board
Management Intelligence

The BI Survey 10
The Customer Verdict

BOARD SUMMARY

A Peer Group Comparison

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SURVEY BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

The BI Survey 10 was conducted by BARC and released in October 2011. It provides a detailed quantitative analysis of why customers buy Business Intelligence tools, what they use them for, how successful they are and why, in some cases, they eventually abandon them.

It is based on the analysis of the real-world experience of about 3,000 respondents worldwide and across all markets, making it the survey with the largest sample of Business Intelligence users available. As with the previous nine versions, no vendors were involved in any way with the formulation of *The BI Survey*. It was not commissioned, suggested, sponsored or influenced by vendors and is therefore completely independent and unbiased.

All BI products receiving 30 or more responses were analyzed in the survey; 26 products or groups of products received a detailed analysis. To allow for a direct comparison of BOARD and its main competitors, the scope of this summary is limited to the following group of products: IBM Cognos BI, IBM Cognos TM1, Microsoft SSRS, Microsoft SSAS, MicroStrategy, Oracle BIEE, Oracle Hyperion, QlickTech, SAP BO WebI and SAP BW BEx Suite.

The BI Survey 10 recorded and analyzed a sample of 152 responses for BOARD. This was the second-highest figure of all products; however, some of the other products included in this group received less responses and therefore exhibit small sample sizes when viewed on detailed analysis levels. Although the statistical significance of this data cannot be guaranteed, it nonetheless represents meaningful tendencies. Thanks to the high number of responses for BOARD, all BOARD-related findings of this study could be calculated reliably.
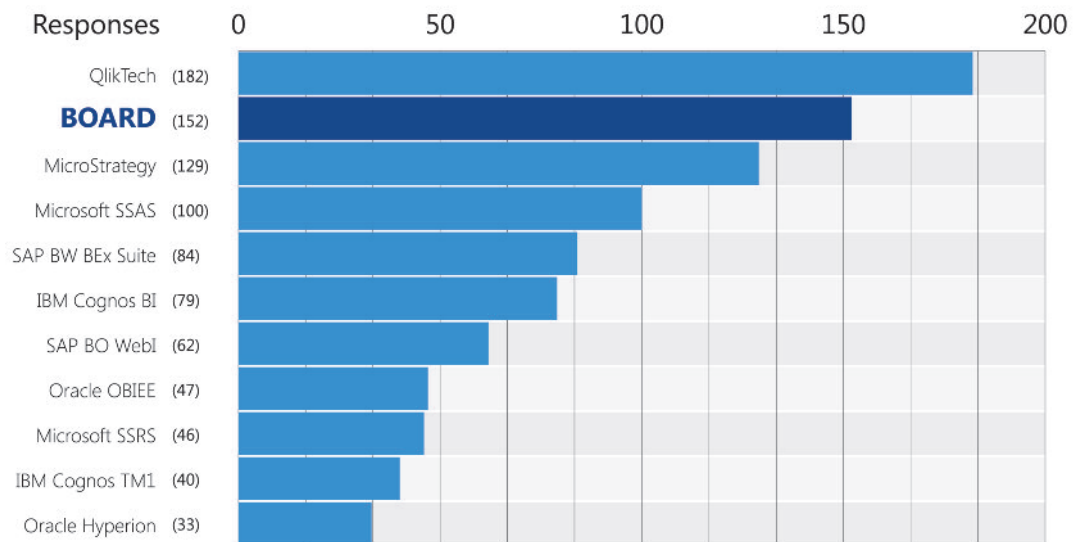

Fig 1: Products included in the sample, ranked by number of responses received (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Ease of Use for Application Builders

The *ease of use for application builders* was a top 5 purchasing criterion in this year's survey and it was identified by BARC to be among the three most important criteria in terms of the business benefits it delivers.
Just like last year, BOARD did not only rank highest in this group, but outscored all the other products included in the survey.

As BARC's managing director Carsten Bange points out, *"This reflects BOARD's programming-free toolkit approach that enables easy and uncomplicated use of the software in most diverse company departments. BOARD allows the easy realization of individual requirements without the need for external consultants."*

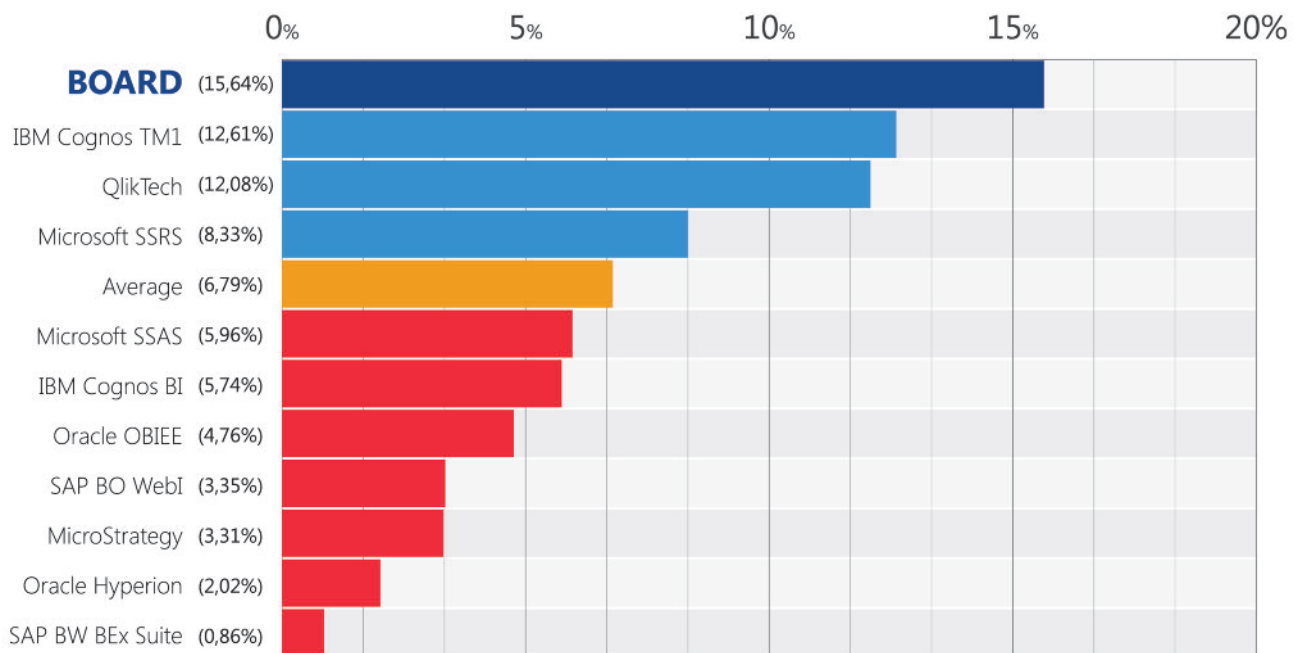### Highest Importance of Ease of Use for Application Builders

