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**PRODUCT  
REVIEWS**

 **ADVIZOR  
SOLUTIONS, INC.**

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## ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench

*BP Relies on ADVIZOR to Collaboratively Gain Better, Immediate Insight into Complex Data*

**REVIEWER:** Dr. Stephen P. Goodwin, Exploration and Production Technology for BP.

**BACKGROUND:** The Exploration and Production business of BP has interests in 28 countries including the United States, UK, Norway, Canada, and in South America, the Middle East, Africa, Australia and Asia. Our activities include oil and natural gas exploration, field development and production, management of pipelines, processing and export terminals, and liquefied natural gas processing.

**PLATFORMS:** PC Windows 2000.

**PROBLEM SOLVED:** BP collects and analyzes data on many aspects of its operations and uses many different tools to help with data management tasks. One of the challenges facing companies is to be able to represent and discuss data across many different aspects of the organization. ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench from ADVIZOR Solutions enables large volumes of data to be brought together and analyzed through an intuitive interface. Benefits have been realized in data collection and assurance cycles and in the analysis and interpretation of data.

**PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY:** ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench reads large volumes of data and supports the visualization of the data in a way that links different aspects of the data. Selection and sorting operations can be performed very simply as can arbitrary cutting of the data across many dimensions. The product supports both familiar business graphics and novel visual representations of data. Familiar representations of data are important as a way into the product, but compelling visual representations of data help with psychological impact and more powerful analysis. Creation of new views is straightforward and the product is capable of handling our data volumes (tens of thousands of records) without any noticeable deterioration of visual performance. Familiar visualizations include pie, bar and scatter charts and

### MANUFACTURER



### ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench

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timetables, with more powerful but less familiar visualizations (to commercial communities) including parabox/parallel coordinate representations and data constellations. A recent addition to the product is the ability to represent data based on maps. The product supports a variety of data entry routes including Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, databases and flat text files.

**STRENGTHS:** ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench enables multidimensional data to be represented in simple ways that can be analyzed during a discussion. Data can be interrogated flexibly from a complete rollup to line-item detail using an intuitive point-and-click interface. Cuts of the data can be exported from the product which helps with communication of data to different communities. In short, the tool empowers nontechnical users to explore, interpret and explain their data in an intuitive and flexible manner not previously possible. The primary benefit is faster, better answers leading to more confident decisions made in a reduced time frame. A secondary benefit is the discovery of new opportunities to improve/optimize.

**WEAKNESSES:** The primary weakness we encountered is that the import of data from flat

text files can initially be difficult because the data is required to have a certain degree of structure, conformity and consistency of format. This is not an issue, however, when reading data directly from a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet or database. Secondly, better integration into workflows for communication of outcomes would be useful (such as a more flexible export capability and more options available in the user interface to tailor scales and titles). Finally, the full capability of the software is not immediately apparent, and powerful features tend to be buried in relatively low-level menus. This, of course, can be addressed through a small bit of formal training.

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** The original set of selection criteria was for a software product to support discussion based on large or complex data sets. However, it quickly became apparent that ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench functionality could also help with rapid analysis and interpretation of data for individual analysis as well as in a team process.

**DELIVERABLES:** The key deliverable has been the ability to interact with our data and to share and discuss complex data sets. Other deliverables have been rapid insight and quality assurance of data.

**VENDOR SUPPORT:** Overall vendor support has been good, with technical problems normally resolved quickly. Vendor support has been particularly useful in helping to get the best out of the product and in building interest in the possibilities. ADVIZOR Solutions has responded to requests for alternative configurations and options within the product.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Documentation on ADVIZOR Analyst Workbench features is comprehensive as are the examples and tutorials. The documentation could be strengthened in the description of data entry and in the description of data formats required by some of the less familiar, but more powerful, visualizations (such as constellations).