

The 7 Hidden Costs of Crappy Reporting Software



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Why outdated software is damaging your business – and how to stop the hurt.

Exactly how much is your outdated reporting software costing you?

It's a question without an obvious answer. Sure, you can add up the visible expenses such as training and maintenance fees, but it's the hidden expenses that are having a much greater impact on your bottom line.

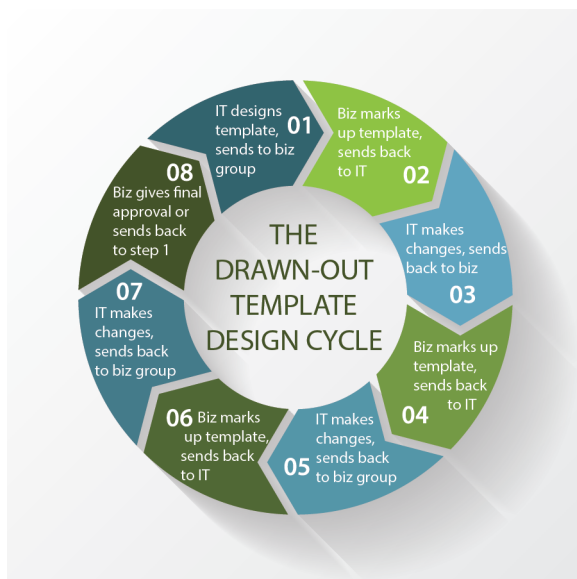
Because of these hidden costs, your outdated and inefficient reporting program could be hurting you big time without you even realizing it.

So let's dig deep and evaluate your current setup's true price tag.

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#1 A Drawn-Out Template Design Cycle

Template design can be a *huge* time suck.



An extended template-design cycle can waste a lot of employee time.

In a typical cycle, IT designs the template and sends it to the business user, who marks it up and sends it back to IT, who makes the changes and sends the template back to the business user, who marks it up again and sends it back... and so on.

This process adds up to a lot of wasted employee time.

Just how much?

Consider CodeObjects, a SaaS solution for insurance process management. They had been squandering hours on each report, so they shortened the template design cycle by switching to a new software app.

As a result, [CodeObjects reduced overall template creation time by roughly 80%](#). That's a lot of employee time (and business dollars) saved!

#2 Subpar Output

If your reporting system isn't producing top-notch output, you lose out with:



Do your reports go directly to the filing cabinet because of inferior output?

- **Inferior reports.** The document that someone (maybe even you) toiled over that simply sits there unopened on a desk — that's just wrong. It's a shame to create a report that gets ignored because it isn't exactly right.
- **Time blown on workarounds.** Maybe you have to come up with a workaround for a template that doesn't meet industry standards, or perhaps you have to translate the output because your current solution doesn't offer the format you require. Whatever the case, your time is money and you could be spending it elsewhere.
- **Unknown customer losses.** Is your sales team embarrassed to show the reporting component of your software? Your reports and documents are the public face of your company. Poor reports can sink an otherwise perfect demo. And you may never know that a prospect chose a competitor over you because your reports didn't show your products off to their best advantage.

#3 Lost Productivity

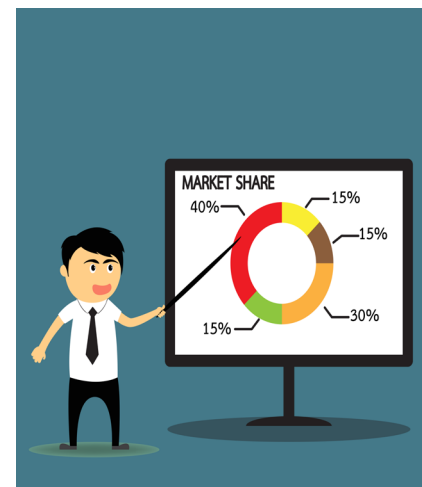
Not being able to quickly produce the volumes of reports you require is another hidden cost.