Fig. 2: Product Analysis, Question: "Why was the product chosen?"
Percentage of responses for "Ease of use for application builders" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Ease of Use for End Users

According to BARC, *ease of use for end users* is among the top 3 selection criteria for companies looking to buy a BI product and its importance is growing even further. BARC asked for the reasons to purchase a BI platform and 17 percent of BOARD users named the ease of use for end users.

Highest Importance of Ease of Use for End Users

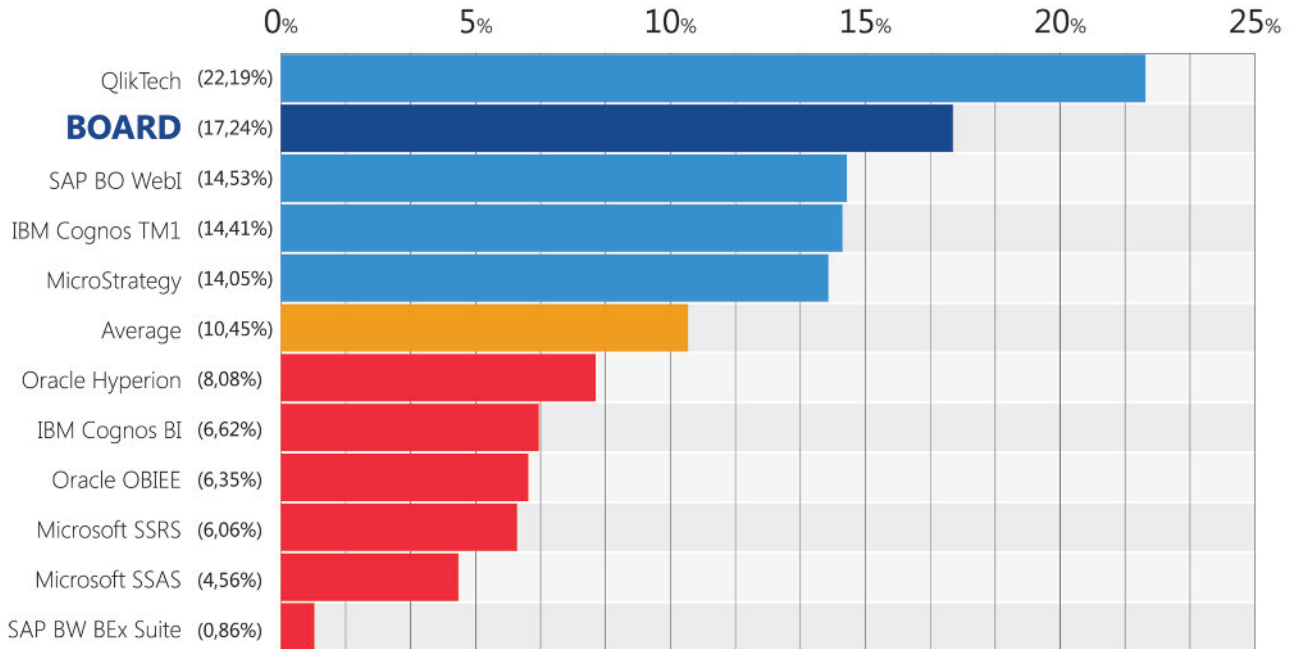| Product	Percentage
QlikTech	(22,19%)
BOARD	(17,24%)
SAP BO WebI	(14,53%)
IBM Cognos TM1	(14,41%)
MicroStrategy	(14,05%)
Average	(10,45%)
Oracle Hyperion	(8,08%)
IBM Cognos BI	(6,62%)
Oracle OBIEE	(6,35%)
Microsoft SSRS	(6,06%)
Microsoft SSAS	(4,56%)
SAP BW BEx Suite	(0,86%)

Fig. 3: Product Analysis, Question: "Why was the product chosen?"
Percentage of responses for "Ease of use for end users" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

