

# What Business Leaders Hate About Big Data

Business Leaders Say Their Data Is Scattered And They Don't Know How To Use It

Data is key to making good business decisions. But it's also causing CEOs and business leaders chronic frustration as they try to navigate the ever-changing sea of reports.

BusinessIntelligence.com surveyed more than 300 business leaders to understand their biggest data-related frustrations and what they would like to be doing differently. The word cloud below reflects respondents' most common responses to the simple question, "What is your biggest data frustration?" Read on as we dig deeper into these data pain-points and learn where demand is growing next.

**How We Did It...**  
Our survey sample included 302 respondents. You can read more about our methodology at the end of the report, or [click here](#) to read it now.



"It is always after the fact. I won't receive March data until the second week of April and if there is an emerging problem with March metrics I don't know in time to 'fix' [it]."  
*CEO, Healthcare*

"[I] wish I could customize it a little more...slice and dice and filter...that I could be in control of when I get my data."  
*CFO, Healthcare*

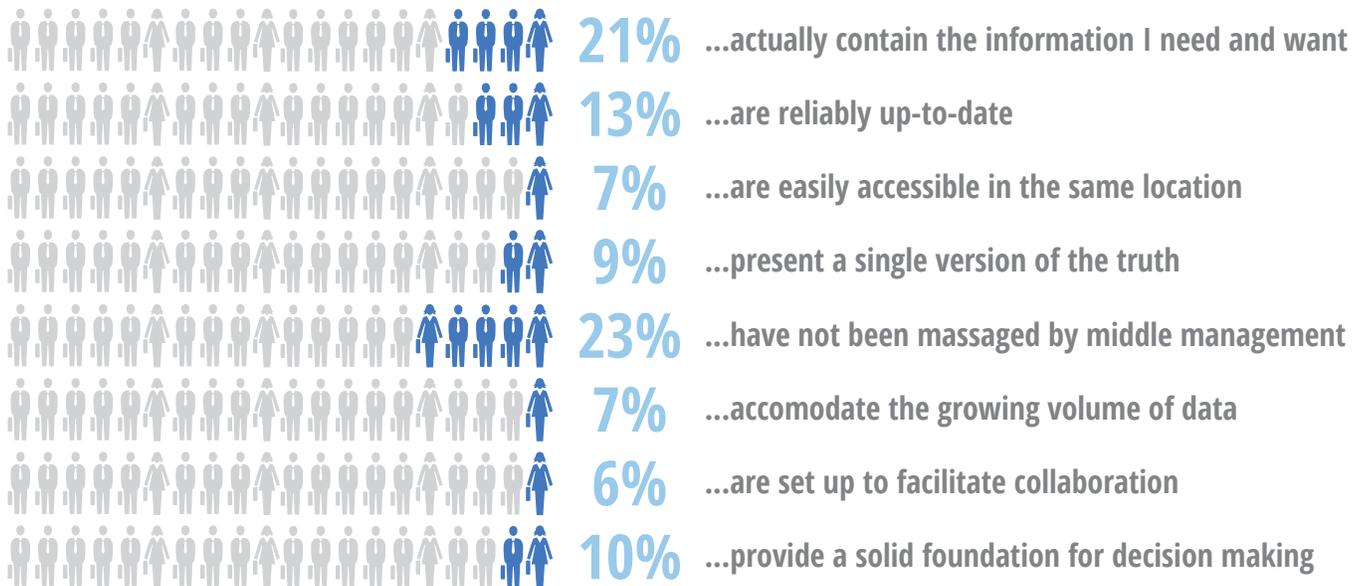
Everyone's data needs are different, but there are a few essential characteristics of a healthy data ecosystem that make it a solid foundation for data-driven decision making. Our survey revealed that shockingly few business leaders feel their organizations have such a foundation:

"[I am] unable to be self-sufficient, to pull reports without requiring another team/person."  
*CEO, Advertising*

# Only about **1 in 4** CEOs say their reports contain the information they need and want.

(12% say they get only summary information, 4% get too much detail)

## How Many Business Leaders Can Confidently Say Their Reports...



## Most Common Data Frustrations

According to our survey results, executives' widespread frustrations are concentrated in three areas:

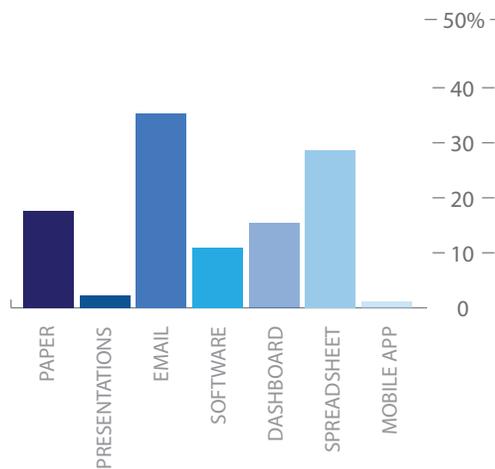
- **How data is delivered:** Systems it comes from, formats of reports, consumability
- **When and where they have access to it:** Reliance on IT/other departments, report frequency, real-time and mobile access
- **Interactions their data doesn't permit:** Drill-down, filtering, customization and collaboration

