



Step up your lexicon game with our

BI Glossary

and maximize your effectiveness

Daunted by the Business Intelligence Terminology? We have your back.

BI or Business Intelligence - most of us know the value of BI but wrapping your head around the words , phrases and acronyms of this area of tech can be daunting. Don't fret, we are here for you! Here is an A to Z guide of BI terminology...

A

Ad hoc query: the ability to create a one-off, "on demand" report from BI software that answers a specific business question.

Aggregate data: formed or calculated by the combination of many separate units or items.

Analysis: detailed examination of the elements or structure of something, typically as a basis for discussion or interpretation.

Analytics: the systematic computational analysis of data or statistics. Phocas data analytics lets you dig into a consolidated view of your actual product, customer and financial data.

Application Programming Interface (API): is code that allows two software programs to communicate with each other.

B

Balanced scorecard: a performance management tool that holistically captures an organization's performance from several vantage points (e.g. sales results vs. inventory levels) on a single page.

Behavioural analytics: using data about people's behaviour to understand intent and predict future actions.

Big data: extremely large data sets that may be analysed computationally to reveal patterns, trends, and associations, especially relating to human behaviour and interactions.

Business intelligence (BI): is a technology-driven process for analyzing data and presenting actionable information to help executives, business managers and purchasing managers make more informed business decisions.

C

CRM: denoting strategies and software that enable a company to organize and optimize its customer relations.

Contextual data: a structuring of big data that attaches situational contexts to single elements of big data to enrich them with business meaning.

Criteria: a principle or standard by which something may be judged or decided.

D

Data: facts and statistics collected together for reference or analysis.

Database: a structured set of data held in a computer, especially one that is accessible in various ways.

Dashboards: a graphical summary of various pieces of important information, typically used to give an overview of a business. Phocas dashboards allows you to see at a glance how your business is performing with an option to go deeper into the underlying data sitting behind the dashboard.

Data model: a data model is the result of collaborative effort between end business users and IT database analysts.

Data point: an identifiable element in a data set.

Data cleansing: is the process of amending or removing data in a database that is incorrect, incomplete, improperly formatted, or duplicated.

Data Source Name (DSN): is a data structure than contains the information about a specific database that an Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) driver needs in order to connect to it.

Drill-down: access data that is in a lower level of a hierarchically structured database.

E

ERP: An enterprise resource management system which manages information and resources involved in a company's operations.

Export: transfer (data) in a format that can be used by other programs.

ETL (Extract, Transform, Load): is three separate functions combined into a single programming tool. First, the extract function reads data from a specified source database and extracts a desired subset of data. Next, the transform function works with the acquired data - using rules or lookup tables, or creating combinations with other data - to convert it to the desired state. Finally, the load function is used to write the resulting data (either all of the subset or just the changes) to a target database, which may or may not previously exist.

F

Filter: software that processes text, for example to remove unwanted spaces or to format it for use in another application.

Forecasting: a prediction or estimate of future events.

G

Geospatial analysis: the gathering, display, and manipulations of imagery, GPS, satellite photography and historical data, described explicitly in terms of geographic coordinates or implicitly, in terms of a street address, postal code.

Gap analysis: a study of whether the data that a company has can meet the business expectations that the company has set for its reporting and BI, and where possible data gaps or missing data might exist.

Gauges: a device for measuring the magnitude, amount, or contents of something, typically with a visual display of such information.

H

Hierarchy: an arrangement or classification of things according to relative importance or inclusiveness.

I

Interactive visualization: technology enables the exploration of data via the manipulation of chart images, with the color, brightness, size, shape and motion of visual objects representing aspects of the dataset being analysed. These products provide an array of visualization options that go beyond those of pie, bar and line charts, including heat and tree maps, geographic maps, scatter plots and other special-purpose visuals.

J

Joint Application Development (JAD): is a methodology that involved the client or end user in the design and development of an application, through a succession of collaborative workshops called JAD sessions.

K

Key Performance Indicator (KPI): a quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of an organization, employee in meeting objectives for performance.

L

Lead generation: the use of a computer program, a database, the Internet, or a specialized service to obtain or receive information for the purpose of expanding the scope of business, increasing sales revenues, looking for a job or for new clients or conducting specialized research.

M

Metadata: a set of data that describes and gives information about other data.

Metrics: a method of measuring something, or the results obtains from this: 'the report provides various metrics at the class and method level.'

Mobile BI: is software that extends desktop business intelligence applications so they can be used on a mobile device. Phocas is a fully mobile software solution that allows access to your data, dashboards and reports wherever you are on smartphones and tablets.

Management Information System (MIS): a computerized information-processing system designed to support the activities of company or organizational management.

N

Non-value-adding: refers to activities within a company or supply chain that do not directly contribute to satisfying end consumers' requirements. It is useful to think of these as activities that consumers would not be happy to pay for.

O

Online Analytical Processing (OLAP): is computer processing that enables a user to easily and selectively extract and view data from different points of view.

Online Transaction Processing (OLTP): is a class of software programs capable of supporting transaction-oriented applications on the internet.

Open Database Connectivity (ODBC): is an open standard application programming interface (API) for accessing a database.

Optimization: the actions of making the best or most effective use of a situation or resource.

P

Personalization: design or produce (something) to meet someone's individual requirements.

Platform: a standard for the hardware of a computer system, which determines which kinds of software it can run. For example, Phocas can be delivered via cloud software-as-a-service (SaaS), private cloud or on premise.

Portal: an internet site providing access or links to other sites.

Q

Query: a database query is a question, often required to be expressed in a formal way.

R

Ranking: the actions or process of giving a specified rank or place within a grading system.

Role-based access control (RBAC): is a method of regulating access to computer or network resources based on the roles of individual users within an enterprise.

S

Slice and dice: divide a quantity of information up into smaller parts, especially in order to analyse it more closely or in different ways.

Snapshot: a brief look or summary. A record of the contents of a storage locations or data file at a given time.

Software as a Service (SaaS): is a software distribution model in which applications are hosted by a vendor or service provider and made available to customers over the internet.

Structured Query Language (SQL): an international standard for database manipulation.

Supply Chain Management (SCM): is the oversight of materials, information, and finances as they move in a process from supplier to manufacturer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer.

T

Technology-enabled relationship management (TERM): the concept of forming one, enterprise-wide view of the customer across all customer contact channels (i.e., sales, marketing, and customer service and support). It is a complex area, requiring complex solutions to problems of integration, data flow, data access and marketing strategy. A critical component is the database that serves as the customer information repository.

U

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): is the character string that identifies an Internet document's exact name and location.

V

Visualization: the representation of a situation, or set of information as a chart or other image. Phocas visualizations presents your findings in many ways.

W

Data Warehouse: a large store of data accumulated from a wide range of sources within a company and used to guide management decisions.

Z

Zen: Well done. We hope you feel Zen for getting to the end.