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While a lot of other BI tools struggle to offer this usability required by BI software users, BOARD, thanks to its programming-free toolkit approach, actually delivers in this area, as shown below.
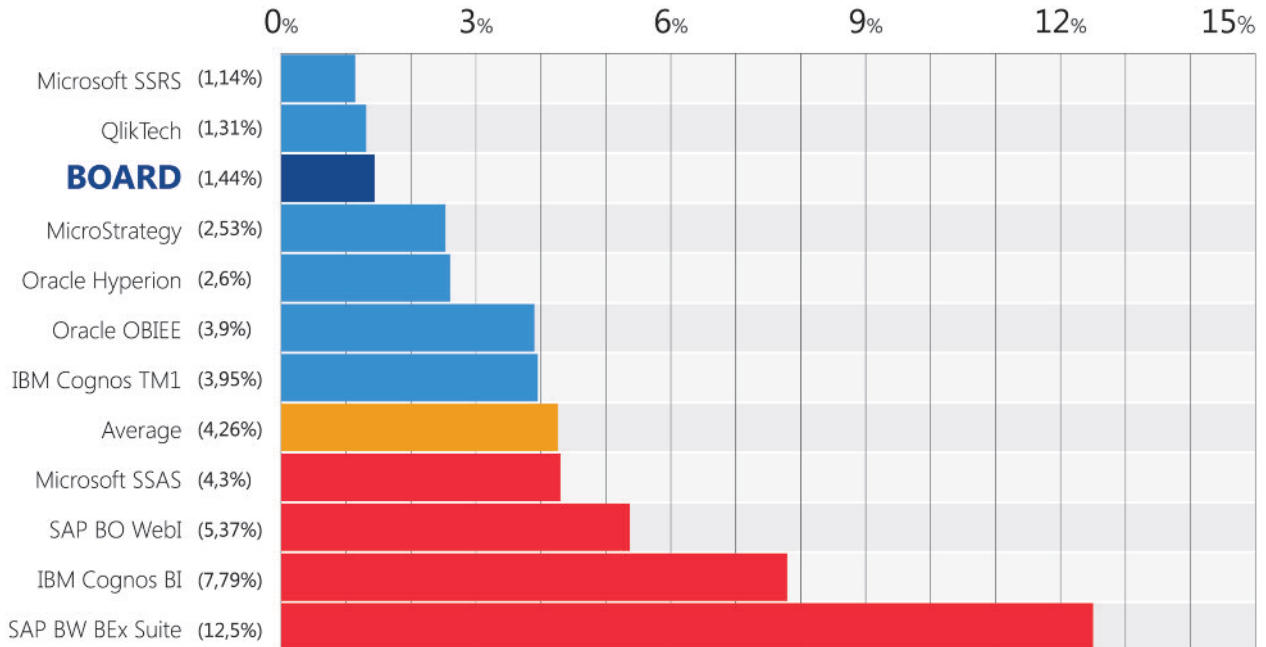
Most-Difficult-to-Use BI Tools

Fig. 4: Product Analysis, Question: "What, if any, are the most serious problems you have encountered?" Percentage of responses for "Software too hard to use" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Administrative Resources and Problems

Efficient software administration is essential and ultimately has a direct impact on project success. In the survey, BARC asked users how many full-time staff members were required for administering their BI application.

Traditionally, users of the BOARD toolkit have been reporting an extremely low need for administrative resources and this year's survey made no exception. In fact, *The BI Survey 10* revealed that BOARD requires the lowest amount of administration manpower of all analyzed products, with 30 percent of BOARD users reporting they needed only a part-time staff to administer the software.
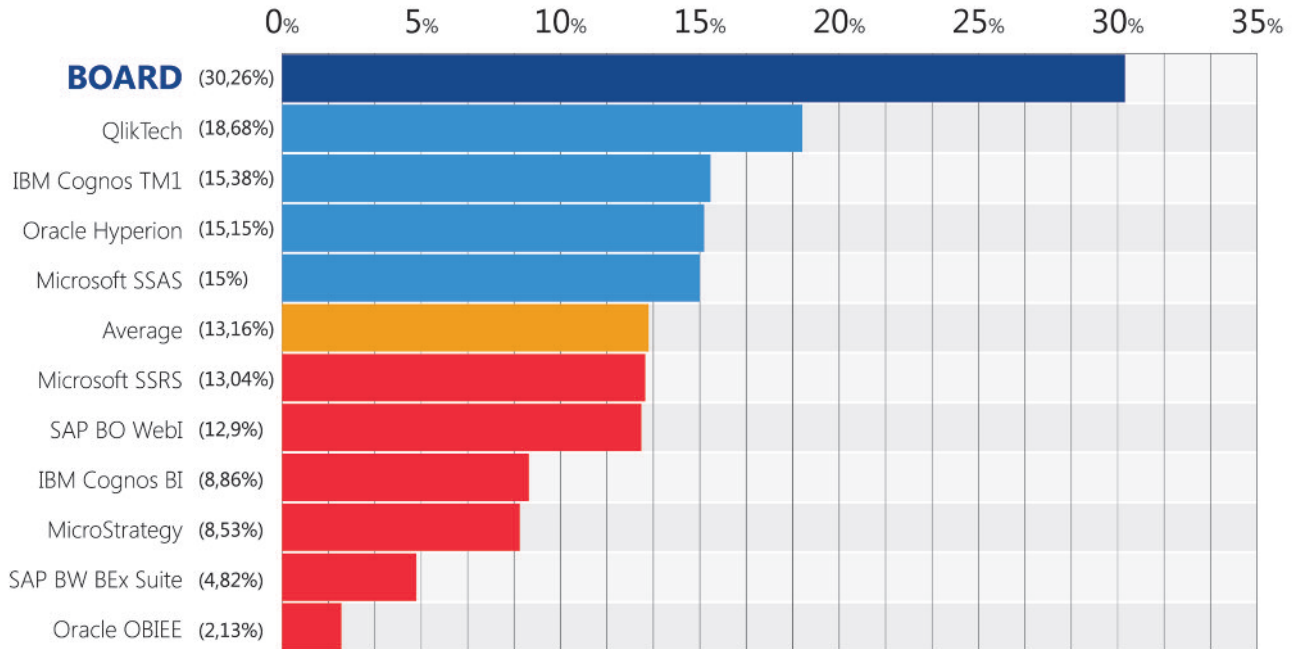
Lowest Possible Administration Headcount

Fig. 5: Product Analysis, Question: "How many full-time equivalent staff are involved in administering the application?" Percentage of responses for "Up to 0.5" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Apart from its general efficiency, BOARD's low need for administrative resources can be contributed to the fact that 96 percent of BOARD users did not experience any problems in administering the software.

