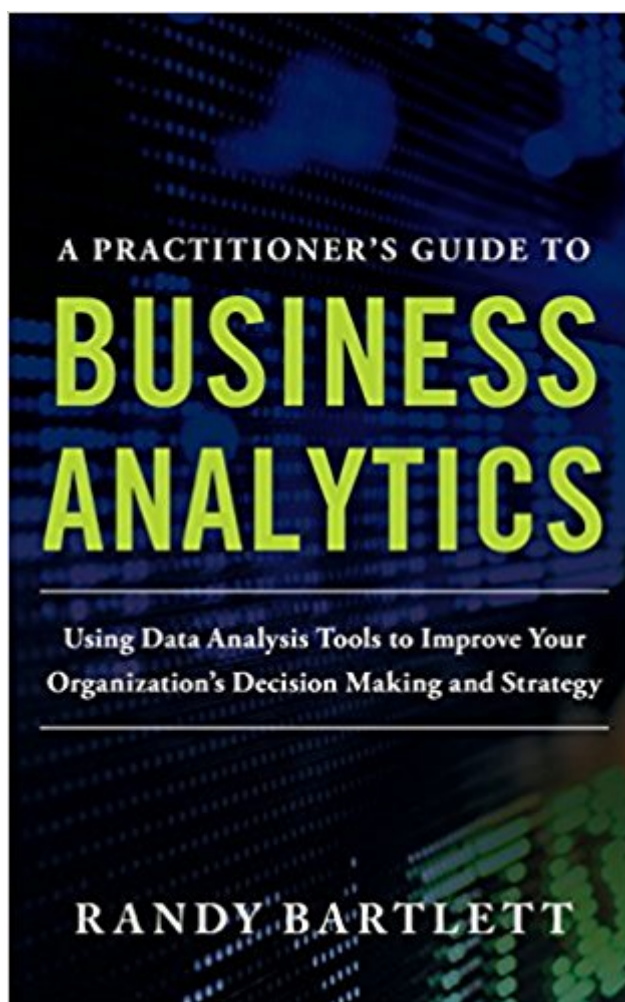


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A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO BUSINESS ANALYTICS: Using Data Analysis Tools To Improve Your Organization's Decision Making And Strategy





Synopsis

The Definitive Guide to Using Analytics for Better Business Decisions "A must-read for anyone who is directly or indirectly leading or managing an analytics function--and anyone who wants to make better decisions based on analytics, not just intuition or an 'overemphasis on industry knowledge, which crowds out good analytics.'" -- Charlotte E. Sibley, President, Sibley Associates, a bioPharma consulting company "Over the long term, those who show the greatest imagination, grow the right skills, build the deepest organizations, and follow rigorous statistical practice will reap the greatest rewards from their analytics efforts. A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics lights the way." -- Thomas C. Redman, PhD, the Data Doc, Navesink Consulting Group "Executives beware. This is not your typical management book. This book contains real information from analytical professionals who are outside the executive bubble. . . . Hold on to your seat and be prepared to change the way you think about leaders, leadership qualities, and leadership skills needed for future success in the changing business landscape." -- Thomas J. Scott, Director/Advisor, Marketing Sciences Solutions, TGaS Advisors "Randy Bartlett has written an important and useful book, filling at least some of the large void between books that exhort managers to think more analytically without explaining how, and overly technical books that only quantitative analysts would appreciate. Particular strengths are the recommendations about how to organize to integrate analytical expertise into decision-making and the guidance about how managers can assess whether they are getting good analytical advice." -- Douglas A. Samuelson, D.Sc., President and Chief Scientist, InfoLogix, Inc., Annandale, VA; quantitative analyst, inventor, entrepreneur and executive About the Book: The real tragedy of a company failing while using analytics is the fact that its leaders will have the data to explain the failure, but they won't have the capabilities in place to filter the data and convert it into actionable business insights. One implication of Big Data is that we need to adapt . . . quickly. A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics integrates powerful strategies for leveraging analytics inside a business with a how-to playbook of tactics to make it happen. The case for competing based on analytics is clear, but until now, there hasn't been authoritative guidance for inciting a corporate community to evolve into a thriving, analytics-driven environment. This hands-on book gives you the tools, knowledge, and strategies to capture the level of organizational commitment you need to get business analytics up and running in your company. It helps you define what business analytics is, quantify the exponential value it brings to an organization, and show others how to harness its power to gain advantage over competitors. Accomplished business information professional Randy Bartlett brings his comprehensive coverage to life with firsthand accounts of using business analytics at brand-name global companies. Through in-depth examinations of success stories and

