

The Criteria for Selecting Strategic Execution Software for Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Almost two decades, the educational institutions using tables and sheets to represent their strategic planning and programs for execution and reporting purposes. Now, this is age of Information Technology, the programs and projects are better represent and easily manage at the finger tips access. In this paper, we mainly focus on selection of suitable strategic execution software using specific criteria which will help us to develop, maintain and monitor our strategic programs and projects for higher education.

Keywords

Strategic Planning, Execution, Reporting, Criteria, programs and Projects.

technology background or having prior IT knowledge and having strategic vision as well. A team is should be assembled or assigned which including a senior-level executive to direct its activities and keep its focus on those specific goals and objectives. The Department managers and an IT staff, who must make the software, work smoothly. Otherwise, he may suffer the consequences of this software failure. So, it is better to chosen very carefully using their IT knowledge and better judgment. It is also advisable to include some departmental heads to join the demo sessions given by the vendors and ask their feedback time to time. It is also necessary to use IT staff to investigate regarding required functionalities available or not as per vendor's commitment. It means that they must assess and verify the software parameters to ensure that the technology and functionality of the software may satisfy the organizational strategic and tactical plans forward without quickly becoming obsolete.

1. INTRODUCTION

The selection of significant software application which serves the specific purpose is a very tedious and cumbersome job. But, it is our dire necessity to select appropriate and relevant software because without suitable software you could not manage your tasks at finger tips access. There are many organizations which have their own in-house built software, but they do not suffice their entire requirements. Only they serve 25 percentages of their organizational needs. The initial process of selecting software is to classify our requirements that best fit in our organization's needs and purpose as required by senior executives those are responsible for the same departments and who has information

2. SOFTWARE REQUIREMENT CRITERIA

Before selecting the software companies, we prepare our case study with some functional criteria for selecting required tool. We have prepare a list of requirements where we listed our software requirement purpose, users categories, license year, needs of organization, reporting facilities, data migration and few more options which we entail during the development of our third year strategic plan. The following are the basic requirements of strategic executions software listed below, which will help us to find the correct and appropriate strategic execution software tool.

Table 1: List of KPIs require for most of the academic institutions

For Values (10 to 15 approx.)	For Strategic Objectives (20 to 25 approx.)
a. Piety	a. Effective Teaching and Learning
b. Kindness	b. Graduate Studies and Scientific Research
c. Cooperation	c. Social Responsibility
d. Patriotism	d. Innovation and Leadership and Development
e. Excellence	e. Infrastructure
f. Innovation	f. Information Technology
g. Sustainability	g. Investment

3. SOFTWARE SELECTION METHODOLOGY

For selection methodology, we use a capeterra.com as a search engine after putting the criteria as Business Performance Management. There are more than 2,000 plus software available related to the Top Business Performance Management software Product criteria using website www.capeterra.com.

Among these top Business Performance management software companies, we have selected more than 30 companies considering two majors points that the software should be web based and best installed in the server for safety and security purpose. As we know that application installed in server is more secured than installed applications in other workstations. The second most important criteria have been mentioned in Chapter V.

4. SOFTWARE SELECTION CHECKLIST

It is quite difficult and cumbersome to identify and select a tool that is appropriate for a particular project. There are

many deliberations and considerations that need to be dealt with while selecting a software tool. In the beginning of selection to select an important software tool, it is better to create a check list of functionalities considering cost, user friendly interface, easy to use, technical support facilities from vendor side, easy installation, localization and above all taking into account that the tool should be menu driven customized application. There is different check list selection approach from different organizations.

For the checklist selection (Table 2), we create exults by marking a checkmark using data columns against various check points as well as missing functionalities on the checklist. A checkmark is used as a Yes column against an item indicates that the functionalities available in this toll are true. A checkmark in the not available (N/A) column against an item indicates that the functionalities are not applicable. The checklist can be customized and add an additional columns like comments, may be added which could provide useful assistance during further analysis.

Table 2: A sample of Software Selection Checklist

S.No	Functionality Check Point Criteria	Check Mark (✓) the Appropriate Column	
		Yes	N/A
01	Whether the price of the tool fit in the department or institution budget?		
02	Whether the tool meets the requirements of the institution testing methodology?		
03	Whether training, classes, user guides, or other forms of instruction are available and necessary for using this tool?		
04	Whether the tool will work effectively on the computer system, currently in place?		
05	Whether more memory, faster processors going to be needed?		
06	Whether the tool itself is easy to use and a user-friendly interface?		
07	Whether the tool is prone to user error and physically capable of testing your application?		
08	Whether the tool can run for long periods of time without crashing, or is the tool itself full of bugs and can handle full project testing?		
09	Whether you have talked to the customers who currently or previously have used the tool. Did it meet their needs?		
10	How similar were their testing needs to yours and how well did the tool perform?		
11	Whether you are trying to select a tool that is advanced enough so the costs of upgrading is minimum?		
12	Is it easy menu base tool that can be picked up quickly?		
13	Whether any of the team members already have experience of using this tool?		

