

TOP 10 FEATURES OF POWER BI FOR MANAGERS

Data is one of your most important assets - you are leveraging it to its fullest extent?

Here are the top features of Power BI: the data analytics solution that is helping other Australian organisations gain a competitive edge, find efficiencies and differentiate. Don't get left in the dark.

What is Power BI?

Power BI is a suite of business analytics tools that deliver insights throughout your organization. Connect to hundreds of data sources, simplify data prep, and drive ad hoc analysis. Produce beautiful reports, then publish them for your organization to consume on the web and across mobile devices. Everyone can create personalized dashboards with a unique, 360-degree view of their business. And scale across the enterprise, with governance and security built-in.

Source: <https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/>

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A single pane of glass, customisable for any level of manager

Power BI allows you to draw on any of your data sources, combine them, and generate simple, succinct visualisations (graphs, charts, reports – you name it) of even the most complex and dispersed information.

Easily gain access to data that was just too hard to get before, and say goodbye to the arduous task of copying and pasting snippets from different systems in to something like excel and spending hours formatting it to gain the overview and insight you need to manage your people and business. With Power BI automation on your side you save time, headaches and the possibility of making mistakes.

You can create customised dashboards for each of your managers so they can see at a glance what is on track, and what needs attention. Clever initial design will help you get the insights you need and the depth of data you want. See an issue? Click on it and drill down in to the data at the click of a button.

Here at Huon IT, when we implement a Power BI build we recommend to keep the business hierarchy in mind. Starting with the company vision and knowing what the Board wants to see across the whole organisation and flowing on to what the CEO wants to know by site or business unit. We also ask line managers what they do to realise the overall vision, get to know their KPIs and produce the dashboards they each need to monitor and manage most effectively.

This level of customisation gets straight to the point of what each key stakeholder needs 'at a glance' to empower them to take ownership and steer your ship in the right direction, whilst ensuring security stays front of mind to ensure managers can only see data within their remit.

- Power BI is richly featured data analytics tool that helps you combine and analyse all your data sources in one easy to use visual platform
- Draw 100's of disparate datasets in to a single system

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2 Interactive Reports and Dashboards

Viewing this single pane of glass is one thing, but being able to actually interact with the data and drill-down for further analysis is where the true beauty of this tool comes into play.

See a concerning result in your response times? Notice that this month's projection is looking low? To view the underlying data and get to the source of the issue, managers can drill down to the detailed level with one simple click on the dashboard. A further click will give them even more options such as granular information, or the raw dataset. This saves time and speeds up the alert/investigation process enabling informed decisions to be made quickly.

3 User friendly for non-technical staff

Power BI is surprisingly easy to use, built for users familiar with Excel. Creation of reports use simple drag-and-drop navigation, and Power BI comes with an extensive library of interactive visualisations, and fast publishing tools.

Whilst we always recommend engaging with experienced experts to set up Power BI, any manager can use it, and even tweak it, without needing to be a Business Analyst or Software Developer!

4 Self-service Q&A feature

One of the most exciting features of Power BI is the real text query function, where users simply type in a question using natural language, and get answers as visualisations charts and graphs.

For example, you can type in "How does NSW profit compare to VIC?" and receive the answer in the form of an easy-to-read chart. You can then extend this question to "by month" to see a breakdown of the comparison. This saves an incredible amount of time and encourages managers to truly engage with the data available to them.

Watch this video to see the Q&A feature in action.

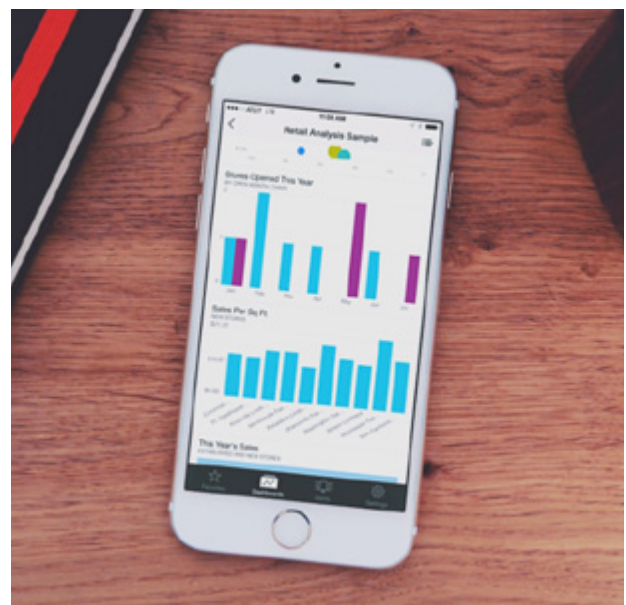
Check out the list of **commonly used search terms here**.

5 Access it on the go

Gone are the days of always working from a desk, 9-5.

Once your managers have these insightful dashboards set up, they'll want to be able to view them from anywhere (on the road, visiting staff and clients) at any time (such as over breakfast as they're planning their day).

Power BI Mobile App is available on Windows, iOS, and Android, and gives insightful mobile optimised views, which can even be shared with colleagues on-the-go.



Source: <https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/mobile/>

6 Automated Alerts for Busy Execs

What if you're too busy on some days to even look at the dashboard in the first place?

Managers can set up automated alerts (either by email, mobile app push alert, or via Power BI's web-based notification centre) upon certain KPI events, such as exceeding a threshold or failing to meet a minimum KPI. This helps to ensure adoption during the early stages of use, and likewise encourages continued good habits if managers become too busy or even disengaged down the track.

7 The end of out of date data

With previous reporting methods data can be time consuming to gather and collate, quickly becoming out of date and therefore misleading or useless.

Power BI can continuously update around the clock to ensure your dashboards and reports are based on live information 24x7. So whether you're looking at a dashboard from your desktop during business hours, or your mobile late at night, you can rest assured the data is current and meaningful, allowing you to make the right decisions for your business.

- Automate the integration, interrogation and visualisation of data
- Discover powerful business insights that were previously hidden
- Produce intelligent reports at the click of a button

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8 Easy Integration

The more systems you can connect to and analyse, the more complete your vision across your business will be.

Power BI comes ready built with a number of connectors with solutions such as Salesforce, Google Analytics, Azure, Oracle, Dynamics, and many more. And if a connector doesn't already exist, Power BI's open APIs mean developers can still customise integration with most software.

Power BI's user community is growing rapidly, and so too are the integration options.

9 Expandable with Cloud

Whether your data is kept onsite or based in the cloud, from single or multiple sources, you can connect to Microsoft's Azure as your BI engine to make use of affordable, high powered, high performance compute resources rather than putting high loads on your on-premise infrastructure.

This allows you to expand as much as you need without commitment or capital investment, and make use of multisource data processing to get instant business insights and make quick, informed decisions.

10 Affordable, easy licensing, part of Office 365

As an important part of Microsoft's suite of business productivity suite, Microsoft Power BI offers users tight integration with other key tools like Microsoft Excel, Azure, and SQL Server. And licensing is just as easy – starting with a simplified free version called Power BI desktop, to paid per user Power BI Pro which allows sharing and collaboration and advanced features such as dashboards, audit and governance, or finally up to Power BI Premium which is based on capacity for larger scale deployments.

Need help starting your Power BI journey?

Speak to an expert at Huon IT
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