Chapter 12

ENHANCING DECISION MAKING

VIDEO CASES
Case 1: Antivia: Community-based Collaborative Business Intelligence
Case 2: IBM and Cognos: Business Intelligence and Analytics for Improved Decision Making
Learning Objectives

• What are the different types of decisions and how does the decision-making process work?

• How do information systems support the activities of managers and management decision making?

• How do business intelligence and business analytics support decision making?

• How do different decision-making constituencies in an organization use business intelligence?

• What is the role of information systems in helping people working in a group make decisions more efficiently?
What to Sell? What Price to Charge? Ask the Data

• **Problem:** Chain retailers such as Starbucks, Duane Reade, need to determine what products will sell at what prices at different locations

• **Solutions:** Business analytics software to analyze patterns in sales data, create pricing profiles and buyer profiles for different regions, locales, even times of day

• Demonstrates the use of business intelligence and analysis systems to improve sales and profits

• Illustrates how information systems improve decision making
• **Business value of improved decision making**
  – Improving hundreds of thousands of “small” decisions adds up to large annual value for the business

• **Types of decisions:**
  – **Unstructured:** Decision maker must provide judgment, evaluation, and insight to solve problem
  – **Structured:** Repetitive and routine; involve definite procedure for handling so they do not have to be treated each time as new
  – **Semistructured:** Only part of problem has clear-cut answer provided by accepted procedure
• Senior managers:
  – Make many unstructured decisions
  – E.g. Should we enter a new market?

• Middle managers:
  – Make more structured decisions but these may include unstructured components
  – E.g. Why is order fulfillment report showing decline in Minneapolis?

• Operational managers, rank and file employees
  – Make more structured decisions
  – E.g. Does customer meet criteria for credit?
Senior managers, middle managers, operational managers, and employees have different types of decisions and information requirements.
The 4 stages of the decision making process

1. **Intelligence**
   - Discovering, identifying, and understanding the problems occurring in the organization

2. **Design**
   - Identifying and exploring solutions to the problem

3. **Choice**
   - Choosing among solution alternatives

4. **Implementation**
   - Making chosen alternative work and continuing to monitor how well solution is working
STAGES IN DECISION MAKING

The decision-making process is broken down into four stages.

FIGURE 12-2
• Information systems can only assist in some of the roles played by managers

• Classical model of management: 5 functions
  – Planning, organizing, coordinating, deciding, and controlling

• More contemporary behavioral models
  – Actual behavior of managers appears to be less systematic, more informal, less reflective, more reactive, and less well organized than in classical model
Mintzberg’s 10 managerial roles

- **Interpersonal roles**
  1. Figurehead
  2. Leader
  3. Liaison

- **Informational roles**
  4. Nerve center
  5. Disseminator
  6. Spokesperson

- **Decisional roles**
  7. Entrepreneur
  8. Disturbance handler
  9. Resource allocator
  10. Negotiator
Three main reasons why investments in information technology do not always produce positive results

1. Information quality
   - High-quality decisions require high-quality information

2. Management filters
   - Managers have selective attention and have variety of biases that reject information that does not conform to prior conceptions

3. Organizational inertia and politics
   - Strong forces within organizations resist making decisions calling for major change
High velocity automated decision making

- Made possible through computer algorithms precisely defining steps for a highly structured decision
- Humans taken out of decision
- E.g. High-speed computer trading programs
  - Trades executed in 30 milliseconds
  - Responsible for “Flash Crash” of 2010
- Require safeguards to ensure proper operation and regulation
Business Intelligence in the Enterprise

- Business intelligence
  - Infrastructure for collecting, storing, analyzing data produced by business
  - Databases, data warehouses, data marts

- Business analytics
  - Tools and techniques for analyzing data
  - OLAP, statistics, models, data mining

- Business intelligence vendors
  - Create business intelligence and analytics purchased by firms
• Six elements in the business intelligence environment

1. Data from the business environment
2. Business intelligence infrastructure
3. Business analytics toolset
4. Managerial users and methods
5. Delivery platform – MIS, DSS, ESS
6. User interface
Business intelligence and analytics requires a strong database foundation, a set of analytic tools, and an involved management team that can ask intelligent questions and analyze data.
• Business intelligence and analytics capabilities
  – Goal is to deliver accurate real-time information to decision-makers
  – Main functionalities of BI systems
    1. Production reports
    2. Parameterized reports
    3. Dashboards/scorecards
    4. Ad hoc query/search/report creation
    5. Drill down
    6. Forecasts, scenarios, models
• Business intelligence users
  – 80% are casual users relying on production reports
  – Senior executives
    • Use monitoring functionalities
  – Middle managers and analysts
    • Ad-hoc analysis
  – Operational employees
    • Prepackaged reports
    • E.g. sales forecasts, customer satisfaction, loyalty and attrition, supply chain backlog, employee productivity
Casual users are consumers of BI output, while intense power users are the producers of reports, new analyses, models, and forecasts.
Examples of BI applications

