

### Knowledge of competitors drives informed decision-making, market innovation, and strategic growth.

While focusing on your Core Purpose, Vision, Long-Term Impact Goal and Values must always be the most important driver of your business, looking at your competition can also provide great context on your market and help you see how your business can be uniquely great and deeply satisfying to Authentic Customers.

As humans, we are creatures of contrast. We find clarity and definition by seeing what resonates and what does, what we like and what we don't like, what soothes and what repels.

Reflecting on your competition will help you home in on what makes your company **distinct**, **desirable**, and **different**.

### What is a Competitive Analysis?

A competitive analysis is a strategic evaluation where a business identifies key competitors and researches their products, sales, and marketing strategies to understand their strengths and weaknesses relative to its own.

### Everyone Has Competitors

Every company has competitors. Inexperienced founders might say “My company is the only company that does XYZ.” Don't fall into this trap.

Perhaps your company has a very unique offering (awesome!!), but it is important to know the alternatives your Authentic Customer has to meeting their needs.

Additionally, the presence of other successful players in your market demonstrates there is a real need. It demonstrates customers already exist who will pay for a product/service that solves the specific need your company addresses.

### What is the Competitive Analysis Process?

In this Worksheet, you will follow this simple step-by-step process:

1. Identify Your Competitors.
2. Build Comprehensive Criteria.
3. Draft Your Competitive Matrix.

# Competitive Analysis Framework

## Example: ABC Integration Company



### PART ONE – IDENTIFY YOUR COMPETITORS.

The first step is to identify a list of competitors.

We will explore four types of competitors:

1. Direct Competitors.
2. Core Competitors.
3. Indirect Competitors.
4. DIY, Free, or No Solution.

#### 1 - Direct Competitors.

Direct Competitors are other companies or organizations in your market that provide similar products and services to your market. They might vary in the specific customer they serve (small business versus large enterprise), or they might have aspects of their offering that are different than yours (perhaps they have features or benefits that are different than yours).

In the space below, create a list of 10+ companies that provide similar products/services as your company.

1. Workday Adaptive Planning
2. Oracle EPM (Hyperion)
3. Anaplan
4. OneStream
5. Planful
6. Domo
7. Tableau (Salesforce)
8. Microsoft Power BI
9. Qlik
10. Alteryx
11. Informatica
12. MuleSoft (Salesforce)

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### 2 – Core Competitors.

Core competitors are the 3-5 competitors whose products, services, and target market emulate yours. They may include the more niche players or specific products or services offered by a larger, more generic competitor.

Your Close Competitors are the ones you want to watch and learn from most closely.

In the space below, create a list of 3-5 companies that provide similar products/services as your company.

1. OneStream
2. Workday Adaptive Planning
3. Oracle EPM (Hyperion)
4. Anaplan
5. Informatica

Your Close Competitors will be use in Step Three – Building Your “Draft your Competitive Matrix.”

***Congratulations! You just drafted your list of Core Competitors! Put them in your [4-Page Growth Plan™](#)! And continue onwards...***

### 3 - Indirect Competitors.

Indirect Competitors are companies or organizations in your market that address the same core challenge or problem your company aims to solve, but they do it in a different way, through a different type of product or service.

Here are some examples of Indirect Competitors:

- **Ride-sharing services and bicycle rentals:** Both address the challenge of urban transportation, but while ride-sharing offers car-based solutions, bicycle rentals provide a healthier, more eco-friendly option.
- **Streaming services and live theater:** Both entertain audiences, but streaming services offer a wide range of digital content accessible from home, whereas live theater provides a unique, in-person cultural experience.
- **Home security systems and neighborhood watch programs:** Both aim to enhance residential security, but home security systems use technology and monitoring services, whereas neighborhood watch programs rely on community vigilance and cooperation.
- **E-books and public libraries:** Both provide access to a wide range of reading materials, but e-books offer digital convenience and portability, while public libraries offer physical books and a community space for readers.
- **Meal delivery services and cooking classes:** Both address the need for home-cooked meals, but meal delivery services offer convenience with pre-prepared ingredients, while cooking classes teach skills for independent meal preparation.

In the space below write down 3-5 indirect competitors.

1. Big Four advisory teams (finance transformation + reporting modernization)
2. Boutique finance transformation consultancies (CFO advisory + reporting redesign)
3. Data warehouse modernization initiatives (Snowflake or Databricks programs led internally)
4. Enterprise automation platforms that replace slices of reporting effort (UiPath-style automation approaches)
5. Managed services finance reporting teams (outsourced reporting and analytics support)

### 4 – DIY, Free, or No Solution.

Your customer always has the option of handling the problem/need themselves, making due with a free solution, or choosing not to address the problem/need at all. Here are examples:

#### 1. Home Renovation

- **DIY:** A homeowner might decide to tackle home renovations themselves, utilizing online tutorials and DIY guides.
- **Free Solution:** Opting to rearrange existing furniture or repurpose materials they already own for a fresh look without spending.
- **Not Addressing:** Choosing to live with the outdated or worn aspects of their home to avoid the expense and effort of renovation.

