



SafeMeasures®: Better Data, Better Value

Agencies seeking to manage by data need responsive, real-time reporting that helps them get the answers they need from their data. To accomplish this, agencies often procure Business Intelligence (BI) software, using consultants and training to build internal reporting and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) services. But is that the most cost-effective method to attain this goal? Can it be less costly and more efficient to send data to an external analytical service? An analysis of actual implementations shows that an Internet-based system can have a long-term cost that is half of that of an in-house, BI-based system.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) has dedicated itself to helping social service agencies identify and implement best practices. NCCD's innovative solution to managing by data is SafeMeasures®.

SafeMeasures is a team of specialists in social services, data analysis, and technology that provides benefits far exceeding those of the traditional BI approach. These experts customize SafeMeasures' monitoring, reporting, and consulting service to meet each agency's needs by providing useful, simple reports based on complex analyses of case management system data. Nightly data refreshes and analysis ensure that reports are always timely, accurate, and relevant.

Instead of following the traditional model and charging for user or seat licenses, SafeMeasures takes a simple yet more comprehensive approach: a one-price subscription that covers all components of the SafeMeasures service. **A SafeMeasures subscription includes what traditional solutions charge more for: consulting, training, help desk support, and more.** With SafeMeasures, agencies pay a subscription price calculated by their size. **There are no additional license fees or charges.**

A SafeMeasures subscription grants access to all subscribing agency staff at no additional charge, and every subscription includes hands-on training for supervisors, managers, administrators, and IT/research staff. It also provides unlimited access to SafeMeasures' acclaimed analysis and support staff. The SafeMeasures team responds quickly and dynamically to tailor SafeMeasures to each jurisdiction's needs, freeing agency analysts and support staff—or dollars that would be spent to hire them—for other things.

How Does SafeMeasures® Save Money?

When comparing system costs, people often look at how much it will cost for software licenses for their users. While seat licenses are certainly a component of the total cost, simply comparing license costs misses a significant portion of the total cost of a reporting system. The reality is that software licenses make up less than half of the cost of a traditional BI system. A true calculation of total cost needs to include costs associated with hardware, analysis, training, support, and the ongoing modification of reports as necessary.

NCCD promotes just and equitable social systems for individuals, families, and communities through research, public policy, and practice.

Hardware Costs

Since SafeMeasures is a secure, Internet-based system, there are no hardware costs. For a BI system, the start-up costs for servers to process the data, the database to manage the data, and the hardware to store the data can be \$140,000 to \$180,000 or more.

Software Licenses

SafeMeasures also doesn't require separate software licensing fees. With SafeMeasures, all users are part of a single subscription. BI software, on the other hand, comes in many licensing configurations with many optional add-ons. It costs about \$220,000 for a basic Cognos® BI installation that includes 150 end-user licenses and 45 to 50 licenses for various other functions such as authoring reports, managing users, and administering the system.¹ This cost may rise depending upon the number of users and the desired capability.

Consulting and Training

In most instances, the costs of consulting, analysis, and training will far exceed those of hardware and software acquisition. A SafeMeasures subscription includes all initial and ongoing consulting and training, including refresher training, onscreen tutorials, and archived training materials. In a traditional BI system, these costs can quickly multiply. A commonly used benchmark for estimating these costs is between 1.5 and 3 times the costs of the BI software licenses.²

Some Hard Numbers

How do the costs associated with SafeMeasures compare to a traditional, Cognos-based implementation? Comparing the SafeMeasures subscription costs for the State of Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) with the approximate annualized costs calculated from a Nucleus Research study of a BI system in Clark County, Nevada, reveals some interesting differences:

	VDSS (SafeMeasures)	Clark County(Cognos)
Users	3,500	595
Software Licenses	\$0	\$100,000
Hardware	\$0	\$30,000
Consulting	\$0	\$280,000
Training	\$0	\$110,000
Subscription	\$330,000	\$520,000
Per-User Cost	\$94	\$874

