." The companies that are most successful at helping their users achieve this evolution do it by gradually introducing the business benefits of such exploration.

Too much demonstration by developers does not solve this problem — **users need to get hands-on with the technology**. The **U.S.-based life sciences company** referenced earlier, describes why demonstrations are limited in effect: "It's completely different when you see a developer driving an application, to when you see a business user exploring the data — the whole approach is totally different."

**Eddo de Vries, UWV (Netherlands, public sector)** had success in encouraging business users to evolve from reading spreadsheets to online exploration: "When management come to the systems team and ask for information, they expect us to provide a spreadsheet. Instead, we build a report in QlikView and ask them if it's what they want. They are usually pleasantly surprised because we can show them more data than they expected, then they start to explore with the tool themselves."

For **Keith Edmonds, Aon Asia (Singapore, financial services)**, there was a point at which his now highly successful BI project was nearly brought down by this effect. "The biggest challenge in the project was to get the users to buy in, so they were looking at the system and wanting to use it. When we first built the data warehouse we were very pleased with all this functionality that we had supplied. However, the users didn't want to use it. They wanted their assistant to print them off a report and hand it to them. That wasn't what the system was about at all, users needed to be exploring interactively, asking, "What is this piece of information telling me and what do I need to know next?" You can't do this by handing over the report to someone who is not part of the data exploration process." On reflection, Keith said, "I really think it was QlikView that solved this problem...I knew our users would find it very intuitive. "

When a BI tool is effectively adopted and accepted by business users, the tool often becomes the subject of an emotional attachment and loyalty. This helps significantly with further deployment of BI solutions around the organization.

**Mario Fiorani, ENI Spa. (Italy, infrastructure services):** "Any time we sit down with the business and mention that QlikView will be part of the project, this brings them on board immediately, because the tool is so popular."

Customers find that **insight can be driven by the available information** — the information itself suggests questions that the business can ask. This is an important conceptual shift. Users that are hamstrung by fragmented architectures often do not start to explore in this way because they cannot imagine the relevant information as being available.

**Josef Attman, Heidelberger DruckMaschinen AG (Germany, manufacturing),** said, "QlikView has given us more refined information that has improved our company's performance. With QlikView, we were able to gain a better overview of our SAP data, and significantly reduce the effort in producing reports."

**Michael Korin, Superior Graphite (U.S., manufacturing),** added: "What you can do with QlikView is only limited by your imagination... In terms of information, we can think outside the box and say what we need, then we can do it in QlikView."

Some organizations **evolve to a more analytical culture**, where using data to back decisions is more obvious and natural than using gut feel. Of course, software tools alone cannot enable a cultural change. However, some QlikView customers did feel that QlikView had helped them with this significant evolution. **Carles Molina Suau, HIPRA (Spain, manufacturing),** said: "We are growing very fast, and with QlikView we have been able to achieve this using data, rather than relying on gut feel."

### ***Speed of Development, Implementation, and Deployment***

IT groups are charged with the task of providing business end users with the right information at the right time. As such, IT groups need to be able to set up systems quickly and provide timely updates and maintenance, so that IT does not become a bottleneck.

A common characteristic of BI system design among QlikView users was the extensive use of rapid prototyping during the BI solution development process. Rapid prototyping seems to be the only effective method to match IT development plans with frequently changing end-user requirements. The quicker the initial development cycles, the more likely it is that the business requirement that was requested is still current and that the strategy and tactics of the organization have not changed to render the requirement obsolete.

QlikView software is made available for organizations to build prototypes before acquiring the software. Many organizations interviewed by IDC were able to use QlikView to develop the initial version of their BI solutions within hours or days. This enabled the developers of the BI solution, both IT and business personnel, to rapidly demonstrate initial business benefits. Most organizations then continued their development efforts in an iterative fashion while working under the guidance of an overall BI strategy.

**A European media company** said: "Using QlikView to develop our stock valuation application took 1.5 days and the application met 100% of our requirements. To build the data repository for our previous BI system took between 3 and 4 months."

**Michael Korin, Superior Graphite (U.S., manufacturing):** "A QlikView representative showed me a demonstration of the software. I liked the product and took it home to play with over the weekend. In four hours I had completed phase 1 of our executive dashboard project, which was more progress than our consultancy partner had made with a traditional tool after a year."

**Keith Edmonds, Aon Asia (Singapore, financial services),** said: "I met with QlikTech and they gave me a product sample. I flew to Auckland overnight and by the time I landed I had built our first QlikView application."

In general, IDC's research shows that a key element of the quick development is ***the flexibility allowed by QlikView's associative technology.***

**A German manufacturing company** made the point that QlikView's simplicity meant he could start prototyping and developing the BI solution without a significant design phase. "[With QlikView] we could start to build solutions immediately. There is no traditional conceptual development cycle where you are working with concepts of how to build the system. You just get results," he said.

Back to **Keith Edmonds of Aon Asia (Singapore, financial services):** "We were using a SQL-based reporting tool but it needed a very structured approach. You need to know what you are doing to call out all the dimensions correctly. With QlikView, you can remove a dimension with one click, there is much more flexibility."

**The C.E.O. of a U.S. manufacturing company** described the challenge presented by complex BI architectures: "With our original BI tool, it took six months to design and get agreement on cube structures. We never implemented the tool."

#### **Low Cost of System Maintenance and Improved Use of IT Resources**

QlikView provides two key benefits that decrease ongoing BI system maintenance costs and help focus limited IT resources. The software can help eliminate the need for building and rebuilding OLAP cubes and reduce the cost and delivery times of reports.

