

BARC Score

Financial Performance Management (FPM)

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Abstract

Performance management plays a crucial role in increasing competitiveness and is one of the central management tasks in the organization. The goal is to align the company's strategy and goals with business processes in order to achieve the highest level of performance at strategic, tactical and operational levels. In recent years, the dynamics of markets and competition have increased rapidly and many companies are struggling to keep pace. In this context, the management and monitoring of financial results across the organization are becoming massively more important. Therefore, financial performance management (FPM) is key for many companies and focuses on streamlining financial management processes.

This BARC Score examines the market for FPM products and portfolios. Based on countless data points from various BARC surveys and many analyst interactions, vendors are rated on a variety of criteria, from portfolio capabilities and architecture to sales and marketing strategy, financial performance and customer feedback.

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Overview

Markets and competition today are highly dynamic and complex, and the future is characterized by uncertainty. In this context, the management and monitoring of financial results across an organization and therefore financial performance management (FPM) are gaining in importance for a growing number of companies.

The age of digitalization presents organizations with new challenges. Many markets have become more dynamic and disruptive as a result of new business models. Globalization and cross-border value chains have greatly increased the scope of control of international business activities and different business models. As a result, the monitoring and forecasting of financial targets is becoming increasingly important as part of FPM. In recent years, many companies have painfully recognized the importance of transparency in financial processes for efficient management. This transparency does not only include looking back into the past (“what has happened”) but increasingly requires anticipation and reflection of future developments in an organization’s process goals and structures (“what will happen”). For this reason, key focus areas that companies are pursuing right now in FPM are:

- An accelerated supply of information for decision-makers.
- Increasing consideration of internal and external data for decision-making.
- Greater use of data and analytics in decision-making and management processes.
- Short-term planning and forecasts with a higher updating frequency.
- Digitalization and greater software support for internal processes as an essential basis for their optimization and further automation.

Support from modern and requirements-oriented software solutions is an essential element in achieving these goals. Hereby, the integration of various FPM disciplines in common software platforms (e.g., financial planning and forecasting, financial consolidation and close, financial reporting and disclosure management and data analytics) is a means of avoiding problems and user dissatisfaction but also helps to streamline financial management processes within companies and to drive finance transformation.

This BARC Score focuses on the highly competitive market for FPM products and portfolios. It analyzes the strengths and challenges of all the leading vendors that offer outstanding value to their customers.

Besides buying a modern FPM platform, organizations should have an FPM strategy that goes well beyond an architecture blueprint to include non-technical and emerging business-user-oriented requirements, alignment with corporate strategy, organizational models, outcome-based priority settings and a proper roadmap. The shift in FPM strategies towards unified FPM processes, cloud-based deployments, self-service in finance and controlling departments as well as AI and machine learning (ML) supported decision-making are also reflected in the new features added to leading platforms.

Still, when it comes to kicking off or expanding an FPM program, the initial focus almost always lies on the required toolsets. While this may not always be the ideal starting point, at some stage a platform, portfolio or product decision has to be made. This document will help with the selection process by evaluating the market leaders and most used product sets for FPM.

Inclusion Criteria

There are two separate categories of inclusion criteria for this BARC Score: the first is associated with a vendor's products and portfolios and the other is linked to the financial results relating to those products.

To be evaluated in this BARC Score, a vendor must have a strong focus on providing FPM functionality (not only analytics functionality) and supply at least four out of five technologies from the following list in a solution not merely focused on one industry or use case:

- Financial planning and forecasting
- Financial consolidation and close
- Financial reporting
- Ad hoc query and analysis of financial data
- Operational planning and forecasting

In addition, a vendor has to generate a minimum of 20-25 million EUR in revenue per year (software revenue) with the evaluated product set in this BARC Score, spread across Europe and at least two additional geographies. Furthermore, the product set must have a significant number of implementations and license or subscription revenues worldwide across different geographies to be considered as global. We consider the following regions as individual geographies:

- Europe, Middle East and Africa
- North America
- Latin America
- Asia-Pacific

There is no differentiation between on-premises offerings and cloud-based product sets.

Evaluation Criteria

Every vendor is evaluated on two dimensions: Portfolio Capabilities and Market Execution. Each represents one axis on the BARC Score. These two dimensions include the following sub-criteria.

Portfolio Capabilities

In general, Portfolio Capabilities reflect functional and architectural criteria. A special emphasis is placed on seamless integration and ease of use for business users. Regarding the vendor ratings in this BARC Score, the focus is rather on the prebuilt business content and FPM solutions that the vendors provide and less on flexibility to create individual applications that can be built with development environments.

The Portfolio Capabilities criteria selected to rank the vendors in this BARC Score include the following technologies and their corresponding weightings:

Criteria	Weighting
Financial planning and forecasting	High
Financial consolidation and close	High
Portfolio evaluation	High
Ease of use for business users	Medium
Infrastructure evaluation	Medium
Financial reporting and disclosure management	Medium
Ad hoc query and analysis	Medium
Operational planning and forecasting	Low

Please note: Only vendor-distinct functionality is rated in our vendor portfolio ratings, not that of integrated OEM products or partner solutions.

Financial planning and forecasting

Planning, budgeting and forecasting are indispensable for managing business in general and corporate performance in particular. By directly comparing actual and planned figures, companies can effectively monitor the progress and impact of their planned actions and adjust their goals accordingly. This is not only true for planning and forecasting financial results but also operational aspects.

Financial planning and forecasting are key elements in finance control and support financial management. Besides maximizing profits and increasing shareholder value, one of the most important objectives of financial planning is to ensure a company's liquidity. Financial planning should describe what steps are needed to generate future income and make sure future expenses are covered. Therefore,

financial plans have to focus on planning the financial results of an organization (e.g., balance sheet, income statement, cash flow), which may also include a consolidation of the financial plans of individual companies and subgroups if regarded at group level. For this reason, functionality for financial consolidation is often required in financial planning as well (see the 'Financial consolidation and close' evaluation criterion).

Particularly in the early stages of implementation projects, companies can benefit from prebuilt planning content, which can be helpful for speeding up implementation. More and more vendors are now providing prebuilt but adaptable models for financial planning and forecasting, which offer extensive predefined business rules, business content and logic.

To comprehensively present the financial view of a company, financial planning must be linked with operational sub-plans (see the 'Operational planning and forecasting' evaluation criterion). Financial planning is only meaningful if dependencies between the individual sub-plans are taken into account and consistent results from all sub-plans are included. The effects of operational planning on the financial results of a company are only directly visible and conclusive when they are completely and automatically integrated. The sequence of detailed planning steps through to financial planning is largely determined by the enterprise's individual driver model.

Financial consolidation and close

Financial consolidation combines the financial data of several legal entities of an organization in group financial statements, eliminating intercompany transactions (IC) to present the group's correct financial performance according to legal requirements (consolidated P&L, balance sheet, cash flow). The preparation of consolidated financial statements of all individual legal entities of a group is not only obligatory from a financial and legal point of view, but also serves as orientation for all decisions relevant to the group as well as for planning and controlling of the entire organization. Fast close, global workflows and more complex and comprehensive accounting standards make appropriate support through software indispensable to manage the data entry flow, guarantee automated data checks and closing, and offer possibilities to monitor reconciliation to enable fast close.

In addition to consolidating actuals, financial planning at group level also requires a consolidation of the data from individual legal entities in order to be economically correct. Organizations that place a high value on the correct representation of group relationships often aim for an intensive integration of financial planning and financial consolidation with a focus on profit planning.

Portfolio evaluation

Portfolio evaluation includes assessing each vendor's overall portfolio from a customer perspective. The perspective of power users and casual users is important when rating FPM platforms. Therefore, we analyze the integration between the system components comprising the platform as well as the consistency of user interfaces and experience across all modules. The product's lifecycle and maturity are also assessed as this yields insight into quality and stability.

A state-of-the-art FPM platform must have consistent user interfaces and provide integrated functionality for financial planning and forecasting, financial consolidation and close, financial reporting and disclosure, analysis of financial data and, if required, also operational planning and forecasting. Consistency and seamless integration are important criteria for the optimal support of FPM processes. Having all FPM functionality in one integrated product on one database is certainly preferable to an integration, for example, at database level between different products with the need for ETL processes to transfer data.

Moreover, the product's lifecycle and maturity are assessed. Customers often complain about reliability and stability in early product releases. Early versions are rarely as functionally rich as mature products so they usually do not meet all their customers' functional requirements. And sometimes vendors offer mature products that are no longer being enhanced with innovative, new features. As a consequence, they may not fulfill new and emerging requirements.

Ease of use for business users

Ease of use considers the general user-friendliness of an FPM product for business users in areas such as model and business logic design, screen generation, content development and administration in business departments. Unified interfaces with a clear and modern design are required to attract business users. Good integration between all components and reliable performance are vital for productivity in content creation – from consolidations to plans, reports and dashboards and beyond. In business-user-oriented products, coding must be optional, and guided navigation should be available rather than expecting users to locate and open wizards and menus. In addition to an assessment by experienced analysts, we take customer feedback into account here from BARC's 'The Financial Consolidation Survey' and 'The Planning Survey' (the *Ease of Use* KPI). This criterion is included because ease of use for business users is often a very important consideration in software selection processes.

Infrastructure evaluation

A modern FPM platform must serve numerous usage scenarios and expanding user numbers as well as growing data sources and volumes. Infrastructure evaluation focuses on the overall architecture of each vendor's product portfolio and includes a broad range of technical criteria. Of particular interest here are the integration of the various components from the perspective of front-end users as well as at infrastructure levels, including data access, models and metadata. A sophisticated system architecture has to allow for efficient scaling as the data volume or the number of users increases without compromising performance or requiring huge hardware investments.

Furthermore, a modern FPM platform must be open in the back end to integrate internal and external data from different data sources (e.g., via ETL) but also in the front end to integrate with widely used BI and analytics solutions such as Microsoft Power BI, Qlik and Tableau (e.g., leveraging APIs). Integration with Microsoft Power BI seems to be increasingly in demand in our experience.

Finally, support for different platforms, the range of deployment options (e.g., cloud, on-premises, hybrid), performance optimization techniques and security settings are considered in this evaluation. Performance plays a particularly important role in user satisfaction, acceptance and perceived usability, and ultimately in the value created from data.

Financial reporting and disclosure management

Together with the analysis of financial data, financial reporting and graphical overviews of financial key performance indicators (KPIs) in dashboards form the backbone of FPM and encompass all information provision tasks for internal and external stakeholders. Individual subcategories include formatted standard reporting, ad hoc query and reporting as well as (management) dashboards and cockpits.

Formatted standard reports are usually page-oriented reports with a standardized format. They run on regular schedules, are triggered by alerts or on demand by user requests. Formatted reports include static (exported) as well as dynamic reports with filters and a predefined, reader-oriented layout. Precise control over layout components such as pixel-perfect placement and numerous printing options are required (e.g., page optimizations, hiding components for printing). A special category of formatted standard reporting is disclosure management, which refers to the fulfillment of external and internal

reporting requirements, in particular financial statements. Many companies must publish their annual financial statements or submit to authorities and therefore need comprehensive software support to observe high quality standards and avoid regulatory risks if standards are not met.

Distribution of the content created must be readily available to feed all communication channels. Distribution must include bursting static and page-oriented PDF reports as well as exports to various formats, such as Excel files, often delivered via email. Triggers for data-driven alerts, scheduling and bursting are required to reach a broad number of users. Recently, integration with collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams has grown in importance for customers and vendors alike.

Ad hoc query and analysis

The continuously growing number of data sources to consider and the variety of analytics questions to answer based on them is raising the demand for methods to analyze financial and operational data in-depth and quickly. Business users need a powerful toolkit of methods to analyze and to intuitively dig deep into the available data.

In many cases, business users require greater interactivity than they can get from predefined (standard) reports and dashboards. Ad hoc query and analyses allow business users to intuitively dig into the available data. Next to basic analysis methods (e.g., filtering, ranking, conditional formatting, etc.) and navigation in data, traditional online analytical processing (OLAP) provides dimensional data views, which make it easy for users to drill down, drill across and pivot dimensions as well as apply sophisticated calculations without scripting. While not discussed much these days, dimensional analyses are still widely used and extremely valuable to many. Moreover, interactive visual exploration allows users to quickly scan significant amounts of data for patterns, outliers and clusters, or even to quickly understand what is in a dataset.

Bringing analytics to a greater number of users is a major trend, particularly to power users in business departments. Augmentation and guidance are therefore gaining in importance to support non-technical users in analysis tasks and query creation. Automated insights speed up time to insight by making use of ML to highlight the most important insights in data, guiding users through possible analysis steps and giving answers beyond questions asked explicitly. Patterns and outliers are detected in the background and are presented to users in a meaningful way – increasingly supported by modern functions such as natural language query (NLQ) so they can type their questions into a search bar or even leverage speech recognition instead of using query languages such as SQL or creating wizard-based data queries.

