



# How to Make Business Intelligence Pay

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A Practical Guide for Manufacturers and Distributors

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## Business Intelligence = Better Decision-making for Manufacturers and Distributors

Over the last decade, the vast majority of small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) have implemented one or more generations of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems to help manage their day-to-day business processes such as accounting, order entry, and operations. Distribution companies have typically augmented these systems with inventory control and warehouse management capabilities, while manufacturing companies have added bills of materials (BOMs) and Material Requirement Planning (MRP I) or Manufacturing Resource Planning (MRP II) functionality. During this time we have seen three distinct waves of business software implementations:

- **In the first wave**, most SMBs were content to simply have the means to get their data (e.g., customer files, time estimates, costs, etc.) into the system correctly.
- **With the second wave**, the objective progressed into making sure the data reflected an accurate likeness of how things actually transpired (forecasts, planning parameters, shipping alternatives, budgeted vs. actual expenses, etc.).
- **Recently, we entered a third wave** of ERP implementations, characterized by a demand for access to and analysis of key information from the system in order to make better business decisions—Business Intelligence (BI). No longer the domain of large companies with deep pockets, a growing number of SMBs, including manufacturers and distributors, want to be able to drill down into their data and extract information that they can use to measure internal performance strengths and weaknesses. Thus, SMBs are increasingly utilizing BI to help identify areas of improvement that can lead to lower costs and increased revenues.

### What is BI?

Business Intelligence (BI) is an umbrella term that describes the process of gathering, manipulating, and analyzing data from past and present sources, and providing intelligent reports that enable you to make informed business decisions. It provides interactive, real-time, business-critical information on behaviors and trends of your business and market.

### BI Tools Improve Decision-making Abilities

According to Jim Worth, in his April 25, 2006 article for [b-eye-network.com](http://b-eye-network.com) entitled *Top 10 Trends in Business Intelligence - What Do They Mean to Manufacturing Companies*, "More organizations than ever are reaching the conclusion that information quality is ground zero for solving many of their most pressing business problems. Why is this? It is because poor information quality makes regulatory compliance difficult, impairs decision-making and promotes inefficiency."

To distill the BI discussion to its simplest terms, what businesses need most is the ability to find and extract key information that identifies their strengths and weaknesses and helps them make better decisions. They also want this information to be presented in a timely fashion and in a way that business people can understand.

Based on the size of your company and budgetary constraints, your goal is to determine what BI tools you really need to drill down and extract the key performance data that will make your company more efficient and profitable.

### No longer a luxury---BI is a top priority

Meridith Levinson in her January 15, 2006 [cio.com](http://cio.com) article entitled *Business Intelligence: Not Just for Bosses Anymore*, says "Companies that use BI to uncover flawed business processes are in a much better position to successfully compete than those companies that use BI merely to monitor what's happening. Indeed, CIOs who don't use BI to transform business operations put their companies at a disadvantage."

According to Betsy Burton and Mark McDonald in their May 01, 2006 article entitled *Smarter Use Of Business Intelligence* (courtesy of [optimizemag.com](http://optimizemag.com)), a January 2006 Gartner Executive Programs survey of 1,400 CIOs indicated that “BI applications are CIOs’ top technology priority in 2006—and, for the second consecutive year, business-process improvement is their No. 1 business concern. These priorities highlight how CIOs are working across dual tracks to improve the business.”

The need for easily accessible business intelligence is even more relevant for manufacturers and distributors than other segments. With ever-increasing price pressures coming from overseas competitors, the need for manufacturers and distributors to extract and analyze key actionable data is more critical than ever before. Add recent legislative changes and regulatory compliance issues to the mix, and the case for BI is just too strong to ignore.

### **Are you ready for BI?**

Keep in mind—manufacturing and distribution companies currently using older ERP systems might face considerable challenges extracting relevant BI data. The good news is that affordable ERP systems with integrated BI add-ons are available right now. Manufacturers and distributors who want to stay competitive in this highly complex, global marketplace will be well served to explore the potential advantages of a BI solution (if they haven’t done so already) and determine whether their current system is sufficient enough to play ball with their competitors who have made the leap to a BI-bolstered ERP solution.

### **What BI tools do you need?**

For starters, we recommend that you leverage your existing technology investment and find cost-effective, easy-to-use BI solutions that integrate with your Microsoft Office Suite. That should be considered the minimum to get you the intelligence you need to boost your bottom line.

