

How to supercharge your application with embedded analytics

Every role is a data role

From developers to executives, tools for analysis empower your customers to make better-informed decisions. Regardless of the business objective of your application, you must provide confidence in data-driven decision-making to your customers. The challenge is, only 22% of users have access to analytical insights in their business applications.¹ For this reason, getting analytics in the hands of users should be considered a top priority.



43% of users leverage embedded analytics on a regular basis – double the adoption rate of traditional analytics.

But access to analytics doesn't guarantee the value of insight. Too often, a lack of contextual tools prevents users from taking full advantage, especially where it relates to everyday tasks that must be performed quickly and accurately. In fact, the difference in usage between embedded analytics and non-embedded solutions is significant: 43% of users leverage embedded analytics on a regular basis – double the adoption rate of traditional analytics.² The trend is clear: the more accessible analytics are in your app, the more customers will adopt them.

The evolution of in-app analytics and the business response

A fundamental shift has occurred in the way we consume data. Visualisations used to entail static pictures and charts that presented a snapshot of a single point in time, but this is no longer the case. Analytics, interactive visualisations and real-time reports are increasingly necessary to turn the massive volume of data into compelling stories.

Forrester predicts embedded business intelligence (BI) will become the new normal in three to five years due to the increase in operational and business complexity.³ This presents a significant opportunity for business applications. The more an application can guide users through decisions by weaving massive sets of data into something meaningful, the more likely adoption and usage will increase.

As a software vendor, you need a combination of powerful analytics and visualisation capabilities in order to deliver on the promise of turning data into actionable insight. So, how will you provide in-app analytics to your customers? Will you invest in building a custom solution in-house, or purchase an embedded analytics solution off the shelf?



Put the power of their data
in your customers' hands

1. BI Scorecard "BI Adoption Remains Flat" 2014.

2. Data Informed "Adoption of Embedded Analytics Growing" July 2016.

3. Forrester. "The next generation of embedded BI will close the insights-to-actions gap" April 2017.

From cost centre to profit centre with embedded analytics

In the past, your business might have considered reporting a small but necessary expense; perhaps even as an afterthought. Today, data volumes, sources and reporting complexity have grown, and the potential overhead has skyrocketed. This leaves a lot of businesses wondering how to best expand their analytics and visualisation capabilities. Does a custom-built platform make the most sense for your business' unique needs, or will an off-the-shelf solution free you up to focus on what's important to your business?

Real-time, self-service and freely explorable visualisations provide massive competitive differentiation, but developing a homegrown set of visuals to represent your data strains the time and resources of software vendors and developers. Technical and business decision-makers alike know that building analytics from the ground up comes with serious challenges, and you've probably said something like this yourself:

I'm concerned we don't have the resources to spare for full-time analytics development in addition to meeting our feature roadmap goals.



What if, in building our own custom reporting framework, we hit a snag and are forced to delay the launch of the new offering?

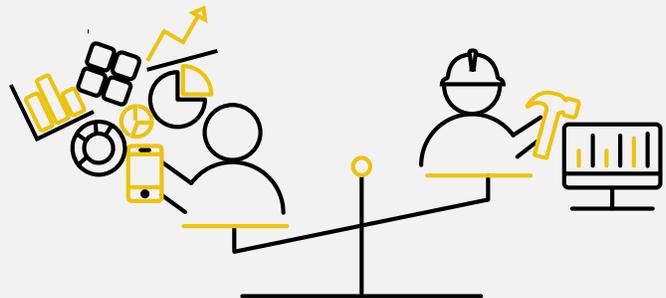


If we continue to grow at this pace, we will need to rebuild the analytics engine from scratch and buy new infrastructure.



You have options...

Mature, embedded analytics and BI solutions are available off the shelf, enabling your business to leverage the dedicated R&D, infrastructure and development effort of a vendor that has BI and data. If you don't have this core competency in-house, choosing to buy is the obvious option. By eliminating the burden of development, your business will be free to invest in capturing additional value for you, your developers and your customers.



The question is: do you build, or do you buy?

Leverage innovation to grow your business and go to market faster

By purchasing embedded analytics, you can accelerate time to market, stand out in the marketplace and expand current and new sources of revenue.



Achieve faster time to market

Dedicated analytics development requires expertise, resources and time. It can be difficult to achieve speed, reliability and scale with a homegrown solution. By investing in a Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) embedded analytics solution, the burden of maintaining infrastructure, storage and computing power is removed and you can be confident your analytics solution will work at 5x, 10x or even 100x users. Perhaps most importantly, the right embedded analytics solution puts you in a position to go to market faster by cutting down the analytics development cycle significantly.

Stand out in the marketplace

Every business wants to differentiate its offerings and increase the stickiness of products once in a customer’s hands. Only 25% of users return to an application after their first day using it,¹ so focusing on how to improve retention is critical. The key to better traction is delivering insights to customers anywhere, anytime, in as few steps as possible. While traditional analytics solutions often require significant data wrangling, embedded analytics enables “export-free zones” for users, delivering on-demand insights within applications in a single, consistent context. The ability to quickly and intuitively drill-down in a report, cross-highlight it with other relevant data or perform trend forecasting delivers significant value to users.

Expand revenue streams

An embedded analytics solution can impact your own business as much as it impacts your application. Embedded analytics can open the door to new revenue streams and serve to grow opportunity size. You can start by offering premium access to analytics and self-service reporting to improve your bottom line. You can also develop new lines of business around embedded analytics services – such as white-glove analyst assistance with reporting – as ways to expand customer loyalty and scale your business.

