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**The WHY, WHAT and HOW
of a Shared Services Model for
Business Intelligence & Analytics**

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Business Intelligence and Analytics (BI&A) applications have the potential of creating enterprise-wide value. However, in a large number of instances, BI&A implementations do not secure the outcomes business leaders and their stakeholders seek from BI&A investments.

- **WHY** do Business Intelligence & Analytics implementations fail to deliver expected results?
- **WHAT** strategy should you adopt to maximize returns from BI&A investments?
- **HOW** do you build a common and centralized hub of business insights — the shared services BI CoE?

This whitepaper answers these three basic, yet complex questions.

WHY Business Intelligence & Analytics Implementations do not Always Deliver as Expected

The answer to that is, in most instances, Business Intelligence & Analytics implementations are fragmented and siloed. The conventional fragmented approach can primarily be attributed to the emergence of new low-cost point solutions for data analysis that have encouraged executives of each business unit or department to implement their own Business Intelligence & Analysis tools and methods. This “democratization” of BI&A has resulted in the uncontrolled proliferation of tools, local data

repositories and analytical management services. It has contributed to the complexity and confusion as different interest groups within the enterprise try to make sense of data that affects various areas of business operations.

If you glance a little at history, you will realize that for most organizations, across virtually all industries, the Business Intelligence function was born as a specialized area to support, enable and sustain narrow areas of investigation. The need to gather and understand data captured by the enterprise was often driven by executives from the office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), involved in annual strategic planning activities. Executives would ask their IT departments to query enterprise systems to identify key trends and correlations that would in turn strengthen the strategic planning process. It often took weeks for a response to the analytical request to be fulfilled. This is because the processes for capturing and analyzing data sets from enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer relationship management (CRM), supply chain management (SCM) systems and other assets were manual. The reason: systems were not integrated, and therefore could not “talk” to each other.

Business unit analysts often took the reports that the IT organization pulled out of the “native” systems, and engaged in their ‘own’ analysis of data sets using spreadsheets that could not be easily shared, and which were often of inconsistent analytical quality. For many organizations, the trend still continues...

In an effort to stay on top of markets and trends, different decision-makers across departments within enterprises have begun improvising and developing their own ad-hoc Business Intelligence and Analytics solutions that cannot be leveraged, and which are not validated to provide accurate insight and ensure successful outcomes. Many organizations are wrestling with a crisis of a corporate context because executives do not have access to a comprehensive ‘single version of the truth’ across structured and unstructured data environments. A fragmented approach to data mining and analysis often leads different executives within the same organizations to end up working with different versions of data. In turn, conflicting conclusions about the nature

of key market dynamics emerge, with contradictory opinions about the best actions to take going forward.

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Strategy Should Organizations Adopt to Maximize Returns from Business Intelligence & Analytics Investments?

The issue of conflicting assumptions based on inaccurate or out-of-context data analysis tends to become aggravated as more business units and geographical areas of operation become involved in BI&A activities. As the market place has become more digital and global, two key imperatives have emerged:

- There is a need to engage in Business Intelligence and Analysis more frequently — ideally in real-time. A growing group of executives across a range of corporate disciplines (from finance, and marketing, to sales and operations) now need access to accurate business intelligence to support day-to-day decision-making — not just annual or quarterly strategic planning processes
- The need to coordinate decision-making and strategic planning across the enterprise on a nearly real-time basis requires that executives share a unified vision and version of data. It is also important to adopt a common system of analytical processes that allows different parts of the organization to compare ‘apples-to-apples’ even though they bring different functional perspectives

Achieving these two crucial business imperatives cannot be driven by the conventional fragmented and siloed approach towards BI&A. The need of the hour is to establish a flexible, accessible, intuitive and centralized “**shared services**” **Business Intelligence & Analytics Center of Excellence (BI & CoE)** that can be used to support a variety of enterprise-wide analytical needs.

