

A Reseller's Guide to Selling DataSelf Analytics

The Evolution of Analytics

The origin and definition of the word 'report' is:

"A description of an event that occurred, carried back to be told to someone who was not at the event."

As businesses emerged in human civilization, "reports" were increasingly used to demonstrate accountability – what would eventually become audit trails.

2,000+ years later . . . and things haven't changed all that much.

The reports that are included with an ERP application look at business activities that have occurred (e.g., historical sales, revenues, & expenses), or at the current state of business conditions (e.g., current stock levels, current open receivables).

And that's fine because every organization needs to verify what has happened (especially for reporting to management and/or shareholders), and every organization needs retain a history of their business activities.

But modern businesses realize that their organization's success didn't depend on what had happened, but rather depended on what could happen, what should happen, and what will happen in the future. And so – about 25 years ago -- "Business Intelligence" and "Analytics" entered the picture.

Businesses realized that by analyzing the past activities and performance (as opposed to merely reporting on them), businesses could predict and postulate on future activities and performance. Potential opportunities presented themselves – and potential pitfalls could be avoided.