

Business Analytics **Forum**

See The Future Of Decision Making

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Introducing Dashboards in a University – an Education in itself

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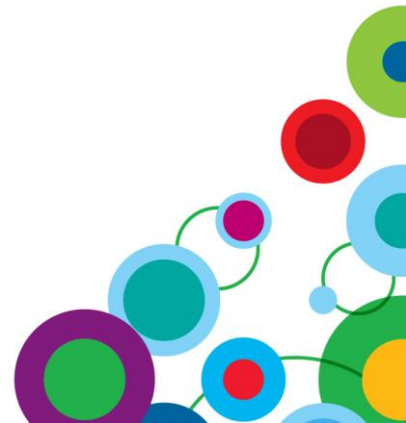


The University



Out of our own mouths...

- Commenced in 1967
- Full University status in 1992
- Direct and unabashed steal from our web page
 - One of the most engaged, supportive and responsive universities in Australia
 - Making higher education and research accessible
- What our VC refers to most is the “Power of Place”
- Goals / targets in short, medium (5 year) and long term (10 year)
- A lot of them have numbers attached – unprecedented!



By the numbers

- Using 2009 (last complete year available)
 - 19,561 Students
 - 12,408.26 EFTSL
 - 89,654 Subject Enrolments
 - 993.95 Staff FTE (non casual) as at June 30*
- 2010 YTD
 - 18,633 Students
 - 11,135.58 EFTSL
 - 81,029 Subject Enrolments
 - 1046.31 Staff FTE (non casual) as at June 30*
- 2010 will overtake 2009 when Spring / Summer Subject Enrolments are made (in 2009 nearly 1,900 EFTSL)



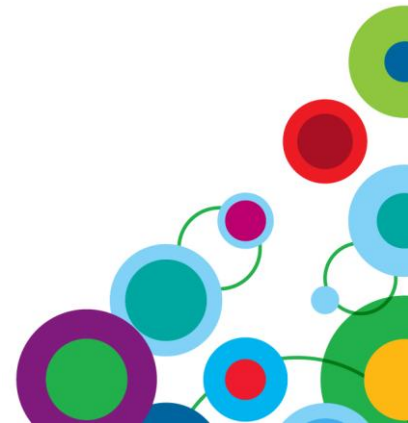
Early history (pre Project)

- Entirely operational focus
- COGNOS tool set in 1990's for reporting
- Bought COGNOS DecisionStream in 2004 for ETL
- Over the next 2 years produced a number of student data marts, and operational data stores for Student & HR data
- Enabled the team (then 3) to answer many things previously impossible
- Order of magnitude speed improvement on some trend queries



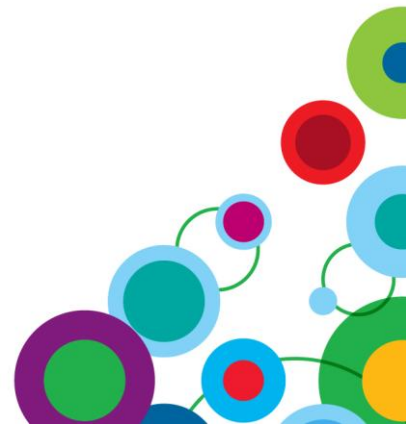
Business Intelligence Project Ambitions

- Provide real business insight to the University's decisions makers, enabling evidence based management
- CQUniversity a self-aware, continuously improving organisation
- Business Intelligence a key and pervasive component in the University's journey



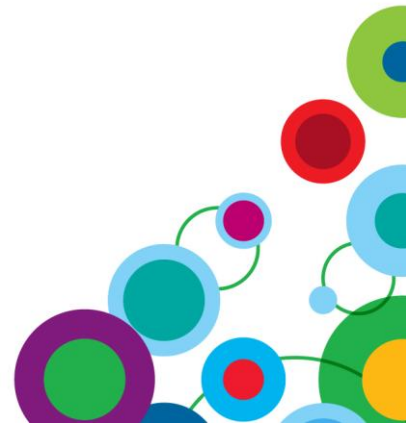
Lesson #1 – Listen to the Boss

- New Director arrived from the frozen tundra of Armidale
- Vini, Vidi, ~~Vici~~, iUpheave
- Recast BI as a Project
 - mean\$ fund\$ available
 - Also structure, governance etc
- Having built a “single source of the truth” did not make us the “single source of ideas”
- Strategic focus, not operational



