



Which of the following current topics will significantly change the market in the next year? And what is the impact? (Business Intelligence/Analytics, Customer Engagement, Mobile, Security, or Social)

The Impact of Analytics

With the technological advances in the past several years, organizations around the world are collecting more and more data. The topic of “big data” has been getting increasing attention, but there has also been so much overuse and misuse of the term big data that organizations have begun to question precisely how big data capabilities and initiatives will help them solve specific business issues. The key to a successful big data strategy is that it’s not just the data itself that creates value – it’s what you do with it. To generate value, you need to combine data with effective analysis and take action based on information-driven decisions.

But how do you make data accessible and easier to consume? How do you identify what is relevant? And how do you get the information you need to make decisions? This is where analytics comes into play. Fundamentally, analytics solutions make information easier to access, understand and act upon. It’s not just pretty reporting where you can see stale data. As part of a complete workforce management solution, analytics provides a closed loop system that presents actionable information so that you can continuously improve your business, particularly in the areas of controlling labor costs and improving overall workforce productivity.

Previous generations of analytics tools focused on backward-looking reporting, like looking out the rearview window of your car. But now you can transform mountains of raw data into nuggets of valuable information to gain immediate insight. An interactive analytics dashboard enables managers to understand what’s happening in their labor pool in near real-time so they can take immediate action to impact status. Increasingly, managers will use this dashboard view to make projections of what will happen in the future. It’s like having the ability to see in the rearview mirror, out the windshield, and around the corner — all at the same time.

Visibility to this ever-growing body of data will increasingly be delivered anywhere at any time. Advances in mobile technology will continue to drive a frontline manager's ability to "manage in the moment" while in the field. They can proactively address future challenges on-site rather than reviewing stale reports that deliver no actionable insight.

In the coming year, we believe that more and more organizations will take advantage of analytics solutions to prevent themselves from drowning in a sea of "big" labor data. We also believe that over time, rather than seeing analytics as a separate category of products and solutions, users will come to expect that analytics capabilities will be embedded in the products and services they already use, giving organizations the visibility they need to make intelligent decisions that lower labor costs, improve workforce productivity and boost profitability.

This interview was published in [SIIA's Vision from the Top](#) , a Software Division publication released at [All About the Cloud 2013](#)