However, more advanced BI tools can now deliver multi-dimensional analysis, graphing, charting, and more, for a fraction of the cost of an expensive Online Analytical Processing (OLAP) solution. Moreover, these tools should be modifiable by a user without requiring extensive programming skills. A familiar and easy-to-use ERP interface helps new users come up to speed quickly on BI tools.

Having access to an analytics tool can be a very powerful component of your BI plan. Analytics enable you to transform data into information, and then get that data into the right hands, at the right time, and in the correct format to facilitate timely decision-making. This, in turn, can help your company increase customer satisfaction, decrease costs, and increase revenues.

### **BI helps ensure compliance**

A combination of accounting and BI-related reporting tools can also serve as a vital part of your overall internal control compliance strategy. As you determine how to respond to the new challenges imposed by Sarbanes-Oxley, there is little doubt that much of your attention will be focused on managing, protecting, and reporting on the data that at some point passed through your accounting system.

One BI tool that can serve this process admirably is an “Alerts” solution that integrates with your accounting system. Using alerts and special triggers, your organization can automatically generate e-mails, launch reports, or generate system warnings without the need for monitoring.

While no software application will make you compliant, the right mix of accounting and BI applications can work in conjunction with your internal policies, compliance programs, and other technology investments to increase the transparency of financial events, ensure distribution of critical information in a timely manner, and provide the peace of mind you need on matters of security and access.

*The good news is that affordable ERP systems with integrated BI add-ons are available right now.*

*The BI tools you implement must also be easy to use and learn and must be able to present data in a way that everyone can understand.*

### **Only use BI solutions that you can easily understand**

The BI tools you implement must also be easy to use and learn and must be able to present data in a way that everyone can understand. If you have access to BI tools that can convert all of your key performance data into easy-to-understand terms that management can fully grasp, you have a tremendous opportunity to boost bottom-line performance and overall profitability.

Conversely, if your proposed BI solution is hard to grasp, it likely won't contribute much to your objective of locating and analyzing key, actionable data that can help your business run smarter. Whatever solution you choose, make sure that all of you can figure out how to get the most out of it without needing a PhD. This cannot be overemphasized!

All roads lead to implementation of cost-effective BI tools that support the more general business functionality of ERP applications for manufacturers and distributors. Now, let's turn to an overview of the unique evaluation and decision-making processes that these companies face in order to achieve the right balance of BI functionality with their ERP foundation.

### **BI for Distributors**

The evolution of business intelligence tools for the distribution sector has run parallel to that of ERP systems for businesses in general. In his November 1, 2002 article for Internet World Magazine entitled *Intelligence Tools Create Smart Reports*, John Pallatto succinctly states the case for BI as an integral component in the overall company strategy for today's distribution companies:

Before the advent of web-based business intelligence tools, a lot of enterprises were practically flying blind when it came to understanding how fast their products were moving through the distribution chain. If companies wanted to learn how much product was in their inventories compared to the inventories of their wholesale and retail distributors, they had to rely too much on paper reports provided by sales staff in the field or on the courtesy of their customers. Next, the battle was trying to collate sales and inventory reports from data stored in separate, incompatible databases—one containing production line information, another containing warehouse inventory tallies, and yet another for order management.

Bringing this disparate data together involved countless hours of grunt work, transcribing the information from computer printouts into spreadsheets before the product line managers could start crunching the numbers to find out what was actually going on in the marketplace.

More specifically, prior to the advent of BI as a key ingredient in the business management equation for small to midsize distributors, most of these companies invested in business software that handled core requirements such as general ledger, accounts receivable, accounts payable, inventory tracking, order entry, and purchasing activities. They may have even added software functionality that fully automated their inventory control, shipping, and warehouse management activities. If these companies invested in ERP applications from the second wave (which also enabled them to forecast and compare actual vs. budgeted scenarios), they were likely on par with their competitors in terms of access to data.

To be effective and deliver reasonable ROI, these second-wave ERP systems offered support of both financials and some more advanced distribution features that could be found in industry-specific or "vertical" applications designed for industrial products, consumer packaged goods, or high-technology products, for example.

John Pallatto delivers the following corollary to our description of the third wave of ERP:

...since the mid 1990s, companies have discovered ways to bring all these disparate data sources together using Web-based business intelligence tools. These tools not only speed up and automate the process of gathering the information, but also provide analysis tools that offer deeper insights into the dynamics of their distribution channels.