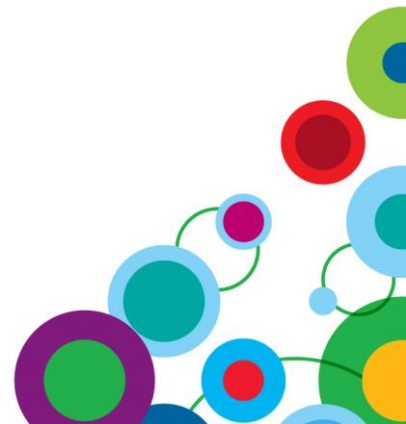
Lesson #2 – Borrow with Pride

- Visits to sector leaders to “borrow” their best points (and learn from things they wouldn’t do again)
- Also “borrowing” requirements from other sources
 - Google is my friend
- No-one in the University sector has the money to do everything and we share
- Consultants are there to be utilised
 - Experience can open whole new worlds
- Magic can happen 😊
- Shift certainly will ☹️



Lesson #3 – Play from your strengths where possible

- The technology is new to you and the executive team
- Try not to learn it and the subject area simultaneously
- University of Wollongong built from Finance out
- We built from Student out
- Now have even more student data, Establishment HR, Sector benchmarks, student evaluations, QTAC...
- And plenty more chaffing at the bit





Lesson #4 – Planning is crucial

- Spent a lot of time up front building a granular plan
- Microsoft Project does not keep up with an enthusiastic, intuitive and involved Director
- Plan obsolete even before finished
- Planning does however draw out an (initial) list of requirements, to set the project and stakeholder minds thinking. If this thinking completely overturns your plan to the betterment of the organisation, “Suck it up and get on with it”* .

* attributed to our ranking executive





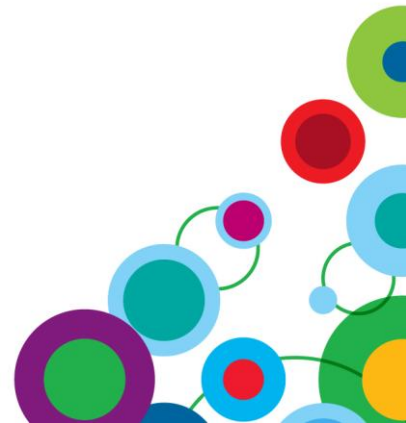
Lesson #5 – It's always all about the stakeholders

- Began Iterative Approach to Senior Management
- Inferring strategic requirements
 - “Progressive revelation”
 - Had to demonstrate what could be done to inform
 - Both our “stuff” and external examples
- Remember “If we build it they will come” is a FATAL FLAW **not** a project manifesto
- Few pointed requests (e.g. EFTSL/Students ratio trends)
- Struggled to deliver with competing operational reporting load until handover in mid 2008



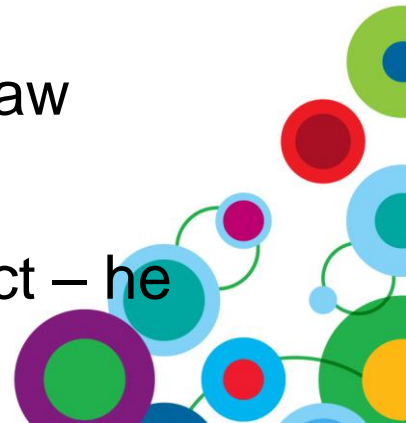
Lesson #6 – “Ooh Ahh” does not mean engagement

- There is only so much low hanging fruit in the orchard
- Check to see usage – initial wow factor can be deceptive
- Emphasise use to answer a real business question in demonstrations / training
- **Engagement is when a stakeholder identifies a business need you can meet**
 - e.g. enforced culture change