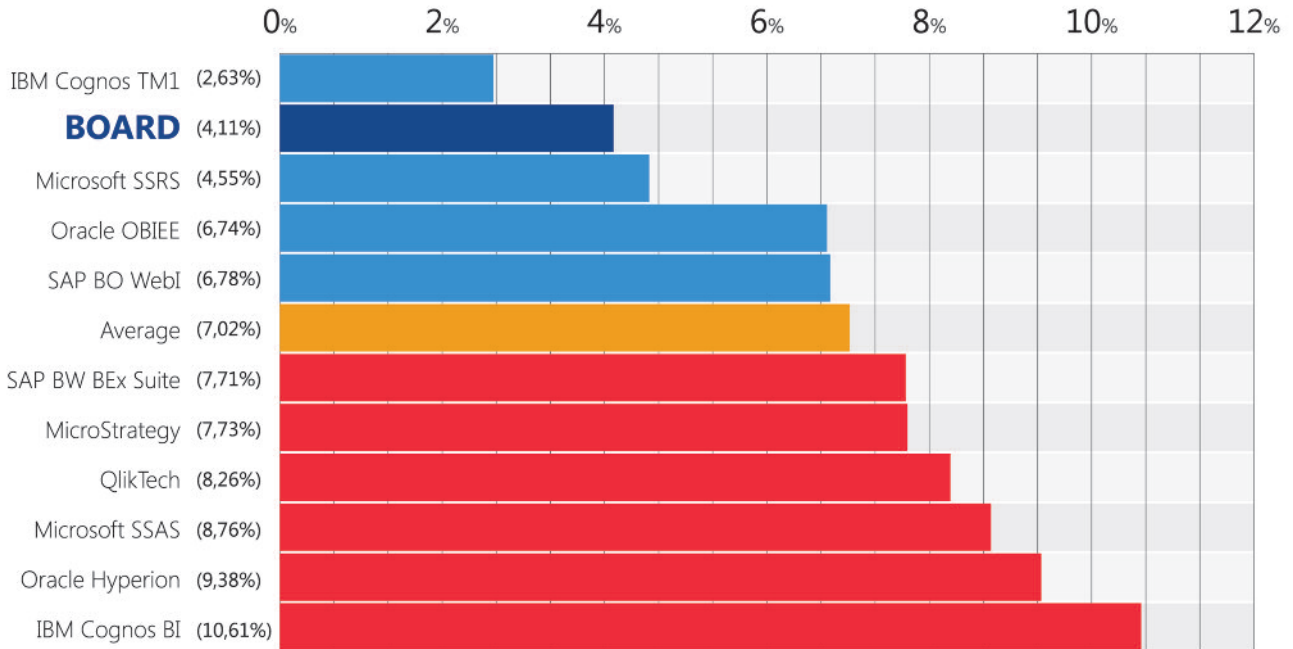**Frequency of Administrative Problems**

Fig. 6: Product Analysis, Question: "What, if any, are the most serious problems you have encountered?" Percentage of responses for "Administrative problems" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

General Problems

Encountering a large number of problems when using BI software is not only frustrating, it might even risk the success of the entire BI project.

BARC asked what the most serious problems encountered were and 39 percent of all BOARD users reported that they had "No significant problems." Of the products in this group, only IBM Cognos TM1 achieved a better result.

Fewest Problems

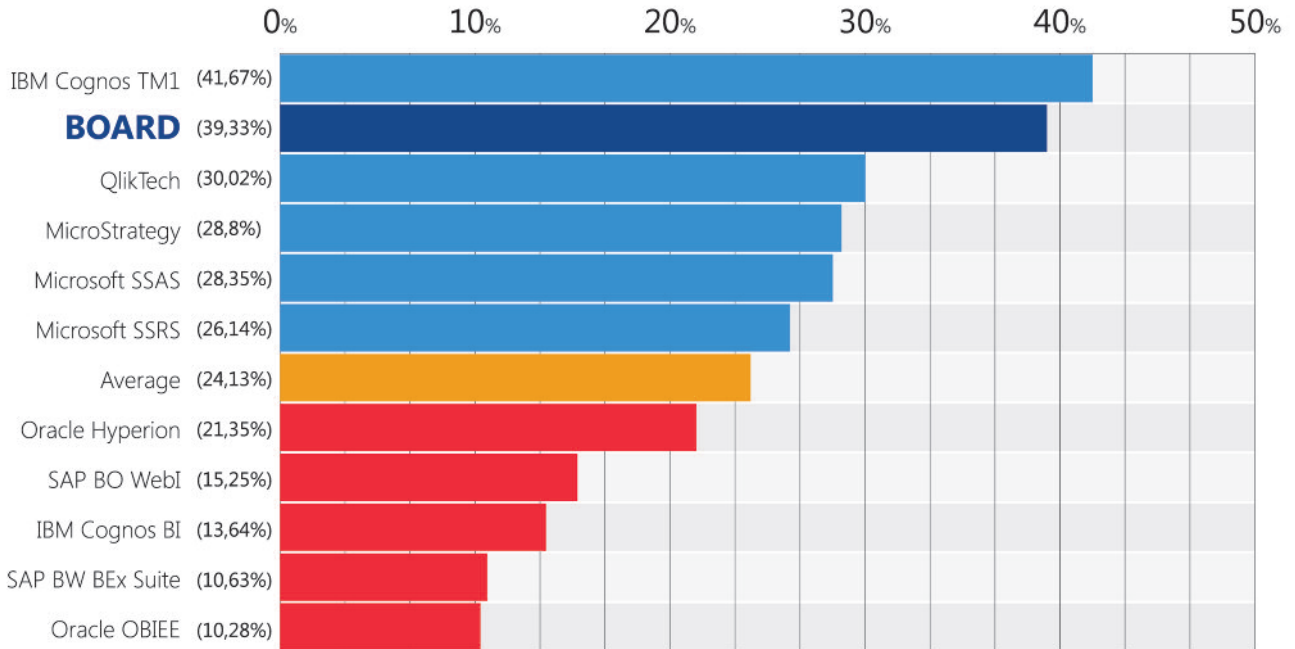| Product	Percentage
IBM Cognos TM1	(41,67%)
BOARD	(39,33%)
QlikTech	(30,02%)
MicroStrategy	(28,8%)
Microsoft SSAS	(28,35%)
Microsoft SSRS	(26,14%)
Average	(24,13%)
Oracle Hyperion	(21,35%)
SAP BO WebI	(15,25%)
IBM Cognos BI	(13,64%)
SAP BW BEx Suite	(10,63%)
Oracle OBIEE	(10,28%)