Operational planning and forecasting

To comprehensively present the financial view of a company, financial planning must be linked with operational sub-plans to take dependencies between the individual sub-plans into account and include their consistent results in financial planning. To do so, software products require the flexibility to model all required operational sub-plans such as sales, production and HR and link them to the financial results plans. Since it is no longer sufficient to plan these operational areas in isolation, many companies are striving to better integrate their overall corporate planning.

Integrated corporate planning models consist of planning structures (master data), key figures and planning logic, and combine different operational and financial plans. All steps of planning processes, such as the creation of a planning model and model provision, creation of planning masks and definition of planning processes as well as user functionality for planning are supported by planning solutions. The coordination of the various planning activities and planners involved is handled by process control

functionality (workflow). For plan data entry and within the planning process, specific planning functionality is provided (e.g., data allocation, comments, forecasting and simulation).

Because increasing dynamics and complexity demand adjustments to corporate planning and decision support to meet growing requirements, short-term updates of targets and forecasts as well as sophisticated scenario-based analyses are indispensable today. That is why advanced planning topics such as the comprehensive integration of corporate planning, the automation of forecasts leveraging predictive algorithms and ML models, and driver-based simulations are of such huge importance to many companies now. This applies not only to operational planning and forecasting, but also financial planning.

Market Execution

On the Market Execution axis, we rate the FPM vendors in this BARC Score using the following criteria and corresponding weightings:

Criteria	Weighting
Product strategy	High
Customer satisfaction	High
Financials	Medium
Geographical coverage	Medium
Ecosystem	Medium
Sales and marketing strategy	Low
Organizational strength	Low

Product strategy

This is the most important of all the criteria. Vendors are rated on the clarity and completeness of vision for their FPM offering, product roadmap and innovation, as well as the alignment of the company portfolio with current market trends and demands.

Customer satisfaction

Here, we include the *Customer Satisfaction* KPIs from BARC’s annual software surveys (e.g., ‘The Planning Survey’, ‘The Financial Consolidation Survey’ and ‘The BI & Analytics Survey’). These take into account price-to-value, recommendation, vendor support, implementer support, product satisfaction and sales experience ratings reported by customers. The ratings of vendors that provide more than a single product are combined into a single rating. Vendors not included in the BARC software surveys (e.g., due to a limited number of survey responses from their customers) receive an average rating. This average rating stands for “satisfied” and does not negatively affect their score.

Financials

This criterion covers the financial position of a vendor, from market capitalization, cash position and EBITDA to profitability, burn rate and investment rounds. For vendors that are private companies or do not break out the numbers for individual product lines, estimated figures are used. This category includes a scaled overall assessment of the vendor’s financial performance.

Geographical coverage

Vendors are evaluated on their global presence. We look at the various geographic regions and major countries in which the company conducts business with both a sales and marketing presence as well as development and support functions.

Ecosystem

In this category, we evaluate the extended ecosystem in which the vendor participates. This includes business partner networks, hardware or cloud infrastructure providers, consulting firms and systems integrators, and other technology alliances.

Sales and marketing strategy

To rate a vendor's sales strategy for FPM, we look at the various channels through which the company goes to market: with both direct and indirect sales teams, as well as through distributors, value-added resellers (VARs), online channels and OEM relationships. We also evaluate the vendor's product pricing and sales models, such as perpetual licensing, support subscription, open source and freemium.

A vendor's marketing strategy is evaluated by rating its corporate and product messaging, the company's presence in media, advertising and social networks, as well as its ability to run events, such as conferences, seminars, roadshows and webinars.

Organizational strength

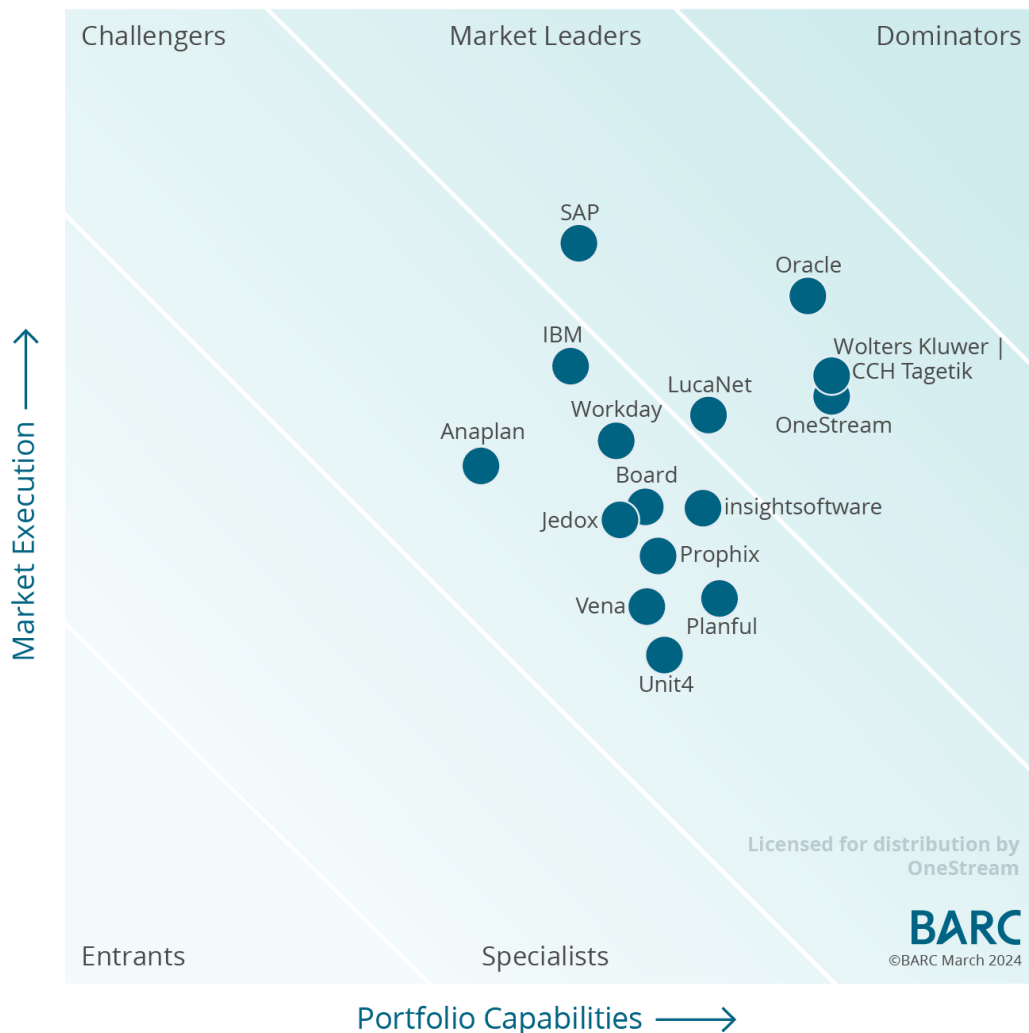
Vendors are rated on their organizational stability, which is influenced by consistency of corporate strategy, continuity of executive leadership, but also staff turnover, reorganization and layoffs.

Score

Calculating the individual ratings for all criteria and all vendors produces two scores per company: the Portfolio Capabilities score and the Market Execution score, each being plotted on the corresponding axis and thus resulting in the vendor's dot on the following BARC Score graphic.

Please note: Only vendor-distinct functionality is rated in our vendor portfolio ratings, not that of integrated OEM products or partner solutions.

BARC Score Financial Performance Management



Disclaimer: BARC Score is published by BARC GmbH (BARC). This chart is part of a larger research document, which contains explanations of the methodology and criteria behind the chart, and should be viewed in the context of the full document. BARC does not endorse any of the vendors featured in its research documents, and does not advise readers to select only those vendors with the highest ratings. Vendors appearing in the bottom left corner of this chart are market entrants or specialists and should not be interpreted as inferior. Those vendors in the top right area are not necessarily superior, but have strong portfolio capabilities and market execution.

Figure 1: BARC Score Financial Performance Management (FPM)

Score Regions

Vendors can be positioned in one of five regions, depending on their total score on each of the two axes.

Dominators

Dominators are vendors that drive both technology and market adoption in a highly influential manner. They possess both a broad portfolio of market-leading and dominating products with a strong brand as well as a robust commercial prowess through best-in-class sales and marketing programs, an extensive ecosystem of business partners and alliances, and a rock-solid financial position. Dominators are considered a contender in virtually every planned implementation.

Market Leaders

Market Leaders are well established vendors that drive strong market adoption, supported by technology innovation and strategic acquisitions and by leveraging robust account management and a solid track record. Their portfolio enjoys high brand awareness in the market and covers an extensive range of technologies and services with only few gaps. Market Leaders typically have a large market share, making them a viable contender in almost all implementation scenarios.

Challengers

Challengers come in various shapes and sizes. They can be large vendors tapping into a new market by acquisition and pushing their way in with force, small innovative companies with a promising portfolio but limited sales and marketing resources, or vendors that attempt to disrupt a market with a new technology approach or different business model.

Specialists

Specialists are usually smaller vendors with a portfolio focused on a specific market segment. They can be either limited in their technical capabilities by concentrating on certain features and functions, or they may only focus on select geographic regions rather than the global marketplace.

Entrants

Entrants are usually startups with limited reach and visibility in the market. Their product capabilities are incomplete when compared to competitors, and their long-term market potential is still unproven.

Evaluated Products

The latest versions of the following products are evaluated in this BARC Score:

Vendor	Evaluated Product(s)
Anaplan	Anaplan
Board International	Board
IBM	IBM Planning Analytics IBM Cognos Analytics IBM Controller
insightsoftware	Bizview Certent IDL Power ON Additional insightsoftware portfolio products
Jedox	Jedox
LucaNet	LucaNet
OneStream Software	OneStream
Oracle	Oracle Cloud EPM Oracle Hyperion EPM Oracle Analytics Cloud Oracle Analytics Server
Planful	Planful
Prophix	Prophix
SAP	SAP Analytics Cloud SAP Business Planning and Consolidation SAP BusinessObjects BI SAP S/4HANA Finance for Group Reporting
Unit4	Unit4 FP&A
Vena Solutions	Vena
Wolters Kluwer	CCH Tagetik
Workday	Workday Adaptive Planning Workday Financial Management Workday Prism Analytics

Vendor Evaluations

In the following section, we discuss each vendor and highlight their strengths and challenges based on customer surveys and market research by the authors.

Each vendor description includes vendor-related information, products covered in the BARC Score, and strengths and challenges.

Anaplan

Miami, FL, USA

www.anaplan.com

Anaplan is a cloud-native enterprise software vendor headquartered in Miami, Florida, USA. The company currently employs more than 2,000 people worldwide. Several major investors have financed Anaplan's growth and global expansion. In 2022, Anaplan was acquired by Thoma Bravo, a leading software investment firm, for approximately \$10.4 billion.

The Anaplan platform was officially released in 2008. The company's name is a combination of analytics and planning. The product represents a new generation of planning, modeling, and forecasting and performance management solutions developed with state-of-the-art technologies on a modern software architecture. Anaplan is a purely cloud-based platform powered by a proprietary in-memory data processing engine (patented Hyperblock technology). The company pioneered the concept of enterprise-wide connected planning, and its low-code technology connects people, plans, systems and data to provide collaboration and visibility into the business to improve decision-making.

Anaplan targets business leaders, as well as corporate finance and operational business departments to connect strategic, financial and operational plans on a single platform and unified codebase to support multiple use cases across finance, sales and marketing, supply chain, HR and workforce in large enterprises and groups worldwide. In addition to horizontal use cases, Anaplan and its global partner ecosystem offer industry-specific prebuilt solutions across a number of verticals such as consumer and retail, financial and business services, manufacturing and life sciences, technology, media and telecommunications. These applications are built and running on the Anaplan platform and can be adapted to customer-specific requirements. In 2022, Anaplan acquired the application division of its partner Vuelta, extending its focus on supply chain planning with purpose-built applications for demand, supply, inventory and sales and operations planning / integrated business planning (S&OP/IBP). Adding to its suite of out-of-the box applications, the company also released its first sales planning application late last year – Anaplan for Territory and Quota Planning.

According to Anaplan, it has more than 2,200 customers worldwide. Implementations range from double-digit to several thousand users per installation. To sell and particularly to implement Anaplan, the vendor has an expansive global partner ecosystem of more than 200 consulting and implementation partners including technology partners with supplementary technical capabilities. The company and its partners adhere to a common agile implementation method known as the Anaplan Way that emphasizes transparency throughout each implementation phase to foster effective deployment and adoption.

Anaplan provides flexible functionality for centralized top-down as well as decentralized bottom-up planning including workflow support and collaboration capabilities. With its 'connected planning' platform, customers can create various planning models on different aggregation levels (strategic, financial and operational planning) for an integrated enterprise planning approach. The vendor's classic Hyperblock and new Polaris calculation engines support scalable, in-memory data processing for detailed planning models. As larger and more granular data sets are required for sound planning and informed decision-making, Anaplan is investing heavily in its new, more memory-efficient calculation engine Polaris as well as in its data management system and intelligent capabilities.