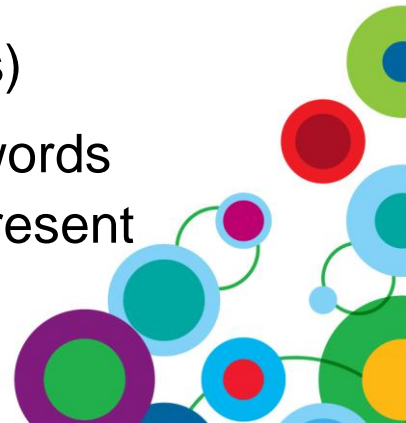
Lesson #7 – Welcome constructive conflict

- Handled properly it achieves immense value
- Example 1: Course “Performance” Dashboard
 - Measured enrolments and \$ only
 - Significant umbrage taken to term by focus group
 - Solution – measure other aspects (pass rate, student evaluations etc) of performance.
- Example 2: Program Attrition Dashboard
 - Nearly needed a triage wing when Senior Exec saw results for a (now former) flagship degree
 - Convinced degree manager numbers were correct – he is now a strong advocate (as is the Senior Exec)



Lesson #8 – It's still about the users

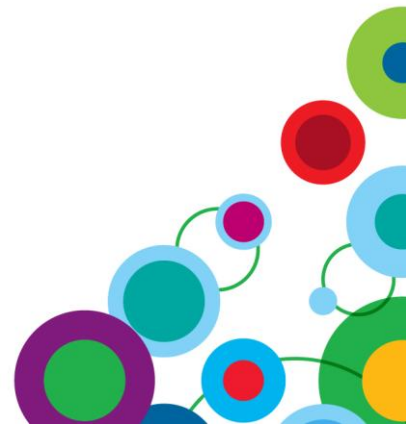
- I have had 21 plus years reporting, slicing, dicing, amalgamating, quantifying... student data
- Strangely, many others haven't
- Context, content, coverage **all crucial** for stakeholder understanding even if unappealing to technical types
- As an example:
 - **Attrition** is a much maligned word in the sector
 - University has an agreed definition (after many meetings)
 - The rebuilt attrition dashboard will probably have more words than the complete works of Shakespeare by the time I present this





Are we there yet?

- Hell no
- Many subject areas yet to be absorbed and Kimballised
- We have purchased TM1, have used it to build a student load projection model and a new budget model
- TM1 may replace PowerPlay as our “go-fast” OLAP vehicle of choice
- And there are always politics ☹️





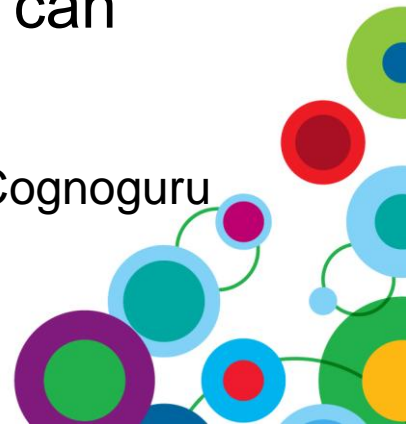
Lesson #9 – There will always be more lessons

- CQUniversity's motto is "Doctrina Perpetua"
- Translation : "Forever Learning"
- And that's the case
- "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it" George Santayana (paraphrase)

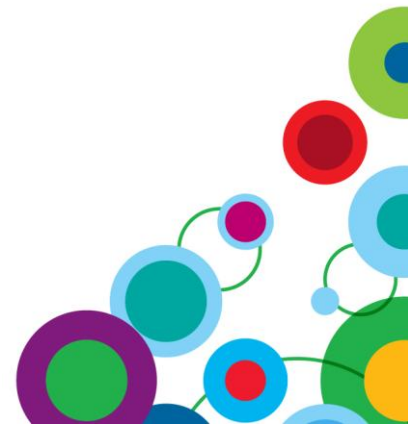
NOT

- "We learn from our mistakes. We learn so well we can repeat them perfectly"

Col Vincent retired CQUniversity Cognoguru



Demonstration



Questions?



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