Fig. 7: Product Analysis, Question: "What, if any, are the most serious problems you have encountered?" Percentage of responses for "No significant problems" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Vendor Support

When users encounter problems, good support is highly important: it is a key determinant for project success. According to BARC, this is an area where there are major differences between vendor performances. When asked about the quality of their vendor's support, 45 percent of all BOARD customers answered with the best possible option, "Excellent - accurate and timely." No other vendor in the comparison group reached a percentage this high.
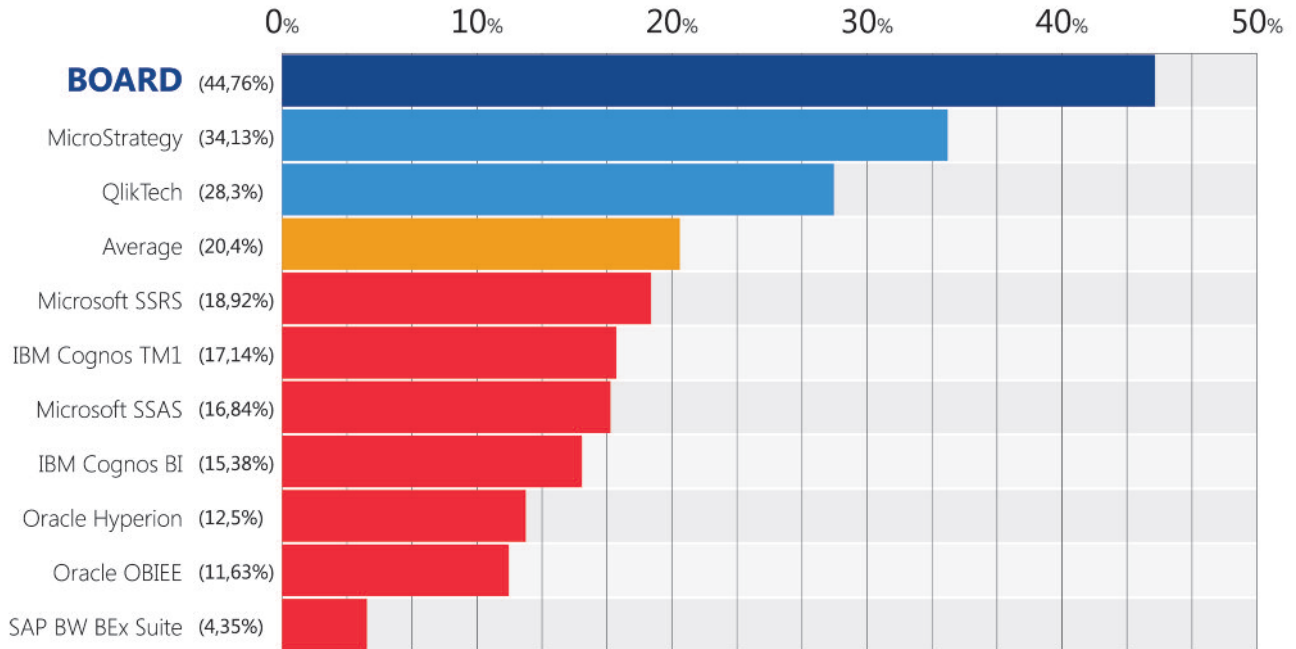
Excellent Vendor Support

Fig. 8: Product Analysis, Question: "How do you rate the support provided by the vendor?" Percentage of responses for "Excellent - accurate and timely" (depicted: custom peer group)

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Implementer Support

BARC thinks that good support from the project implementer is an important aspect of successful projects. The majority of BOARD users answered the question "How do you rate the support provided by the implementer?" with the highest possible answer: "Excellent - accurate and timely," thus again scoring higher in this crucial area than any other product in this group.

