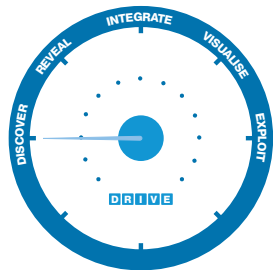


DRIVE Implementation Methodology

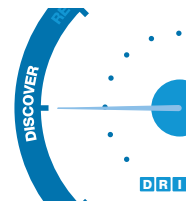
A customer chooses a standard application because it brings the benefit of a tried and tested solution, reduced project risk, and a lower product and implementation cost. This results in faster exploitation of value and stronger ROI to the business.



While a standard Analytical Application removes the traditional need for highly detailed functional analysis, it does not take away the key need of ensuring that the solution is implemented in such a way that it properly supports the business process. As the standard Analytical Application may not exactly fit the detailed needs of the customer, there may be a need to modify functionality to meet individual businesses' operational needs.

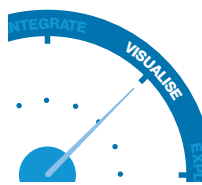
With this in mind **visualmetrics** developed an accelerated form of its **DRIVE** project methodology to implement standard Analytical Applications. We call this **@DRIVE** (Discover Reveal Integrate Visualise Exploit).

The objective of the **Discover** phase is to uncover the changes needed to achieve a full alignment of the Analytical Application with the customers' Methods. This includes any organisational and process changes the customer needs to consider as well as functional and technical modifications needed to the standard Analytical Application. The analysis will include functions across the business which contribute to, or benefit from the solution. This is a customer dependant process, driven by **visualmetrics** with assistance from the client.



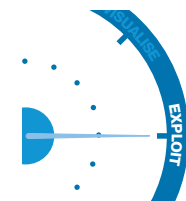
In the **Reveal** phase, documented functional and technical modifications are fed back to the customer. Through this, an optimum solution is identified, and a list of organisational, functional and technical application changes are defined and agreed. Responsibilities, sponsorship and commitments are understood, and the project is launched from feasibility into execution. This activity is jointly carried out by the customer and **visualmetrics**.

Having understood fully how the organisation can make best use of the technology investment, the next task is to **Integrate** the Analytical Application with the existing operational applications and configure it for best use. This work, which includes engineering any programming modifications, is delivered almost exclusively by **visualmetrics**. Through this we automate the delivery of information into the Analytical Application from the operational applications, a process we call the Information Supply Chain.



Training and roll-out of the Analytical Application to the users takes place during the **Visualise** phase. It is now that the information delivered by the solution becomes visible to the broad base of users for the first time. **visualmetrics** assists the customer's internal project team during this phase to ensure maximum knowledge transfer.

Exploit is the post implementation phase where benefit and value is driven out of the solution. It is a process primarily run by the customer's project team as it seeks to ensure that the targets set, which have been set, are achieved, and ROI realised. **visualmetrics** acts in a secondary reference and support role as the Analytical Application beds in, and familiarity with it grows.



To derive benefit from the investment, the focus of the implementation must be on ensuring full alignment of the application to the improved business process. **DRIVE** is first and foremost about business process improvement. It is more than solely a technical implementation. While the scope of **DRIVE** is focused on fast and cost effective support from project initiation to implementation, at **visualmetrics** we recognise that Methods inevitably change over time as market conditions and internal procedures change. As new methods diverge from the initial configuration of the application, degradation of benefits takes place. We therefore complement the **DRIVE** service with the **visualsupport** service which maintains the maximum business benefit over the lifetime of the application.

visualmetrics Glossary

Analytical Application: a pre-built application using a BI toolset and based upon a domain of data, which allows an organisation to track, monitor and effect business performance through analysis of its Metrics.

Business Intelligence (BI): software tools from companies such as Cognos and Business Objects which are employed in the overall delivery of CPM based solutions and Analytical Applications.

Corporate Performance Management (CPM): the process of understanding and effecting the quality of an organisation's performance, based upon the interplay of BI, Metrics and Methods (also otherwise known as BPM: Business Performance Management or EPM: Enterprise Performance Management).

Data Warehouse: an off line database, which retains all the aggregated and restructured data that delivers the CPM solution through an Analytical Application.

Information Supply Chain: a suite of software programmes which automates the time based and selective extraction, transformation and loading of relevant data for reporting purposes, into the Data Warehouse.

Methods: the process that an organisation employs to fulfil its operational activity. When qualified by Metrics and reported via a BI tool set the results are used to meet CPM objectives.

Metrics: business measures which are quantifiable, including their associated business rules, (also otherwise known as KPIs: Key Performance Indicators).

Reporting: a broadly generic term which includes Business Intelligence, Analytical Applications, Business Performance Management and Key Performance Indicators.