With business intelligence technology, enterprises get more timely information, they discover new sales opportunities, devise more-sophisticated pricing strategies, and learn more about which products are their best sellers and where they are most popular. All of this information helps adherents of a well-implemented business intelligence program increase revenue and improve profitability.

### Software evaluation for distribution companies

Evaluating current business software systems and determining the need for upgrading and enhancements (such as BI) to those systems can be a very overwhelming task for small and midsize distributors due to the sheer quantity of products to choose from and the complexity of each system.

Distribution software is often specialized depending on the types of products sold. For example, some of the most common distribution applications on the market are designed for distributors of industrial products, consumer packaged goods, and high-technology products. Industry-specific software products are attractive to distributors because they typically provide a dozen or so specific features designed to meet a particular business requirement such as custom item look-ups in the fastener industry or rental management for equipment distributors. In addition to industry-specific solutions, there are hundreds of add-on and complementary solutions available to provide more advanced features. For example, there are literally hundreds of independent Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Warehouse Management System (WMS) applications on the market today.

On the flip side, most popular ERP applications provide 75-90% or more of the functionality required by distributors. To help bridge the gap with the industry-specific solutions, a few of the more established ERP vendors offer numerous third-party enhancements and vertical applications. Some even offer BI tools that are either embedded into the system or are modules that can be easily integrated with the core ERP system. In many cases, these solutions may prove to be more cost-effective and complete than their industry-specific counterparts. In any event, they are worth a look as you gear up to include BI as a major component of your ongoing strategy for business growth and operational efficiency.

#### Here are a few things to consider as you commence your research into prospective BI-enabled solutions:

- Industry and niche publishers typically allocate most of their research and development to the inventory management, order entry, and purchasing side of their business applications with little investment in accounting, business intelligence, customer relationship management, human resources, asset management, payroll and other non-distribution capabilities.
- The distribution software market, like the ERP and accounting software market, has undergone considerable consolidation. Many smaller, niche software vendors have already been acquired by larger software vendors, leading to the retirement of their legacy products and many unhappy end-users.
- Established ERP and accounting software vendors tend to have much larger installed bases and are much more likely to support and enhance their products for years to come.

### Warehouse management considerations

With warehouse management providing a critical piece of your distribution equation, it is essential that your WMS also integrates with your distribution, accounting, and BI systems. Here are a few points to consider when evaluating the warehouse management system that you currently have in place and the enhancements or upgrades that may lie ahead.

For starters, to get the most out of your new WMS, you need to do more than simply add technology to your current processes. The more you know about the problems you expect the new system to solve, the more successful your final choice will be. So try the following:

*“With business intelligence technology, enterprises get more timely information, they discover new sales opportunities, devise more-sophisticated pricing strategies, and learn more about which products are their best sellers and where they are most popular.”*

*Automatic updates of inventory and shipping information to your back-office systems can reduce transcription errors, lower the staffing requirements for data entry, and improve access to up-to-date information throughout your organization.*

- Discuss what modifications need to be made to current system procedures.
- Examine how your warehouse interacts with customers, suppliers and your organization's departments.
- Look for weaknesses and ways to improve them.

### **Consider the benefits of fully integrated WMS with financials**

Some end-to-end ERP solutions offer robust WMS modules as part of their database. Other back office solutions have established integration with proven WMS solutions. In either case, selecting WMS software that integrates with your accounting system ensures complete control and flow of information between your back office and the warehouse floor. A fully integrated solution can automatically transfer data from your WMS to your accounting system, eliminating manual intervention, upgrade incompatibility, and transcription errors, while providing accurate and up-to-date inventory control. If your ERP system does not have built-in WMS modules, look for a smooth-running warehouse system that can easily and reliably interface with your financial data—supplying in-depth information across the enterprise. Just as important, an integrated WMS will support your Web order and EDI needs, and send back Advance Ship Notices (ASNs) to notify vendors of incoming shipments.

### **Important questions to ask while evaluating a new system**

During your evaluation of a new or upgraded WMS, make sure to get answers to the following questions in order to ensure that your system can satisfy all of your order fulfillment, shipping/receiving, inventory control, labor, and equipment challenges.

- How are inaccuracies negatively impacting my organization?
- What do I need to accurately pick, pack, and ship my orders?
- How can my current system integrate with e-business initiatives?
- What information do I need to make strategic decisions?
- How fast do I need warehouse data to be available across the enterprise?
- Does the system enable users to easily sort and view information, allowing warehouse employees to know exactly which activities need to be done at all times?
- Does the software use a familiar navigational model?
- Is the system accessible over the Web through a secure connection?
- Can the software provide a real-time window into warehouse operation and access to critical data with only a few clicks?