Strengths

- Anaplan is a modern cloud-based connected planning and performance management platform for use across financial and various operational business departments with complementary analytics functionality, which is highly recommended by customers.
- Flexibility for a wide variety of industry agnostic planning approaches (centralized top-down, decentralized bottom-up) and planning topics (strategic, financial, operational planning with support for various verticals).
- Anaplan Predictive Insights offers integrated predictive algorithms and advanced analytics functions leveraging ML, AI and optimization techniques. Furthermore, Anaplan PlanIQ delivers intelligent forecasting capabilities with integrated AI and ML as a managed service. With PlanIQ, customers can leverage multiple intelligence techniques such as native predictive capabilities based on internal and external data as well as integrations with third-party ML engines of choice (e.g., Amazon Forecast). In 2024, Anaplan expects to enhance its intelligence offering with an AI-based conversational chat functionality that enables natural language queries.
- Anaplan and its global partner ecosystem offer additional industry-specific prebuilt solutions across a number of verticals such as consumer and retail, financial and business services, manufacturing and life sciences, technology, media and telecommunications. These applications are built and running on the Anaplan platform and can be adapted to customer-specific requirements.

Challenges

- Cloud-only – the product is purely cloud-based and not available on-premises. Web access is essential to use the product (except for offline planning in the Excel add-in).
- Anaplan provides its own data integration options at multiple levels, while third-party ETL tools are also used to connect to source systems (particularly when predefined data connections are required). Anaplan does offer connectors for industry-leading ETL/ESB tools, such as Informatica, Boomi, SnapLogic and MuleSoft. Additionally, platform capabilities can be extended using REST APIs, scripting and transactional APIs. Anaplan CloudWorks orchestrates bi-directional data integration with a variety of external cloud-based data and service providers and internal Anaplan models. However, customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' shows that neither Anaplan's predefined data connectivity nor its data integration capabilities entirely satisfy customers. Within the next year, however, Anaplan expects to enhance its data integration and management system.
- Anaplan is a comprehensive planning, budgeting and forecasting platform rather than a BI and analytics tool. This is confirmed by customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey'. However, it does support functionality for OLAP analysis, screen-based, self-service dashboarding and formatted, pixel-perfect reporting, which are all continuously being expanded. Its native mobile app enables access to insights on the go. This is supplemented by prebuilt third-party analytics integrations with, for example, Tableau, Microsoft Power BI and Workiva to connect Anaplan data and models with specialist BI and analytics tools.
- According to customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', several customers consider Anaplan to be more expensive than competing offerings and 'rising costs' is a problem encountered by Anaplan users.

Board International

Chiasso, Switzerland

www.board.com

Board was founded in 1994 and employs more than 600 people. Both its European head office and software development headquarters are located in Chiasso, Switzerland. The company also has regional headquarters in London, UK, and Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Board has worldwide offices and a global partner network. More than 2,000 customers globally use Board to implement planning, performance management and analytics projects. The ownership of the company changed in 2019, when Nordic Capital acquired a majority share to support the vendor's continued international expansion.

Board aims to provide a modern and intelligent planning platform which supports fast, automated and transparent decision-making. The scalable platform helps enterprises discover insights that drive business decisions and unify strategy, finance and operations through connected and agile planning to achieve control of performance. Therefore, Board unifies platform capabilities (integration, security, etc.), planning and automation functionality, AI/ML, and analytics, reporting and collaboration features in an easy-to-use, no-code solution for business power users to build tailored applications. Board does not focus on specific industries, but popular sectors across its customer base include retail, banking and finance, manufacturing, professional services and consumer packaged goods.

Board offers a combined product consisting of a front end and a proprietary multidimensional in-memory data processing technology, which also allows for business-user-friendly data modeling. The product provides a consistent, technically homogeneous environment for administration, development and utilization with tightly integrated front and back ends. Board is data agnostic and supports data integration via ODBC/ODBO/REST and API connectivity including predefined connectors to various cloud and on-premises data sources. It is available in the cloud (leveraging Microsoft Azure) and, if required, on-premises.

At its core, Board is a flexible web-based platform for creating custom planning and performance management applications. The product offers intelligent planning capabilities but also reporting, dashboarding, analysis, advanced and predictive analytics, and financial consolidation functionality. It comes equipped with a rich portfolio of visual objects, from basic charts to advanced charting techniques. Particularly for planning, forecasting and simulation use cases, Board offers strong and comprehensive functionality. Users can create and tailor a broad range of applications specifically to their own needs, bringing together financial and operational data. Together with its partners, Board now has a strong focus on enhancing the platform with prebuilt business content including connectivity to data sources, preconfigured models, embedded industry best practices, workflows, reports and dashboards. Applications such as Group Consolidation and Reporting, Integrated Business Planning, HR Management and Sales Performance Management are available from Board itself. Additionally, Board and its partners offer solutions for specific domains and industries. These can be adapted to customers' individual needs.

AI- and ML-augmented planning and decision support is an important area of investment for the future development of Board. Flexible capabilities focus on automated predictions, intelligent insights and conversational experiences / generative AI – provided by Board's own functionality and through the integration of R and with third-party ML services such as Microsoft Azure ML.

Strengths

- Flexible, fully web-based planning and performance management platform with tightly integrated system architecture of proprietary multidimensional in-memory database and front ends.
- Graphical no-code development environment for business power users to create tailored planning and performance management applications.
- Comprehensive planning, budgeting and forecasting functionality for all kinds of planning approaches (top-down, bottom-up or combinations of both). Customers can address various workflow-based planning topics on one common platform with different aggregation levels (e.g., strategic, financial and operational planning) for an integrated business planning approach.
- Complementary, comprehensive capabilities for BI and analytics including dashboards, reporting and analysis with a rich portfolio of visual objects. AI-and ML-augmented planning and decision support based on the platform's own capabilities, native R integration and third-party ML services integration to execute AI/ML algorithms.

Challenges

- Limited direct access to the proprietary Board data model for third-party front ends. However, Board continues to open the platform via APIs. As an example, for those customers following a Microsoft strategy, Board data sets can be imported and consumed in Microsoft Power BI by leveraging a REST API. Moreover, Board also natively includes its own comprehensive BI and analytics capabilities.
- Board has a comparably low level of prefabrication, and many implementations are customized based on the customer's requirements, which is a real strength of the product. However, as BARC's 'The Planning Survey' confirms, the product's extra flexibility may lead to implementation projects taking longer to complete in comparison to those of competitors. Therefore, Board's future strategy strongly focuses on "solutionizing" the flexible platform. Several prebuilt but adaptable applications are now available from Board itself and partners to provide industry best practices and to speed up implementation projects.
- Board is a very flexible and comprehensive platform. Depending on the data complexity and volume, the product's flexibility and rich functionality can lead to quite complex handling for inexperienced users when implementing and building intricate applications for customized solutions.
- According to customer feedback from 'The Planning Survey', some customers consider the product to be more expensive than competing offerings with a significant price increase in recent years. However, Board also includes BI and analytics capabilities, and the platform is often being extended to include solutions for new business problems.

IBM

Armonk, NY, USA

www.ibm.com

IBM is one of the world's largest vendors of IT hardware, software and services. The company has a global workforce of approximately 300,000 employees and is active in over 170 countries.

IBM offers a comprehensive portfolio of analytics, performance management (in particular for planning, budgeting and forecasting, and financial consolidation and close) and advanced analytics solutions. Major offerings include IBM Cognos Analytics and IBM Planning Analytics. For financial consolidation and regulatory reporting, IBM Controller is part of the performance management portfolio. IBM supports a wide range of deployment requirements by offering both cloud and on-premises options as well as containerized applications.

IBM Planning Analytics – the vendor's strategic enterprise planning product – is a core element in IBM's performance management portfolio and has been on the market since the 1980s. Due to its rich functionality for planning and OLAP analysis, and its underlying in-memory TM1 technology, the product plays a strategic role for IBM and thousands of solutions have been implemented worldwide. Planning Analytics is available in both cloud and classical on-premises versions. Essentially, Planning Analytics is a high-performance, multidimensional, in-memory database for budgeting, planning and forecasting with Excel and web front ends. The product is targeted at business power users for building all kinds of applications (planning, analytics, strategy management, etc.). Therefore, it has no dominant focus on any one topic (financials, sales, HR, etc.) or industry. While Planning Analytics' strength is its rich flexibility to implement tailored solutions for specific use cases, IBM and particularly its extensive partner network offer prebuilt business content based on use case and industry. In the latest versions of Planning Analytics, IBM has improved the product's web client with a modernized user interface and user experience, extended charting options and visualizations, a web-based data modeling environment and strengthened Planning Analytics' workflow capabilities. To control planning processes, a web-based visual workflow designer helps in the development of individual workflows (e.g., task management and due dates, status monitoring, approval, email notifications, etc.). Built-in AI and ML capabilities can be used to recognize anomalies or potential data entry errors and offer functionality to generate forecasts. Moreover, Planning Analytics can also be connected to the services of advanced IBM AI capabilities such as IBM watsonx.ai.

IBM Cognos Analytics, the vendor's enterprise BI and analytics platform, provides functionality for dashboards, pixel-perfect reports, data stories, data modeling and analysis in a unified web-based user experience. It combines ease of use with elaborate governance features in an end-to-end platform. The product can be used in large-scale scenarios supporting the needs of many concurrent users as well as large data volumes. IBM wants Cognos Analytics to be every user's analytics copilot when navigating data. The vendor has incorporated NLQ, automated insights and intent-driven modeling and has invested in automation and ML capabilities across data modeling, dashboards, data exploration and an analytics chat assistant. The AI assistant allows users to explore data by asking natural language questions and by receiving insightful answers with a presentation-ready dashboard or report. Cognos Analytics' AI capabilities can also identify trends and forecast results, helping companies to identify relevant influencers and correlations and calculate quick predictions.

IBM Controller is a purpose-built financial consolidation and close product for statutory and management consolidation use cases with predefined dimensions, consolidation computations as well as a library of pre-packaged reports for data review, system configuration and audit trail. Controller is agnostic in terms of industry and organization size and is available in the cloud and on premises. Standard functionality includes currency translation, intercompany reconciliation/elimination, complex ownership handling, multi-GAAP capabilities and options for custom calculations and flexible reporting.

Strengths

- IBM Planning Analytics offers rich flexibility for business power users to create tailored planning, budgeting and forecasting as well as analytics applications based on a high-performance and scalable in-memory database.
- IBM Planning Analytics provides comprehensive functionality for preparing individual content in Excel (modeling, custom planning forms, etc.) and publishing it to the web.
- IBM Cognos Analytics combines ease of use with elaborate governance features in an end-to-end platform that provides functionality for dashboards, pixel-perfect reporting, data stories, data modeling and analysis in a unified web-based user experience.
- Well established and expansive partner community with global product support and knowledge.

Challenges

- IBM Planning Analytics is essentially a development environment for planning, budgeting and forecasting as well as OLAP analytics. Compared to competitors, the product has a rather low level of prefabrication and only limited prebuilt business content is currently available from IBM itself (mainly blueprints and project best practices). However, extensive predefined business content is available from partners and IBM also plans to strengthen its solution offerings in 2024 with pre-packaged solutions for finance, advanced workforce, demand and supply, and projects/IT.
- IBM Planning Analytics itself offers comparatively limited reporting capabilities (e.g., format/layout for page-based print reporting). However, an integration with IBM's enterprise BI and analytics suite for advanced reporting with Cognos Analytics is in place and is being continuously expanded. Furthermore, IBM enhanced Planning Analytics' reporting capabilities in 2023 with a new 'Universal Report' report type that allows users to build more complex and sophisticated reports in Planning Analytics itself.
- While using different IBM performance management and analytics products, users will face different UIs. Cognos Analytics and Planning Analytics share the same dashboarding functionality so the UIs and building processes are very similar. Planning Analytics Workspace includes native dashboarding capabilities, but dashboards from Cognos Analytics can also be embedded. IBM is continuously working on standardizing the UI and UX of its products.
- Comparatively expensive planning and analytics products, although the cloud versions of Cognos Analytics and Planning Analytics offer alternatives for a lower level of initial investment and faster time to value.

insightsoftware

Raleigh, NC, USA

www.insightsoftware.com

insightsoftware is a US-based global provider of solutions for the office of the CFO backed by private equity investors Hg, TA Associates and Genstar Capital. The company employs more than 2,400 people worldwide and serves 32,000 customers with more than 500,000 active users in 150 countries. insightsoftware was formed in 2018 out of a merger of Hubble by insightsoftware.com and Global Software, Inc. The vendor's rapid growth in recent years has been driven by the acquisition of vendors such as Bizview, Calumo, Certent, CXO, IDL, Longview, Power ON and Viareport. This strategy has resulted in a broad portfolio of software solutions for financial planning and analysis (FP&A), controllership, and data and analytics.

insightsoftware's product portfolio includes cloud and on-premises solutions for the key processes of today's finance organizations: financial reporting, operational reporting and analytics, budgeting and planning, close and consolidation, tax and compliance, accounting and treasury, ESG, embedded analytics, automation and data management. These solutions can be used independently or in combination and are offered on the basis of customer requirements and strategic direction (e.g., use case, UI requirements, industry, global or local orientation of an organization, company size, connectivity to source systems, etc.). The overall objective is to enable the office of the CFO to connect to and make sense of existing enterprise data to drive greater financial intelligence across the organization.

insightsoftware's future product strategy circles around investing in its high growth products while continuously optimizing the portfolio and adding new products in desirable segments. The vendor's platform vision pursues the unification of its product portfolio through a consistent user experience and shared capabilities. With a common user interface, insightsoftware is working towards creating a comprehensive platform sharing data and business logic, connectivity to source systems and user management. For the future, insightsoftware's platform investments strongly circle around prebuilt templates and starter kits for specific use cases as well as shared AI/ML services including natural language processing.