Balanced Scorecard: a management system that enables organisations to clarify their vision and strategy and translate them into action. It provides feedback around both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results. It retains traditional financial measures to assist in creating future value through investment in customers, suppliers, employees, processes, technology, and innovation.



visualrevenue | Metrics Management for Financial Analysis

About visualmetrics

visualmetrics is a Business Intelligence (BI) solutions provider that develops and delivers best of breed Analytical Applications, utilising BI tools, to its focus markets. Based in Chester, with an annual turnover approaching €4 million, **visualmetrics** also offers consultancy services to construct custom applications tailored to a client's specific requirements.

visualmetrics has developed specialist project methodologies for the delivery of its solutions - **DRIVE** for custom Analytical Applications and an accelerated form, **@DRIVE**, for standard applications. These services span the full application life cycle from functional specification to application support and enhancement, ensuring that project risk is managed and ROI is maximised.

visualmetrics maintains partnerships with leading product, application and service partners in the BI market. **visualmetrics** sees its value not only in assisting its customers to exploit data as information on which to base decisions, but as intelligence to promote insight into businesses performance.

Our clients include market leaders such as DHL, Unipart, Balfour Beatty Utilities, Places for People, Travelex and CIPD.

visualmetrics has developed a suite of Analytical Applications, based on their length and breadth of industry and technical experience.

- **visualaffinity** for contact centres
- **visualperformance** for sales
- **visuallogistics** for logistics
- **visualrevenue** for finance
- **visualintellect** for human resources
- **visualavenue** for property portfolio management
- **visualintegrator** the engine to automate the data delivery

Executive Summary

visualrevenue gives financial specialists insight into the financial health of the organisation by representing KPIs in terms of **cash flow, debtors, creditors, and profit measures**. This is achieved through an analytical application integrated to the General Ledger, budgeting and other associated applications. The application is delivered through a combination of dashboard, exception-highlighting, and alerts which give real-time responses to business critical situations.

visualmetrics has also developed a rapid implementation methodology **@DRIVE** which de-risks the implementation and enables a fast Return on Investment (**ROI**). **visualrevenue** can be deployed across relevant financial, operations, commercial, and cost centres within your organisation, to ensure that **'exceptional answers are given to critical questions of financial performance'**. Whether you are financially driven, based on cash flow management, operational costs, or profitability, **visualrevenue** will empower your business to optimise its financial performance.

Business and Operational Scenario

Today's business environment is unforgiving. The margin between success and failure continues to narrow. In order to win it is essential to have a firm grip on current financial performance, and to be able to identify emerging trends, effecting positive change through informed business decisions.

Financial specialists and operational managers must be able to keep track of performance targets and ensure that their organisations are achieving business goals. They must have at their fingertips all the information they need, to identify problem areas, to ensure that targets continue to be met, and that resources are used cost effectively and profits maximised. They must be in a position to exploit data from internal applications to make informed decisions, but also as intelligence to promote insight into business performance.

A key business and operational challenge is the timely, relevant, and accurate monitoring & reporting of financial information across all products, business units, and cost centres. This is key, both in terms of revenues, costs, cash flow impact, and time. This information needs to be available in both summary form to highlight current situation and trends, as well as at a detailed level, to provide greater insight and effective business planning.

A typical problem lies in the collation and summarisation of financial information. Often, base data is gathered and collated manually from the accounting system, budgeting application, and departmental spreadsheet based applications. This is a time consuming and labour intensive task which frequently impacts reporting and consequently delays effective decision making. Manual data manipulation methods are prone to error, and allow limited ad-hoc analysis, so the quality of the financial performance is impacted by the quality of the information. The challenge is to capture this data seamlessly and without impact on the performance of operational applications, or employees and organise and present it in a way in which it can be used effectively.

It is critical that in an increasingly competitive environment, that the financial plan is able to respond to, and support the overall financial performance.

While individual users will have specific and variable needs, dictating a solution that is configurable and brings "what if" capability, financial specialists will recognise many common and typical questions and demands that must be answered, including:

- **How much is spent on a particular cost category in the context of other costs and as a proportion of total costs?**
- **What are the shifts and trends in cost structure at any operational level over varying time periods?**
- **What are the cost variances at the lowest level of cost element?**
- **What are the cost variances on an exception basis?**
- **How timely are the monthly financial statements produced?**

Whether you are financially driven, based on cash flow management, operational costs, or profitability, **visualrevenue** will empower your business to optimise its financial performance.