1. Appboy “Customer Retention Report” 2016.

Expand core competencies and clear the way for innovation

With an embedded analytics solution, developers can free up their hours to add value, innovate more and build alongside a robust community.

Generate value, not just reports

Your application developers should focus on creating new features and improving core functionality, not custom building an extensive analytics engine or endlessly hand-coding reporting features. With the right embedded analytics, you don't have to start from scratch to meet new customer demands. Even the most complete embedded analytics offering requires some development effort. However, the more an organisation can minimise this, the more time developers have to improve core features and functionality.



Reap the rewards of others' dedicated BI investments

Customer demands change frequently, and keeping up with competitors can be tough. As soon as a feature becomes "industry standard" or is noticeably lacking from an application, it creates a challenge for businesses trying to grow their user base. And what if you want to integrate world-class artificial intelligence or machine learning into your analytics? By leveraging the dedicated R&D of an analytics vendor, you lift a significant development burden from the shoulders of your developers and product managers. Critical updates and new features are automatically integrated into your application, and you get to reap the rewards of satisfied customers.

Leverage a community of support

The additional value provided by a community of experts, support staff and other businesses also using the same product shouldn't be underestimated. User groups, forums and a host of additional content – everything from online training to industry blogs – can get your teams working faster, drive awareness of your product and help build expertise in your business. Global communities of users may also lead to partnerships, inspire new offerings or just help you troubleshoot a tricky issue.



Turn critical data into meaningful insight

By investing in an embedded analytics solution, you're positioned to wow customers and empower them to have confidence in their data-driven decisions – making their lives easier and driving usage of your application.

The key to insight is embedded analytics

Timely access to insights is more important than ever with growing data volumes and business complexity. Data drives decision-making across industries and processes from optimising production to informing strategy. But customers can't make an informed decision based on raw data – they need the means to understand it.

Business applications with easy-to-use analytics are the critical link between customers and the data they need. Simple charts don't do justice to your application or customer challenges. To meet today's complex business challenges, application data must be accessible anywhere and tell a story to inform insight. By purchasing a complete embedded analytics solution, you can make data exploration easy. Free your customers from exporting, give them fewer steps to insight and enable more powerful self-service. When customers can trust that the insights they generate are relevant and actionable, they accomplish more and get more out of your application.

Empower customers with confidence

Embedded analytics creates confidence by providing customers with the ability to make quick, informed decisions in context no matter what their role. From business executives and data scientists to the occasional user, providing actionable insights to anyone who uses your app is the core value of your application and will keep users coming back for more. At the end of the day, it's all about driving success for your customers and that means giving them not only the tools they need but also the confidence that they are making the right decisions to push their business forward. In a world where every role is a data role, business intelligence and reporting are forces that drive growth and delight customers by connecting them directly to meaningful insights.



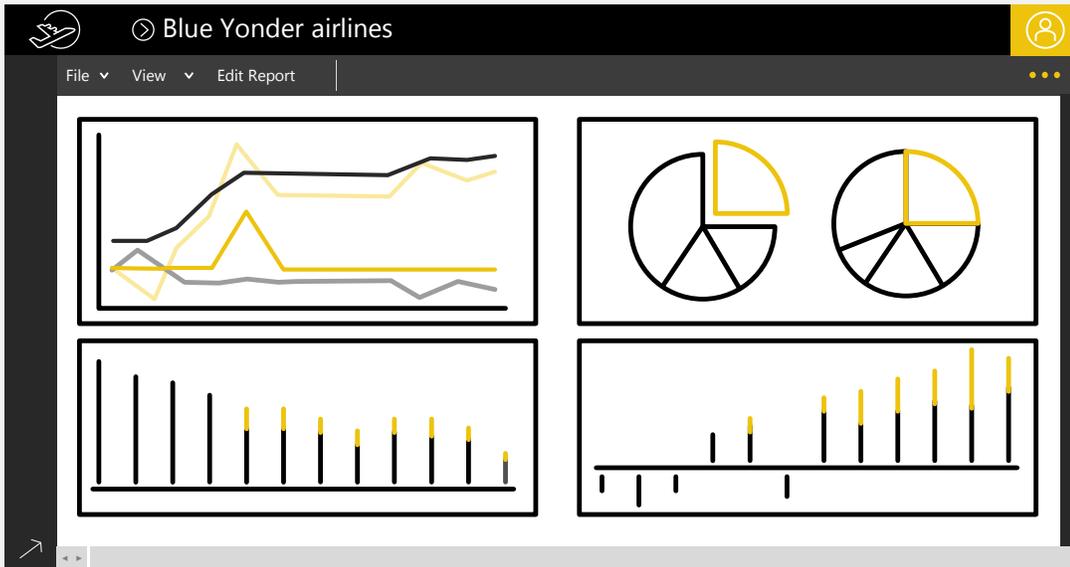
Whether on the job...



...or on the go

Embedded analytics is for your business, your developers and your customers

Power BI Embedded from Microsoft is a market leader in embedded analytics, built to deliver custom, compelling and intuitive analytics and visualisations within your application. Put the ability to make data-driven decisions in the hands of users anywhere with the security, scale and innovation that only Microsoft can provide.



-  Learn more about the value that Power BI Embedded and the Microsoft approach to data exploration can generate for your organisation <https://aka.ms/PBIE>
-  To start exploring the synergies available with the Azure ecosystem and Microsoft stack, check out [the Azure products page](#)