### **Look for a solution that integrates with your accounting database**

As mentioned previously, not all ERP systems have a built-in WMS. If this is the case, make sure the WMS software has solid integration with your accounting database so multiple departments and your warehouse staff can more effectively track inventory and order fulfillment. Automatic updates of inventory and shipping information to your back-office systems can reduce transcription errors, lower the staffing requirements for data entry, and improve access to up-to-date information throughout your organization.

### **Ask for real-time updates**

Look for systems that can provide you with real-time information. WMS software supporting wireless RF-based technologies can facilitate real-time updates to the warehouse—the WMS is updated as soon as information is captured on a Radio Frequency (RF)-based terminal. Also, if a system promises real-time delivery, make sure vital

business information (for example, inventory count) is updated as new data is entered, and not with a periodic batch process. Warehouses performing batch updates run the risk of shipping delays, especially with orders requiring same-day shipping—which can result in high compliance fines.

### Understand how the system collects data

Consider how well the system monitors your critical operational activities. When you're running at full capacity, can you monitor which items have been received? If so, what communication standard is used to capture and transfer data? Make sure that data flowing into your database from RF devices is validated before it is allowed to update transactions in the database. You should also inquire about synchronization issues in case of a lost RF connection during transaction uploads. Most RF-based technologies collect data using the 802.11 communication standard. Make sure the system you choose supports this widely accepted standard, and isn't limited to a proprietary communication standard.

### Conclusion

Not all distribution systems are created equal. Some systems provide rich industry-specific functionality, but lack fundamental accounting features, while others provide a broader feature set, which can be customized to meet the needs of many different distribution environments. Small companies that have automated their accounting and inventory processes, but not their WMS and extended supply chain systems, must prepare themselves for a significant investment in money and time in order to implement and learn a more sophisticated business application that offers BI functionality.

Distributors need to consider future growth, vendor viability, product stability and functionality, the availability of third-party add-on solutions, total cost of ownership, and potential return on investment when choosing new business software.

A defined software evaluation process will help distributors identify the best solution to meet their needs. In addition, information gleaned from the evaluation process should be used during the implementation to keep the project on track and on budget. Successful implementations can reap huge company-wide benefits, including sizable reductions in data entry, elimination of data entry errors, improved system security, and significant improvements to the company's bottom line.

Distribution companies that have already ridden the first two waves of ERP implementation have likely reaped significant cost savings and efficiency improvements. If you are ready to embrace the ROI-enhancing rewards of the third wave, make sure your company engages in a thorough evaluation process that measures the costs and benefits of a narrowly focused industry-specific or vertical solution vs. a more comprehensive ERP and BI solution.

## BI for Manufacturers

If you've worked for more than one manufacturing company, then you already know that each one is different—different processes, different tracking systems, different challenges. All of these variations add up to the fact that you need a system tailored to your specific needs. There are so many solutions available that you could spend months looking at demos and still not see it all. Narrow your search for a solution by defining your company.

Jim Worth in the previously noted article *Top 10 Trends in Business Intelligence - What Do They Mean to Manufacturing Companies*, offers a strong argument that manufacturing companies have much to gain with a well-conceived BI plan:

*Distributors need to consider future growth, vendor viability, product stability and functionality, the availability of third-party add-on solutions, total cost of ownership, and potential return on investment when choosing new business software.*

*“More companies are looking to BI solutions as a means to help address regulatory compliance issues on an enterprise basis.”*

For manufacturers, information quality issues exist throughout the supply chain. One reason for this is that manufacturers depend on data from suppliers, contract manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and consumers in order to effectively and efficiently source raw materials, forecast demand, make and market their products. Very seldom will manufacturers have control over the quality and format of this external data. Through incremental improvements in data quality throughout the supply chain, however, manufacturers can realize significant performance improvements, including improved speed and efficiency of product manufacture, improved ability to perform demand analysis, improved channel partner effectiveness through timely and accurate product and pricing information, and improved customer satisfaction through timely and accurate customer information. Measurement and verification are needed to ensure the information quality program is reaching its objective.

Regarding the increasing importance of compliance requirements for manufacturers. More companies are looking to BI solutions as a means to help address regulatory compliance issues on an enterprise basis. ... After all, doing so can help manufacturers avoid costly penalties, negative media attention, and even keep executives out of court.