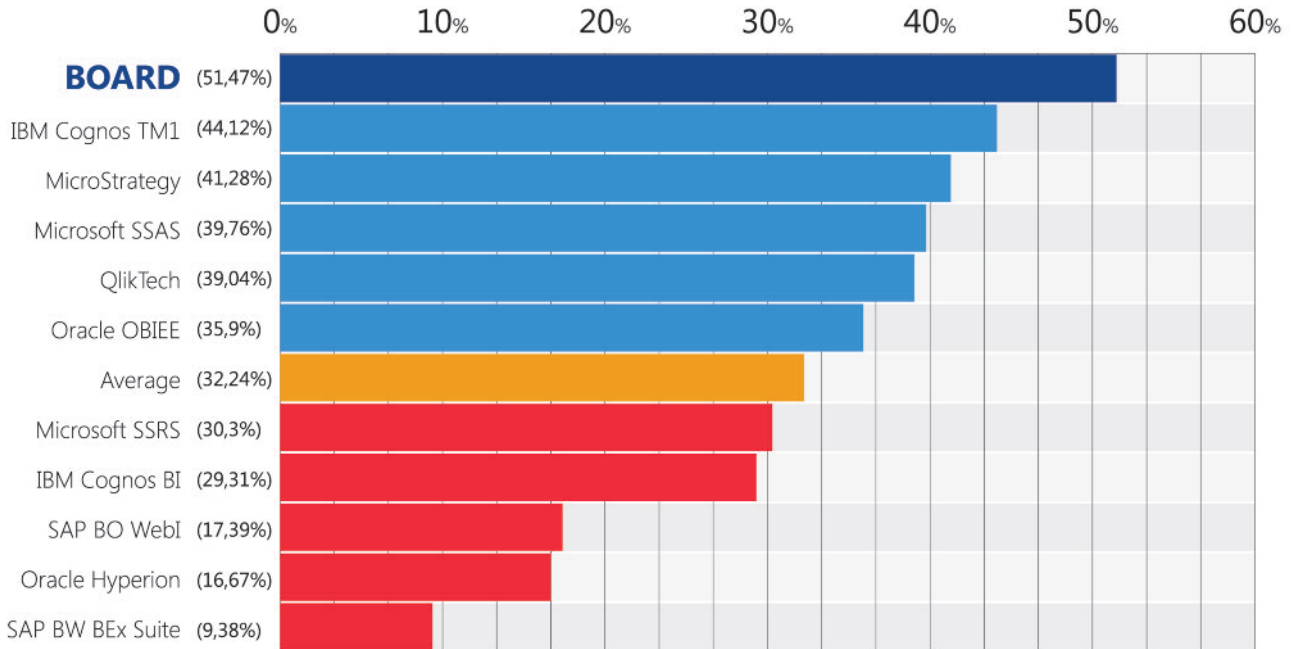### Excellent Implementer Support

Fig. 9: Product Analysis, Question: "How do you rate the support provided by the implementer?" Percentage of responses for "Excellent - accurate and timely" (depicted: custom peer group)

KPIs

Overall Competitiveness

BARC calculated this aggregated KPI from three "root KPIs": *competitive win rate*, *on-site competitiveness* and *bought for features*. A high *competitive win rate* means that a product was likely to be chosen by companies who had evaluated at least one other product. The *on-site competitiveness* KPI calculates how desirable a product is to companies or users who have seen it in use in the workplace. The *bought for features* KPI measures how commonly users reported that a tool was bought because of its features, as opposed to price or other considerations.

Its top position for this KPI underlines one of the survey's central findings about BOARD: When put in direct comparison with other products, BOARD is convincing enough as a product to succeed even against products by much larger vendors.
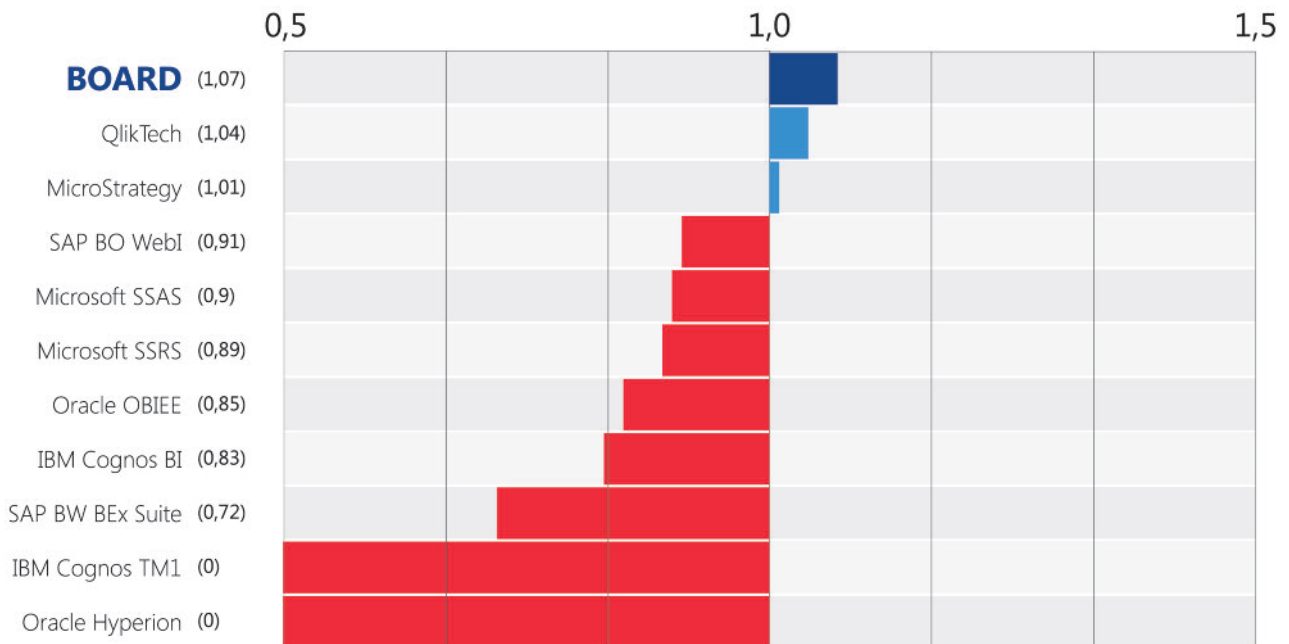
Overall Competitiveness Index

