



10 GOLDEN RULES

For Profitable
Business Intelligence

All retailers want to improve their effectiveness and profitability – especially coming out of a global recession and tackling the challenges around supply chain management and multi-channel eCommerce. The value of making better decisions and giving employees access and insight to better information can empower the business and drive even greater results.

Business Intelligence is one of the most effective tools for achieving this. If properly developed and implemented, it can yield significant operational improvements, efficiency gains and profitability. Unfortunately, many organisations think having a BI system in place is enough. It's not. BI tools are only as effective as you make them. That's why we've outlined Hitachi Consulting's Golden Rules for Profitable Business Intelligence.



1. **START WITH THE WHO** - Who is your audience? BI is a decision support tool. You need to understand who will be making what decisions
2. **PROCESS, PROCESS, PROCESS** - know your user's process and where the decisions fit into the wider role they perform. Review your project team's process by which you capture and deliver requirements, and identify the process by which those new capabilities will be run in the future
3. **THINK STRATEGICALLY** - design an architecture capable of scaling to a single enterprise wide platform, but don't be scared to make tactical deviations to support your business. Make sure you have a plan to move tactical back to strategic over time
4. **ACT TACTICALLY** - move towards that architecture project by project as opportunities arise
5. **RAPID BUSINESS VALUE DELIVERY** - consider short bursts of activity, each with an incremental business value – keeping business momentum is critical. Big bang is dead – don't disappear into a project black hole whilst re-platforming. Find a way of incrementally sorting out the back end, whilst delivering business benefits
6. **MOBILISE THE ARMY** - most retail organisations are full of creative people who know their business and the data which supports it. Find a way of giving them the tools to innovate new reports and dashboards, but have a central publishing process by which you promote them to "official" corporate reports
7. **VENEERS ARE OK** - using a portal veneer over existing BI solutions, or creating a BI veneer to quickly expose information held within source systems, are both good tactics to use in delivering rapid business value. A wider BI strategy is required to identify both the rationalisation approach to existing BI and also where the data should be held long term, but one size does not fit all
8. **VISUALISE FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT** - retailers are visual people. Bring in product, store and customer images to enrich your reporting wherever possible to drive adoption
9. **THINK BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, NOT BI TECHNOLOGY** - deliver capabilities that are in demand from the business, that give the commercial teams the opportunity to be the best they can. Stay close to them, and don't get carried away with the art of the technically possible
10. **UNDERSTAND THE DATA** - always understand the data you are presenting. Data quality issues can be tolerated if they are understood and articulated to the end user, providing it enables educated decision making. Lack of quality and lack of understanding of the issues result in a failed project

Why Hitachi Consulting?

■ Retailer led

Hitachi Consulting's retail practice is led by an award winning retailer, with over 10 years retail experience. This translates into everything we do being tied back to the language, the culture and the drivers of your retail business.

■ Approach

Hitachi Consulting know your business is an impatient one and value oriented. However, we also know that often retailers will struggle to get beyond the immediate priorities, of which there are many. We use our extensive experience to quickly deliver a pragmatic strategy, and then help you deliver the steps to deliver it in manageable business focused phases – we call this Rapid Time to Value.

■ Qualified

Hitachi Consulting only employ experienced consultants, and we hold the top level accreditation from both Microsoft & Oracle. More to the point, we bring the lessons we have learnt and the IP we have delivered to every engagement, to shortcut your time to benefit – there is nothing worse than feeling like you are paying someone to learn on your account.

■ Backing

Being part of the Hitachi Consulting family gives us the strength and stability required in these uncertain times; being led by our local management team gives us the agility and creativity to differentiate from our competitors and innovate for our clients.

■ Partnerships

Hitachi Consulting actively aims to foster long term relationships that are mutually beneficial, and will be honest and transparent in the way that we work – we will apply the test of “Would I buy that?” at every turn. We actively encourage networking between our clients to enable lessons to be shared. We will flex our approach and our team client by client, to complement what you've already got. And we are highly referenceable. Just ask Tesco, Whitbread, Experian and many others

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