# The Disparate Data Dump: How They Get It vs. How They'd Like it

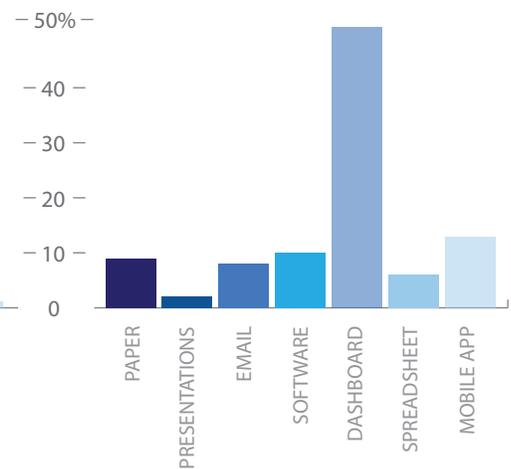
Like a pebble in your shoe, a small issue with data consumption causes big problems. We asked business leaders how they are receiving data and reports, and how they prefer to consume the same information—the comparison is disappointing for most:

**74%** of business leaders must get their data from multiple, unconnected sources

Data formats business leaders receive most often:



Business leaders' "most preferred" data formats:



**1 in 3 CEOs say email is the way they get data most often.**  
(fewer than 10% say they would prefer it in that format)

**More than 50% of CEOs say dashboards are their "most preferred" data format.**  
(currently, fewer than 15% regularly use dashboards for their primary data access)



## The Mobile Data Gap

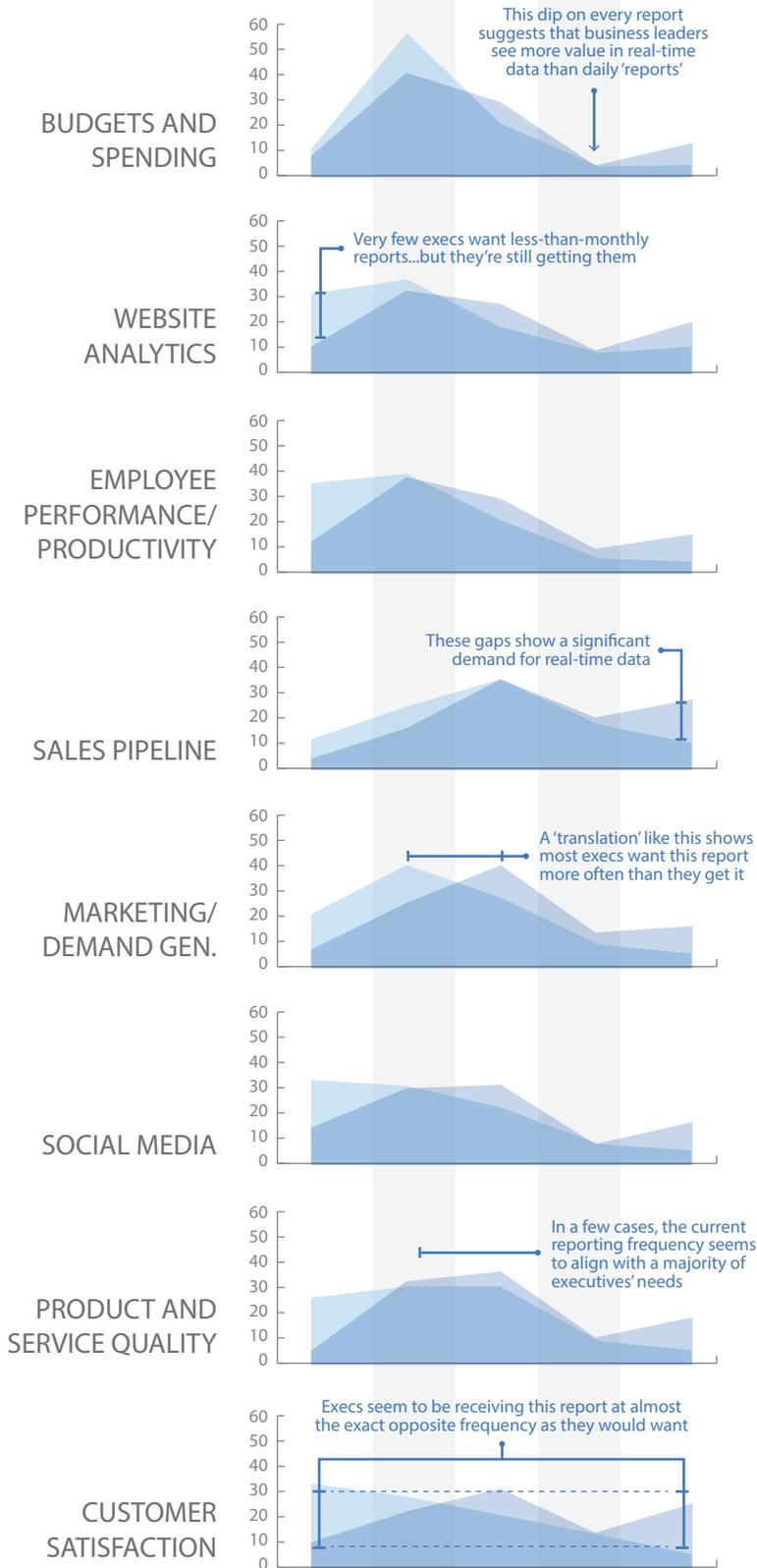
In a report from the Aberdeen Group, mobile BI users reported that their ability to make critical business decisions within the required time frame increased 45% from 2012 to 2013, more than twice the improvement reported by those without access to mobile BI (19%). But, according to the BusinessIntelligence.com survey, mobile usage still lags far behind both demand and potential utility.