Strengths

- Comprehensive solution portfolio for the key processes of finance organizations including financial reporting, operational reporting and analytics, budgeting and planning, close and consolidation, tax and compliance, accounting and treasury, ESG, embedded analytics, automation and data management.
- Strong individual solutions with comprehensive functionality for supporting finance processes that can be used independently or in combination, processing data from various source systems.
- Depending on the requirements and strategic direction of customers, insightsoftware's portfolio offers suitable solutions for individual use cases in various industries for different company sizes and UI requirements.
- The insightsoftware platform connects applications, provides centralized solution access, user management and data access. With a common user interface, consistent user experience and shared capabilities, insightsoftware is working to further unify and integrate the portfolio.

Challenges

- From the perspective of potential customers, there is significant functional overlap across the insightsoftware product portfolio (especially in the areas of reporting, planning and budgeting, and financial consolidation and close), so the challenge is to find the right solution for an organization's needs. However, the experienced insightsoftware sales team assists in identifying and recommending the right products to customers on a case-by-case basis depending on the size of the organization and its location.
- The breadth of the product portfolio means continuous further development, integration and unification of the different portfolio components towards a comprehensive platform is a resource-intensive task for the vendor and a work in progress.
- While many of insightsoftware's products have a long history and existing customer base, the vendor is relatively new to the market, only launching in 2018. Today, insightsoftware and its products are far from achieving the same market presence and global visibility of rival finance software solutions vendors.
- A number of solutions in the portfolio currently have a rather local market spread and customer base. Enterprise customers with global implementation requirements should evaluate similar references for the use of insightsoftware's individual products.

Jedox

Freiburg, Germany

www.jedox.com

Founded in 2002, Jedox has grown into a team of more than 450 employees. The vendor serves over 2,800 clients worldwide through its headquarters in Freiburg, Germany, its international offices, and a network of more than 250 partners and global alliances. Besides implementers, the vendor has a technology partner network including Microsoft (Azure, Office, Power BI, Teams, Dynamics, etc.), Salesforce/Tableau and Qlik. To accelerate customer growth and increase the company's global footprint while enhancing its CPM platform, Jedox works together with several global investment partners.

The company's flagship product is Jedox, a flexible CPM platform with planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, dashboarding, analysis and financial consolidation capabilities. The solution offers both an Excel client and web interface as front ends. The Excel add-in is a classic spreadsheet interface combining well-known Excel functions with additional Jedox features. The web client has a browser-based spreadsheet interface – a type of Excel on the web – with additional functions. The underlying philosophy of Jedox is to extend the familiar Excel environment with specific analytics functionality. The software is available as SaaS in the public cloud (leveraging Microsoft Azure) or can also be deployed in private environments, for example, by leveraging other cloud infrastructure providers, or on-premises.

Jedox is aimed at business power users who create individual CPM and analytics applications that require collaboration and data input from across the business. Leveraging the product's own in-memory database, users have a flexible multidimensional experience while staying in their familiar spreadsheet environment. Jedox Integrator, a web-based ETL tool, enables customers to integrate data into Jedox OLAP Server. It comes with many prebuilt connection types including an SAP Connector. Additional connectors and integration solutions are available to access live Jedox data and reports from third-party systems via an OData interface (e.g., Salesforce CRM, Microsoft Power BI, Qlik). Trained business users can take on responsibility for the administration and further development of Jedox applications. These applications can be published to large groups of users through Jedox Web and Jedox Mobile. Both centralized top-down and decentralized bottom-up planning scenarios can be implemented with Jedox. Furthermore, the platform is complemented by prebuilt solutions for various topics and industries created by Jedox or partners (e.g., for integrated business planning, financial planning and analysis, sales performance management, workforce planning, ESG, etc.) as well as best practice accelerators (including ready-made reports, database, rules, integration logics, framework of basic functions, etc.). This content is built on best practices and is available in Jedox's own integrated marketplace.

Besides CPM functionality, Jedox offers reporting and analysis capabilities for business users. Reporting generally takes place in Excel using Excel's own functionality, or in Jedox Web, which offers additional options for responsive content compilation in dashboards, dynamic reporting, data visualization and content distribution. Users can create reports, analyses and dashboards on the web from a spreadsheet interface closely resembling the functionality, look and feel of Excel. Both clients offer standard and advanced charts for visualizing information as well as IBCS-compliant charts. In recent releases, Jedox has improved the platform's end-user experience for content consumption but also for content creation with a drag-and-drop, responsive dashboarding technology Jedox calls Canvas. Since Jedox is an open platform, it also integrates with existing BI and analytics infrastructures and ecosystems and can extend these with its planning capabilities (e.g., Microsoft Power BI, Qlik and Tableau).

Leveraging AI and ML in finance and CPM are strategic initiatives for Jedox. The vendor is continuously introducing AI features for automating data preparation and classification, time series and driver-based predictions and scenarios as well as smart insights. Jedox Assisted™ Planning is a wizard-based web service that is integrated in Jedox to support users with tasks such as predictive forecasting, outlier detection, and offers insights into business drivers, data and data connections.

Strengths

- Flexible CPM and analytics platform for planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, dashboarding, analysis and financial consolidation, designed for business users.
- Uses native Excel interface and web client as user interfaces with good integration between Excel, web clients and mobile access to Jedox content. Additional connectors and integration solutions for accessing live Jedox data and reports from third-party systems via OData interface.
- Development environment for creating custom planning and analytics models, primarily via Excel formulas, with supplementary marketplace for predefined but flexibly adaptable solutions and accelerators. Jedox's future strategy strongly focuses on further solutionizing the flexible platform.
- Feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' revealed a high level of customer satisfaction with the business value Jedox provides as well as its price to value, flexibility, ease of use and its data integration, planning and forecasting functionality.

Challenges

- Jedox's flexibility as a development environment for CPM and analytics can lead to complex handling when implementing/building intricate applications from scratch. With its prebuilt solutions and best practice accelerators, Jedox tries to address this challenge and guide customers through the implementation process.
- Jedox offers comparatively limited functionality for formatted print-oriented reporting within the Excel client and web client (e.g., format/layout for page-based print reporting).
- Jedox has traditionally been used mostly in departmental or smaller and midsize scenarios. However, implementation projects have been growing in terms of numbers of users and data volumes in recent years. Large enterprise customers should evaluate similar references. According to customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', some customers are dissatisfied with Jedox's performance, predominantly in larger environments.
- Customer feedback in 'The Planning Survey' included several critical user reviews expressing the view that the vendor's support services have become less consistent in recent years due to its rapid growth.

LucaNet

Berlin, Germany

www.lucanet.com

Founded in 1999, LucaNet is a German vendor with a focus on CPM for finance including tax and financial disclosure management solutions. The company is headquartered in Berlin with additional offices in Germany, Europe, the UK, Asia and the United States. LucaNet has over 5,000 customers in 50 countries worldwide and employs more than 800 people. In 2022, Hg strategically acquired a majority stake in LucaNet to support the company's growth and ambition to become a global leader. In 2022 and 2023, LucaNet itself acquired its long-term partner Amana (solutions for taxation, disclosure management, XBRL and leasing) and ementexx (digital banking and cash management software).

LucaNet's software portfolio comprises end-to-end solutions for the office of the CFO including consolidation, financial planning and budgeting, financial and legal reporting, ESG reporting, tax and additional financial management topics, which can be used in any combination. LucaNet offers an automated financial close solution including financial consolidation, data collection and validation, intercompany reconciliation and disclosure management, supported by workflow management tools. All products are targeted at business users and are based on a proprietary, multidimensional, in-memory database (LucaNet.Financial OLAP Server). The database provides a predefined data model with intertwined business rules for establishing an integrated financial planning model and creating consolidated financial statements. Using the same logic, it is possible to compare planned versus actual data dynamically and at group level. LucaNet.Importer provides a variety of predefined connectors to common ERP and financial accounting systems. It is also possible to collect and validate data via a web interface, including an intercompany reconciliation. In the latest versions of LucaNet, the vendor has functionally enhanced the product's rich client and web client, modernized the user interface and user experience and improved the integration of its acquired products.

LucaNet software is based on Java and offers both cloud (leveraging Amazon Web Services) and on-premises options. The cloud services possess all the necessary ISO certifications. Building LucaNet as a real software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform with all the functionality available in the web is a strategic goal for the vendor.

In addition to LucaNet's core capabilities, an integrated development environment 'Script Designer' offers functionality to design individual forms, calculation rules and applications. Using Script Designer, LucaNet provides standardized apps for financial solutions (e.g., IFRS 16) or operational planning scenarios that can be used to feed the vendor's inherent financial planning model. However, operational planning is not the focus of the solution. Apps can be adapted to customer-specific needs and requirements.

For reporting and analysis, LucaNet offers an Excel add-in, but third-party offerings such as Microsoft Power BI or others may also be used. The platform's open architecture allows these front ends to access the LucaNet.Financial OLAP Server and/or LucaNet Financial Warehouse (usually based on Microsoft SQL Server or Oracle) including the hierarchies, structures and values. For disclosure management, ESEF reporting and ESG reporting requirements, LucaNet offers a fully integrated proprietary software solution, acquired with the Amana takeover.

Strengths

- Business-user-oriented and certified (IDW PS 880) CPM platform for integrated financial management of individual subsidiaries or at group level. LucaNet's software portfolio comprises solutions for financial consolidation and close, financial planning and budgeting, financial and legal reporting, ESG, tax and additional financial management topics.
- Integrated financial management capabilities with extensive predefined business rules. The product is essentially a CPM platform (particularly for financial consolidation and close) with complementary and tightly integrated financial planning functionality. Its planning functionality is geared towards LucaNet's consolidation logic.
- Supplementary prebuilt but adaptable apps for financial solutions (e.g., IFRS 16) and industry solutions.
- In BARC's 'The Planning Survey', LucaNet achieved excellent customer feedback for the business value, customer satisfaction, planning content and financial consolidation functionality it provides as well as predefined data connectivity and data integration into the product's proprietary multidimensional database. The vendor offers a strong collection of more than 300 (partially certified) connectors to ERP and financial accounting systems with semantic support including drill-down functionality (e.g., SAP ERP, SAP S/4HANA, Microsoft Dynamics, DATEV, Sage, etc.).

Challenges

- Operational planning is not the primary focus of the solution and customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' shows that some customers would prefer greater flexibility for operational planning. For complex requirements, a tool-linking approach with additional third-party products may be necessary, which LucaNet supports through its open architecture and integration capabilities.
- Limited functionality for individual reporting and analysis via Excel add-in. However, proprietary LucaNet OLAP cubes can be accessed by third-party analytics front ends using XMLA or can be replicated in a standard database management system.
- Creation of complex individual apps with LucaNet's integrated development environment is more technical and script-based so may require consulting support from implementation partners.
- While LucaNet continues to develop a new web client that will replace the rich client, the functionality of the web client is still limited compared to the rich client (e.g., no administration). The new web client currently focuses on the visualization and analysis of data. Functional enhancements will be published in upcoming releases.

OneStream Software

Birmingham, MI, USA

www.onestreamsoftware.com

OneStream Software is an independent US-based CPM software company backed by private equity investors. Headquartered in Birmingham, Michigan, USA, the company has offices in North America, Europe, the UK and APAC with more than 1,300 employees globally.

OneStream is a unified platform that supports various CPM processes and information streams in organizations. It integrates financial consolidation and close, planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, analysis and financial data quality management in one single application. In addition to the platform's standard functionality, the OneStream Solution Exchange provides more than 75 prebuilt business and productivity solutions that allow customers to extend the platform with additional capabilities in areas such as finance/accounting (e.g., account reconciliations, transaction matching, tax provision, ESG, etc.), financial planning and analysis (e.g., specialty planning solutions, ML-enabled forecasting, etc.) and for specific industries. Solutions in the Solution Exchange are provided by OneStream, partners and the broader OneStream ecosystem. All OneStream-developed solutions are fully supported and available free of charge to active customers.

OneStream is ideally suited to mid-sized to large enterprises across all industries who require a unified, robust and complete CPM solution. The vendor employs a direct sales model alongside its partner network to support customers with implementation services. According to the vendor, more than 1,400 customers currently use OneStream, and the company is in a period of strong growth. OneStream is available for deployment in the Microsoft Azure cloud.

