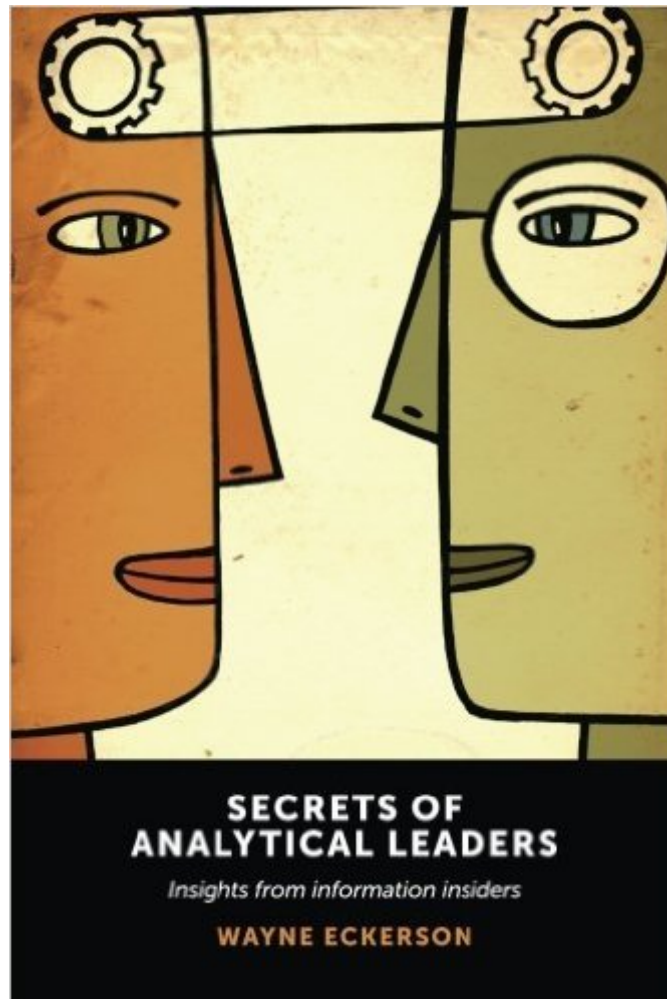


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Secrets Of Analytical Leaders: Insights From Information Insiders



Synopsis

Imagine spending a day with top analytical leaders and asking any question you want. In this book, Wayne Eckerson illustrates analytical best practices by weaving his perspective with commentary from seven directors of analytics who unveil their secrets of success. With an innovative flair, Eckerson tackles a complex subject with clarity and insight. Each of the book's 20 chapters is a stand-alone essay on an analytical topic, yet collectively they form a concise methodology about how to implement a successful analytics program. Wayne Eckerson has created a unique - and uniquely valuable - book in "The Secrets of Analytical Leaders." He's pulled together the insights of seven leading analytics practitioners, and combined them with his own considerable experience. The result is an interesting dialogue among some really smart and distinguished people. I'm not sure which is more interesting - the format or the content!

Thomas H. Davenport Visiting Professor, Harvard Business School Co-Founder and Director of Research International Institute for Analytics Professors are hard at work molding the world's future analytical leaders - but the chasm between theoretical textbook learning and the real world is considerable. Wayne, with his customary clarity and insight, helps professors cross the chasm by delivering frameworks, commentary, and scenarios that are real, interesting, and important.

Hugh Watson Professor of MIS and a C. Herman and Mary Virginia Chair of Business Administration Terry College of Business, University of Georgia and Barbara Wixom Associate Professor at the McIntire School of Commerce University of Virginia

From the Foreword by Michael Halbherr, Executive Vice President, Nokia

We are living in a time of radical change. From my vantage point as head of Nokia's Location and Commerce business, I see many business and technical trends shaping our future and all depend on a new commodity: data. In our mapping business, I see the need to evolve from a road-centric tool to something that allows people to truly understand and maneuver the complexities of a modern city. To accomplish this, we need a lot of data and ways to correlate disparate information into what we call "Smart Data."

Analytics is core to what we do, and how we deliver value to customers today and in the future. I recently spoke to the Nokia board about our data, and some members questioned how we could monetize this asset. Since a few members are executives in the oil industry, I told them that data is the "oil of the future", and that you monetize this new resource the same way you monetize oil, by spending time and money refining it. In our case, we are refining data about people, locations, social interactions, traffic, musical preferences, and so on to bring maps to life. The analytical leaders profiled in this book demonstrate how to refine data for business gain and innovation. They play a pivotal role by bridging the worlds of business and technology. When supported by the business, they've delivered remarkable solutions that have given their organizations a competitive edge. I

highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to monetize the most important resource of our time: data. It's written in language that both a CEO and a CIO can understand, and carries important lessons no matter what side of the business-technology aisle someone sits.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As an avid follower of Wayne Eckerson's writings, I was pleased to have an opportunity to read and review his latest book. His earlier work helped me to understand dashboards and scorecards. The new work which provides insights from seven analytics leaders is a winner. The book is divided into four parts. First the experts interviewed for the book are introduced: * Eric Colson - Chief Analytics Officer for a start up with Yahoo and Netflix experiences* Dan Engle - VP of Vehicle Valuation for Kelly Blue Book* Tim Leonard - CTO of US Express* Amy O'Connor - Senior Director Big Data for Nokia* Ken Rudin - Head of Analytics at Facebook with Zynga experience* Darren Taylor - President and COO for Cobalt Talon, a company of BlueKC* Kurt Thearling - Director of IT and Applied Analytics for Alex Partners, LLP. Second, analytics and its benefits are defined. Eckerson provides a great overview, expanding on his book Performance Dashboards: Measuring, Monitoring, and Managing Your Business (Wiley 2010) as well as referencing the works of Tom Davenport - Competing on Analytics (Harvard Press 2007) and Analytics at Work (Harvard Press 2010). Understanding analytics and its benefits are critical to developing an analytical program and selling it to executive sponsors. The experts each explain how analytics has proven itself and provided strategic benefits at firms including BlueKC, Zynga and Nokia. Third, the people side of

analytics is presented. The author explains how to build a business case to gain executive support; build momentum; manage analysts; organize the analytical function and deliver results through analytical models.

Secrets of Analytical Leaders by Wayne Eckerson is, in many ways, a sequel to his earlier (and excellent) Performance Dashboards: Measuring, Monitoring, and Managing Your Business. The author provides the organizational structure and a majority of the conceptual material, but what makes it a fascinating read is the real-life commentary from seven analytical leaders that he carefully weaves into the book's narrative. The book consists of twenty chapters covering the entire analytical landscape. On the hard technical side, Mr. Eckerson answers timely questions such as how to create an agile data warehouse and identifying the role of big data. But he also addresses the soft side of leadership, such as gaining executive support, building momentum for your analytics program, and proper staffing and organization. Mr. Eckerson defines analytical leaders as "purple people", being neither "blue" business leaders or "red" technology leaders but a balanced blend of the two. And although it is tempting to only focus on the technical issues of managing an analytics program, he cautions: "The biggest factor that determines analytical success does not involve technology; rather, it involves leadership. Successful analytical leaders provide vision, guidance, and support to their teams, and they model and continually reinforce the importance of communication, teamwork, and execution.

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