Take, for example, consulting firm AON Hewitt. They didn't realize how much their reporting had been slowing them down until they switched programs and were then able to generate way more than they had before: [36,000,000 pages per day](#). They were no longer limited by their reporting software; their only limitation came from their database bandwidth access.

Then there's the lost productivity your company experiences in human capital. When your developers are spending boatloads of time each month on reporting instead of on your core application, everyone loses.

#4 Lost Market Share

If you're a software company, you know how speed to market can make or break your application's success. When you're incorporating reporting into that app, a component that is difficult to update or upgrade can lead to costly delays in your own product release schedule.



Your reporting component affects your speed to market — and your market share.

#5 Wasted Training Time

No matter how well you might know your current solution, sooner or later others will need to be trained to use it.

First there's the issue of who is being trained. Are you using salaried developers to train others and how does that affect your cost to train? Will employees other than developers be using the system and if so, how much training will they need?



Reporting software training costs can quickly add up.

Then there's the issue of the actual cost of training. You may be spending hundreds or even thousands of dollars to train each employee to use a clunky system. The hidden costs of a reporting application with a huge learning curve quickly add up.

#6 Delayed Support Response Time

"The real magic is their fantastic support team backed by some A1 developers. What we didn't understand they always explained to us."
 – Excerpt from a reporting software review on [Capterra](#).

Can you say this about your current reporting software's support? Consider all the time your developers waste waiting for responses, attempting to create workarounds, or anticipating drawn-out bug fixes or product updates.

These delays at best make your team less productive and at worst slow down your own product's release schedule if the reporting is integrated into your own application.

#7 The Costs of Free

If you're using open-source software, keep in mind that hidden costs can include:

- **Integration.** Time spent integrating software can balloon quickly.
- **Support.** Your free solution probably doesn't come with free support. That's more time wasted looking for answers.
- **Documentation.** Does the open-source software come with free documentation? Maybe, maybe not. And if it does, it's almost guaranteed to be limited. Again, that's more of your time wasted looking for answers.
- **Product updates and bug fixes.** Open source software is notorious for being late to the game re: product updates and bug fixes. In the meantime, you waste time on workarounds.

Just because a solution is "free" initially doesn't mean it comes without a price.

How to Reduce Hidden Costs

Are the above hidden costs sapping your company's revenue stream? It doesn't have to be this way. There are better reporting systems out there, and Windward is one of them.

Windward eliminates many hidden costs by giving you:

- ❑ Quick and intuitive template design.
- ❑ On-demand report generation.
- ❑ Flexible report output.
- ❑ Impressive sales demo capabilities.
- ❑ Free and detailed training and documentation.
- ❑ Easy integration and regular updates.

How does Windward accomplish this? By providing a unique experience in which you use Microsoft Office to format and edit templates. No more prolonged back and forth with IT, no more time wasted on imperfect output, no more waiting on unresponsive support.

Behind the scenes, Windward's sophisticated engine pulls data from multiple sources and merges that data into your reports, which can be output into PDF, Native Office, HTML and other formats.

Windward delivers a solution that allows IT professionals to easily create templates and business users to customize those templates and create variations to meet their reporting needs. It's a fast and hassle-free experience that can make generating reports and documents fun. **Come see the Windward difference.**

About Windward

For businesses in document-intensive industries, Windward Studios is the document generation and reporting software company that empowers business professionals to create beautiful, professional reports.

Windward OEM and enterprise customers span over 70 countries and all industries, including financial services, insurance, energy, healthcare, HR and technology. We've been delighting customers since 2004.

Our primary products are AutoTag, a design tool that creates custom templates with Microsoft Office, and a Java or .NET engine that connects to virtually any data source.

Windward delivers exceptional support, training, and documentation, with a 98% satisfaction rating from our customers. We're a Microsoft Gold Partner and an Oracle Gold Partner.

Eliminate Your Reporting Software's Hidden Costs!

[Download a free trial](#) of Windward's products or [schedule a free consultation](#).