OneStream is a financial consolidation and planning platform with built-in financial data quality functionality that focuses on supporting the full range of CPM processes. The product provides a proprietary in-memory financial analytic engine with built-in financial intelligence (e.g., supporting complex financial consolidations) that uses ROLAP storage in Microsoft SQL Server. Company-wide consolidated financial results, statements and plans at subsidiary or group level can be created. In addition, Extensible Dimensionality® provides the ability to extend the account and other dimension structures to support both corporate and line-of-business financial and operational planning and reporting in one single solution.

Fully supported operational planning solutions in the Solution Exchange – including workforce, capital, cash and sales planning – feed into the financial model. Moreover, the empowerment of users with AI and ML for tasks such as predictions, scenario analyses and to automatically find insights and take actions is an important area of continued investment for OneStream. To create, maintain and deploy predictive models across financial and operational planning processes, OneStream offers several options. AI-enabled solutions such as Sensible ML offer scalable AI purpose-built for finance, operations and data science teams. Sensible ML provides a guided experience to build, deploy and consume time-series ML models for auto-generated forecasts inside OneStream.

In addition to its core capabilities, OneStream also integrates functionality for BI and analytics. For individual, flexible (ad hoc) reporting and analysis, the product includes a reporting studio, spreadsheet interface or Excel add-in. Interactive dashboards can bring key financial and operational metrics together by combining tables, charts, graphs and other visualizations. In addition, Analytic Blend includes a relational column store engine that blends detailed operational data with financial data. Financial analytics, detailed operational analysis or a "blended" view of both can be presented within the same dashboard. For those customers following a Microsoft strategy for analytics, a OneStream Power BI connector offers direct integration with Power BI via a certified API to create reports and visualizations with Microsoft's software based on OneStream data.

Strengths

- Integrated CPM platform for financial consolidation and close, planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting and analytics with built-in financial intelligence and financial data quality capabilities, available in the Microsoft Azure cloud.
- Integrated BI and analytics functionality for (print-oriented) production reporting, financial reporting (disclosure management) with self-service dashboards and visualizations, and ad hoc analysis via Microsoft Excel add-in. As an extension, OneStream data can be imported and consumed in Microsoft Power BI leveraging REST APIs.
- OneStream Solution Exchange with more than 75 prebuilt business and productivity solutions that allow customers to extend the platform with additional capabilities. Solutions are provided by OneStream itself, partners and the broader OneStream ecosystem. All OneStream-developed solutions have a dedicated development team and roadmap, are fully supported and are available free of charge to active customers.
- Excellent customer feedback for many important KPIs in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' including customer satisfaction with vendor and product, price-to-value, and functionality for workflows, forecasting and financial consolidation. The vast majority of customers say they would recommend the platform to other organizations.

Challenges

- OneStream's recommended client solution providing access to all functionality is a native Windows App, a web-based thin client deployed using Microsoft ClickOnce technology. However, an improved browser and mobile (HTML5) UX is being introduced to customers, which will support all end-user functionality across the platform and Solution Exchange solutions. Administration, modeling and content creation capabilities are available in the Windows App only.
- According to user feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', OneStream implementations are often large and complex, which can mean they take longer than average to complete. Implementation times will vary based on customer use cases and unique requirements. In addition, several customers recommend taking care in selecting an implementation partner. The rapid growth of OneStream and its continuous acquisition of new partners worldwide apparently means that the quality of support and the implementation experience of partners is not at a consistent level. However, OneStream seems to be aware of this and has launched a dedicated OneStream Certification program to ensure the quality of partner support.
- OneStream lacks the market presence and global visibility of its main competitors Oracle and SAP. However, it is a fast-growing vendor globally and is constantly improving its market visibility, particularly in EMEA. When organizations do decide to evaluate OneStream, the vendor has a high competitive win rate against its rivals.

Oracle

Austin, TX, USA

www.oracle.com

Oracle is a global provider of enterprise cloud computing, offering software, platform, infrastructure and data as a service. The company employs more than 160,000 people worldwide and serves 430,000 customers in 175 countries.

Oracle's portfolio includes a comprehensive stack of cloud applications, platform services and engineered systems. The vendor's cloud enterprise performance management (EPM) and analytics portfolios contain a comprehensive set of strategic offerings, which are packaged as Oracle Fusion Cloud EPM and Oracle Analytics Cloud. However, the company's widely used on-premises solutions (e.g., Oracle Hyperion EPM) continue to be enhanced and fully supported. A variety of other cloud and on-premises offerings and applications complete Oracle's broad product portfolio.

Oracle's comprehensive EPM portfolio includes various products and applications covering all relevant EPM processes (e.g., planning, budgeting and forecasting, profitability and cost management, financial consolidation and close, account reconciliation, financial and management reporting, tax provision and reporting, transfer pricing, ESG/sustainability reporting, analytics and enterprise data management). Oracle Cloud EPM is a cloud-native SaaS solution, delivered end-to-end from Oracle data centers around the world, owned and operated by Oracle itself. All Oracle Cloud EPM solutions are based on a consistent technical platform architecture, run on Oracle database technology and can be deployed in a modular fashion according to customer needs and priority. For data integration from data sources, Oracle Cloud EPM provides native, wizard-based features including predefined connectors and prebuilt adapters to Oracle and non-Oracle operational systems (e.g., ERPs). For customers who prefer to manage EPM applications on premises, Oracle's Hyperion EPM portfolio is still available (i.e., Oracle Hyperion Planning for planning, budgeting and forecasting or Oracle Hyperion Financial Management for financial consolidation and close). Oracle Cloud EPM has some 'shared DNA' with the on-premises Oracle Hyperion EPM portfolio, for example, leveraging the optional Microsoft Office add-in Oracle Smart View to work in Excel, Word and PowerPoint across both cloud and on-premises versions.

In terms of planning, Oracle Cloud EPM offers a broad range of capabilities for enterprise-wide integrated business planning processes – including connected operational, financial and strategic planning, budgeting and forecasting as well as scenario simulations. Prebuilt modules and solutions expand the reach of Oracle's planning solution beyond finance into sales, workforce, IT, marketing and supply chain operations. To support users with tasks such as predictions, simulations, correlations and to automatically find insights and take actions, Intelligent Performance Management (IPM) is a major area of continued investment for Oracle. Several statistical and ML features are embedded in Oracle Cloud EPM including support for integrating third-party ML models and ML engines. In addition, Oracle's own data science platforms and ML algorithms embedded in Oracle databases can be leveraged.

Oracle's flagship product for analytics, Oracle Analytics Cloud, incorporates capabilities for the complete analytics cycle including data preparation and machine learning. It offers modules for developing and deploying formatted reports, interactive dashboards and analytics suitable for business users. Data visualizations from Oracle Analytics Cloud can now be displayed on EPM dashboards. Oracle Analytics Server, the on-premises version of Oracle Analytics Cloud, brings all the capabilities of the cloud platform to organizations requiring on-premises deployment options. In addition, Oracle Fusion Analytics offers embedded analytics within the vendor's portfolio of business applications. With its EPM suite, Oracle has adopted the strategy of embedding analytics and reporting capabilities needed by the majority of customers and their users into the Cloud EPM platform as opposed to requiring customers to separately acquire Oracle Analytics Cloud.

Strengths

- Oracle's comprehensive Cloud EPM portfolio includes a full suite of products and configurable applications covering all relevant EPM processes. All products are connected, based on a consistent technical platform architecture and can be deployed in a modular fashion.
- Oracle Cloud EPM Planning offers a good range of capabilities for enterprise-wide planning, budgeting and forecasting processes as well as scenario simulations. Broad functionality is available for web-based, integrated business planning – including connected operational, financial and strategic planning – in top-down and bottom-up planning scenarios. Prebuilt modules and solutions expand the reach of Oracle's planning solution beyond finance into sales, workforce, IT, marketing and supply chain operations.
- 'The Planning Survey' revealed a high level of customer satisfaction with Oracle Cloud EPM Planning. The product is highly rated for its planning content, planning functionality, and forecasting and simulation capabilities.
- Oracle Analytics Cloud is a comprehensive cloud and web-based platform for formatted and ad hoc reports, analysis, visualization, data preparation and dashboards – all in one suite.

Challenges

- The integration between product lines such as Oracle Cloud EPM and Oracle Analytics Cloud is mainly at data level leveraging data models and structures, but is continuously being improved by Oracle. As an example, data visualizations from Oracle Analytics Cloud can now be displayed on EPM dashboards. Oracle's general approach embeds analytics capabilities directly into the EPM platform. In contrast to most other vendors, Oracle's strategy sees EPM and analytics as related, but separate product lines.
- The pricing of Oracle's EPM and analytics products is transparent but comparatively expensive compared to mid-market focused products. However, the cloud versions offer cost-effective editions for smaller organizations as well as alternatives for cost shifting to future periods and faster time to value. Furthermore, pricing includes the Oracle cloud infrastructure (end-to-end), avoiding extra cost options. Oracle's suite-based Cloud EPM pricing offers cost advantages for customers implementing across multiple application areas (such as planning, financial close and account reconciliations).
- According to user feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', Oracle Cloud EPM projects seem to take longer than average to complete. One explanation for this might be the fact that, in our survey sample, it was often implemented in mid-sized and large organizations where requirements are often more complex. This can mean they take longer than average to complete. Generally, implementation times will vary based on customer use cases and unique requirements. It is useful to note that Oracle Cloud EPM incorporates prebuilt content that can be configured to meet specific customer needs in most areas.

Planful

San Francisco, CA, USA

www.planful.com

Planful is a financial performance management cloud platform provider. The company was founded in 2001 as Host Analytics and rebranded to Planful in 2020. The vendor is headquartered in San Francisco, California, USA, and currently has more than 450 employees globally. Planful is backed by private equity investor Vector Capital. In 2022, Planful acquired Plannuh, a cloud platform for marketing performance management to enable seamless collaboration between finance and marketing teams and to provide marketers with deep financial intelligence for all marketing activities (now called Planful for Marketing).

The Planful platform helps organizations of all sizes and industries to combine financial consolidation and close, financial and operational planning, reporting, analytics and marketing performance in one single solution. As a cloud-based platform, Planful can be accessed via any web browser, including on mobile devices, and Planful Spotlight, which extends access to Planful data, analysis and data input to Microsoft Office (Excel, PowerPoint, Word) and Google Sheets. The product is sold and implemented by Planful itself and also through a global partner network of over 70 resellers and solution implementers. According to the vendor, Planful is currently used by more than 1,400 customers worldwide.

Planful's solution combines relational (for planning and consolidations), multidimensional (for reporting, modeling and analysis) and NoSQL databases. For data integration, Planful uses its own data load wizard, open APIs and has natively integrated all Boomi connections as a third-party ETL tool, providing more than 1,400 prebuilt bi-directional connectors to integrate with ERP, HCM, CRM, data warehouses, spreadsheets and other sources, whether on-premises or cloud-based.

A single solution offers both standardized financial planning and dynamic operational planning. A combination of prebuilt but adaptable models and a flexible engine enables customers to create custom models for specific businesses. Industry and topical planning templates are available for areas such as finance, capital, workforce, marketing and others. Planning, budgeting and forecasting processes are supported by comprehensive collaboration capabilities (including commentary, threaded conversations and chats) and workflow functionality (e.g., task management and due dates, status monitoring, approval, email notifications, etc.). In addition to entering and submitting plan data, users can leverage Planful Predict, a library of AI/ML algorithms, natively within the platform. Planful Predict includes Predict Signals, designed to identify anomalies in data, and Predict Projections, focused on generating baseline planning figures for budgeting and forecasting activities.

Fully integrated with the platform's other capabilities, comprehensive financial consolidation and close functionality supports statutory and management consolidation processes. The platform includes workflow-based consolidation functionality and native financial intelligence, journal entries and reclassifications, currency conversions, intercompany eliminations, and financial and regulatory reporting. Planful complements its capabilities for streamlining financial processes by integrating with partner solutions such as Trintech (for monthly account reconciliation) and Workiva (for financial reporting and disclosure management).

Besides planning, Planful also supports BI and analytics. For standard reporting, the platform enables the creation of formatted reports and board books including advanced formatting and distribution of report packages. Standard reports are generated directly from the relational database, so there is no need to process a reporting cube to synchronize data for reports. Furthermore, dynamic ad hoc query and analysis functionality is available based on dimensional data, allowing business users to drill up and down hierarchies and through to transactional detail. This functionality can be used in both the web browser or Spotlight. In addition, visual and interactive dashboards can display financial and non-financial data in charts, graphs, data grids, dials and a vast array of other visual formats.

