

Managing Spend analysis data is way too much effort

The sourcing world is fascinating - and often wonderfully complex in many respects. However, compared with other elements of business – the data that is used to drive procurement *isn't* that complex. The issue is there is just a lot of it. It may also come from a variety of payment systems. Problem

ERP data is quite crude in many respects – we liken it often to a cheap magnetic compass – it's not going to tell you where you are *exactly*....but will help you move in a direction of your choosing that is underpinned by data. We still meet a wide range of companies who have no spend analysis capability – and deploy Excel ineffectively.

Many elements of business (sales/marketing/finance) see control, understanding and management of their data as critical to their business. Procurement teams have started to acknowledge that this data is key to not only sourcing improvements but also P2P strategy.

However, research suggests that many procurement teams (c. 50%) still do not have a data driven approach. A wide range of technical capabilities exists to meet this need.....outside of Excel, there are really two core technologies that dominate the market – web hosted systems and DIY or desktop analytics.

So what are some of the key differences between desktop and web analytics?

Web analytics	Desktop
Built and hosted by the supplier.	Built and managed within your own resources.
Little (or limited) capacity to change the data structure.	Full control over the structure.
An “access and use” capability	Generally, a staff member has to be trained to both use and maintain the application.
Can be made available to all staff if required.	May have limited access to one seat depending on pricing.

There are a wide range of questions that need to be answered when seeking to acquire new technology. As many organisations discover, Excel can deliver a wide range of outputs... but at some point, the volume of data and the complexity of reports can limit the product.

The question still remains – is your data and its control pivotal to your business?and are you prepared to invest in a solution?