A ‘shared services’ BI&A CoE serves as a central hub of business insights for the entire organization. The shared services BI CoE is created by breaking the data silos, leveraging / sharing the best practices, standardization and better alignment between technology and business. A shared services model can help an organization to significantly increase its competitive position, better leverage and unlock value of its data assets, enhance organizational capability to generate and action insights to meet its customers’ changing demands and needs. It also provides senior management with the visibility necessary to monitor decisions and improve accountability.

An effective BI CoE optimizes the interplay of the three most crucial elements in any business – people, processes and technology.

- **People** – An effective Business Intelligence CoE serves as a common resource center that can be used by executives from a variety of backgrounds and expertise to accomplish departmental objectives. Moreover, because it is a ‘shared services’ hub, the analysis and insights developed by one group can be shared with other departments and disciplines throughout the enterprise to enhance analysis and accelerate the development of new insights. A proficient BI CoE will make it unnecessary for executives to take data out of ‘native’ BI&A environments. This will in turn reduce the use of individual spreadsheet analysis that can create confusion, inconsistency and unnecessary complexity.
- **Processes** – An effective Business Intelligence CoE introduces standard operating procedures that greatly enhance the data mining and analysis processes across the enterprise. Additionally, it can play a critical role in identifying opportunities to improve inefficient business operations. BI CoEs can play a vital role in ensuring that both analytical methodologies and business process improvements achieved in one area of the business can be shared with and adopted by other groups with similar challenges and situations.

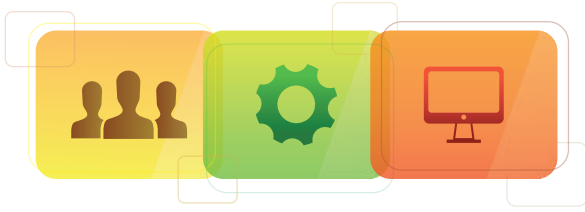


Fig. 1: An effective BI CoE optimizes the interplay of people, processes and technology.

- Technology** – While there are a growing number of point solutions that provide excellent capabilities for discrete problems in specific situations, the key to success lies in orchestrating each technological element (data capture, harmonization, presentation and analysis) with a thorough understanding of the various internal requirements across the enterprise. An effective Business Intelligence CoE provides a framework for identifying the right tools for the right applications in the data gathering and analysis processes across the enterprise.

- Laying the Strategic Foundation ?** The first step in establishing a BI CoE is to begin with the end in mind. This means identifying and aligning the needed functional capabilities of the BI CoE with the mission-critical objectives of the enterprise.

Highly effective Business Intelligence & Analytics capabilities are now considered a strategic requirement for most organizations that wish to be successful in today's fast moving global digital economy. It is therefore important to have a clear understanding of what senior executives and the Board of Directors believe the organization should look like over the short-, mid- and long-term time frames. In other words, executives must understand the relationship between analytics and the ability to achieve each Target Operating Model (TOM) in an organization's planned development.

HOW do you build a Centralized Hub of Business Insights — the Shared Services Business Intelligence CoE?

While there are a growing number of point solutions and providers that offer excellent capabilities, the key to success lies in applying an optimized mix of Business Intelligence & Analytics expertise with best-in-class technologies and applying them with a thorough understanding of internal enterprise requirements.

In addition to addressing the requirements of various lines of business, a BI CoE in a global company must address the specific needs of operations in specific regions or countries. It is important for senior leadership at the corporate level to provide active input into the various domains, data sets, languages and operational nomenclatures in the Business Intelligence & Analytics CoE.

A step-by-step approach works best for designing a shared services model. This approach analyzes important design elements that are crucial in designing any shared service model.