Fig. 10: Overall Competitiveness KPI (depicted: custom peer group)

KPIs

Business Benefit Index (BBI)

Business benefits are the real reason for carrying out any BI project, so this is obviously a KPI of special importance. BARC has been studying these business benefits directly for years. Respondents were asked the extent to which they realize standard benefits such as "saved IT headcount," "increased revenues" or "better business decisions." They were also able to nominate an additional benefit. These benefits were then combined with the level of goal achievement reported by the respondents to create the aggregated BBI KPI.

Traditionally, BOARD has always achieved high BBI ratings, and, as the chart shows, this year's survey results are no exception.
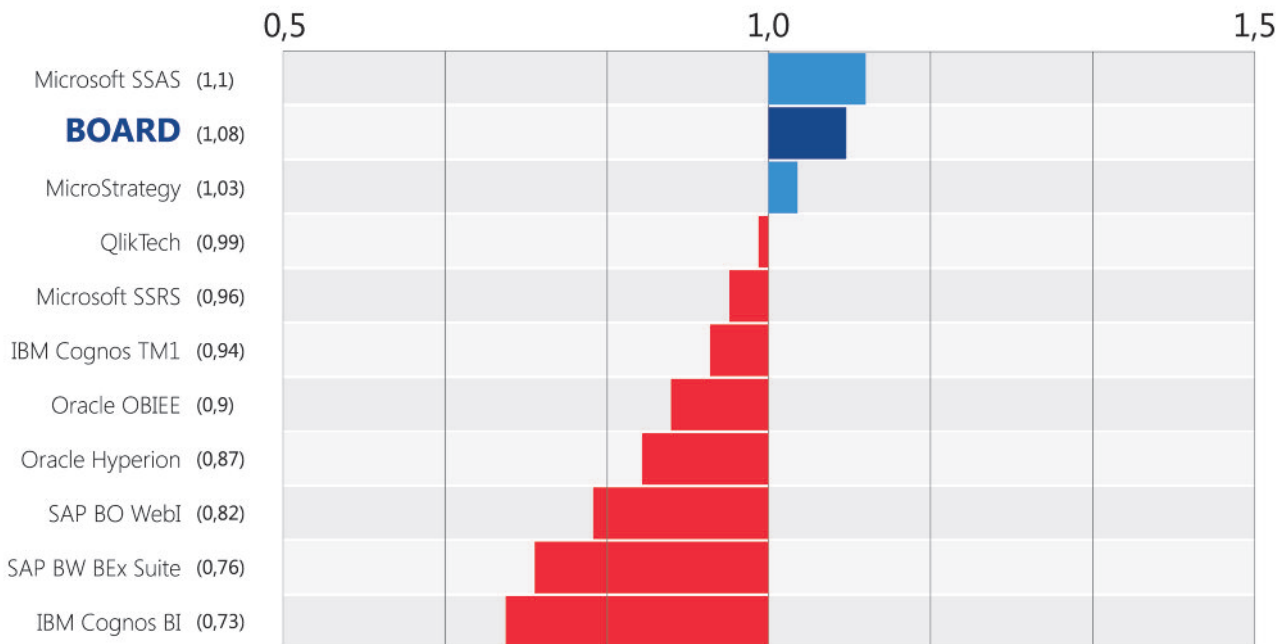
Business Benefit Index

Fig. 11: Business Benefit Index KPI (depicted: custom peer group)

KPIs

Overall Loyalty

To calculate this aggregated KPI, BARC combined plans to buy more licenses and complete usage of existing licenses. Since no one knows more about how a product performs in the real world than the customers already using it, BARC considers it a very positive sign if existing customers say they expect to purchase more licenses. Therefore, the *overall loyalty* KPI can be seen as a very good indicator for customer satisfaction.