Strengths

- Cloud-based, business-user-oriented platform with integrated functionality for financial consolidation and close, planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, analysis and dashboarding as well as marketing performance management.
- Flexibility for a wide variety of planning approaches (centralized top-down, decentralized bottom-up) and planning topics (including financial and operational planning) aimed at companies of all sizes and industries. Supplementary prebuilt but adaptable models for specific industries and topics.
- Comprehensive workflow functionality to enable flexible control over tasks and planning, budgeting and forecasting processes. Moreover, collaboration capabilities support conversations and decision-making processes through commentary, threaded conversations, chats and more.
- Feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' revealed a high level of customer satisfaction with the business benefits Planful provides as well as the vendor's support services, planning and forecasting functionality, financial consolidation functionality, flexibility and innovative power.

Challenges

- Cloud-only – Planful is purely cloud-based and not available on-premises. Web access is essential to use the product (except for offline planning using Excel templates).
- Advanced data integration is very reliant on third-party technology. Planful provides its own data load capabilities and open APIs, while Boomi is used as a third-party ETL tool (OEM) to load data. More than 1,400 prebuilt bi-directional connectors are provided to integrate with source systems. Customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' shows that neither Planful's predefined data connectivity nor its data integration capabilities entirely satisfy customers.
- Shortly after the acquisition, the integration of Planful and Plannuh is still limited. We expect initial integration to be at process level before deeper technical integration and alignment of user interfaces and functionality follows.
- Lacks the market presence and global visibility of its main competitors today. Most of Planful's business is still in North America. However, according to the vendor, its international customer count and revenues are rapidly expanding (e.g., in UK and Australia). Prospects outside North America should evaluate the vendor's and partners' local consulting and support capabilities. While the product's competitive win rate in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' is good, Planful does not have the global market presence to be widely considered for purchase.

Prophix

Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

www.prophix.com

Founded in 1987, Prophix began as a software distributor implementing financial applications before it released its own CPM software in the year 2000. In 2021, Prophix received significant investment from Hg to accelerate and scale growth and fund further development. In the first instance of inorganic growth in the company's history, Prophix acquired Sigma Conso, a Belgian financial consolidation specialist, in late 2021. Prophix now has more than 500 employees and over 2,600 active customers worldwide, covering all company sizes and industries. In addition to its market presence and continuous growth in North America, Prophix is increasingly winning customers outside its core market. Its current international expansion efforts are focused on EMEA and APAC.

Prophix offers a unified CPM solution, Prophix Financial Performance Platform, for business users that delivers insights into and automates finance, operations and business performance processes. The platform covers planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting and analytics, financial consolidation and close. With the acquisition of Sigma Conso, Prophix particularly enhanced its capabilities for financial consolidation and close, management reporting, intercompany reconciliation, as well as adding specialty solutions for IFRS 16 and iXBRL.

Prophix's future product strategy focuses on its unified Prophix Financial Performance Platform with four main applications currently available: Budgeting & Planning, Reporting & Analytics, Financial Consolidation and Intercompany Management; with Account Reconciliation set to become available in mid-2024. Platform data and metadata is stored relationally in Microsoft SQL Server but it is presented multidimensionally to the user. Prophix targets business departments in midsize companies (e.g., office of finance) across all industries and is available in the Amazon cloud (AWS).

Prophix is a flexible no-code solution that does not confine itself to any one single planning topic (financials, sales, HR, etc.). The product can be used to create individual planning, budgeting and forecasting applications with capabilities for top-down and bottom-up planning. In general, Prophix contains comparably little predefined business content (e.g., for specific industry verticals). However, a prebuilt solution is available for the construction industry and Prophix has plans to provide more industry-specific content in the future (e.g., for higher education, healthcare, manufacturing, etc.). Partners can offer prebuilt content for certain topics and industries. Prophix recently relaunched its Global Partner Network, that includes more than 200 partners.

Based on the planning model, Prophix leverages its web client and an Excel add-in for plan data entry. To control planning processes, Prophix offers workflow functions including visual process overview, task management and due dates, status monitoring, approval, email notifications, etc. Prophix continues to simplify and automate use for business users by leveraging AI, ML and natural language processing techniques, for example with the launch of statistical/predictive forecasting functionality, auto-generated insights, a virtual task assistant or by giving recommendations based on best practices and how to drive optimal performance and user experience.

Besides planning, Prophix provides capabilities for BI and analytics. Standard reporting in a formatted and print-oriented way is supported, as are ad hoc queries based on OLAP methodologies (drill functionality, slice and dice, pivoting, etc.). For visualizing data (e.g., in management cockpits or dashboards), standard business graphics as well as more advanced chart types are available. Reports, like planning templates, are created in a user-friendly, Excel-like environment. An HTML5 web client and Microsoft Office add-ins are available as front ends to enter plan data or to work with reports, analyses and dashboards. In addition, for those customers following a Microsoft strategy, Prophix data sets can be pushed to Power BI for more advanced dashboarding, data visualization and analytics.

Strengths

- Prophix is an integrated, flexible CPM platform for business users focused on mid-sized companies. It is based on Microsoft technologies and available in the Amazon cloud (AWS).
- Comprehensive planning, budgeting and forecasting functions for top-down and bottom-up planning with strong workflow capabilities to control planning processes. Prophix can be used to create individual planning applications on different aggregation levels (strategic and operational planning) for an integrated enterprise planning approach (including financial planning).
- Supplementary integrated functions for standard reporting (also formatted and print-oriented), ad hoc query, OLAP analyses (drill operations, slice and dice, pivoting, etc.) and dashboarding. Moreover, comprehensive functionality for financial consolidation and close as well as other FPM use cases is available with the integration of Sigma Conso.
- BARC's 'The Planning Survey' reveals a high level of satisfaction with Prophix, particularly with its functional capabilities for planning and reporting/analysis, in terms of the sales experience with the vendor and also the platform's ease of use and options for self-service usage.

Challenges

- Prophix is a flexible no-code solution for planning and CPM and, compared to its competitors, not much prebuilt business content is currently available from the vendor itself. However, Prophix has developed a prebuilt model for construction WIP reporting and has a strong focus on providing more industry-specific content in the future. Partners also offer prebuilt content for specific topics and industries.
- The integration of Prophix and Sigma Conso is continuously improving but is still a work in progress. For the future, common platform features, continuous UI/UX unification and functional enhancements are priorities for the vendor. In 2023, a joint Prophix portal that provides unified access to all applications was launched.
- Canada-based Prophix is predominantly used in North America and still lacks the market presence and global visibility of its main competitors. It has a smaller footprint in geographies outside North America. However, in recent years, its customer count outside North America has increased (also through the acquisition of Sigma Conso) and implementation projects have been growing in terms of numbers of users and data volumes. Enterprise customers and companies with a planned global roll-out should evaluate similar references.

SAP

Walldorf, Germany

www.sap.com

SAP was founded in 1972 as a business applications company. Today, the vendor has a turnover of €29.52 billion, employs more than 100,000 people, and is one of the largest business software vendors in the world.

SAP's data and analytics portfolio is based on the SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP), which provides cloud-based data, analytics, application integration and extension services across all SAP products. It encompasses solutions for BI, analytics, enterprise planning and performance management. From a strategy perspective, SAP is investing heavily in innovation in the cloud while still supporting and developing its on-premises solutions. SAP's analytics and EPM solutions are spread across different product lines. For planning and budgeting, SAP Analytics Cloud (SAC) and the on-premises solution SAP Business Planning and Consolidation (BPC) are the core offerings. Both are supplemented by SAP S/4HANA Finance for Group Reporting for financial consolidation and close. SAP Analytics Cloud plays a central role in the company's BI and analytics portfolio and combines comprehensive capabilities into one cloud environment. It is built on top of SAP HANA in-memory technology.

SAP Analytics Cloud, SAP's strategic cloud offering and analytics platform, brings together BI, augmented analytics and enterprise planning into one integrated platform. The product is continuously becoming richer in features such as application and dashboard design, conversational analytics and smart data exploration, planning and predictive functionality as well as prebuilt business content (e.g., solutions for finance, sales and marketing, HR and various industries). SAP Analytics Cloud is fully web-based with a modern web client and a Microsoft Office 365 Excel add-in. It has a modern and user-friendly UI and offers functionality for all individual planning activities including strategic, operational, functional and financial planning. SAP Analytics Cloud can be used with its own data sets or to query selected SAP data sources directly. It integrates with all major SAP enterprise applications (e.g., SAP S/4HANA, SAP BW/4HANA, SAP HANA, SAP Datasphere, SAP Integrated Business Planning (IBP), etc.). Customers can take advantage of this live connection to implement hybrid cloud scenarios without moving, caching or persisting the data into the cloud. In recent versions, SAP Analytics Cloud's integration and connectivity with SAP and non-SAP sources has been strengthened. Its planning, predictive and workflow functionality as well as its reporting and dashboarding capabilities have also been improved through a new optimized 'Unified Story' experience including scripting options.

SAP BPC is SAP's recommended product for those requiring an integrated on-premises planning and financial consolidation solution. As an additional front-end option, SAP BPC customers can combine SAP Analytics Cloud with the product's planning engine. SAP Analytics Cloud can access SAP BPC's 'Embedded' model (data and structures) using a 'BPC Live Connection' without replicating data, thus providing write-back options for planning data directly into SAP BPC's planning model in BW through write-back enabled queries.

Finally, SAP S/4HANA Finance for Group Reporting is SAP's strategic financial consolidation and close offering. It directly integrates with SAP S/4HANA for Central Finance and is available in the cloud, on-premises or in hybrid deployments. SAP S/4HANA Finance for Group Reporting offers capabilities for the preparation of consolidated financial statements and group reporting, including data entry, data validation, currency translation, intercompany reconciliation, postings and more. Thanks to integrations with SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP Disclosure Management, the analysis of data, publishing of consolidated results and consolidation of plan data is supported.

Strengths

- Integrated business-user-friendly functionality for enterprise planning and BI with embedded capabilities for augmented analytics and application design in SAP Analytics Cloud. Comprehensive capabilities for implementing custom planning applications with supporting workflow and collaboration functionality.
- Augmented analytics and generative AI features in SAP Analytics Cloud leverage predefined ML algorithms and help users to query, predict and dig deep into data sets quickly (e.g., 'Smart Predict', 'Smart Insights', 'Smart Discovery', 'Just Ask').
- Highly scalable on-premises planning and financial consolidation capabilities for web and workflow-based scenarios in SAP BPC based on SAP BW/4HANA.
- Exclusive connectivity (e.g., live access and direct write-back) and prebuilt content available for SAP's own data sources and applications (e.g., SAP Analytics Cloud with SAP S/4HANA or SAP Datasphere, SAP BPC with SAP BW/4HANA).
- For those requiring an on-premises platform for formatted and ad hoc reporting, analysis, dashboarding and custom application design, suitable for medium and large deployments, a new and continuously supported version of SAP BusinessObjects BI has been announced for 2024.

Challenges

- Strong focus on cloud products such as SAP Analytics Cloud is leading to less innovation and fewer updates for the on-premises planning and analytics product portfolio (e.g., SAP BPC and SAP BusinessObjects BI).
- Besides using SAP Analytics Cloud with its own data models in the cloud, it can also be used as a front end for other SAP data sources ('live data connection'). However, for live access only, a limited set of functionality is available (e.g., not all 'smart' functions). Moving forward, the SAP Analytics Cloud team is investing in a common architectural layer for live connectivity which should, over time, result in improved functional parity regardless of the underlying data source.
- SAP Analytics Cloud is mainly used by SAP customers together with SAP data sources. While the product integrates easily with all major SAP enterprise applications, fewer native connectors are available to non-SAP data sources, especially to competing business applications. SAP Analytics Cloud does provide open REST APIs to import and export data from and to non-supported systems, and near-term roadmap investments related to SQL Live and tighter coupling with SAP Datasphere will extend native connectivity for both live and remote sources.
- Customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey' as well as BARC's experience from customer projects reveals that some customers have expressed concerns about the business benefits, product capabilities, pre-delivered content and performance of SAP Analytics Cloud. Customer quotes in BARC's surveys confirm that the maturity of the solution is steadily building, and that SAP Analytics Cloud is an evolving product.

Unit4

Utrecht, The Netherlands

www.unit4.com

Unit4 is a global provider of cloud-based enterprise software for HCM, financials and FP&A. To strengthen its offerings for CPM and analytics, Unit4 acquired the German vendor Prevero in 2016. Prevero originally delivered CPM software to support planning, budgeting and forecasting, analytics and reporting processes and has now been fully integrated into Unit4's ERP application ecosystem to provide its Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) solutions. While Unit4 FP&A historically attracted a strong customer base in the DACH and EMEA regions, its appeal has subsequently broadened to mid-market and enterprise-level customers worldwide.

Unit4 FP&A solutions focus on people-centric industries, namely professional services, the public sector, not-for-profit organizations and higher education, but they also have a strong customer base in the utilities, manufacturing and retail industries. These sectors are supported with prebuilt business applications for financial planning, sales and operations planning, people planning and analytics, reporting and analytics, financial consolidation and IFRS 16. Unit4 FP&A solutions are available as standalone applications or integrated into Unit4's ERP suite. They deliver CPM technology with native integration to Unit4's enterprise solutions. Unit4 FP&A is available for deployment in the Microsoft Azure cloud.