By leveraging an optimum mix of people, processes and technology, BI CoEs can help:

- Establish enterprise-wide governance frameworks
- Guide BI application development throughout the enterprise
- Capture and disseminate best practices as they are discovered and validated
- Provide company-wide training and education for BI and analytics processes
- Centralize and optimize vendor tools and resources for the entire organization
- Streamline cross-departmental coordination and collaboration



	Design Elements	Relevance	Organization design implication
People	Career path	Employee motivation, engagement and retention	Engender skill/domain depth
	Training	Up-skill, reduce learning curve, motivation, retention	
	Skill sets	Availability of relevant skill, level of analytical maturity	Enhance organizational talent capabilities
	Talent mobility	Motivation, retention, innovation	
Process	Knowledge management	Knowledge retention and reuse, productivity, reduce learning curve, reduced business risk	Practice experts / Competency leaders with clear and measurable objectives
	Best practices sharing	Reuse, productivity, reduce learning curve, ability to perform higher order analytics, consistency, free flow of ideas	Foster communities - visibility to best practices and incentive to embrace them
	Strategic insight generation	Competitive advantage, value tracking	Strong alignment with organizational goals
	Standardization	Productivity, analytical driven organization, cost optimization, release bandwidth to enable higher order analytics	Competency based alignment
	Innovation	Proactive trading and capturing market trends (Social Media, Big Data)	
Technology	Data silos	Speed insight, analytical depth, competitive advantage	Competency based alignment to better harness available data tool set and technologies
	Tool set	Speed to insight, analytical maturity	
	New technologies	Speed to insight, competitive advantage	

In turn, this requires BI CoE designers to understand: **1)** the types of executives who will be using the BI&A systems; **2)** the types of questions that are going to be asked; **3)** the frequency with which they will be asked; and **4)** the level of complexity that will have to be managed to address those questions.

Once that is done, it is possible to assess the skillsets that are currently available within the organization to support a strategic BI&A initiative, and lays the foundation for determining what must be done to field the experts, analysts and technologists required to support an agile and responsive BI CoE that supports the evolving TOM.

Depending on the structure of the TOM, executives must decide if they require a centralized, decentralized / functional or hybrid BI&A infrastructure, and then ensure that the proper incentives, processes and technological tools are in place for analytical teams to support the short-, mid- and long-term data gathering and analysis needs of key corporate constituencies.

It is important to think of the BI CoE as a journey and not a destination. The structure and key elements of the BI CoE must keep pace with the evolution of the interests and objectives of the enterprise..

- **Choosing the Right Business Intelligence CoE Architecture?** While a Center of Excellence may conjure up a single point of management, the BI CoEs should be viewed as a concept that is developed around the strategic objectives and evolving structural organization of the enterprise. In this context, successful shared services BI CoEs can be established to support decentralized TOMs that are organized to support specific Business Intelligence needs of discrete departmental functions.

However, they can also be consolidated to support broad requirements across the enterprise. Finally, hybrid models can also be deployed to deliver BI&A capabilities for general and department-specific requirements. There is no single recipe for success.

Each architectural model, however, carries with it implications for the skillsets and domain expertise that must be possessed by the BI CoE team, the types of processes that must be in place, and the sophistication of tools needed to ensure that a single version of the truth is maintained in a disciplined manner across the organizational decision-making process. Enterprises must therefore carefully plan, establish and manage

