

Three Hallmarks of an Effective Competitive Intelligence System

Across more than twenty years as an IT Director, I had many sales people incorrectly tell me that their product was the only one that offered a particular benefit. Did their false claims harm their credibility? Absolutely. Were they trying to deceive me? Possibly. But it is far more likely that they sincerely believed their claims.

Their lack was not truthfulness but accuracy. They lacked accurate and up-to-date information about the current capabilities of competing products in the marketplace. Their competitive intelligence system had failed them.



When [DCIG](#) was recruiting me to become an analyst I asked DCIG's founder, Jerome Wendt, what were the most surprising things he had learned since founding DCIG. One of the three things he mentioned in his response was the degree to which vendors lack a knowledge of the product

features and capabilities of their key competitors.

Reasons Vendors Lack Good Competitive Intelligence

There are many reasons why vendors lack good competitive intelligence. These include:

- They are focused on delivering and enhancing their own product to meet the perceived needs of current and prospective customers.
- Collecting and maintaining accurate data about even key competitor's products can be time consuming and challenging.
- Staff transitions may result in a loss of data continuity.

Benefits of an Effective Competitive Intelligence System

An effective competitive intelligence system increases sales by enabling partners and sales personnel to quickly grasp key product differentiators and how those translate into business benefits. Thus, it enhances the onboarding of new personnel and their opportunity for success.

Three Hallmarks of an Effective

Competitive Intelligence System

The hallmarks of an effective competitive intelligence system center around three themes: data, insight and communication.

Regarding Data, the system must:

- Capture current, accurate data about key competitor products
- Provide data continuity across staff transitions
- Provide analyses that surfaces commonalities and differences between products

Regarding Insight, the system must:

- Clearly identify product differentiators
- Clearly articulate the business benefits of those differentiators

Regarding Communication, the system must:

- Provide concise content that enables partners and sales personnel to quickly grasp key product differentiators and how those translate into business benefits for CxOs and line of business executives
- Bridge the gap between sales and marketing with messages that are tailored to be consistent with product branding
- Provide the content at the right time and in the right format

Whatever combination of software, services and competitive intelligence personnel a company employs, an effective competitive intelligence system is an important asset for any company seeking to thrive in a competitive marketplace.

DCIG's Competitive Intelligence Track Record

DCIG Buyer's Guides

Since 2010, DCIG Buyer's guides have provided hundreds of thousands with an independent look at the many products in each market DCIG covers. Each Buyer's Guide gives decision makers insight into the features that merit particular attention, what is available now and key directions in the marketplace. DCIG produces Buyer's Guides based on our larger bodies of research in data protection, enterprise storage and converged infrastructure.

DCIG Pocket Analyst Reports

DCIG leverages much of the Buyer's Guide research methodology—and the competitive intelligence platform that supports that research—to create focused reports that highlight the differentiators between two products that are frequently making it onto the same short lists.

Our Pocket Analyst Reports are published and made available for sale on a third party website to substantiate the independence of each report. Vendors can license these reports for use in lead generation, internal sales training and for use with prospective clients.

DCIG Competitive Intelligence Reports

DCIG also uses its Competitive Intelligence Platform to produce reports for internal use by our clients. These concise reports enable partners and sales personnel to quickly grasp key product differentiators and how those translate into business benefits that make sense to CxOs and line of business executives. Because these reports are for internal use, the client can have substantial input into the messaging.

DCIG Battle Cards

Each DCIG Battle Card is a succinct 2-page document that compares the client's product or product family to one other product or product family. The client and DCIG collaborate to identify the key product features to compare, the key strengths that the client's product offers over the competing product, and the appropriate messaging to include on the battle card. Content may be contributed by the client for inclusion on the battle card. The battle card is only for the internal use of the client and its partners and may not be distributed.

DCIG Competitive Intelligence Platform

The DCIG Competitive Intelligence (CI) Platform is a multi-tenant, platform-as-a-service (PaaS) offering backed by support from DCIG analysts. The DCIG Competitive Intelligence Platform offers the flexibility to centrally store data and compare features on competitive products. Licensees receive the ability to centralize competitive intelligence data in the cloud with the data made available internally to their employees and partners via reports prepared by DCIG analysts.

DCIG Competitive Intelligence platform and associated analyst services strengthen the competitive intelligence capabilities of our clients. Sometimes in unexpected ways...

- Major opportunity against a competitor never faced before
- Strategic supplier negotiation and positioning of competitor

In each case, DCIG analysis identified differentiators and 3rd party insights that helped close the deal.