☐ Email Integration

☐ White Labeling

☑ Executive dashboards

☐ Single Sign-On

☑ Multi-tenant Security

☑ Mobile Support

☐ Web Pivot Table

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mrc's 15-point reporting checklist

Introduction

What makes for good reporting software? How do you know which option is best for your company?

While the answer to that question largely lies in your company's needs, all "enterprise-class" reporting solutions must include certain essential features. In this checklist, you'll find 15 such features that any "enterprise-class" reporting solution must include. For your convenience, it is broken up into three sections:

1. **Essential Applications**
   This section includes 6 essential reports that good reporting software must create. Click on each report type to view a live demo.

2. **Essential Security Features**
   Reporting software isn't just about flashy charts and graphs. Good reporting software provides total control over the data and user access. This section outlines 5 essential security features found in good reporting software.

3. **Essential Software Features**
   This section outlines 4 features that must exist in the reporting software itself. These features add power and flexibility to your reports.

When combined, the features found in this checklist provide a great starting point in your search for reporting software. It gives you a solid list of must-have elements that will help your company avoid purchasing the wrong software, or overlooking critical features. For your convenience, you'll even find checkboxes by each feature that you can check off as you go through the process.

Let's get started. Here's a 15-point checklist of essential reporting features:

Essential Applications

Types of reports that good reporting software must create.
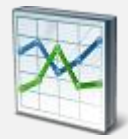
Click on each reporting type to view a live demo

☐ **Ad-hoc Reporting**

Ad-hoc reporting is essential because it lets end users create and distribute reports on the fly, and helps remove the reporting burden from the IT department. The user selects the data elements he/she wishes to see in the report, and then can either export the report into a format of their choosing or email it directly from the web browser.

☐ **Web Pivot Table Report**

Pivot tables are powerful interactive reports that let users view data from multiple perspectives. They are great for analyzing data, making comparisons, and discovering trends.

☐ **Interactive Reporting**

Interactive reports display as much or as little data as the user desires, and lets users analyze the data however they wish. It starts out with a high level view of business data and lets users filter, sort, and drill down to the most minute details.

☐ **Business Dashboard**

A business dashboard displays multiple high-level graphs and reports in one easy-to-use interface. It lets executives see information critical to their everyday decision-making and can alert a company to problems before they get out of hand.

☐ **Ranking Report**

A ranking report creates variable rankings, across multiple dimensions, while specifying various selection criteria at run-time. It's a critical component to a good reporting solution because it lets users quickly compile reports showing the best and worst of any aspect of their business.

☐ **Drill-down Report**

Drill-down reports give users a high-level overview of their data and lets them drill down into more information as needed. Drill-down reports also provide interactive charts and graphs, which let users drill down to more information when they click on graph values.

Security Features

Essential security features found in good reporting software.

☐ Application level security

Unless every employee in your organization needs access to every application, you need application level security. It lets you control reporting application access on a per-user role, or per-user basis. This typically includes a role-based menuing system, which displays different menu options to different users based on their role.

☐ Row-level (or multi-tenant) security

Different users (or groups of users) have varying levels of data access. Multi-tenant security lets you control data access within a single application at the row level. This means that multiple users access the same application, but view different data.

☐ Single sign-on

A session/user authentication process, single sign-on (SSO) lets users enter their name and password in only one place, and access multiple related applications. It authenticates the user for all authorized applications and eliminates login prompts when switching between applications in a single session.

☐ User-specific data sources

Similar to row-level security, this security feature applies to the database level. It lets you build a single application that accesses different data sources depending on the user. It provides flexibility, as it lets developers control database access on a user level.

☐ User privilege parameters

User privilege parameters let you personalize features and security to individual users or user roles. Saved to a user's profile, these user privilege parameters control user-specific features throughout every report.

Software Features

Features that must exist in the reporting software itself.

☐ **Intelligent Alerts**

Intelligent alerts let a BI application automatically send an email or sms message to the appropriate party when data reaches a pre-defined threshold. For instance, intelligent alerts can instantly notify the CEO any time a customer cancels their account, or any time sales numbers reach abnormal levels.

☐ **Mobile support**

Modern reporting solutions must create applications that instantly adapt to any platform or device. A single report must provide a different, yet native, experience regardless of whether the user accesses it on a smartphone, tablet, or PC.

☐ **Email Integration**

A good reporting solution will integrate with your email service, and let you email a report to other users directly from the report itself. Additionally, it must also let you automatically email reports on a pre-determined schedule.

☐ **White labeling**

White labeling (or re-branding) lets you customize the reporting software to look and feel like your current business software. It helps you give the end users a consistent interface, which improves overall user adoption.

About mrc

michaels, ross & cole, ltd (mrc) is a global software company which specializes in web application development software. Headquartered in Lombard, IL, and established in 1981, mrc has offices in the U.S. and the UK. mrc offers award-winning development software, as well as consulting, mentoring, and training services.

mrc's web application development platform, m-Power, is software that rapidly creates all types of web applications such as report-writing, Business Intelligence, executive dashboards, e-commerce, customer portals, and mobile applications to name a few. To learn more about mrc or m-Power, please visit: http://www.mrc-productivity.com