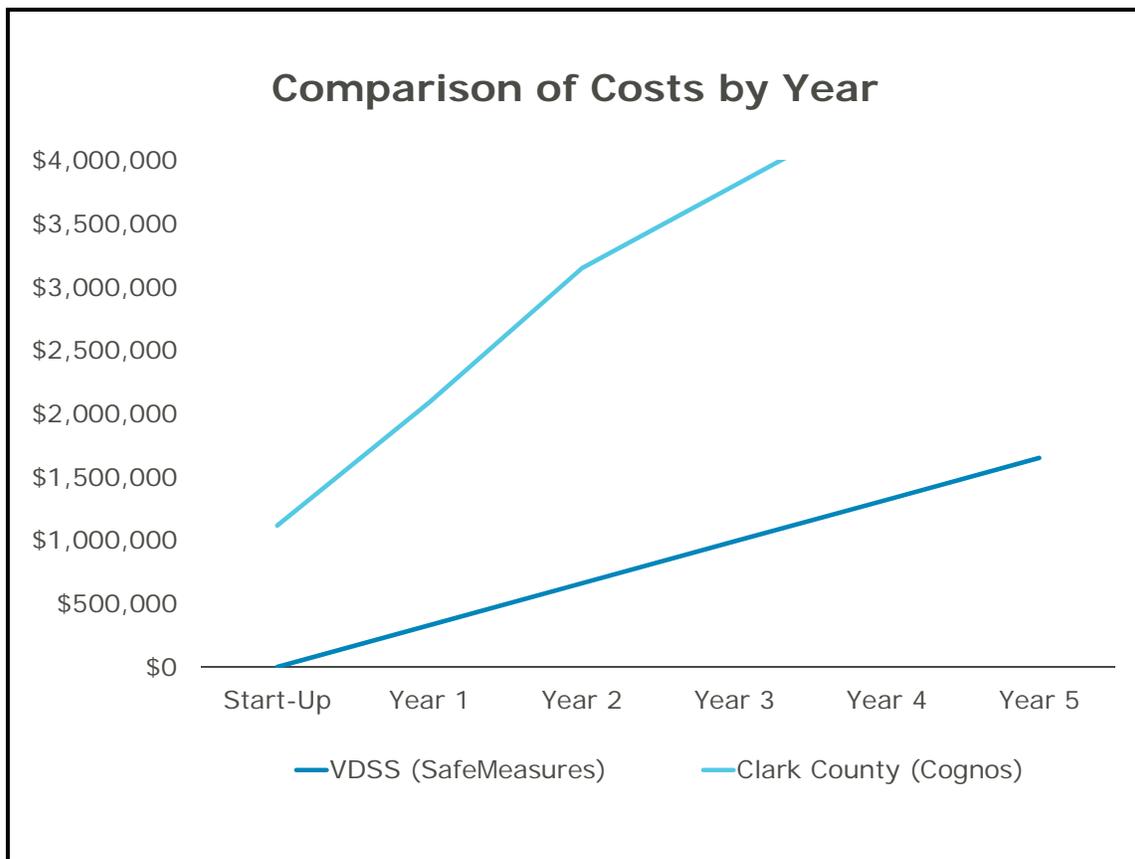
¹ 150 BI consumers, 15 business authors, 15 business analysts, 10 business managers, five BI professionals, two BI administrators. From <http://searchcrm.techtarget.com/review/Cognos-8-Business-Intelligence>

² <http://businessintelligence.ittoolbox.com/groups/vendor-selection/bi-select/cognos-enterprise-planning-pricing-1805841>

Looking at these costs by year also shows striking differences:

Year	VDSS (SafeMeasures)	Clark County (Cognos)
Start-Up	\$0	\$1,117,230
Year 1	\$330,000	\$643,327
Year 2	\$330,000	\$727,508
Year 3	\$330,000	\$322,661
Year 4	\$330,000	\$322,661
Year 5	\$330,000	\$322,661
Total	\$1,650,000	\$3,456,048

Over a five-year period, Clark County will have invested **\$3,456,048**. Over the same five-year period, SafeMeasures for VDSS will cost **\$1,650,000**—50% less for a system that is available to all users in all counties in the state.



Expert Analysis Means Great Value

SafeMeasures is an excellent value for VDSS and for its other clients. At \$330,000 annually, the cost for VDSS is well below what it would cost the agency to create and operate a dedicated CQI unit. The savings on infrastructure and BI software licensing, plus the experience and demonstrated effectiveness of the SafeMeasures team, creates an extremely favorable cost-benefit ratio.

Agencies seeking to manage by data need responsive, real-time reporting that amplifies the power of their data. Data monitoring services must help an agency learn what it is doing well and what needs attention; make sense to users at all level of the agency; and help the agency achieve better outcomes for clients. When chosen wisely, a data monitoring system can pay for itself by freeing up resources and time that can be dedicated to the agency's core work.

The long-term cost of transforming data into usable information is driven not by hardware and software, but by consulting, training, and the cost of assembling and maintaining skilled staff. SafeMeasures bundles all of this into one package of continuous service to provide agencies with a low-cost CQI solution that has demonstrated benefits and high user satisfaction.

Further Information

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About NCCD

NCCD, the country's oldest nonprofit criminal justice research organization, was founded in 1907. Today NCCD works with agencies and organizations across 79 jurisdictions in the United States and nine jurisdictions in Australia, Canada, Bermuda, and Taiwan to develop and implement evidence-based and data-driven practices in adult and juvenile justice settings, child welfare, adult protective services, and other social welfare arenas. Please visit our website at www.nccdglobal.org. For more information, call us at (800) 306-6223.