Enterprise Intelligence is a Team Sport

IDC research shows that organizations invest in intelligence primarily to drive specific business outcomes. Technology investment is important to improving enterprise intelligence, but on its own, it's not sufficient. Organizations must also ensure they have the right skills, structure, culture, and supporting ecosystems to use data insights to improve business outcomes. Thinking about enterprise intelligence as a team sport can be a helpful way to think about how and where to focus enterprise intelligence investments across the organization.

Organizations have high ROI expectations when it comes to their enterprise intelligence initiatives. Technology buyers increasingly gauge the success of their intelligence technology and services purchases on whether or not they generate the desired outcomes. This emphasis on ROI has driven a shift toward use case-driven initiatives that focus on faster, higher-quality data analysis and decision support, which in turn helps organizations become more agile and resilient by arming themselves with the right insights at the right time to make the best possible decisions.

Enterprise intelligence teams are critical to designing, implementing, and supporting purpose-built, business-specific initiatives, which rely on deep domain knowledge and the ability to apply insights to make business decisions.

IDC defines enterprise intelligence as the ability to synthesize information, the capacity to learn from that information, the ability to apply those insights at scale, and a strong data-driven culture that enables organizations to improve business outcomes. The four pillars are driven by a technology platform foundation that in turn drives enterprise intelligence.

Source: IDC, 2021

But, for these purpose-built intelligence initiatives to be successful, there needs to be agreement across the organization about the desired business outcomes, the roles that team members play in achieving those outcomes, and a culture of learning that helps improve decisions over time.

Levi Strauss & Company provides an instructive example. In early 2020, Levi Strauss created its Strategy and AI team with the objective of using data and AI to identify areas of commercial value, automate processes, and create digital assets for the company. The team has since grown into an integrated, horizontal function that partners with business functions to build and deliver AI solutions.

One of these solutions is a mobile application – Retail Insights – which enables store managers to access sales, inventory, and product performance metrics without leaving the store floor. In a recent blog post on the company's website, a store manager was quoted as saying: "I like to use the app to compare my store's performance with similar stores. It allows my team and I to level set and create bolder goals for ourselves. I encourage my team to reach out to those stores who are seeing success to gain best practices."

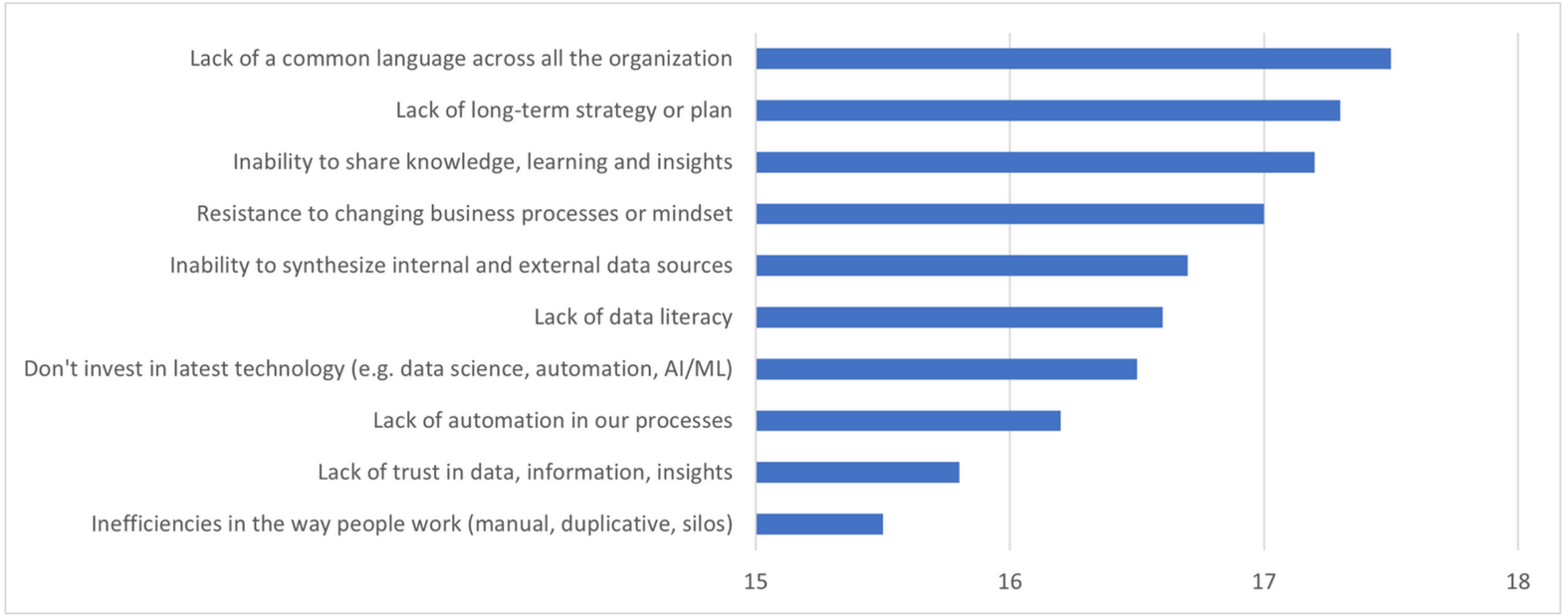
For more information about Levi Strauss' initiative, visit https://www.levistrauss.com/2022/01/18/insights-in-the-palm-of-store-managers-hands.