5. SOFTWARE CRITERIA

For the selection of a software tool or computer application, it is always obligatory to check that the selected tool meets the

requirements or not. In this perspective, we have selected some important functionality which we describe in brief to know their usefulness.

- Ad Hoc Analysis
- Ad Hoc Reports
- Balanced Scorecards
- Budgeting and Forecasting
- Consolidation / roll-up
- Dashboard
- Qualitative Analysis
- Key Performance Indicators
- Quantitative analysis
- Strategic Planning

- Workflow Management
- Performance Management
- Other Functions

6. LIST OF SOFTWARE COMPANIES

During the selection of software companies, we prepare a comprehensive list of more than 30 companies which is fore-runner in providing solution for strategic software execution and which satisfies our specific requirements for required functionalities.

Table 3: List of Strategic Software Companies

S.No	Company Name	Contact Person	Email	Website	Country
01.	MICROSOFT PERFORMANCE POINT DASHBOARD DESIGNER	Mahmoud Qashou 966 50165 1443	v-maqash@microsoft.com	www.microsoft.com	USA
02.	SAP ERP-SEM		Contact form	www.sap.com	USA
03.	ORACLE SCOREBOARD AND STRATEGY MANAGEMENT		Mea-saas_sa@oracle.com	www.oracle.com	USA
04.	CORPORATER	Jihad Jahed +971 55 210 1003	jahed@corporater.com info@corporater.com	www.corporater.com	Norway, UAE
05.	ACTUATE	Maroun Yazbeck +971 55 997 0533	maroon@eupartners.info	www.eupartners.info	UAE, France
06.	IYCON	Iffath Fatima +971 55 985 2465	fathima@iycon.com	www.iycon.com	UAE, Australia
07.	ICSME	Azam Dabbagh, +971 55 334 6000	Azam.dabbagh@icsme.com	www.icsme.com	UAE
08.	IBTIKAR	David Jalali +971 50 458 9299	dj@balancedscorecard.org iikar@eim.ae	www.ibtikar.biz	UAE
09.	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SUITE	Free Call: 800.303.6346	info.jp@ adaptiveinsights.com	www.adaptiveinsights.com	USA, UK, Japan, Australia
10.	EXECUTIVE STRATEGY MANAGER By Palladium Group	Tel: 971.44.28.1550 Phone:+1-800.773.2399	Contact Form	www.Executivestrategymanager.com	USA, UAE
11.	CASCADE	Phone: +61 2 8038 5034	sales@executestategy.net support@executestategy.net	www.executestategy.net	Australia
12.	QUICKSCORE	Tel: +44 (0)1962 855655		www.intrafocus.com	UK
13.	ACTIVEMETRICS	Phone: +1 613.236.1644	sales@pureshare.com	www.pureshare.com	Canada
14.	ACTIVESTRATEGY ENTERPRISE	Tel: 484.690.0700	support@activestategy.com	www.activestategy.com	USA
15.	AXIOM EPM	Toll Free: 877.691.9969	info@axiomepm.com	www.axiomepm.com	USA