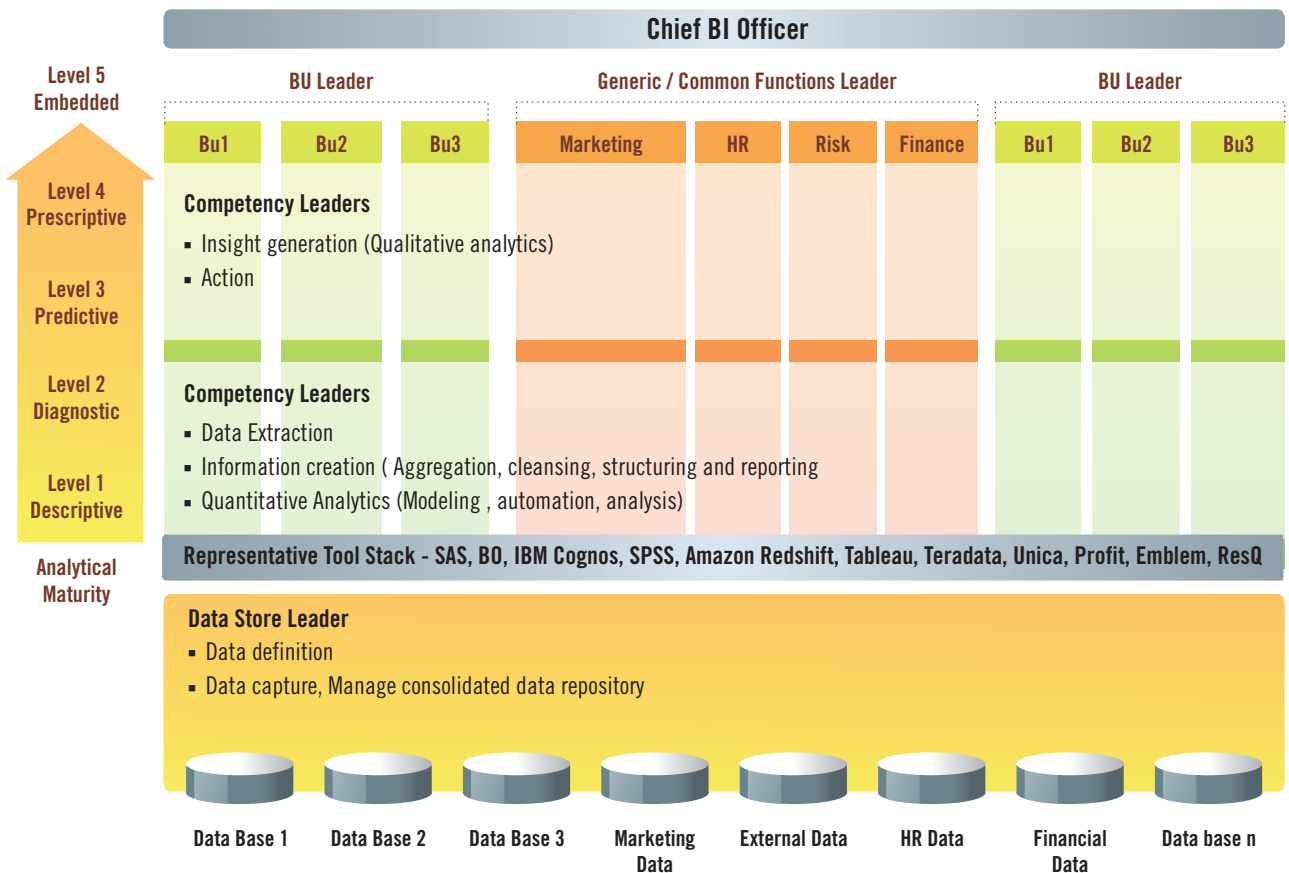
the key elements of the BI CoE to ensure enhanced business impact from it.

▪ **Establishing an Effective Operating Structure?**

The purpose of a BI CoE is to provide enterprise-wide context for managing the complexity associated with data, information and knowledge management across a heterogeneous stack of technologies. It should serve the information gathering and analysis needs of a diverse inter-disciplinary group of executive decision-makers. It is therefore

important to give careful thought to the organization of the operating structure that will tap an array data storage resources processed by multiple analytical tools to ultimately deliver meaningful insight in real-time.

There are several layers of technology and process management steps that must be administered by an extremely competent and widely respected Chief Business Intelligence Officer who is supported by sophisticated technology management and analytics leaders.



▪ For the BI CoE to be successful, it is critical to have in place the ability to access, integrate and rationalize structured and unstructured data from a broad variety of internal and external data stores. Before data can be presented for the first level of analysis, a Data Store Leader must develop conventions for defining data elements from a variety sources and either establish a consolidated data repository, or create a middle-ware map that

makes it possible to execute a federated query for information across the multi-vendor storage environment.