Built on a highly flexible platform, Unit4 FP&A applications are adaptable to various CPM and analytics use cases. The solutions give business users the platform and tools they need to configure their planning, budgeting and forecasting, analytics, reporting and financial consolidation applications to meet individual requirements, without having to have a technical background. For data storage and navigation, Unit4 FP&A uses a ROLAP approach and offers typical OLAP navigation capabilities in its clients.

For planning, budgeting and forecasting, Unit4 FP&A provides comprehensive capabilities to support top-down, bottom-up and mixed planning processes. The product's flexible development environment allows customers to address various planning topics on one common platform, with different aggregation levels (e.g., strategic as well as operational planning) for an integrated corporate planning approach (including financial planning). Planners can enter budget data in the FP&A Designer (rich client), web client or Excel add-in. In addition to Unit4 FP&A's core capabilities, comprehensive predefined business applications and solutions based on use cases and industries enhance the platform.

Unit4 FP&A also offers complementary reporting and analytics functionality. Report creation is done in a tabular, Excel-like grid ('worksheets') in the FP&A Designer using tables and different chart types. Flexible options are available for formatting the tabular grid. Moreover, individual dashboards can be created in the web browser via drag and drop including existing worksheets and a wide variety of widgets (for visualization, analysis and input of data).

For financial consolidation purposes, Unit4 FP&A offers a prebuilt application that includes legal consolidation covering several consolidation standards as well as reporting capabilities and predefined disclosure statements.

Strengths

- Integrated and feature-rich CPM and analytics platform for planning and budgeting, reporting, analysis, dashboarding and financial consolidation available in the Microsoft Azure cloud.
- Flexible, no-code development environment aimed at business power users for building tailored CPM and analytics applications, created in an Excel-like tabular grid in the FP&A Designer.
- Extensive planning, budgeting and forecasting functionality for all kinds of planning approaches (top-down, bottom-up or combinations of both), planning topics and aggregation levels (e.g., strategic as well as operational planning, including financial planning).
- Comprehensive predefined business applications and content (topical and industry-focused) with dedicated support and release management enhance the platform and enable accelerated project implementation.

Challenges

- Cloud-only for new implementations. Unit4 has informed all FP&A customers that its solutions will no longer be maintained on premises from 2027. While Unit4 continues the webification of FP&A, the functionality of the product's HTML5 web client is still limited compared to the FP&A Designer (e.g., no administration, no modeling).
- Unit4 FP&A is a very flexible CPM platform. However, companies should handle this flexibility with care during implementation and seek support from the provider. While Unit4 FP&A can be used to address a wide range of use cases, sub-optimal design of the data model and cumbersome calculations can result in disadvantages such as performance problems, especially with large amounts of data and concurrent users.
- Today, Unit4 FP&A's go-to-market strategy strongly focuses on cross-selling with the ERP suite to new customers and upselling to existing ERP customers. Indirect sales to non-Unit4 ERP customers are addressed via the company's partner network. Due to this strategy, BARC expects the visibility of the product on the standalone market to decrease in the medium term.
- Further development of the product is geared to integration with Unit4's own ERP system (e.g., synchronization of users/structures/data, drill through in details, prebuilt solutions, etc.). This reduces its innovative power for further development to address functionality and current trending topics. Overall, it has a rather slow speed of development and innovative power compared to competitors, which is confirmed by customer feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey'.

Vena Solutions

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

www.venasolutions.com

Vena Solutions is a financial planning and analysis cloud platform provider that was founded in 2011. The vendor is headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, Canada with additional offices in the US and UK and currently has more than 750 employees globally. Vena Solutions is backed by several investors to accelerate growth and continue to provide a market-leading customer experience. According to the vendor, Vena is currently used by more than 1,700 customers worldwide.

Vena is a complete planning platform and helps organizations of all sizes and industries with integrated solutions for planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, analytics, financial consolidation and close, and account reconciliation. The primary target group for the product is the office of finance as well as all operational departments. As a cloud-native platform leveraging Amazon Web Services and Microsoft Azure, Vena can be accessed via web browsers and offers native integration with Microsoft Office 365. Vena strategically integrates with Microsoft's technology stack – leveraging Excel as its primary user interface for entering data, integrating with Microsoft 365 (e.g., PowerPoint, Teams), and embedding Power BI and Microsoft's AI and ML technology for reporting, analysis and advanced analytics (called Vena Insights). The product is sold and implemented by Vena itself and through a global partner network of approximately 170 resellers and solution implementers. In the recent past in particular, Vena has placed a strong focus on enhancing its global partner ecosystem, developing new partnerships and partnering on preconfigured solutions.

Vena's solution is technically based on its own Vena CubeFLEX™ technology – an in-memory, multidimensional database that is the core of the platform – as well as a relational/OLTP database to handle large scale transaction data volumes (leveraging Amazon Redshift as the underlying technology). For data integration, Vena offers its own data transformation layer/ETL, open APIs and is supported by process automation platforms such as Microsoft Power Automate. Predefined connectors are available to integrate data from several on-premises and cloud-based data sources.

The platform provides comprehensive functionality for all kinds of planning, budgeting and forecasting processes and can be flexibly modeled to address business-model-specific use cases and requirements. The product supports both financial planning and operational planning (including sales, marketing, IT, HR (workforce), supply chain, demand forecasting, etc.) in one unified platform. Moreover, Vena and its partners offer more than 20 preconfigured solutions for various use cases and industries. These solutions include templates, data models, connectors and business logic and can be adapted to a customer's specific needs. Based on the planning model, Vena leverages an Excel grid interface for creating planning forms as well as plan data entry. To control planning processes, Vena offers a web-based, visual workflow designer and blueprint to help in the development of individual workflows (e.g., task management and due dates, status monitoring, approval, email notifications, etc.). Once plan data is entered, anomalies and potential data entry errors can be recognized using AI and ML capabilities. With Microsoft Azure Machine Learning Studio integrated with Vena CubeFLEX™, customers can create advanced predictive ML forecast models, gain strategic insights and detect unusual patterns in data.

Fully integrated with the platform's core capabilities, Vena offers financial consolidation, financial close management and account reconciliation functionality. Statutory as well as management consolidation processes are supported, including accounting for partial ownership, intercompany eliminations, multiple currencies and multiple ERPs/general ledgers. Vena complements its own capabilities with a solution for more complex consolidations developed by its partner Fluence.

For reporting and self-service analytics, Vena leverages an Excel grid interface connected to Vena CubeFLEX™ to explore data and create reports. Furthermore, for advanced dashboards with interactive

data visualizations, mobile support and natural language capabilities and generative insights, Vena embeds Microsoft Power BI (Vena Insights).

Strengths

- Cloud-based, flexible CPM platform designed for business users with unified functionality for planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, analytics, financial consolidation and close, and account reconciliation.
- Tight and strategic integration with Microsoft's technology stack (e.g., Excel, Office 365, Power BI, Azure ML). Leverages the often familiar native Excel interface for ease of use, modeling and to work with the platform. Advanced self-service analytics through using embedded Power BI and Microsoft's AI and ML technology (Vena Insights).
- Data architecture based on multidimensional in-memory database Vena CubeFLEX™, which was purpose-built to leverage the flexibility of Excel, and relational/OLTP database. For data integration in Vena's data model, the platform provides its own data transformation layer, visual data mapping, open APIs and predefined connectors.
- Flexibility for a wide variety of planning approaches (centralized top-down, decentralized bottom-up) and planning topics (including financial and operational planning) aimed at companies of all sizes and industries. Supplementary preconfigured but adaptable solutions for specific industries and topics.

Challenges

- Cloud-only – Vena is purely cloud-based and not available on premises. Web access is essential to use the product (except for offline planning using Excel templates).
- Vena leverages the Microsoft technology stack (e.g., Excel, Office 365, Power BI, Azure ML) to provide certain capabilities (e.g., advanced dashboarding, AI/ML support, etc.). Technical changes to the technology stack by Microsoft could invalidate or impair Vena's functions.
- Lacks the market presence and global visibility of its main competitors today. Most of Vena's business is still in North America and the UK. However, according to the vendor, its international customer count, partner ecosystem and revenues are expanding (e.g., in EMEA). Prospects outside North America and the UK should evaluate the vendor's and partners' local consulting and support capabilities.

Wolters Kluwer

Alphen aan den Rijn, the Netherlands

www.wolterskluwer.com

Wolters Kluwer (WKL), through its CCH® Tagetik expert solutions, offers enterprise-scale performance management software solutions for the office of the CFO while expanding to other financial and operational adjacencies. The company is a global provider of professional information, software solutions and services within five global operating divisions: Health, Tax & Accounting, Corporate Performance & ESG, Financial Corporate Compliance and Legal & Regulatory.

The CCH Tagetik expert solution provides a unified, finance-owned platform for financial corporate management (financial consolidation and close; budgeting, planning, and forecasting; ESG and regulatory reporting; corporate tax). Used by organizations of all sizes, CCH Tagetik is particularly appealing to mid-sized and large companies (or groups of affiliated companies) with many users involved in corporate planning and/or financial consolidation processes. The comprehensive platform also extends into areas such as account reconciliation; financial reporting, disclosure management and iXBRL; transaction matching; IFRS 16, IFRS 17; and solvency II. In addition, the CCH Tagetik applications marketplace includes predefined starter kits, pre-packages and tech solutions developed by partners as well as Wolters Kluwer itself. CCH Tagetik is available for deployment in the Amazon (AWS) cloud (Microsoft Azure is also available on request) and on premises. According to the vendor, more than 1,900 customers worldwide across all industries currently use CCH Tagetik.

From a planning perspective, CCH Tagetik is focused on financial and integrated business planning, with top-down, bottom-up and mixed approaches all supported. CCH Tagetik contains a predefined model for financial planning (balance sheet, P&L, cash flow) that can be used by individual subsidiaries or at group level. Consolidation of plans is possible thanks to integrated functionality for financial consolidation and close. Comprehensive workflow and governance functionality (especially for bottom-up approaches) is available to control planning and consolidation processes. The CCH Tagetik platform is underpinned by the Analytic Information Hub, which connects granular financial and operational data with flexible and scalable possibilities in the context of open data modeling, FPM (e.g., regulatory reporting), operational planning and analytics. CCH Tagetik offers extended planning capabilities beyond finance including sales and operations planning as well as functionality for supply chain planning and production planning. From a technical perspective, the CCH Tagetik platform was built with an open and extendable architecture based on a relational data model that supports implementations in Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle, PostgreSQL and SAP HANA. CCH Tagetik continues to empower the office of finance and automate use by leveraging AI and ML for data management – including AI automapping and AI anomaly detection, forecasting, reporting and analytics. For predictive planning and forecasting, CCH Tagetik offers out-of-the-box or customized embedded predictive models and trainable ML capabilities based on Python that can be leveraged to predict future outcomes. A new AI driver-based analysis feature helps to interconnect and correlate data and visually highlights the key drivers. New AI-based intelligent analytics capabilities leveraging GenAI, NLP and LLM have been announced for later this year.

In terms of analytics and reporting, CCH Tagetik pursues a two-fold strategy. The product's integrated functionality is geared to self-service with on-screen display of reports and dashboards as well as regulatory reporting use cases (e.g., ESG). Report creation using a 'matrix wizard' in Excel is business-user-friendly. Furthermore, CCH Tagetik's embedded web-based tool SmartInsight enables dynamic ad hoc reporting and analytics. These capabilities can be supplemented by third-party products (e.g., Microsoft Power BI, SAP and Qlik) accessing CCH Tagetik data via an OData API to allow customers to use their analytics tool of choice.

Strengths

- Unified finance-owned platform for financial corporate management (financial consolidation and close; budgeting, planning and forecasting; ESG and regulatory reporting; corporate tax) that can be used by individual subsidiaries or at group level.
- Integrated financial corporate management capabilities with extensive predefined business rules. Supplementary solutions for financial and regulatory use cases (account reconciliation; financial reporting, disclosure management and iXBRL; transaction matching; IFRS 16, IFRS 17; and solvency II) as well as selected operational plans.
- Comprehensive workflow and governance functionality to control planning and financial consolidation processes. CCH Tagetik is particularly appealing to mid-sized and large companies (or groups of affiliated companies) with many users.
- According to feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', customers are very satisfied with their CCH Tagetik projects, the business benefits the product provides and its price-to-value, planning and financial consolidation functionality, workflow support and ease of use.

Challenges

- For advanced BI and analytics, CCH Tagetik currently relies heavily on third-party products such as Microsoft Power BI, SAP Analytics Cloud and Qlik Sense. CCH Tagetik itself offers self-service reporting and dashboarding; ad hoc reporting and analysis in SmartInsight; Microsoft Word add-in-based disclosure management; and a Microsoft PowerPoint add-in.
- BARC's 'The Planning Survey' confirms that performance satisfaction among customers is just average. In complex environments with large amounts of data and concurrent users, organizations should evaluate the most appropriate configuration to meet their performance needs. Amongst other choices, CCH Tagetik is certified to run natively on SAP's in-memory HANA database, providing a powerful option for complex implementations.
- According to user feedback in 'The Planning Survey', CCH Tagetik customers are usually large, complex global companies and their implementations are similarly large and complex with phases for multiple solutions. For this reason, projects can take longer than average to complete. Implementation times will vary based on customer use cases and unique requirements.

