

**Self-service Business Intelligence
with SAP Business Warehouse**





What is self-service Business Intelligence?

Self-service Business Intelligence (BI) is the trend of giving professional users access to corporate data. Doing so means, users can create their own reports and analyses without needing to involve IT departments. This lightens the load of these departments and enables reports and analyses to be produced faster. In this way, decision-making processes can be supported in a more streamlined manner and changes in requirements can be responded to more flexibly.

Critical success factors

We believe there are some critical factors when implementing enterprise-wide self-service BI solutions. The tools and models used to generate the corporate data need to be easy to use and the quality of the data they produce must be high. This ensures that – even in the event of careless use – no incorrect data is created that could lead to the wrong decisions being made. When considering today’s data security and compliance requirements, it must also be ensured that each user has access only to the data they are authorised to view.



The flexibility and performance requirements are particularly high, especially when it comes to self-service BI, as this is the only way to guarantee the necessary agility when using the tools on a daily basis. Here, the main focus of the required functions is on data blending, whereby data is enhanced with data from other sources. Otherwise there is a risk that professional users could download the data from the system and use their own tools for further processing purposes. This would mean that ongoing quality control could no longer be guaranteed centrally.



Integration with SAP BW

SAP Business Warehouse (BW) is renowned for its deep integration with SAP ERP systems and the provision of data models based on these systems. With the release of the SAP HANA database, the stringent requirements concerning the performance of self-service BI are also met as a matter of principle. Nevertheless, the frequently used data models from BI Content provided by SAP are not directly suitable for professional users, as the models are too complex and the users lack the required technical expertise.

To manage these issues, the IT departments often provide BW queries that allow the models used to be taken out of the equation, which makes it significantly easier



to use this system. When using SAP tools, this method is in itself likely to lead to success, as these tools can work natively with the BW queries.

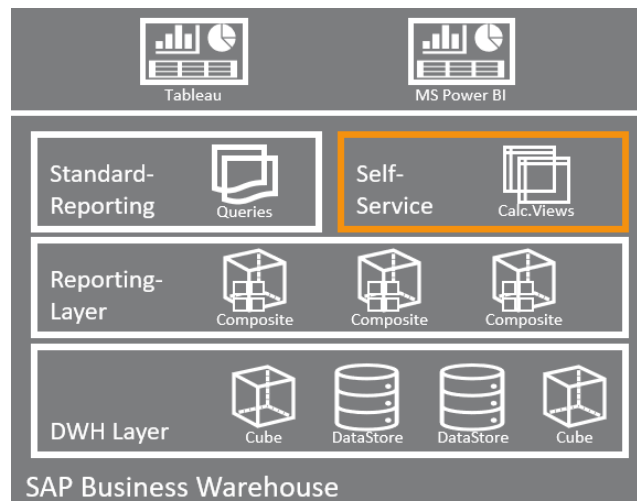
Reporting with focus on SAP applications



If, however, third-party tools such as Tableau or Microsoft Power BI are used, this will require a workaround, as these tools can be used with BW queries only to a limited extent. A popular way to resolve this issue is to import the BW data directly into the third-party tools. However, the benefits of the integrated authorisation system cease to apply in this case, and it requires the elaborate replication of the permissions structure in the respective tool. In addition, having another redundant data storage location means extra data management work. This runs the risk of data discrepancies between the systems.

For this reason, we recommend direct access to the SAP HANA database. This interface enables relational access that harmonises much better with third-party tools. At the same time, it provides significantly better performance and comes with the benefits of direct integration along with the BW analysis authorisations. Setting up a dedicated virtual data model that hides the complexity from the user whilst simultaneously ensuring the data quality and KPI consistency guarantees broad user acceptance.

Reporting with focus on non-SAP applications





Best practices approach

Are you still unsure of how exactly to pursue this avenue? Contact us! We will leverage our many years of experience in SAP BW, front-end tools and the integration with third-party tools to come up with the best solution for your needs. Our best practice approach ensures both optimum integration and satisfied professional users who are happy to make decisions based on correct data and work with a system that does everything it is supposed to do.

About biX-Consulting

biX Consulting GmbH & Co. KG is a medium-sized consultancy firm with numerous branches in Germany and abroad. We support customers with our long-standing experience and extensive expertise in business intelligence systems based on SAP®, Tableau and other manufacturers and their associated architectures, products and solutions. We advise and support customers in our specialist fields of consulting, services and solutions in a holistic 360° approach, providing all relevant services from one single source. biX prides itself on excellence in business integration and business intelligence, which underpins our focus and our standards.

At biX Consulting, we believe a thorough understanding of our business partners' processes is essential. This enables us to implement high-quality and, above all, tailored architectures and solutions with modern and tried-and-tested technology. In our projects, we often act as the glue that connect information technology and the corporate divisions with their diverse processes with one another. In so doing, biX Consulting offers cross-sector consulting services to customers in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Benelux countries.

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