#### 2. Learning a New Language

- **DIY:** An individual could use free online resources and language exchange meetups to learn a new language on their own.
- **Free Solution:** Utilizing public library resources or free language learning apps to acquire language skills without a financial investment.
- **Not Addressing:** Deciding the time and effort to learn a new language isn't worth it for their current lifestyle or career path.

#### 3. Managing Personal Finances

- **DIY:** Someone might decide to manage their budget and investments using free spreadsheet software and personal research.
- **Free Solution:** Using free budgeting apps or templates found online to keep track of finances without paying for premium tools or services.
- **Not Addressing:** Avoiding the management of finances altogether due to feeling overwhelmed or uncertain, risking potential financial instability.

#### 4. Improving Physical Fitness

- **DIY:** An individual could create their own workout routine using free workout videos online and outdoor activities.
- **Free Solution:** Taking advantage of community fitness programs or free trial periods at local gyms without committing to a membership.
- **Not Addressing:** Deciding not to pursue fitness goals due to time constraints, lack of motivation, or prioritizing other activities.

#### 5. Business Marketing

- **DIY:** A small business owner might choose to handle all marketing efforts in-house, relying on free tools and platforms to reach their audience.
- **Free Solution:** Using social media and word-of-mouth strategies to promote their business without investing in paid advertising.
- **Not Addressing:** Choosing not to market due to budget limits, skepticism, or reliance on referrals.

# Competitive Analysis Framework

## Example: ABC Integration Company



In the space below, write down 3-5 DIY, Free, or No Solution scenarios.

1. DIY: Finance and FP&A teams build and maintain a spreadsheet-driven reporting engine, plus manual reconciliations and email-based approvals
2. DIY: Internal IT builds custom integrations and reporting pipelines using an internal data warehouse and BI tools
3. Free or existing tools: Teams rely on current ERP reporting exports plus PowerPoint and Excel templates for board reporting
4. Free or low-cost patchwork: Teams use a mix of "good enough" connectors, scripts, and shared drives, then fix issues during close
5. No solution: The organization delays modernization, keeps the current process, and accepts slow cycles and elevated reporting risk

**PART TWO – BUILD COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS CRITERIA.**

Now that you have identified a range of competitors in your market, now it is time to conduct Competitive Analysis.

A list of criteria has been started for you in the first column below. In the open rows, add any specific additional features, benefits, claims, or criteria you'd like to include in your competitive analysis.

Criteria	Your Company ABC Integration Company	Competitor A OneStream	Competitor B Workday Adaptive Planning	Competitor C Oracle EPM (Hyperion)
A) Market Presence and Position				
1) Market Positioning				
2) Brand Recognition				
3) Market Share				
4) Distribution Channels				
5) Customer Loyalty				
B) Product Value and Category Fit				
6) Product Offering				
7) Quality (trust, auditability, board-grade accuracy)				
8) Innovation				
9) Usability and Adoption				
10) Customization and Flexibility				
C) Data, Reporting, and Automation Capability				
11) Integration Breadth				
12) Automation Depth				

# Competitive Analysis Framework

## Example: ABC Integration Company



13) Board Reporting Outputs				
14) Data Governance and Audit Trail				
D) Enterprise Readiness and Delivery				
15) Security and Compliance Readiness				
16) Scalability and Performance				
17) Implementation Time-to-Value				
18) Ecosystem and Partner Support				
19) Customer Service				
E) Commercials and Honest Assessment				
20) Price				
21) Strengths				
22) Weaknesses				
Best for				



# Competitive Analysis Framework

## Example: ABC Integration Company



### PART THREE – DRAFT YOUR COMPETITIVE MATRIX.

The process of competitive research is ongoing. To get started, set a timer for 20-30 minutes and fill in as much as you can using your top three Core Competitors identified in PART ONE and the criteria developed in PART TWO.