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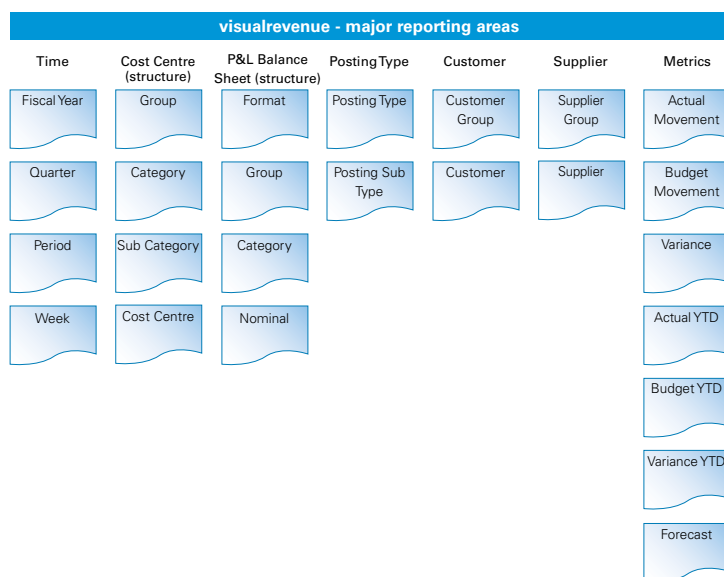
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Application Overview

visualrevenue is a graphical and tabular analytical application, which brings together financial and associated operational data to provide an insight on financial performance. It is built around a standard set of financial metrics and standard reports to manage financial performance. With its design, **visualrevenue** can be customised to add additional metrics and reporting views that may be specific to an organisation, and other subsidiaries or parent company within its financial structure. Through trends and patterns which are part of the business KPIs, **visualrevenue** provides the distinct financial perspectives needed by different members of the organisation, in the timescales needed for effective financial management.

Bespoke reports can be created that meet a variety of needs, from the exacting requirements of auditors to the forward facing demands of the boardroom. Depending on the financial sophistication of the audience, **visualrevenue** can switch effortlessly from presenting a simple pictorial overview, to unveiling a detailed analysis underpinned by verifiable and accurate data.

visualrevenue is designed to meet the business and IT challenges, utilising Business Intelligence (BI) software to provide insight to evaluate the operational success of the financial function. **visualrevenue** does this through a data warehouse, across the systems that feed in data. These systems can be legacy transactional systems, typically the in-house GL accounting system, but also departmental databases, spreadsheets, and budgeting data. **visualrevenue** answers a range of questions which will show how these operational activities impact on the overall business performance. The data feeds selectively import, cleanse and organise data, before updating the data warehouse, while the analytical application through which the data is viewed is refreshed from the data warehouse. Exceptional conditions can be pro-actively alerted within the application, sending an electronic communication to relevant parties via several electronic devices, SMS, Pager, Email, etc.



Features and Benefits

visualrevenue offers financial, operations and cost centre managers a set of business views and standard reports, in a user configurable environment. Data is organised by subject area making reporting easier and key data is extracted and made available to the user without the need to understand file names and database structures. **visualrevenue** is delivered with a standard report pack covering Profit & Loss, Expenses and Budgets. It provides the ability to analyse information and answer ad-hoc critical questions, by subject area, including:

- **Profit & Loss**

Dynamic exploration of P&L statements by drilling up and down the levels of nominal groups held in the General Ledger with the ability to view by company, region, area or department, within one or multiple chart of account structures.

- **Financial Performance Tracking**

Comparison of current financial performance with the same view in other time periods i.e. last quarter or last year to assist in the planning and forecasting in future time periods.

- **Expenditure Management**

Tracking of budgets, actuals and commitments in terms of balances at any period, movements in any period and percentage terms, by cost centre and nominal groups. This focuses the budget holders on their expenditure and leads to a greater level of controlled expense management throughout the company.

- **Improve Cash Flow**

Review of actuals and commitments against income, projected income and available funds to maintain efficient cash flow levels.

Beyond the reporting information immediately available, **visualrevenue** delivers a number of additional business and operational benefits. Weekly managed reports now refresh dynamically, reducing the time and effort of meeting routine reporting requirements. Users can produce their own ad-hoc requests for information more quickly and intuitively than previously, allowing IT to be custodians of the data. By utilising **visualrevenue**, organisations can substantially decrease the time and effort it takes to produce their financial reports. **visualrevenue** also stores extensive historical information which can be used to monitor trends and is the reference basis for informed business decision making.