### **Searching for an affordable manufacturing/BI solution? Here are a few questions to consider.**

If you are considering your first fully automated manufacturing solution or looking to upgrade to a more effective system with BI capabilities, you will want to ask the following questions to start narrowing down the field of potential software solutions that will best fit the unique requirements of your company:

#### **1. Are the standard accounting modules available for this package?**

Look for General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Purchase Orders, Sales Orders, and a very strong Inventory Control module as a minimum set. You may also want to ask each prospective supplier about the availability of additional modules such as Payroll, Fixed Assets, and vertical modules.

#### **2. Which manufacturing modules are available?**

Light Assemblers should look for a product that offers features like Bill of Materials (BOMs), sales kits, and product configuration. Discrete manufacturers should look for MRP and MRP II, in addition to support for BOMs. Make-to-Order and Job Shop manufacturers will likely need all of these features plus a method for estimating and tracking costs on a project-by-project basis.

#### **3. Do the accounting and manufacturing modules integrate seamlessly?**

Even if all the accounting and manufacturing modules are available from the same vendor, there is no guarantee that they will actually integrate seamlessly. In some cases, the accounting software vendor may have acquired the manufacturing modules from another company, and integration may be shaky. With this in mind, we encourage you to view a product demo to determine just how well the accounting and manufacturing modules integrate and share information. For example, check to see that BOMs and Manufacturing Orders have solid integration with Inventory Control and Sales Orders. You should be able to maintain inventory items while defining BOMs, and configure orders based on BOMs during order entry.

#### **4. How does the system handle data collection?**

You will need to consider how well a system monitors your critical work areas. Can you monitor production if you're running at 100 percent capacity for your staff? Has inventory actually been received, and if so, are the counts reliable enough to forecast material requirements? Data collection ties into true manufacturing as well as accounting. How well you collect vital data determines your ability to forecast production information. Data collection is an important part of the total solution for a company that requires MRP II.

## 5. What kinds of reports does the system provide?

Your system must be able to extract relevant information easily. A system using database files provides virtually unlimited reporting capabilities. In addition to standard reports, the product should allow non-programmers to design custom reports using industry-standard reporting tools.

## 6. Does the system have the capacity to grow?

If you're not sure how well a system will accommodate your company's needs as you grow, here are some key questions to help you find out. What is the maximum number of customers, vendors, BOM levels, or inventory items that are allowed? What is the maximum number of users that can be working with a particular application at the same time? Can the software be customized to meet the changing needs of a growing company?

## Key BI Components of Your Manufacturing or Distribution Solution

As you contemplate a cost-effective BI solution for your manufacturing or distribution company, you should make sure that the integrated software delivers most, if not all, of the functions listed below at a price point that fits your company's budget:

- **Alerts** – Alerts provide crucial monitoring, proactive notification, and automation capabilities that help your company adapt to changing conditions and avoid alarming scenarios pertaining to payables, receivables, budgets, sales, and inventory. With alerts functionality in place, you can pre-set a wide variety of benchmarks in all of these areas and protect yourself from missing key time- or date-sensitive events or failing to respond to deviations from acceptable levels.
- **Inquiry** – Having an easy-to-use inquiry tool enables you to drill down into a specific area and quickly extract data that is essential to your business. For example, if you need to examine sales trends by region over the last 12 months, identify the top 5 customers for the quarter, or locate the top 10 best-selling items for the last month, this type of BI tool will serve you well.
- **Analysis tool** – SMBs want the ability to bring in data from multiple locations and still be able to see a unified macro view of the entire enterprise. Analysis software should help you achieve this goal—providing a quick snapshot of your business and enabling you to drill down into sales and purchasing trends, as well as perform budget analysis. Some of these solutions offer “scorecards” that provide a quick view of the overall health of your business. Make sure to insist on a multi-dimensional analysis tool that fully utilizes Excel's capabilities, including pivot tables and charts.
- **Dashboards** – The term “dashboard” has become omnipresent in the ever-expanding BI lexicon. An effective dashboard should provide a graphical snapshot of your business's health that is easy to understand. Some common categories of data (often from Excel) feeding the dashboard are revenues by period, product sales by category, actual vs. budgeted financial indicators, and expenses by category, just to name a few. The good news is that you can take full advantage of affordable BI solutions that offer this type of functionality.
- **Quick KPI's** – Whether analyzing business performance vs. another company or between divisions within your company, quick access to key performance indicators enables you to see how your business is measuring up at any moment in time. This type of solution should possess the capability to compare financial models and actual performance vs. budget and forecast numbers for different time periods. In addition, it should enable you to quickly establish benchmarking of results vs. competitors over varying time periods. Finally, you should be able to export any KPI report or model to Microsoft Excel or Word.