Challenges of Building Enterprise Intelligence

Architecting and deploying enterprise intelligence platforms are far from the only challenges organizations face when seeking to improve their enterprise intelligence. According to IDC's Future of Intelligence Survey, conducted in August 2021, seven of the top 10 most difficult enterprise intelligence challenges had more to do with people — particularly, how people relate to each other and to the data they need to make decisions — than a lack of technology platform.

One of the biggest challenges organizations face in enterprise intelligence a lack of common language across the organization and lack of investment in artificial intelligence (AI) and automation technologies.

Q. Please rate the level of difficulty for each of the following Enterprise-Intelligence related challenges.



n=1,170

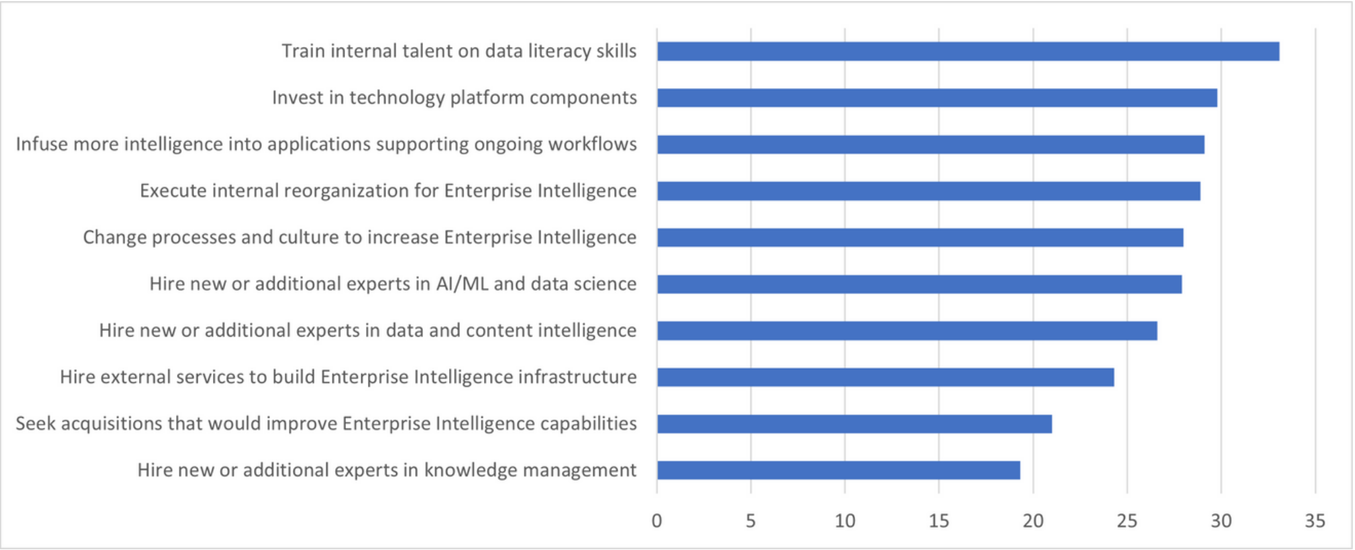
Source: IDC's *Future of Intelligence Survey*, August 2021

Issues with data integration and lack of investment in artificial intelligence (AI) and automation technologies are also in the top 10 list of challenges. But simply investing in those technologies will not solve overarching organizational issues that impede enterprise intelligence. These technologies must be viewed as enabling and supporting teams of people working together to make the right decisions that drive better outcomes for the business.

Investment in internal enterprise intelligence capabilities is a broader trend in the market. According to IDC's 2021 Future of Intelligence Survey, data literacy skills training for internal talent is the top investment area for enterprise intelligence.