failures in analytics-based decision making and data analyses, he fully prepares you to: Assess your company's analytics needs and capabilities, and develop a strategic analytics plan Steward the three pillars of Best Statistical Practice and accurately measure the quality of analytics-based decisions and data analyses Build and organize a specialized Business Analytics Team to lead infrastructural changes Upgrade the foundation that supports business analytics--data collection, data software, and data management Create the essential synergy for success between the Business Analytics Team and IT Effectively integrating analytics into everyday decision making, corporate culture, and business strategy is a multifront exercise in leadership, execution, and support. The specialized tools and skill sets required to succeed are finally in one resource--A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics.

Book Information

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Education; 1 edition (February 5, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0071807594

ISBN-13: 978-0071807593

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.9 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #169,258 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #98 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Quality Control & Management > Quality Control #162 in Books > Textbooks > Business & Finance > Investments & Securities #237 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Production & Operations

Customer Reviews

Randy Bartlett, PhD, is a business analytics leader with more than 20 years of business experience and 9 years of training in statistics at Iowa State University and Texas A&M University. His experience includes performing analytics, reviewing analytics, leading analytics teams, and making analytics-based decisions. He has worked at Applied Research Associates, AHQR, AstraZeneca, Bell South, BMS, Fannie Mae, Infosys, Inspire/Merck, JDA Software, NHA, PricewaterhouseCoopers, The Associates/ Citigroup, UnitedHealthcare, Wells Fargo, and other companies. Recently he helped build a new Business Analytics practice and developed Big Data and CoE offerings.

The real tragedy of a company failing while using analytics is the fact that its leaders will have the data to explain the failure, but they won't have the capabilities in place to effectively filter the data and convert it into actionable business insights. One implication of Big Data is that we need to adapt ... quickly. A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics integrates powerful strategies for leveraging analytics inside a business with a how-to playbook of tactics to make it happen. The case for competing based on analytics is clear, but until now, there hasn't been authoritative guidance for inciting a corporate community to evolve into a thriving, analytics-driven environment. This hands-on book gives you the tools, knowledge, and strategies to capture the level of organizational commitment you need to get business analytics up and running in your company. It helps you coherently define what business analytics is, quantify the exponential value it brings to an organization, and show others how to harness its power to gain advantage over competitors. Accomplished business information professional Randy Bartlett brings his comprehensive coverage to life with firsthand accounts of using business analytics at brand-name global companies. Through in-depth examinations of success stories and failures in analytics-based decision making and data analyses, he fully prepares you to:

- * Assess your company's analytics needs and capabilities, and develop a strategic analytics plan
- * Steward the three pillars of Best Statistical Practice and accurately measure the quality of analytics-based decisions and data analyses
- * Build and organize a specialized Business Analytics Team to lead infrastructural changes
- * Upgrade the foundation supporting business analytics--data collection, data software, and data management
- * Create the essential synergy for success between the Business Analytics Team and IT

Effectively integrating analytics into everyday decision making, corporate culture, and business strategy is a multi-front exercise in leadership, execution, and support. The specialized tools and skill sets required to succeed are finally in one resource--A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics.

While I believe I learned a few good ideas from reading this book, it is definitely not a "guide" I would recommend to others. The author occasionally shares opinions (for example on the importance of speed) but most of the book seems occupied with laundry-lists of ways you can do things (often repeated without much detail) where I would have liked to see more real guidelines recommending one way above another. The book particularly emphasizes "qualifications" meaning expertise (training, experience) - ok, fine, but then you don't need to repeat it 50 times. And the examples provided - largely from scientific literature or the recent financial collapse, don't seem very

directly applicable to anything I'm interested in. I realize when you're addressing a cross-industry audience you won't catch everyone's fancy so maybe it really works for other people. It was not what I was expecting though.

