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Cognos 8 Query, Reporting and Analysis Capabilities

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Evaluation Methodology

BIScorecard evaluates vendor products with the view of a customer who wishes to buy a full BI suite or integrated toolset. Products are evaluated according to major functional areas ranging from query and reporting to architecture and administration. Within each functional area, I score vendors on various features. This list of criteria is based on:

- Features that customers often look for in evaluations
- Unique capabilities identified while evaluating products
- Vendor marketing claims that are either a point of differentiation or confusion

To evaluate products, I rely on vendor briefings, customer feedback, and newsgroup postings. To ensure an objective, apples-to-apples comparison of products, I also evaluate the software hands-on. Because I seldom have the benefit of days or weeks of training (that I hope a typical customer would invest in), this does pose a challenge in evaluating more complex products. When a task is not apparent via the menus or online help, I rely on vendor documentation. Poor documentation for complex products can hurt a vendor's evaluation.

Each feature is assigned a score of 0 to 3:

Score	Explanation
3	Exceptional capabilities
2	Very good capabilities
1	Limited capabilities, difficult to do, or may require a work around
0	Minimal capabilities out of the box. The software may require customization or coding to accomplish.

This evaluation represents findings for Cognos 8.0, tested hands on Q1 2006.