



## Mid-Market Companies Benefit from the Significantly Better ROI Offered by the Synergistic Relationship Between ERP and BI

***By planning for and/or implementing enterprise resource planning (ERP) and business intelligence (BI) solutions simultaneously, companies can gain significant benefits.***

ERP solutions come with a reporting toolset consisting of a predefined set of reports and general-purpose query tools, designed to help businesses generate reports from data within an ERP database. But in many cases, these tools are difficult and confusing for business users to make use of by themselves. Users frequently need to turn to the IT team to create and run reports for them—adding time and cost to the reporting process. Furthermore, while ERP systems provide acceptable routine reports for day-to-day operations, the process to revamp/customize reports when business processes or conditions change is often cumbersome and expensive.

However, BI reporting solutions can empower business users to define and generate reports in a more timely, independent and effective fashion. This means that business users get the insights they need when they need them for decision-making, and IT staff (or consultants) are freed up to focus on other areas.

The SMB Group has been conducting interviews with financial and IT decision-makers at several mid-market companies that first implemented ERP solutions, followed (6 months to a year later) by BI solutions required to facilitate reporting ERP data. They indicate that if they had considered ERP and BI requirements in tandem, they would have realized a significantly higher return on their total solution investment versus the alternative of planning for and deploying these solutions independently.

Based on their experiences deploying ERP and BI solutions independently, these decision-makers recommend that other mid-market enterprises should plan for ERP and BI concurrently, and deploy these solutions through via a phased implementation approach. The crux of this recommendation comes from a close examination of how much customization companies need to make in order to make reporting directly out of the ERP solution truly useful. In most cases, companies must invest considerable resources to customize and generate reports that provide the detailed information that

the business demands. Business decision-makers often want IT to replicate information that users had previously obtained through their former, legacy systems, and provide it in a useful and easy-to-understand manner right out the gate. By complementing the ERP application with BI upfront, it's easier to create and generate reports that corporate management and various line-of-business managers will need, from the get-go. This type of synergistic approach eliminates the need for the type of extensive customization that would be required to generate similar reports directly from the ERP system. It also enables the business to more readily extract value from the extensive data repositories residing in the ERP system.

As companies strive for maximum efficiency in today's volatile economic climate, they need to make better decisions about where to cut costs and where to invest for the future. By providing enhanced report creation and generation capabilities, BI solutions can offer greater insight into corporate performance management and strategy planning that businesses require for optimal decision-making.

Several mid-market customers using [SAP Business-All-in-One](#) as their key ERP solution told us that *the extra time, effort, and money they spent to customize their initial ERP solution would have been better spent purchasing a BI solution earlier on*. Eventually, these customers did go on to deploy BI (in most cases, SAP Business Objects) to gain more reporting flexibility and capability.

Integrating SAP BusinessObjects Edge BI with SAP Business All-in-One has given them more detailed and accurate reporting. Because SAP tightly integrated these two solutions to streamline workflow, and offers self-service capabilities for business users, customers can also save on maintenance, IT administration time, integration and consulting support. BI capabilities also enable individual users to easily drill down, going beyond the graphs and tables to get deeper context about the factors underlying these charts.

By employing a cohesive strategy for combining SAP Business-All-in-One and [SAP BusinessObjects Edge BI](#) from the outset, customers should be able to garner a better ROI than if they consider and deploy each solution independently. By deploying SAP BusinessObjects Edge early on, customers can reduce/avoid making customizations in SAP Business-All-in-One. SAP's Business All-in-One Fast Start program coupled with best practices for the SAP BusinessObjects Edge BI should help mid-market enterprises benefit from a more productive and streamlined solution.

Mid-Market companies benefit from the significantly better ROI offered by the synergistic relationship between ERP and BI

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### [SMB GROUP, INC.](#)

The SMB Group focuses exclusively on researching and analyzing the highly fragmented “SMB market”—which is comprised of many smaller, more discrete markets. We take a custom approach to working with clients, assessing where you are in the market today, and the steps you need to take to get where you want to be tomorrow. Our pragmatic, actionable research approach provides you with insights and recommendations you need to capitalize on shifting market requirements and trends, and create successful go-to-market outcomes. We also work closely with your marketing team to help integrate key findings and deliverables into your marketing and media outreach campaigns to boost market awareness and consideration of your offerings.