The next two top investment address the technology platforms and the infusion of more intelligence into applications supporting ongoing workflows, which requires new development methodologies and collaboration across data, IT, and business teams, which requires new development methodologies and collaboration across data, IT, and business teams. The survey data shows that companies also recognize the need to invest in internal reorganization and change management to make enterprise intelligence investments stick for the long term.

Q. Which of the following will be your organization's most important investment areas in the next 12 months in terms of building Enterprise Intelligence?



n =1,170
Note: Respondents could select up to three investment areas.
Source: *Future of Intelligence Survey*, IDC, August, 2021

Interestingly, hiring outside data experts is a comparatively low priority, suggesting that organizations recognize that enterprise intelligence is not something that any outside technology or service provider can sell or deliver. It is a capability that needs to be built from the inside, starting with people and processes. Professional services providers, however, can support organizations' efforts to build enterprise intelligence capabilities internally in several ways, including supplying talent to fill critical skill shortages on intelligence teams, offering best practices and frameworks to help clients develop data and organizational strategies that improve their capacity to learn, and enabling employees to build data awareness, literacy, and skills through boot camps, workshops, and training resources.

The Enterprise Intelligence Roster

Enterprise intelligence teams will look different for every organization, but most will include a similar roster of team players.

- **Executives** use data and enterprise intelligence to make decisions. They are also responsible for establishing and promoting a data culture across their organizations.

- **Managers** typically own specific outcomes in departments or processes they oversee and use operational insights to make the decisions in those roles. They also play a key role in enabling their direct reports to develop skills and relationships related to data literacy, knowledge sharing and collective intelligence.

- **Employees** use information to make decisions and building knowledge and subject matter expertise in their roles. They are also building knowledge and subject matter expertise in their roles that should be considered an essential component of organizations' capacity to learn.

- **Technology,** such as artificial intelligence, analytics, automation, data management, and cloud, is part of the intelligence team in the way technology capabilities augment human capacity to consume vast amounts of data with the speed and accuracy required for the pace of business decision making.

- **Third-party service providers** support intelligence teams in a variety of ways, such as strategic advice, best practices, methodologies, domain expertise, technology skills, solution development, co-innovation, business analysis, and training.

- **Industry and academic ecosystems partners** expand organizations' ability to build collective intelligence through creating networks, establishing common standards, sharing data and insights, recruiting talent, and driving innovation**.**

Advice for the Technology Buyer

- Focus first on people and processes to establish your organization's baseline capacity to learn. Think beyond executives and managers and include other roles across the organization that would help drive improved business outcomes through better, more informed decision-making.

- Assess internal data literacy skills and determine what you need to make data literacy pervasive across your organization. Assess your organization's culture, structure, and knowledge management systems, and their impact on promoting data-driven decision making throughout the organization.

- Make technology platform choices that serve your business' unique enterprise intelligence needs rather than letting technology drive your initiatives. Think about how to incorporate technologies such as AI can to augment your organization's human intelligence and how these technologies can drive desired business outcomes

- Consider opportunities to bring your broader network into your enterprise intelligence team and improve your organization's capacity to learn. Look for best practices and lessons learned by other organizations inside or outside your industry.

- Seek out professional services partners that can work with you as an extension of your internal intelligence team and provide advice, methodologies, and solutions to address challenges across people, processes, data, and technology.

Learn more about building enterprise intelligence in IDC's report: ***Enterprise Intelligence Teams Expand Capacity to Learn***.

Learn more about IDC's research in our Future of Intelligence video or visit idc.com/FoX.

FUTURE OF
Intelligence

IDC

How You Can Leverage IDC's Enterprise Intelligence Index

A Facilitator of Meaningful Two-Way Dialogue With Your Buyers

Your buyers are looking for a personalized conversation, focused on their needs. But meaningful engagement starts with understanding their desired business outcomes. At the very core of IDC's Enterprise Intelligence (EI) Index is an interactive experience; it enables a dialogue, based on direct insights from your customers, that helps you better position your solutions to help them accomplish their business outcomes.

Organizations With Excellent Enterprise Intelligence are Reaping the Benefits

55%

Improved time to market with new offerings by 10+%

35%

Increased their revenue growth by 10+%

47%

Increased their customer acquisition rate by 10+%

Meaningful Buyer Interactions Begin With Asking The Right Questions

Using the Index as an assessment tool, before a digital event or workshop, can create more compelling conversations, because the results from the assessment will allow you to draw from real insights, direct from your customers.

IDC's Enterprise Intelligence Index is most powerful when used as an assessment tool, and paired with IDC solutions that give you an audience with your buyers. Ask us about how you can leverage the Index to have deeper buyer conversations, with IDC solutions like webcasts, virtual roundtables and speaking engagements.

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