**72%** of business leaders say they can't easily access data on their mobile devices



## How Often Do You View The Following Reports?

CURRENTLY IDEALLY



## Report Frequency & Accessibility: What They Get vs. What They Want

Across the board, execs say they want reports more frequently than they're getting them (1 in 5 only get an updated view of their sales pipeline once a month). Still, 70% of survey respondents revealed that they still lack real-time access to their most important information.

### The Real-Time Data Access Gap

The Aberdeen Group survey reveals that real-time BI adopters are more than twice as likely to track and compare the organization's performance with corporate strategy. Our survey confirms that business leaders are anxious to get more real-time reports than they currently have, and that insights on their sales pipeline and customer satisfaction top the list of their priorities. Still, no more than 1/4 of them indicated a *preference* for real-time access to any of the core business reports we asked about.



**The most-viewed reports for CEOs are financial and sales pipeline.**  
(They receive marketing and customer satisfaction reports least often)

## Data Interactions: The Executive Wish List

After simply getting access to the reports in a timely, consumable manner (remember, 74% still have reports coming from multiple systems that have to be managed individually), the execs we surveyed still expressed frustration with what they could *do* with the data once they got it. Searching, filtering, ad-hoc reports, exception reporting and drill-down/slicing are all high on the list of desired functionality, as is collaboration.



"I can't get it myself and I can't manipulate it."

"I cannot push results to other users in a graphical format that is capable of drilling down into the details."

"I have too much information, not enough facts."

"If I want to customize a report I have to wait on IT."

"I need information that I can slice and dice to meet my operational needs."

"There's no way to drill down to see the details of where issues are."

**Only 8% of CEOs are confident that their reports facilitate collaboration**

### The Collaboration Gap

Data from a *Forbes Insight* study suggests that employees who use collaboration tools are up to 62% more productive and accomplish work 57% faster. Yet, while the same study claims 59 percent of executives believe cloud-based collaboration stimulates innovation, our findings show only eight percent of CEOs feel their reports facilitate collaboration — that number drops to six percent when you include all business leaders.

### Conclusion

Business leaders have highly specific problems that require highly customized solutions. Business intelligence hasn't scaled well for many business leaders, at least in part because BI solutions typically don't put control in their hands. But that doesn't negate the value inherent in BI. Companies that continue to invest in their BI future understand that the importance of data in the world-- and in their company--will only increase.

Recognizing your company's frustrations and barriers with data reporting is crucial to creating a successful BI strategy. With the knowledge of what your company needs to change in order to succeed, you will be able to appropriately choose a BI solution that suits your company's needs.



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## About The Sample

A total of 302 respondents completed our 15-question survey (4-6 demographic questions, depending on role, and 10 about the data ecosystem of their organization.) 197 of the respondents were or had been the CEO/head of a company. 105 held other leadership positions; 11 in the C-suite, 23 VP/SVP, 30 Directors, 29 Managers and 12 with other titles. These 105 senior leaders represented functional departments from Sales and Marketing to IT to HR and Finance. 70% of the respondents were between 40 and 65 years old and about half had been in their current position at the company for more than 5 years.

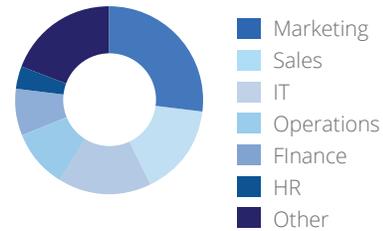
### Sources:

- “Decisions on the Move: Mobile BI 2013” Aberdeen Group, Inc., A Harte-Hanks Company
- “Real-Time Operational Intelligence: There’s No Time like the Present” Aberdeen Group, Inc., A Harte-Hanks Company
- “Collaborating in the Cloud” Forbes

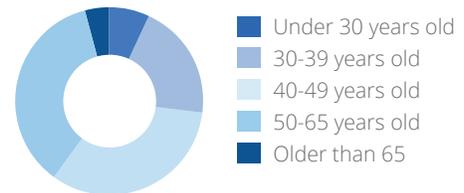
### Job Titles...



### and Departments...



### Age...



### Experience...