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16.	BOARD	Tel. +971 4 453 2832	infome@board.com	www.board.com	USA, Australia, UAE
17.	BUDGETGUIDE BY ACTEON TECHNOLOGIES			www.acteontechnologies.com	Unknown
18.	BUSINESS EXECUTION SYSTEM	UK : +44 (0)845 607 0061 US: +1 770-521-4211	sales@i-nexus.com	www.i-nexus.com	USA, UK
19.	BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM	David Jamieson Phone : +61 2 43654886	djamieson@jamieson-group.com	www.jamiesonconsulting.com.au www.wincapri.com	Australia
20.	BUSINESS PERFORMANCE TOOLS	+1-646-213-0067	sales@priZem.com	www.prizem.com	USA
21.	CALUMO	Tel: +1 214 387 6030 Tel: +61 2 8985 7777	Contact Form	www.calumo.com	USA, Australia
22.	CONTROL BY KCI COMPUTING	Tel: +1-310.921.6222.	Contact form	www.kcicorp.com	USA
23.	CORPORATE PLANNER	Phone: +44 (0)1242 578966	sales@account-ability.co.uk	www.account-ability.co.uk	UK
24.	COVALENT CPM BY COVALENT SOFTWARE	T: +44 (0) 1823 32 32 39 Fax: +44 (0) 1823 32 32 29	Contact Form	www.covalentsoftware.com	UK
25.	CUBEPLAN	Damian Ginnobili +54 351 462 3436	dginobili@cubeplan.com	www.cubeplan.com	Argentina
26.	DUCKSBOARD	Call us: +1 (650) 646-3786	contact@ducksboard.com	www.ducksboard.com	SPAIN
27.	ECOSYS EPC	Tel (US): +1 720 214 1000 1000	info@ecosys.net	www.ecosys.net	USA, UK, Australia
28.	ENTERPRISE STRATEGYWARE	Tel: 1.860.808.1102	info@keytechstaff.com dbrogan@keytechstaff.com	www.arrowpointtechnologies.com	USA
29.	ERMSIM STRATEGY ANALYTICS		Contact Form	www.edglabs.com	Unknown
30.	IDASHBOARDS	Toll Free: 1-888-359-0500	SaudiArabia@idashboards.com	www.idashboards.com	USA
31.	INSIGHT BY CLEARWATER SOLUTIONS		Contact Form	www.clearwater-solutions.co.uk Website not working	UK
32.	INSIGHTVISION BY INSIGHT FORMATION	Phone: 763.521.4599 Fax: 763.521.4598	info@insightformation.com	www.insightformation.com	USA
33.	INTELLI-BPM BY INTELLI-MINE	Phone: (949) 528-3830	Info@intelli-mine.com	www.intelli-mine.com	USA

7. PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF FUNCTIONALITIES OF SOFTWARE COMPANIES

As per the functionality and important use, we categorize the different criteria mark them. We have provided suitable

Weightage point for different 14 criteria from 5 to 20 points totaling 100 Marks to see which company score highest marks and then we may short list at least 5 companies and ask them to give us life demo at the earliest.

Table 4: List of Software selection Criteria

S.No	COMPANY	Ad hoc Analysis	Ad hoc Reports	Balanced Scorecards	Budgets & Forecasts	Consolidated/Roll-Up	Dashboard	KPI	Qualitative Analysis	Quantitative Analysis	Strategic Planning	Workflow Mgmt	Performance Mgmt	Other Functions	software Functionalities
1	SAP ERP-SEM		5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5	5	5	95
2	AXIOM EPM	5	5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			90
3	CUBEPLAN	5	5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			90
4	ECOSYS EPC	5	5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			90
5	IDASHBOARDS	5	5	15	5		10	20	5	5	10	5		5	90
6	EXECUTIVE STRATEGY MANAGER		5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			85
7	QUICKSCORE	5	5	15	5	5	10	20	5	5	10				85
8	INSIGHT SOLUTIONS	5	5	15		5	10	20	5	5	10	5			85
9	ORACLE SCOREBOARD		5	15	5	5	10	20			5	5	5	5	80
10	BOARD	5	5		5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			75
11	CALUMO	5	5		5	5	10	20	5	5	10	5			75
12	CORPORATE PLANNER	5	5		5	5	10	20	5	5	10				70
13	COVALENT CPM	5	5	15			10	20			10	5			70
14	INTELLI-BPM	5	5			5	10	20	5	5	10	5			70
15	QPR SOFTWARE	5	5			5	10	20	5	5	10				65
16	IYCON		5		5			20	5	5	10	5	5	5	65
17	ACTIVEMETRICS	5	5			5	10	20	5	5	10				65
18	CONTROL BY KCI CO.	5	5		5	5		20	5	5	10	5			65
19	ERMSIM STRATEGY ANALYTICS	5		15				20	5	5	10	5			65
20	ENTERPRISE STRATEGYWARE				5	5	10	20	5	5	10				60
21	ACTIVESTRATEGY ENTERPRISE		5			5	10	20			10	5			55
22	BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM	5	5		5		10	20	5	5					55
23	BUSINESS PERFORMANCE TOOLS	5	5		5			20	5	5	10				55
24	DUCKSBOARD	5	5				10	20		5	10				55
25	CORPORATER			15	5	5	10				10	5			50
26	IBTIKAR			15			10		5	5	10			5	50
27	CASCADE			15			10				10	5	5	5	50
28	BUDGETGUIDE ACTEON TECH	5	5		5	5	10			5	10	5			50

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29	INSIGHTVISION	5	5					20	5	5	10				50
30	ICSME				5				5	5	10	5		5	35
31	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SUITE	5	5		5						10	5	5		35
32	ACTUATE				5						10	5	5	5	30
33	BUSINESS EXECUTION SYSTEM										10	5			15
34	MICROSOFT PERFORMANCE POINT SCOREBOARD DESIGNER														0

8. SOME GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF CRITERIA POINTS

This is the graphical representation of criteria point showing the strength of the executive strategic software by creating bar chart (fig. 1) and also the line chart bar and wheel bar chart in fig. 2 and 3 respectively.