By being able to integrate other relevant data feeds, the **visualrevenue** architecture gives an insight into the value that the financial function contributes to the overall business operation. By integrating other analytical applications or capturing data directly from other source applications, a Dashboard can be developed which correlates performance in other business functions and gives an executive insight into total business performance.

visualrevenue, in conjunction with **@DRIVE**, enables financial specialists responsible for managing the direction and health of the business to benefit by allowing them to find quick and accurate answers, ensuring that:

- ✓ Spending can be proactively controlled by tracking actual and proportional cost element movements
- ✓ Cost trends are highlighted and can indicate areas that need attention
- ✓ Transaction details are immediately available to indicate factors driving variance
- ✓ Financial reporting is a fast and accurate output from the analytical application
- ✓ Exception reporting or traffic lighting reduces time to analyse by only highlighting the data that falls outside the norm. and can be brought to the attention of relevant business managers
- ✓ Production of multi-dimensional financial statements without the need for re-keying data, saving time and reducing errors
- ✓ Analysis of which customers are responsible for the highest level of debt is clearly visible
- ✓ Data can be represented graphically or in a tabular format, or a combination of both, dependant upon the users requirement

The application of Business Intelligence tool kits and data warehousing techniques allied to **visualmetrics'** experience in financial accounting, delivers tangible business benefits to the consumers of financial information.

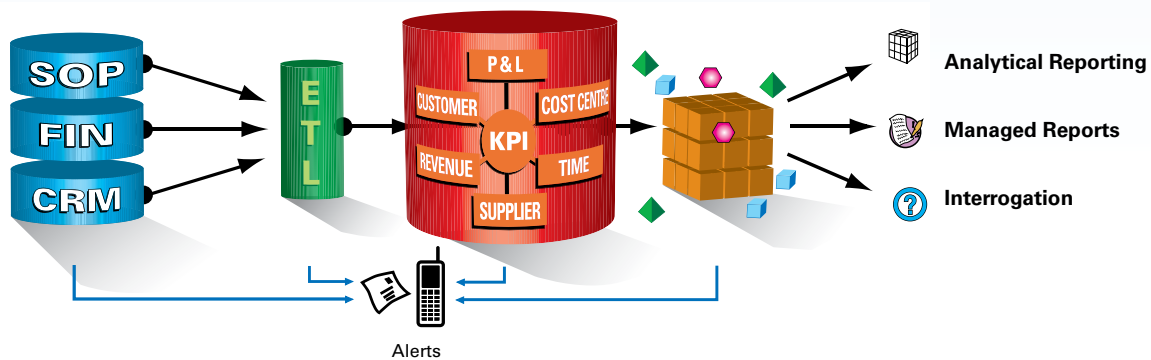
With this key financial information at their fingertips, managers can identify and then tackle hurdles to progress and secure a smooth and efficient fiscal procedure. For added security, individual profiles can be built within **visualrevenue** for each member of the financial team to ensure that they can only access information relevant to their seniority and area of work.

- Manage performance against plan, bringing insight into business dynamics, both problematical and beneficial
- View critical KPIs in a visual way
- Operate the business from one version of the truth
- Identify the effectiveness of business activities at all levels of management
- Report to different management levels at the appropriate level of detail
- Deliver a fast project implementation, enabling fast return on investment
- Automate the delivery of timely, relevant and accurate information

Technical Architecture **visualrevenue** is built from a number of technical components

visualrevenue is built from a number of technical components with financial data being captured from the underlying operational GL system, and other associated financial applications, such as budgeting.

A suite of software programmes which **visualmetrics** term the **Information Supply Chain** extracts transforms and aggregates the data from the underlying operational systems into a data warehouse. Dependent upon the database technology chosen the **Information Supply Chain** will apply either Data Transformation Services (DTS) for Microsoft SQL/Server for loading into Microsoft SQL/Server database environment, or alternatively PL/SQL and SQL+ into an Oracle environment. The frequency of these data refreshes can be determined by business demand, and can operate in a real time environment, if required.



The extraction, transformation and load mechanism that refreshes the data warehouse is designed to work within the constraints of the operation of the underlying applications. As overnight batch processes often consume large amounts of processing time the **Information Supply Chain** uses a 'smash and grab' feature to reduce the impact on the batch schedule by minimising the data extraction time. It does so by performing an optimised extraction to a **work in progress** staging area. Once complete the operational systems are released and the **Information Supply Chain** continues by aggregating and populating the data warehouse from the **work in progress** staging area.

visualrevenue also offers a choice of either Business Objects or Cognos technologies for the analytical application. **visualrevenue** is

maintained to be compliant with latest versions of Business Objects and Cognos software toolsets and operates in both client server and web environments. Business Objects and Cognos are widely recognised as authors of the best of breed software tools in the Business Intelligence (BI) sector.

Security features cover report distribution and user class based access. Alerts indicating exceptional conditions can be pro-actively triggered within the application, sending an electronic communication to relevant parties via several devices including SMS, Pager, Email, etc. The most efficient report distribution strategy is determined as part of the **@DRIVE** implementation process, utilizing the functionality of the BI toolset.