- Predictive analytics
  - Use patterns in data to predict future behavior
  - E.g. Credit card companies use predictive analytics to determine customers at risk for leaving

- Data visualization
  - Help users see patterns and relationships that would be difficult to see in text lists

- Geographic information systems (GIS)
  - Ties location-related data to maps
Management strategies for developing BI and BA capabilities

- Two main strategies

1. One-stop integrated solution
   - Hardware firms sell software that run optimally on their hardware
   - Makes firm dependent on single vendor – switching costs

2. Multiple best-of-breed solution
   - Greater flexibility and independence
   - Potential difficulties in integration
   - Must deal with multiple vendors
Read the Interactive Session and discuss the following questions

• Identify and describe the problem discussed in the case.
• How do business intelligence systems provide a solution to this problem? What are the inputs and outputs of these systems?
• What management, organization, and technology issues must be addressed by this solution?
• How successful is this solution? Explain your answer.
• Should all school districts use such a data-driven approach to education? Why or why not?
Business Intelligence Constituencies

• Operational and middle managers
  – Monitor day to day business performance
  – Make fairly structured decisions
  – Use MIS

• “Super user” and business analysts
  – Use more sophisticated analysis
  – Create customized reports
  – Use DSS
• Decision support systems
  – Use mathematical or analytical models
  – Allow varied types of analysis
    • “What-if” analysis
    • Sensitivity analysis
    • Backward sensitivity analysis
    • Multidimensional analysis / OLAP
      – E.g. pivot tables
This table displays the results of a sensitivity analysis of the effect of changing the sales price of a necktie and the cost per unit on the product’s break-even point. It answers the question, “What happens to the break-even point if the sales price and the cost to make each unit increases or decreases?”

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<thead>
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<th>Variable Cost per Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fixed costs</td>
<td>19000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable cost per unit</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average sales price</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution margin</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-even point</td>
<td>1357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Price</td>
<td>Sales Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1462</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>1267</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A PIVOT TABLE THAT EXAMINES CUSTOMER REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND ADVERTISING SOURCE

In this pivot table, we are able to examine where an online training company’s customers come from in terms of region and advertising source.

FIGURE 12-6
Management Information Systems

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Business Intelligence Constituencies

• Decision-support for senior management
  – Help executives focus on important performance information
  – Balanced scorecard method:
    • Measures outcomes on four dimensions:
      1. Financial
      2. Business process
      3. Customer
      4. Learning & growth
    • Key performance indicators (KPIs) measure each dimension
In the balanced scorecard framework, the firm’s strategic objectives are operationalized along four dimensions: financial, business process, customer, and learning and growth. Each dimension is measured using several KPIs.

**THE BALANCED SCORECARD FRAMEWORK**

- **Financial**
  - Cash flow
  - Return on investment
  - Financial result
  - Return on capital employed
  - Return on equity

- **Customers**
  - Delivery performance
  - Quality performance
  - Customer satisfaction
  - Customer loyalty
  - Customer retention

- **Firm Strategy and Objectives**

- **Business Processes**
  - Number of activities
  - Process execution time
  - Accident ratios
  - Resource efficiency
  - Equipment downtime

- **Learning and Growth**
  - Investment rate
  - Illness rate
  - Internal promotions %
  - Employee turnover
  - Gender ratios
Management Information Systems

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Business Intelligence Constituencies

• Decision-support for senior management (cont.)
  – Business performance management (BPM)
    • Translates firm’s strategies (e.g. differentiation, low-cost producer, scope of operation) into operational targets
    • KPIs developed to measure progress towards targets
  – Data for ESS
    • Internal data from enterprise applications
    • External data such as financial market databases
    • Drill-down capabilities
Management Information Systems
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Business Intelligence Constituencies

PILOTING VALERO WITH REAL-TIME MANAGEMENT
Read the Interactive Session and discuss the following questions

• What management, organization, and technology issues had to be addressed when developing Valero’s dashboard?
• What measures of performance do the dashboards display? Give examples of several management decisions that would benefit from the information provided by Valero’s dashboards.
• What kinds of information systems are required by Valero to maintain and operate its refining dashboard?
• How effective are Valero’s dashboards in helping management pilot the company? Explain your answer.
• Should Valero develop a dashboard to measure the many factors in its environment that it does not control? Why or why not?
• **Group Decision Support Systems (GDSS)**
  
  – Interactive system to facilitate solution of unstructured problems by group
  
  – **Specialized hardware and software; typically used in conference rooms**
    • Overhead projectors, display screens
    • Software to collect, rank, edit participant ideas and responses
    • May require facilitator and staff

  – **Enables increasing meeting size and increasing productivity**

  – **Promotes collaborative atmosphere, guaranteeing anonymity**

  – Uses structured methods to organize and evaluate ideas