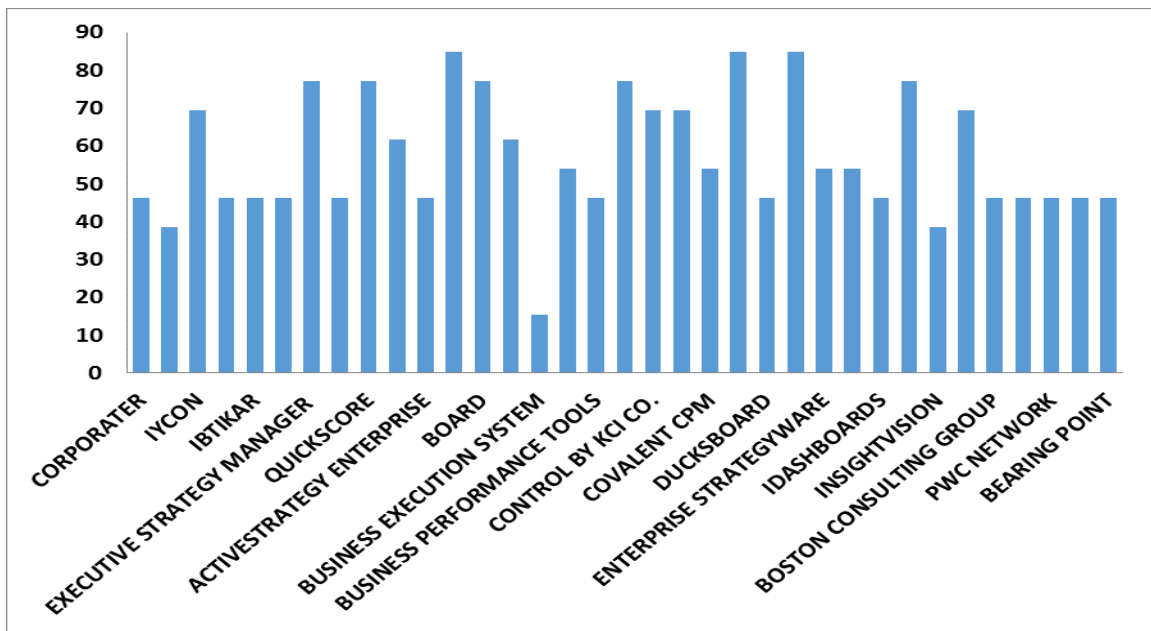


Figure 1: Graphical representation of Criteria Points

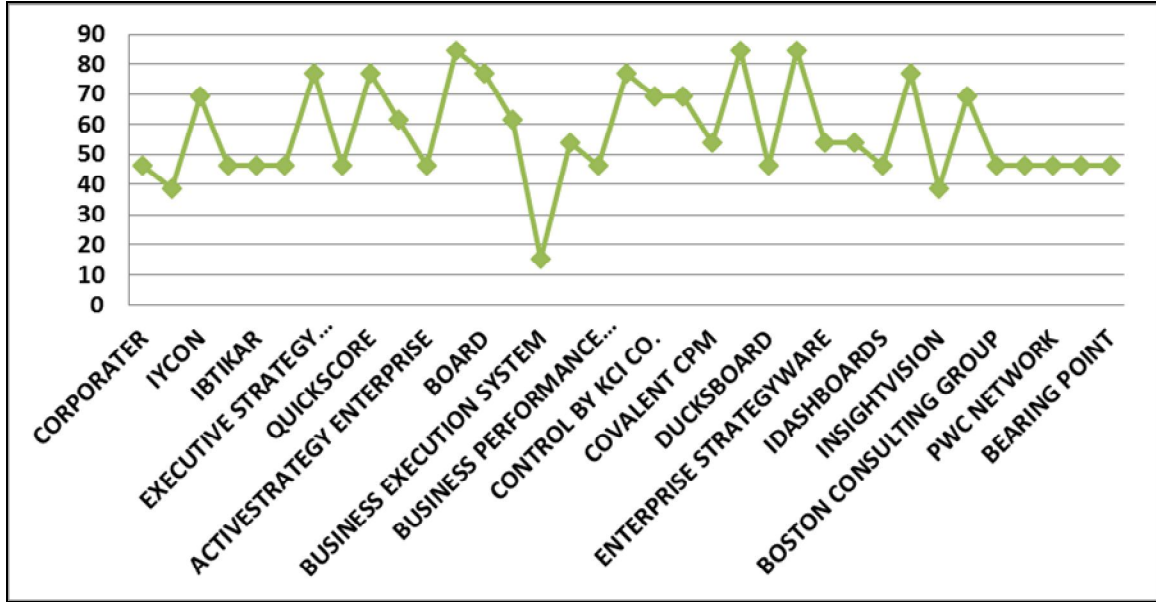


Figure 2: Graphical line representation of Criteria Points

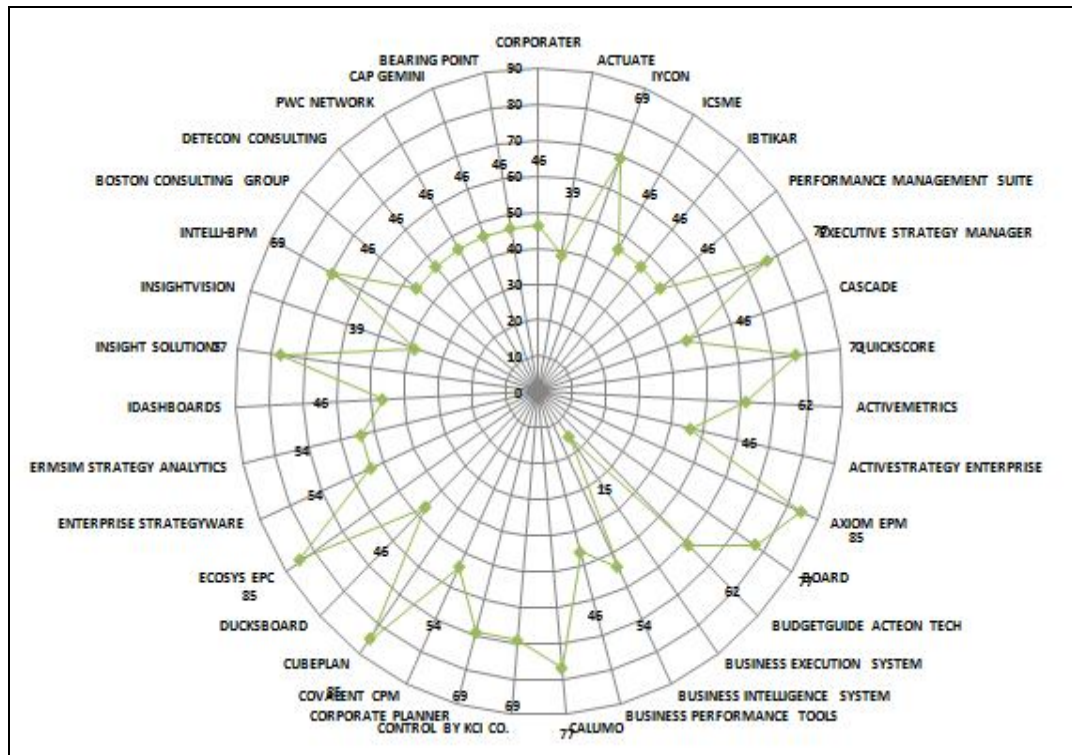


Figure 3: Graphical representation of Criteria Points with companies

9. CONCLUSION

Once the various faculty and department goals and tactics have been aligned with academic strategy and software requirements defined in the selection criteria team can move on to the demo phase with selection evaluation of software suppliers. Product functionality, cost evaluation, technical support technology infrastructure, installation and commissioning processes, field support, and their vision of the future as expressed through their research and development efforts with customer testimonials. These factors are become the key issues of focus while culminating in a selection procedures and decision.

It is obvious that the informed selection of strategic software is a process which is one that is unique to each organizational need, its structure, the capabilities and personalities of its staff's and executives. Regardless of process methodology, however, this is certain that the odds of choosing the correct software tool will be greatly enhanced if the team's selection process and tactics completely align with the institutional strategic goals and objectives. If your process tactics are sound and strong enough, you will be succeeded, otherwise, your worst nightmare will come true [6].

In this software selection procedure, we have faced lots of difficulties. Sometimes, vendors having no information on their websites, some are not answering on telephone and some vendors are less bothers about our queries. At last, after a rigorous and painstaking struggling, we have selected few best vendors who may provide better product functionalities with adequate infrastructure facilities and technical support with installation and integration for our strategic requirements.

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