Criteria	Your Company ABC Integration Company	Competitor A OneStream	Competitor B Workday Adaptive Planning	Competitor C Oracle EPM (Hyperion)
<b>A) Market Presence and Position</b>				
1) Market Positioning	4 – “Board-grade truth at speed” for CFO credibility	3 – Unified finance platform transformation	3 – Modern planning for agile FP&A	4 – Enterprise standard for EPM and governance
2) Brand Recognition	2 – Known by insiders; lower broad awareness	3 – High recognition in CFO circles	4 – Very strong recognition	4 – Very strong recognition
3) Market Share	2 – Growing niche player	3 – Strong and rising in enterprise finance	3 – Large installed base in planning	4 – Major enterprise footprint
4) Distribution Channels	3 – Direct enterprise plus select partners	3 – Direct plus partner ecosystem	4 – Broad channel reach and partners	4 – Global distribution and integrator network
5) Customer Loyalty	3 – High after reporting rhythm becomes embedded	3 – Sticky after implementation	3 – Sticky in FP&A teams	4 – Highly embedded in enterprise environments
<b>B) Product Value and Category Fit</b>				
6) Product Offering	4 – Integration + analytics + board reporting automation	4 – Broad platform: consolidation, planning, reporting	3 – Planning-first; reporting depends on data foundation	4 – Comprehensive EPM suite with deep coverage
7) Quality (trust, auditability, board-grade accuracy)	4 – Board-grade accuracy is a core outcome	3 – Strong; depends on implementation quality	3 – Strong for planning; audit-grade varies by stack	4 – Enterprise-grade controls and reporting rigor
8) Innovation	3 – Focused innovation on automation and trust	3 – Steady product expansion	3 – Strong planning and usability innovation	2 – Modernization pace can vary
9) Usability and Adoption	3 – Strong for finance; depends on rollout	2 – Can feel complex to teams	4 – Strong usability and adoption	2 – Complexity can reduce adoption
10) Customization and Flexibility	3 – Configurable for complex reporting needs	4 – Highly configurable enterprise platform	3 – Flexible within planning scope	4 – Highly configurable, often with complexity cost
<b>C) Data, Reporting, and Automation Capability</b>				
11) Integration Breadth	3 – Strong integration focus; depth varies by environment	3 – Strong, often via ecosystem and partners	2 – Often needs external integration layer	3 – Strong, especially in Oracle-centric stacks

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12) Automation Depth	4 — Validation, reconciliation, reporting automation are core	3 — Automation varies by module and setup	2 — Less focused on automated board reporting	3 — Strong, often requires heavy configuration
13) Board Reporting Outputs	4 — Board-pack automation and executive-ready outputs	3 — Board packs possible with configuration	2 — Often needs extra tooling for board packs	3 — Strong outputs; board packs require effort
14) Data Governance and Audit Trail	3 — Strong governance for reporting integrity	3 — Strong, depends on configuration	2 — Governance depends on broader data stack	4 — Best-in-class enterprise auditability
<b>D) Enterprise Readiness and Delivery</b>				
15) Security and Compliance Readiness	3 — Enterprise-ready for high-stakes finance	3 — Enterprise-ready controls	3 — Enterprise-ready controls	4 — Deep enterprise security and compliance posture
16) Scalability and Performance	3 — Enterprise-capable; proven in complexity	4 — Built for large enterprise finance	3 — Scales well for planning	4 — Best-in-class global scale
17) Implementation Time-to-Value	4 — Fast path to board-ready outputs	2 — Value follows heavier implementation	3 — Faster for planning use cases	1 — Typically long deployments
18) Ecosystem and Partner Support	2 — Selective ecosystem; growing partner base	3 — Strong partner ecosystem	4 — Very strong partner ecosystem	4 — Massive global SI ecosystem
19) Customer Service	4 — High-touch support during close and board cycles	3 — Solid; partner-influenced at times	3 — Strong vendor support; partner impacts delivery	2 — Enterprise support can feel slower
<b>E) Commercials and Honest Assessment</b>				
20) Price	3 — Premium, value-based enterprise pricing	2 — Higher platform and services cost	3 — Mid-to-high subscription pricing	2 — High licensing and services cost
21) Strengths	4 — Board-ready automation, trust, CFO confidence outcomes	4 — Broad finance transformation capability	3 — Planning agility and modeling	4 — Governance, scale, enterprise rigor
22) Weaknesses	3 — Lower awareness; requires clear category framing	2 — Implementation intensity and change effort	2 — Board-grade depends on integration quality	2 — Complexity and long time-to-value
<b>Best For</b>				
	4 — CFOs who need board-grade truth fast, with automation and confidence	4 — Enterprises that want a broad finance platform and can support implementation	4 — Teams that prioritize agile planning adoption and modern FP&A workflows	4 — Global enterprises that require deep governance and standardization at scale

***Congratulations! You've completed a draft of your Competitive Matrix!***

Use this as a starting point to continue ongoing research and analysis to help you elevate what is **distinct**, **desirable**, and **different** about your Company.