Workday

Pleasanton, CA, USA

www.workday.com

Workday is a provider of enterprise cloud applications for finance and human resources, which are used by more than 10,000 organizations of all sizes and industries around the world. The company has a turnover of \$7.3 billion and employs over 18,000 people worldwide. Workday's portfolio includes applications for financial management, human resources, enterprise planning, spend management and analytics. The vendor's main offerings for performance management and analytics are Workday Financial Management, Workday Adaptive Planning and Workday Prism Analytics.

Workday Adaptive Planning (formerly Adaptive Insights) was an acquisition to extend Workday's enterprise planning and CPM capabilities. The flexible and scalable cloud-based platform offers business-user-friendly functionality for various CPM processes, particularly planning, budgeting and forecasting, but also reporting, analysis and dashboarding. It enables continuous, scenario-based planning across the organization – from enterprise-wide financial planning and analysis to operational planning for specific functions such as workforce, sales, marketing, projects, demand and supply. Furthermore, Workday Adaptive Planning includes embedded AI- and ML-based features called Intelligent Planning. This functionality offers predictive forecasting based on historical data, anomaly detection and outlier reporting. Embedded ML functions surface insights to business users that are incorporated in the planning process. Leveraging generative AI and natural language processing for planning to support and guide users is an important area of investment for Workday.

Workday Adaptive Planning is used via a fully web-based application, which is compatible with popular browsers and can also be run on browsers on mobile devices. Supplementary Microsoft Office add-ins are available. The platform is based on a multidimensional, in-memory modeling engine (Elastic Hypercube Technology), whereby data is stored in a relational database in the back end. All calculations and aggregations are performed in-memory. Workday Adaptive Planning enables interoperability and data integration with numerous software applications as well as back-end and third-party systems (ERP, CRM, HCM, etc.). Customers have the flexibility to either use its APIs or purpose-built embedded integration framework (including multiple prebuilt connectors) to manage data integrations.

Workday Adaptive Planning can be used together with the Workday suite of applications or with non-Workday solutions. The vendor's marketing and sales strategy positions it as a standalone product as well as offering it as a part of the suite to Workday HCM and Workday Financial Management customers. The vendor will continue to position the product within its existing customer base as a future strategic direction. Customers who deploy Workday Adaptive Planning with Workday HCM and/or Workday Financial Management leverage a unified security and user experience as well as native data management with the ability to drill back to data and master data in the ERP system or publish plans back to Workday core transactional systems. Overall, Workday Adaptive Planning is used by more than 6,300 customers of various sizes from a wide range of industries worldwide.

Workday Financial Management offers complete ERP with comprehensive finance and accounting capabilities. For financial consolidation and close, it provides functionality that allows companies to consolidate as they transact. Workday Consolidations combines financial results of subsidiary companies into the parent company to create combined financial results. It automatically creates intercompany and eliminating entries across the group. As accounting and journal lines are created, Workday Journal Insights detects anomalies leveraging embedded ML capabilities. In 2024, a new packaged offering was released that unifies planning capabilities from Workday Adaptive Planning and financial consolidation and close capabilities from Workday Financial Management for those customers who wish to follow an integrated approach.

Complementing the portfolio, Workday Prism Analytics (acquired with Platfora) offers data management and analytics capabilities, including the ability to integrate and ingest operational data and blend it with financial information to drive more comprehensive insight and decision-making. Workday Prism Analytics supports an analytics layer that enables Prism data sets to be discoverable, searchable, combined with core Workday data and surfaced in a wide array of dashboards and reports.

Strengths

- Workday offers a comprehensive enterprise applications portfolio for financial management, human resources, enterprise planning, spend management and analytics. All products are based on a consistent cloud architecture leveraging an intelligent data core that combines financial and operational data.
- Workday Adaptive Planning is a flexible and scalable cloud-based platform that provides integrated functionality for planning, budgeting and forecasting, reporting, analysis and dashboarding for business users. It can be used together with the Workday suite of applications or with non-Workday solutions.
- Workday Adaptive Planning offers flexibility for a wide variety of planning approaches (centralized top-down, decentralized bottom-up) and planning topics (including operational planning and financial planning) aimed at companies of all sizes and industries. It includes built-in financial intelligence with a native understanding of account types such as assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses.
- According to feedback in BARC's 'The Planning Survey', customers are satisfied with Workday Adaptive Planning, the business benefits it creates and its planning, forecasting and reporting/analysis functionality. The product is highly recommended by customers.

Challenges

- Workday Adaptive Planning is purely cloud-based and not available on-premises. Web access is essential to use the product (except for offline planning using Excel templates).
- In contrast to previous years, customer feedback in 'The Planning Survey 23' reveals some dissatisfaction with the support Workday provides as well as rising costs. There are several critical user reviews expressing the view that the vendor's and its partners' support services and support during implementation are not always satisfactory and have worsened since the Workday acquisition. Perhaps the growth of Workday and its continuous acquisition of new partners means that the quality of support and partners' implementation experience are not at a consistent level. Workday seems to be aware of this and has taken steps to improve and expand its partner ecosystem and provide better support to its customer community.
- Customer feedback in 'The Planning Survey' also shows that not all customers are satisfied with Workday Adaptive Planning's predefined data connectivity and data integration capabilities. Workday provides its own data integration framework and open APIs, while third-party ETL tools can also be used to load data. In addition, prebuilt adapters to selected source systems are available.
- Most of Workday Adaptive Planning's business is still in the United States. However, the international customer count and revenues have increased since the acquisition by Workday. Prospects outside North America should evaluate the vendor's and partners' local consulting and support capabilities.

Other Vendors

There are many other established software vendors that provide mature and very useful technology, which may be ideal for organizations looking for a planning and analytics solution. However, due to the inclusion criteria applied in this report, those vendors are not evaluated in detail. To complete the market overview, here is a selection of those providers (this does not claim to be a complete list).

Acterys

Sydney, Australia

www.acterys.com

Flexible Microsoft technology-based CPM platform for data discovery and planning. Leveraging a variety of prebuilt templates, customers can support planning and performance management processes in Power BI, Excel and web browsers as well as on mobile devices.

Centage

Framingham, MA, USA

www.centage.com

Cloud-native planning and analytics platform with capabilities for budgeting, forecasting, reporting and analysis focused on small and midsize businesses.

CoPlanner

Graz, Austria

www.coplanner.com

Flexible CPM development environment for creating individual planning applications based on Microsoft database technology with integrated functionality for reporting, analysis and financial consolidation.

Corporate Planning

Hamburg, Germany

www.corporate-planning.com

Integrated, no-code-platform for operational management, financial planning, sales management, financial consolidation, HR management and management reporting for business users. Available on premises and in the Microsoft Azure cloud.

Fluence

Toronto, Canada

www.fluencetech.com

Cloud-based solution for financial consolidation and close as well as financial reporting (Excel and web-based reports, dashboards and analyses for a wide range of data sources based on XLCubed and Sturnis).

Infor

New York, NY, USA

www.infor.com

Infor Enterprise Performance Management (EPM) is an integrated application suite for dashboards, reporting, analysis, planning and forecasting as well as financial consolidation with proprietary multidimensional data storage. Birst is an integrated cloud-based analytics and BI platform for formatted and ad hoc reporting, dashboarding and analysis. Infor has a strong focus on its own customer base and upselling both these products in addition to its operational applications (e.g., ERP).

macs Software

Zimmern, Germany

www.macscontrolling.com

Modular software product family for accounting and controlling with integrated planning functionality. Flexible combination of different software modules is possible.

Kepion

Seattle, WA, USA

www.kepion.com

Integrated planning and analytics platform based on Microsoft technologies that supports both financial and operational planning processes, providing dashboards as well as reporting and analytics.

Pigment

Paris, France

www.gopigment.com

Modern, cloud-based planning, budgeting and forecasting platform with supplementary functionality for reporting and analysis. Flexibility and collaboration capabilities support financial and operational planning processes.

Serviceware

Idstein, Germany

www.serviceware-se.com

Serviceware Performance provides an integrated platform for CPM, analytics, project portfolio management and strategy implementation with an Excel-like user interface and web functionality suitable for business users.

Solver

Los Angeles, CA, USA

www.solverglobal.com

CPM suite based on the Microsoft platform that supports planning, reporting, dashboards, analysis and data warehousing. It can be deployed either in the cloud or on premises.

Syntellis

Skokie, IL, USA

www.syntellis.com

Cloud-based performance management solution that supports budgeting and forecasting; financial and capital planning; and reporting and analytics with a dedicated focus on the healthcare, financial and higher education sectors.

Talentia

Paris, France

www.talentia-software.com

Comprehensive platform for financial consolidation and close, financial reporting and intra-group reconciliation, budgeting and forecasting as well as management reporting.

Valsight

Potsdam, Germany

www.valsight.com

Innovative platform for interactive, driver-based simulation and corporate management based on operational and strategic drivers. Scenario simulation of action alternatives and measures considering uncertainties and risk simulations (Monte-Carlo).

Related Research Documents

The following BARC documents complement this BARC Score report:

BARC+

www.barc.com/product/plus

The BARC+ package gives you access to all BARC's premium research content including our leading-edge market research reports, the full catalog of detailed product reviews and The BI & Analytics Survey Analyzer, our online BI solutions evaluation tool.

BARC Scores

www.barc-research.com/barc-score

BARC Score Integrated Planning & Analytics: This BARC Score focuses on the market for integrated planning and analytics (IP&A) products and portfolios. Besides functionality for planning, budgeting and forecasting, we evaluate integrated capabilities for reporting, analysis and dashboarding.

BARC Score Enterprise BI & Analytics Platforms: This BARC Score provides a clear overview of the global BI and analytics products market based on a combination of detailed end-user feedback and thorough analysis of products and vendors.

BARC Score Analytics for Business Users: The lowdown on the global market for governed self-service analytics platforms. We evaluate business user support for the entire analytical cycle: from data and its preparation to presentation and collaborative content editing.

BARC Score Data Intelligence Platforms: This BARC Score focuses on the market for data intelligence products and portfolios. Besides the ability to integrate and process different metadata sources and types, we evaluate functions for data cataloging, business glossary, collaboration and the support of data governance processes.

BARC Software Surveys

The Planning Survey: The Planning Survey offers an in-depth comparison of up-to-date planning solutions to decision-makers looking for new planning software. Based on feedback from more than 1,300 users, the latest edition evaluates 19 leading planning products.

The Financial Consolidation Survey: Based on feedback from more than 500 users, nine leading financial consolidation and close products are analyzed and compared. Our survey results support decision-makers looking for new financial consolidation software.

The BI & Analytics Survey: BARC's major annual report on the global BI and analytics software market. It is based on a sample of almost 1,500 survey responses – that is why so many companies trust the results of The BI & Analytics Survey and base their software purchasing decisions upon it.

The Data Management Survey: The voice of the data management community: The Data Management Survey is BARC's annual report on the data management software market. This BARC survey examines data management products in terms of their functionality, application areas and usability based on feedback from almost 1,000 users.

Other BARC Research

Free to download at: www.barc.com/research

BARC Data, BI & Analytics Trend Monitor: BARC's Data, BI & Analytics Trend Monitor study gives more than 2,400 practitioners a platform to have their say on the trends currently shaping the BI, analytics and data management market, supplemented by additional commentary and analysis from BARC analysts.

Data Decisions. Built on BARC.

About BARC

BARC is one of Europe's leading analyst firms for business software, focusing on the areas of data, business intelligence (BI), analytics and corporate performance management (CPM). The company was founded in 1999 as a spin-off of the chair of Business Administration and Information Systems at the University of Würzburg, Germany. Today, BARC combines empirical and theoretical research, technical expertise and practical experience, and a constant exchange with all market participants to provide market-leading research publications, events and advisory.

Research

BARC user surveys, software tests and analyst assessments in blogs and research notes give you the confidence to make the right decisions. Our independent research gets to the heart of market developments, evaluates software and providers thoroughly and gives you valuable ideas on how to turn data, analytics and AI into added value and successfully transform your business.

Consulting

The BARC Advisory practice is entirely focused on translating your company's requirements into future-proof decisions. The holistic advice we provide will help you successfully implement your data & analytics strategy and culture as well as your architecture and technology. Our goal is not to stay for the long haul. BARC's research and experience-founded expert input sets organizations on the road to the successful use of data & analytics, from strategy to optimized data-driven business processes.

Events

Leading minds and companies come together at our events. BARC conferences, seminars, roundtable meetups and online webinars provide more than 10,000 participants each year with information, inspiration and interactivity. By exchanging ideas with peers and learning about trends and market developments, you gain new impetus for your business.

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