▪ Once data from multiple sources are rationalized, it is necessary to engage in accurate enterprise-wide descriptive analysis. An effective BI CoE can help ensure consistent reporting on the state of current operations by tracking key internal metrics and external market trends.

- The availability of accurate reports from the market and across the enterprise makes it possible to engage in diagnostic analysis to determine the impact key trends captured in reports have on internal business operations as well as external competitive dynamics.
- By capturing critical dependencies in the diagnostic impact analysis, higher-level analysts can apply tools and algorithms to engage in predictive analytics that provide insight into the most probable outcomes of unfolding trends and developments.
- With insight into probable outcomes, strategic planners can apply analytical processes to develop prescriptive scenarios of activity that senior horizontal (discipline-specific) and vertical (business unit) leaders can evaluate to chart an appropriate course of action.



...To Build, Buy or Rent...That is the Question

Speed, quality and cost are among the key issues that must be managed as executives evaluate their options for implementing an enterprise-wide Business Intelligence CoE. Those options include:

- **In-sourced Strategies?** Are aimed at allocating internal human, financial and technical resources to develop a dedicated internal shared services that is optimized to address the specific Business Intelligence & Analytics needs of various constituencies
- **Outsourced Strategies?** Focus on leveraging the growing variety of cloud and managed service providers that have created repeatable solutions to address the constantly evolving requirements and demands for BI&A
- **Hybrid Strategies?** Tap the best of both worlds by developing and integrating a mix of internal and external resources that allow the organization to harvest the cost-benefits of shared solutions available in the market, while retaining control of critical capabilities for ensuring quality, relevance and control of sensitive information.



...Conclusion: Expertise and Effective Partnerships are Critical to Building Business Intelligence CoEs

The volumes of data that organizations collect, manage and analyze will grow exponentially in the months and years to come. Companies that can develop a shared framework to capture comprehend and act on this explosion of information will be best positioned to thrive in the dynamic, global digital economy.

- Most organizations sit over highly fragmented sets of siloed repositories of structured and unstructured data. As a result, many departments within global operations are engaged in ad hoc data analysis to support day-to-day business decisions. Disparate data sources coupled with disparate analytical procedures can have negative consequences on the ability of organizations to achieve strategic mission objectives.
- For this reason, there is a growing need to develop a shared services Business Intelligence & Analytics model that offers an enterprise-wide capability to engage in complex data management while delivering tailored analytical services for short-, mid- and long-term decision support.
- An effectively designed and managed BI CoE can provide a global framework for delivering a BI&A capability that is responsive and constantly evolving to support many use-cases within an enterprise.

Organizations must work in close partnership with experienced service providers that have developed — and are constantly evolving — BI&A CoEs that are relevant, intuitive and widely accessible in a secure and compliant manner to key enterprise constituencies.

About WNS

WNS (Holdings) Limited (NYSE: WNS) is a leading global Business Process Management (BPM) company. WNS offers business value to 200+ global clients by combining operational excellence with deep domain expertise in key industry verticals, including Banking and Financial Services, Healthcare, Insurance, Manufacturing, Media and Entertainment, Consulting and Professional Services, Retail & Consumer Packaged Goods, Telecom and Diversified Businesses, Shipping and Logistics, Travel and Leisure and Utilities. WNS delivers an entire spectrum of business process management services such as customer care, finance and accounting, human resource solutions, research and analytics, technology solutions, and industry-specific back-office and front-office processes. WNS has delivery centers world-wide, including Australia, China, Costa Rica, India, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, UK and US.

WNS is a leading provider of business intelligence and analytics solutions. WNS's award-winning proprietary framework, the WNS Analytics Decision Engine (WADESM) is a predictive analytics solution framework to inspire and enable an organization to scale the analytical maturity curve and become fact-based in the way it thinks and acts to achieve its long-term growth targets. With extensive experience of setting up multiple delivery centers round the globe, having led hundreds of successful transitions and set up shared services centers for many clients, WNS is well-positioned to support the shared services needs of clients for their BI&A needs.

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