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*Whether analyzing business performance vs. another company or between divisions within your company, quick access to key performance indicators enables you to see how your business is measuring up at any moment in time.*

- **Graphical Presentations of data** – Viewing data in graphical format makes the process of analyzing performance so much quicker and easier. Make sure that your BI solution incorporates customizable graphical views of your data in grid, pivot table, and interactive chart formats. This should be standard feature, not an accessory.
- **Flexible reporting capabilities** – The ability to create and generate reports (including exception reports) that accurately reflect your company's key performance data is crucial as is the ability to customize these reports and display them graphically, if needed. In addition, you should be able to export these reports to an Excel worksheet or include Excel spreadsheet data in these reports.
- **Remote access** – Most decision-makers conduct a significant portion of their business while out of the office. Thus, it is essential that they have remote access to a wide range of their company's vital business data any time they want via the Internet. Make sure your BI solution enables you to access your KPI's such as sales, product, and customer analyses, income and balance sheets, and inventory reports whenever you are out of the office.
- **Report automation** – In order to stay ahead of the competition, most SMBs can't afford to sit back and wait for their IT or accounting departments to provide the information they need to make informed decisions. They must be proactive in automating their entire reporting process—from the creation to generation to distribution of reports across the entire enterprise. Armed with streamlined, high-volume reporting, these companies are equipped to respond to ever-changing market conditions and make the best possible decisions that impact the health of their business.

## How Sage Software Can Help You Achieve Your Goals

Sage Software understands that competitive advantage is derived from knowledge. Faster access to better information results in smarter decisions. Sage Software offers several options for generating and delivering this business-critical information from Sage MAS, Sage Accpac, and Sage Pro end-to-end business management applications (accounting, distribution, manufacturing, warehouse management, human resource management, etc.) to the decision-makers. These reporting solutions address different business needs (financial vs. end-to-end reporting, transaction listing vs. drill down, etc.); different interaction needs (desktop vs. Web-based, on-demand vs. scheduled pushed reporting, etc.); and fit different budgeting needs.

### Business Intelligence Solutions

To stay competitive and to enjoy peak efficiencies, SMBs like yours need the right business intelligence (BI) tools to analyze operations and determine underlying strengths and weaknesses. Sage Software BI solutions have been specially designed to help you gain valuable insight into your business data and operations, enabling you to make more effective decisions. With Sage Software ERP and BI solutions working together, your company has the ability to pull data from anywhere in your enterprise, and perform insightful analysis so that you can achieve the best possible results.

### Distribution Solutions

If you're like most distributors, you're continually striving to increase sales, deliver on time, retain customers, and minimize overhead. In addition, you're focused on strategically managing your supply chain and keeping your operating costs down. Over 60,000 U.S. distributors rely on Sage Software for distribution solutions that meet the daily challenges they face head on, as well as provide the operational efficiency and big picture insights they need to position their company for continued success.

## Manufacturing Solutions

For over 25 years, Sage Software has served the needs of more than 80,000 discrete and process manufacturers, which means **approximately 1 in every 10 manufacturers in the United States is capitalizing on a Sage Software solution**. None of our competitors can make a similar claim. Sage Software provides a variety of products for SMBs to handle virtually every aspect of their business from supply chain management to resource scheduling, quality control, production reporting, and cost and pricing analysis.

## About Sage Software

Sage Software is the North American business of UK-based Sage Group plc. Sage Software offers leading business management products and services that give more than 2.6 million SMBs in North America the insight for success throughout the lives of their businesses.

For more than 30 years, Sage Software has delivered easy-to-use, scalable, and customizable software for accounting, customer relationship management, human resources, time tracking, and the specialized needs of accounting practices and the construction, distribution, manufacturing, nonprofit, and real estate industries.

Sage Software's parent company, The Sage Group, plc (London: SGE.L), reaches a global client base that numbers 4.7 million SMB customers worldwide. It serves these businesses through more than 8,000 employees in operations in North America, the UK, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, South Africa, Australia, and various countries in Asia.

*Sage Software BI solutions have been specially designed to help you gain valuable insight into your business data and operations, enabling you to make more effective decisions.*



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