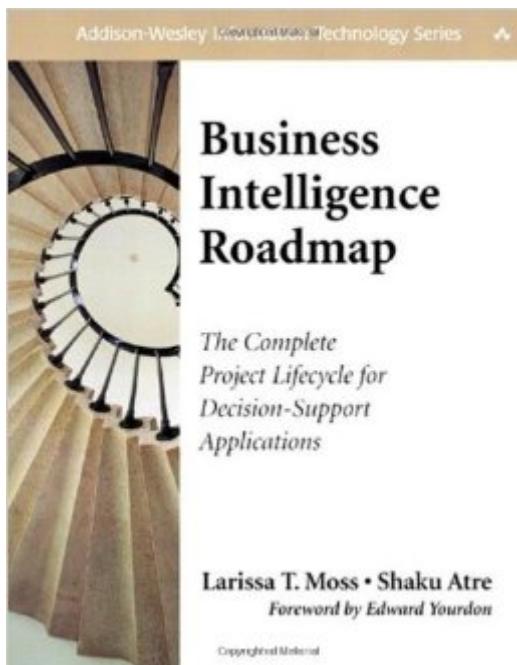


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# Business Intelligence Roadmap: The Complete Project Lifecycle For Decision-Support Applications



## Synopsis

"If you are looking for a complete treatment of business intelligence, then go no further than this book. Larissa T. Moss and Shaku Atre have covered all the bases in a cohesive and logical order, making it easy for the reader to follow their line of thought. From early design to ETL to physical database design, the book ties together all the components of business intelligence."--Bill Inmon, Inmon Enterprises

*Business Intelligence Roadmap* is a visual guide to developing an effective business intelligence (BI) decision-support application. This book outlines a methodology that takes into account the complexity of developing applications in an integrated BI environment. The authors walk readers through every step of the process--from strategic planning to the selection of new technologies and the evaluation of application releases. The book also serves as a single-source guide to the best practices of BI projects. Part I steers readers through the six stages of a BI project: justification, planning, business analysis, design, construction, and deployment. Each chapter describes one of sixteen development steps and the major activities, deliverables, roles, and responsibilities. All technical material is clearly expressed in tables, graphs, and diagrams. Part II provides five matrices that serve as references for the development process charted in Part I. Management tools, such as graphs illustrating the timing and coordination of activities, are included throughout the book. The authors conclude by crystallizing their many years of experience in a list of dos, don'ts, tips, and rules of thumb. The accompanying CD-ROM includes a complete, customizable work breakdown structure. Both the book and the methodology it describes are designed to adapt to the specific needs of individual stakeholders and organizations. The book directs business representatives, business sponsors, project managers, and technicians to the chapters that address their distinct responsibilities. The framework of the book allows organizations to begin at any step and enables projects to be scheduled and managed in a variety of ways.

*Business Intelligence Roadmap* is a clear and comprehensive guide to negotiating the complexities inherent in the development of valuable business intelligence decision-support applications

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Very action oriented. The prose is concise and to the point. A key feature is that at the start of each chapter is a ticklist of action items to do or at least be aware of, for that chapter's topic. This may have value to you, from a management viewpoint. Also similarly useful are the extensive tables at the back of the book, that complement the ticklists. For me, the most relevant sections were those describing metadata and how this is commonly defined and used by people in the data mining/business intelligence community. I enjoyed the description of a metadata repository/silo as a navigation tool. The book is readily accessible to a nontechnical manager. There is little mathematical jargon, and there are clear explanations of common data mining techniques. Enough so that you can converse intelligently with personnel in that field. A strength of the book is that it lets you understand and direct a technical team, in a top-down fashion, driven by business imperatives, rather than by technical capabilities.

It is refreshing to read a book that presents in-depth techniques for developing a BI application from cradle to grave in a continuous evolutionary process. Various matrices and WBS samples in Part II of the book serve as a quick reference for iterative planning and delivering of decision-support systems. The authors have done a phenomenal job in integrating business, technical, and management aspects of a BI and decision-support system to present an exhaustive set of guidelines. After working with numerous clients and having read Inmon's *Building the Data Warehouse*, Kimball's *The Data Warehouse Lifecycle Toolkit* as well as various BI white papers, I know that data ETL and data warehouses are a major part of any BI strategy. However, after reviewing the summary of over 20 BI related books, I found that the primary focus of many BI books is normally limited to data presentation and analytical layers only. This book is an exception. I would recommend this book to experts as well as novice DW/BI professionals alike, who may be business users, data analysts, architects, project managers, statisticians, or executive stakeholders.

This book is impressive in its scope! Starting with the business justification of the project, Moss and Atre emphasize requirements, metadata, and extraction/transformation/ and load. In each chapter is a good overview, things to consider, relation to other steps of the plan, and a clear list of deliverables and the personnel (the roles) involved in each of the steps. Each chapter also offers rules of thumb that could only have been come from someone experienced with setting up a Business Intelligence Solution. Perhaps most important to a project manager tempted to cut out a step, is a warning about the risk of omitting the step. Each chapter should NOT be thought of as an in-depth analysis of the topic (for example, there are just 4 pages discussing the star versus the snowflake schema when discussing database design), but rather as a map of the steps that need to be done. I was particularly impressed with the metadata discussions, which emphasize testing of the metadata repository, the role of metadata in navigation and context-sensitive-help at the element level, and the use of multiple sources to generate the metadata. The common emphasis on reviews, involvement of the business sponsors, and testing throughout the process was great! The discussion on three parallel development tracks seemed optimistic, as I was not sure that the application track is completely independent of the Extraction/transformation/load steps until the final implementation step. The book probably also should have emphasized security earlier in the process. This book offers a good plan, and I would be happy if our Business Intelligence projects followed the plan laid out here!!

This isn't a technical book that talks in detail about how to solve design problems. It's a book that tries to explain what a BI project is and why it is so complex. Even if it isn't a book for developers, the target audience is very broad and includes dw architects, project managers and executives. The book structure is well designed: each chapter covers a different stage of BI projects using the same structure which includes useful practical things like project flow charts, project roles and risks. It is essentially a methodology with some technical details, but don't look in it for complete, in-depth technical discussions, or for innovative contents. For example, dimensional modelling only takes two short paragraphs that are absolutely insufficient to teach a designer how to use it in practical situations. Even with these limitations this is a good and useful book, and it's clear that the two authors (Shaku Atre e Larissa T. Moss) have a lot of experience and a good understanding of BI projects.

This book is the perfect blend of project management techniques, application of the software development lifecycle framework, and decision support / business intelligence projects. As a project

manager for data mart and decision support projects, I am using this book as a reference for making sure all the steps are covered in these types of projects. All areas are at least touched upon if not covered in greater detail. The authors do an excellent job in explaining many of the BI concepts, identifying steps to completion, and raising questions to consider in tailoring the success of these projects to your organization's circumstances. The deliverables and risks presented for each step fits nicely with the Project Management Institute's PMBOK framework and the tips at the back of the book are incredibly helpful.

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