QlikView's associative data model enables n-dimensional data analysis that is not constrained by a prebuilt data model and data aggregation required of OLAP cubes. The flexible data structure and highly interactive user interface of the solution also mean that IT does not have to prebuild dozens or even hundreds of reports for each end user.

Several customer examples demonstrate this benefit of QlikView:

**The CEO of a U.S. manufacturing company:** "Flexibility is key to the system's success. It takes us about a day to put changes in. We are a fluid organization, we don't have a change log, we build the new application, check it, then roll it out. It's infinitely faster [to develop] than an OLAP system would be — we just change pointers around instead of building new cubes."

**Gael Urbauer, Provera (France, consumer products, retail and distribution):** "We believe that query and reporting needs of any business are infinite — they cannot be limited — certainly not by the software development time. By moving to QlikView from a traditional BI tool we have gained five times the capacity with the same number of development staff."

## **Build Trust in the Data Via Data Quality Insight and Improvements**

QlikView's flexibility as a viewer over a data source means that QlikView users often find the tool provides benefits related to data quality, such as improved insight into data.

IDC market research consistently shows that data quality remains one of the top information-related challenges for organizations of all sizes. The data integration elements of traditional BI architectures address the automation of data quality routines. However, if an organization is in the early days of its BI implementation, or has a fragmented information landscape, allowing business users to view the source data directly can give the organization a "quick start" to data quality. Business users understand the context of data and can quickly identify data quality problems and the source of these problems. IT has the tools and techniques to profile and cleanse data, but lacks this specific contextual understanding, which means IT can take a long time analyzing the causes of data quality problems that the business could identify fairly quickly.

QlikView's direct view into the source data provides business users with a view into datasets from different sources, and the facility to combine them using QlikView's associative technology. This brings business users closer to the source data they are using for decision making.

One customer, **Bring Frigoscandia (Sweden, consumer products, retail and distribution)**, started its use of QlikView with a data quality initiative. **Ulf Carlsson, BI manager**, explains: "We started with customer master data, and used QlikView to explore it, then we cleaned it up. Then we integrated the sales ledger information about all the open invoices, so our sales reps could see the amounts outstanding for their accounts. Eventually we allocated a statement, a controller, and a customer number and we compared the salesmen on the quality of the data. They didn't like it at first [because they were much more accountable for the quality of business than before]."

A key benefit of improving data quality and having a set of employees working with a common information system is **transparency**. Many BI initiatives fail because the organization is not yet ready for transparency of information, as so many of its power structures relate to people "owning" information that they have produced themselves in spreadmarts. Although this is not a technology issue, good technology can enable transparency if the organization recognizes the need for it.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR QLIKTECH

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### Challenges

- ☒ A key challenge for QlikTech, as a relatively small player, is that it is in competition with the newly consolidated software platform players with their broad technology portfolios.
  - ☒ Another challenge for QlikTech is to ensure that it is not viewed as a propagator of individual decision support tools that are outside the support structure of IT groups. Although support for individual decision support is important, it is only one of the factors in an organization-wide BI strategy.
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### Opportunities

- ☒ Economic volatility is both a challenge and an opportunity for QlikTech. IDC research indicates that organizations are focusing on more tactical projects, with lower upfront spend and more quickly realized business benefits. This plays directly to QlikTech's strengths of simplicity, flexibility and power.
- ☒ The midmarket is an under-served area for BI solutions, because the big players have so far been unable to simplify their product ranges and pricing models enough to enjoy notable adoption within midsized and small organizations. QlikTech, along with its partners, has had great success addressing the BI needs of midsized and small organizations.

## CONCLUSION

Organizations seeking to make better use of their data to support a wide range of decision making processes would be wise to invest in BI solutions. These solutions can help IT groups to provide a clean, consistent source of information overlaid with reporting, dashboarding, and analysis tools that business users can use to manage and monitor departmental or organizational performance. However, many of the traditional BI solutions on the market present significant implementation, maintenance, and user acceptance challenges. This is particularly the case for organizations that need very flexible ad-hoc analysis capabilities and a particularly simple user interface. IT groups need to be able to make changes quickly, while business users need to be able to build their own reports and analysis that present the data in a way that makes the information easy to use for their daily tasks.

QlikTech's BI offering provides an interface that business users find easy to use and intuitive, while IT users find it to be relatively easy-to-install and flexible. This should be appealing to both IT and business users alike.

While QlikTech faces a competitive BI market, it is differentiated in its approach to BI. QlikView can provide companies with dashboards, dynamic reports and ad-hoc query and analysis features that do not require the IT group to predict all the likely end-user queries that users may ask.

## APPENDIX

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### The Survey

The IDC survey was deployed for twelve weeks during the first quarter of 2009, in 9 languages worldwide. The survey resulted in 809 responses. The organizations and survey respondent characteristics include:

- Region: Americas (27%), EMEA (70%), and Asia Pacific (3%).
- Industry: Consumer products, retail & distribution (38%), manufacturing (28%), financial services (9%), public sector (9%), infrastructure services (7%), life sciences (5%), and healthcare (4%).
- Organization size based on the number of employees: Fewer than 20 (6%), 20–499 (34%), 500–999 (12%), 1,000–9,999 (25%), and 10,000 or more (23%).
- Individual respondents profile:
  - Senior management (23%), middle management (30%), and staff (47%).
  - Line of business (38%) and IT (62%).

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