The fact that a high number of BOARD users are not only using all of their purchased licenses, but are planning on purchasing additional licenses, ultimately speaks in favor of BOARD's product and support quality, since these are the basis of customer satisfaction.
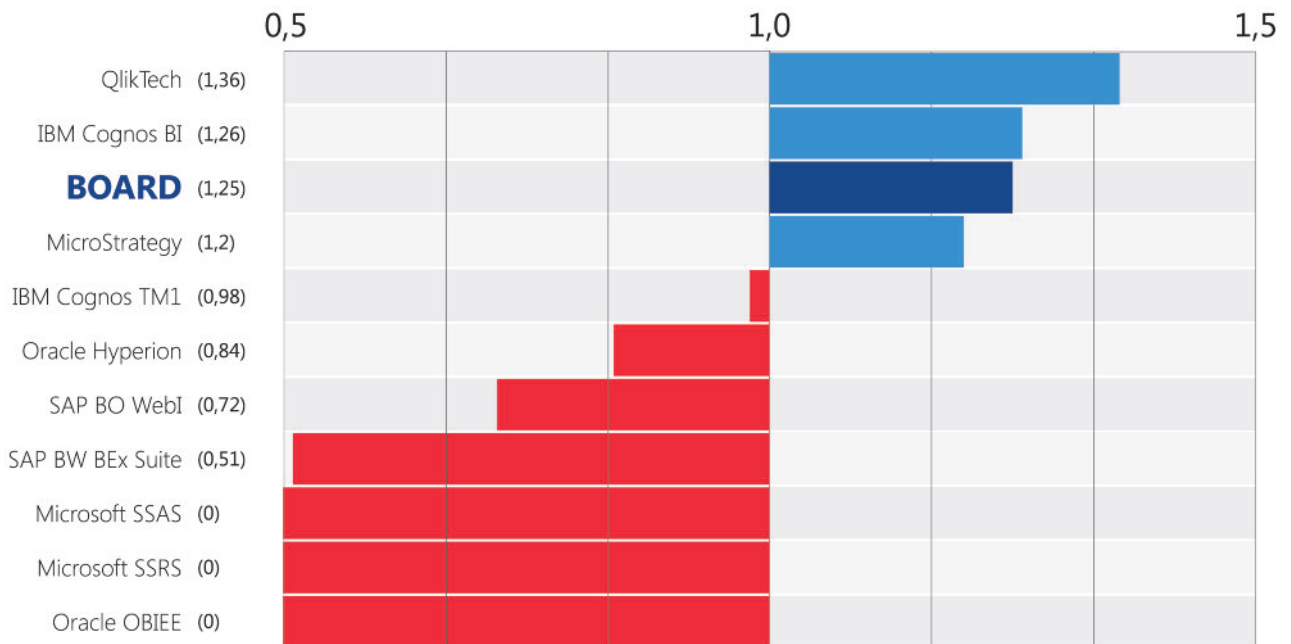
Overall Loyalty Index

Fig. 12: Overall Loyalty KPI (depicted: custom peer group)

KEY FINDINGS

Overall, *The BI Survey 10* made the following findings:

IMPACT OF PRODUCT EVALUATION

Products of large vendors such as IBM, Microsoft, SAP and Oracle were very likely to be chosen when there was no evaluation process. However, the BARC analysts say they "do not recommend buying a product without formal evaluation, even if the project is small."

The study also found that all business benefits could be improved by carrying out a competitive evaluation process, i.e. by conducting a comparison with at least one other product. In this case, as shown by this summary, BOARD had a very high success rate.

FOCUS ON USABILITY

50 percent of respondents included "Ease of use for end users" in their top 3 most important criteria for deciding which BI software to purchase while 23 percent of respondents named "Ease of use for application builders" as a top 3 criterion.

These two criteria experienced a significant boost compared with the previous year, as both of their response figures increased by 5 to 10 percent, which strongly accounts for the focus on usability for all user groups. As in previous years, BOARD has been ranked in the top positions in both classifications.

SPECIAL NEEDS OF PLANNING TOOLS

Well-executed proof of concept, availability of local support and ease of use are more important for planning tools than for other tools. Since a proof of concept requires local support and ease of use for developers, these three are closely related. Often being used for complex planning, BOARD is able to fulfill these special requirements, as shown by its high scores in these categories.

VENDOR REPUTATION: WRONG BASIS FOR PRODUCT CHOICE

The survey revealed that, when vendor reputation is used as a criterion, the products of larger vendors are often selected. However, it was also shown that these products often do not undergo a formal evaluation and are chosen for the wrong reasons.

As a result, products by smaller vendors, such as BOARD, ranked a lot higher in a lot of crucial categories such as *BBI*, *vendor support*, *implementer support* and *overall loyalty*. Therefore, BARC recommends not basing product choice on vendor reputation alone.

KEY FINDINGS

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IMPORTANCE OF MAKING THE RIGHT PURCHASING DECISIONS

Many vendors are stressing arguments that are not aligned with what the clients consider important. As BARC points out: It is crucial to choose the product that is the best fit for the respective company's needs. This obviously requires evaluating several products, but it also means refraining from buying products for features that are not needed.

As proven by the survey, BOARD can offer the flexibility, usability and support to adapt to virtually all kinds of usage scenarios, which is one reason why BOARD has satisfied customers of all sizes and from a large variety of business sectors.

BOARD AT A GLANCE

BOARD International

BOARD International is a global provider of Business Intelligence and Performance Management software. Founded in 1994, BOARD has enabled over 2,500 companies worldwide to improve the effectiveness of their management decision making processes, unifying BI and CPM in a single integrated environment.

BOARD provides a seamless solution for the support, control and management of core processes such as:
- **Budgeting, Planning & Forecasting**
- **Profitability Modeling & Optimization**
- **Simulation & What-if Analysis**
- **Scorecarding & Strategy Management**
- **Financial Consolidation**
- **Statutory & Financial Reporting**

Thanks to its programming-free toolkit approach global enterprises like ABB, Bata, DHL, GSK, Mitsubishi, NEC, Puma rapidly deployed BI and CPM applications in a fraction of the time and cost associated with traditional solutions.

BOARD Key Differentiators

MANAGEMENT INTELLIGENCE
Since its founding, BOARD has pioneered an integrated approach to BI and CPM, designated as Management Intelligence. After more than 15 years BOARD is leading the way in the unification of BI and CPM, offering a fully integrated solution from both a technological and functional point of view.

ALL-IN-ONE
BOARD combines in a single integrated platform all the features and functionalities needed to build and use pervasive BI and CPM applications.

TOOLKIT APPROACH
BOARD makes it possible to create customized BI and CPM solutions without the need for any programming. From simple reports to the most sophisticated performance management applications, any analysis can be easily built using the drag and drop function and the configuration of objects that are automatically synchronized with the data.

HBMP
BOARD offers a revolutionary in-memory technology, called HBMP, which combines extreme performance with scalability and full support to simulation and planning processes.

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