



BI and Analytics Tools Next Level for Governance

The government seems to be quite prompt in its action when it comes to digitizing its available infrastructure-With a lot of e-Governance projects in the plan list, the next level for government will be to look at BI and Analytics...

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Of late, the government has made massive investment in IT to make things more convenient for its citizens as well as to enhance the efficiency of governance. In a country of billion plus people, the amount of information that these systems are generating and processing is huge. But beyond the immediate use, this huge collected information is not being used. Even today it takes immense amount of time to get any meaningful insight. While on the ground, the situation has changed for better in many places, we do not have an idea on what is happening. The preparation of answers to the MPs questions in Parliament still takes as much time as it used to take 10 years back. RTI queries also take enormous time.

Imagine using BI for the world's largest democracy, where citizens live in extremes and of course the most dominant population being the middle class who mostly are affected by the government decisions and from the way it functions. Using BI for the governance of the nation is something the private players are looking at. With the popularity of Right to Information (RTI) Act, the government has to take the responsibility of providing information to the citizens regarding the functioning of the government offices and the status of their appeal for a service from the government. And with the central government backing up the UID project Aadhar, the application of BI would play an important role.

Indian E-governance has it Reached the Stage of Maturity?

Gartner had come up with a 4 phase e-governance model. The hierarchy starts from information, followed by the stage of interaction. The third phase is the stage of transaction and the final stage calls for transformation.

The first phase of providing information means having a presence on the web and delivering relevant information to the external public. The external public is namely the business interest groups and the citizens willing to seek information. The second phase of interaction is a stage where the government interacts with the citizens and the business interest groups. In this stage, citizens can interact with the government officials using emails, search engines for coming across some documents. In the third phase, technology becomes more intricate but the value sought by the public is higher. And finally, there comes the stage of transformation in which all the information systems are integrated and the public can avail services at 1 virtual counter.

It seems that after the RTI Act has gained popularity across all the states, the respective State Information Commissions are taking the queries by citizens very seriously. Dataquest had sent some queries to the Orissa Information Commission (OIC) about the status of RTI applications in the state and the kind of technology deployed at the government offices across the state. We are still receiving responses from all the districts of Orissa. This gives us an impression that the Indian governance is at the second stage of this e-governance model formulated by Gartner.

Though it is hard to believe that government is taking up the deployment of IT solutions seriously and more surprising is the fact that it is quite prompt in putting its plans into actions. The government offices in the state and the center, the public sector undertakings are modernizing their infrastructure with all desirable technologies at place and from here they would step up to the next level where they would like to use BI tools to derive all relevant information. By bringing in more analysis, they could predict the trends in the future and take apt decisions.

How can BI Help Indian E-governance?



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—Sanjay Mehta, CEO, MAIA Intelligence

BI can be applied where there is tremendous information. The data has to be accurate so that some meaning could be derived out of it through BI. UIDAI has been trying to link with government projects like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), and Public Distribution System (PDS). This means that there will be a huge enrollment and the presence of a vast database would call for the need for BI. If one has to seek the details of the beneficiaries under a particular scheme, BI would ensure that maximum number of beneficiaries are covered and the time and effort taken to procure these information is greatly reduced.

The government is very vast. We can segregate them to PSUs, defense, central government, state government, and municipalities. A lot of government units have already started using BI tools and they are looking at BI through various requirements, says Maneesh Sharma, head, business analytics and technology, SAP India. Sharma says the biggest challenge of any BI project is the availability of information and the accuracy of the data. Most of the departments are facing these 2 challenges.

Arvind Agarwal, head of the center of excellence for analytics and DW/BI, Birlasoft, strongly feels that data cleansing and data validation is very important for BI. DW/BI will force you to put the processes and datapoints in place. It will also ensure that it creates some data bonding and brings in ownership and accountability into the system, says Agarwal.

BI and analytics can serve up to a great extent in terms of spotting out the trends at present and in the future. Since the government is initiating a lot of e-governance projects and digitizing its offices, they will have to take BI and analytics very seriously.

Most of the governments have got huge amount of budget spends. To track record those budgets which is going to be for citizen services, they would need lot of tracking about the budgets and whether they are properly utilized or not, says Sanjay Mehta, CEO, MAIA Intelligence.

The Step Ahead

With the growth of internet across the country and the replacement of conventional infrastructure to a digitized one, government will have to take the next step forward. Citizens are becoming more participatory in the political process of the nation and if required, people are also using their RTI Act to ask for an account of their money used in creating public infrastructure. People are willing to become more rich in information and this will pester the government to move to the next level using BI tools to cull out the important and required information and to spot out the possible trends in future through analytics.

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