The purpose of this book is to provide advice on how to set up a business analytics infrastructure in a corporation. Among other things, the author describes various roles that exist in a fully developed analytics team: "business quants" possess an advanced degree in a quantitative discipline and work mostly with data performing quantitative modeling. "Expert leaders" are experienced business quants who lead analytics projects. "Ordinary managers of analytics" have formal authority to manage business quants, but they don't have much of quantitative training. This book is mostly addressed to the expert leaders, ordinary managers, and similar individuals who either have or are interested in acquiring leadership and managerial responsibilities in the business analytics area. While reading, I had a distinct feeling that the author is very experienced and knowledgeable, but for some reason he decided to share his expertise in a manner that made the book far less useful than it could have been. Most of the time he dispenses advice in way too general terms, with few specific examples from the industry. "There are countless examples of corporations that closed their doors or were severely impacted by a single poor decision, let alone a series of them" - says the author on p 138. I was excited when I reached it, thinking that he eventually decided to share some of those anecdotes in detail, but to no avail. If only the book had contained 5-10 more of such examples, it would have been far more effective in reaching its goal; in addition, it would have appealed to a far broader subset of analytics professionals, including business quants.

This book gives real world insights of how business analytics plays out in the real world. It walks through the basics of managing data and analytics best practices. The author makes a strong case for the business need for analytics, some of which I will shamelessly borrow to justify my own internal analytics project :-). I also enjoyed the writing style of Mr. Bartlett. He kept it as light and easy as possible. The footnotes were particularly funny. This book is not academic, full of boring equations. However, if you work in or lead a real world analytics group, and you work in a typical company (with its typical data / analytics shortcomings), this book will help you understand the opportunities and start toward realizing them.

Creating competitive business advantage with technology and developing technological strategies

for multi-billion dollar corporations are what I do for a living. The recent surge in Big Data has driven a greater demand by corporations to build advantage-creating analytic capabilities. To harvest the desired benefits, the technologies built and deployed must fit within the context of the business AND the business must understand how to embrace analytics. What's the use of all these tools if those using them don't understand their capabilities? To this end, I want to share that "A Practitioner's Guide to Business Analytics" is the very best source of information on how businesses, from a business perspective, must think about and leverage business analytics. Part I of the book, Introduction and Strategic Landscape, is fantastic and should be required reading for any organization that wants to compete in the modern business landscape. Parts II and III provide playbooks for executing and supporting analytics respectively. The conversational style of the text makes ingesting the key concepts and salient subtitles of leveraging business analytics simple and enjoyable. No small feat for such a topic! The real world case studies shared in the book are also of note. As one who operates in the world of real organizations, and as a first-hand witness of how organizations operate with these powerful tools, I especially appreciate the author's "boots on the ground" experience. This isn't some tome of theory, it is what really works. Read this book, then rethink your approach to analytics.-Bill Peer ([...]

I was disappointed in this book. The author is heavy on tables and diagrams. He is aiming at business leaders and owners who are looking to put together a data analytics team. In the last section of the book, he gives some statistical techniques, but the techniques are basic statistical methods.

I am a practicing statistician/business analyst and I have found Bartlett's treatment of the field to be insightful and eye-opening. His experience in the field shines through his explanations of current best practices. I have already employed many of his ideas about BA group structure and dynamics. I also enjoyed his overview of the statistical tools he keeps in his top-shelf for solving problems he faces. There is something for everyone in this book in an organization that wishes to leverage data to move business forward, from practitioner (like myself) to the CEO.

This book is for all individuals that are interested in aligning their organization's business analytics strategy. It is an enjoyable read, while at the same time providing insightful step by step actions on implementing a successful business analytics strategy. I plan on using many of the strategies within my own organization.

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