# **Week-4: Market Research & Journal**

**Group-2**

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**Power BI- Market Research**

The objective of this analysis is to research, evaluate, and analyze a technology solution that can address SLU’s problem of scattered alumni and employer data. The solution is reviewed by looking at its main features, benefits, and limitations, as well as its market position and credibility. Gartner Peer Insights and Gartner’s Magic Quadrant are used to understand how the solution performs in practice and how it is positioned in the wider market.

**Step 1 – Research the Solution**

**Problem:** SLU’s alumni and employer data is scattered across different sources. Without centralizing this information, it is difficult to track jobs, skills, and opportunities, limiting useful insights for students, alumni, and employers.

**Solution and Relevance to the Problem:**

Microsoft Power BI is an analytics and business intelligence tool that centralizes scattered data and presents it through interactive dashboards. It helps SLU address the problem of fragmented alumni, student, and employer data by offering a single platform for insights and decision-making.

**Main Characteristics:**

* Strong data integration and modeling (Power Query, DAX).
* Interactive dashboards with filters, drilldowns, and natural language Q&A.
* Governance and security (row-level security, permissions).
* Integration with Microsoft 365, Azure, and Power Platform.
* Embedding support for SLU webpages and React apps.

**Pros of Power BI**

* Leader in Gartner Magic Quadrant, strong adoption.
* Strong dashboards, Rich visualization, Scalable.
* Cost-effective compared to peers.
* Easy Microsoft integration,

**Cons of Power BI**

* Premium licensing required for advanced features.
* Learning curve for DAX/data modeling.
* Risk of vendor lock-in within Microsoft stack.

**Types of Other Solutions Available:**

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| **Types of Solutions Available** | | | |
| **Category** | **Examples** | **Purpose** | **Relevance to SLU Project** |
| Analytics & BI Platforms | Power BI,  Tableau,  Qlik | Visualize data, build dashboards, and support decision-making | Track alumni jobs, skills, OPT/CPT status, and employer trends |
| Higher-Ed Systems | Ellucian,  Salesforce Education Cloud | Manage student/alumni records and reporting | Provide base records that can be analyzed in BI dashboards |
| Alumni Engagement Tools | People Grove, Graduway | Connect alumni and students for mentoring and networking | Build mentorship and engagement networks |
| Data Integration Tools | Talend, Five Tran, Azure Data Factory | Extract and combine data from multiple sources | Merge LinkedIn, surveys, and registrar data for analysis |
| Credential Verification Tools | True Rec,  Blockchain Solutions | Securely validate alumni credentials and job roles | Allow employers to confirm alumni qualifications and positions |

**Step 2 – Market Review (Gartner Peer Insights)**

In this section, Gartner Peer Insights was consulted to evaluate Microsoft Power BI by applying filters for company size (>10,000), region (North America), and industry (Education) to identify vendor details, overall ratings, number of reviews, and key user feedback.

**Vendor name: Microsoft (MS-Power BI Product)**

**Overall rating (stars): 4.4 out of 5 stars**

**Number of reviews: 3179 Reviews**

**Short description** **of the solution:** Microsoft Power BI is a leading analytics and business intelligence platform designed to bring scattered data into one centralized system and present it in an easy-to-understand, visual format. For educational organizations like Saint Louis University, it helps integrate alumni, student, and employer data. Power BI creates dynamic, interactive dashboards that allow leadership, students, and employers to view insights tailored to their needs. Reviews on Gartner Peer Insights highlight its ease of integration with Microsoft tools, strong reporting capabilities, and ability to simplify complex data models, which makes it a trusted choice for universities. By centralizing data and offering powerful visualizations, Power BI directly addresses SLU’s challenge of aligning information between the university, its students, and employers.

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| **Comparison of BI Platforms (Gartner Peer Insights)** | | | |
| **Vendor / Product** | **Rating** | **Reviews** | **Notes** |
| **Microsoft Power BI** | 4.4/5 | 3,179 | Easy Microsoft integration, cost-effective, can embed in apps/webpages, learning curve for DAX; visuals require customization; performance issues with very large datasets |
| **Tableau (Salesforce)** | 4.4/5 | 4,162 | Higher licensing costs; steeper learning curve for governance and enterprise deployment. |
| **Qlik Sense** | 4.5/5 | 1,316 | Complex interface for beginners; higher total cost of ownership for advanced features. |
| **IBM Cognos** | 4.3/5 | 467 | Less intuitive UX; slower adoption compared to Power BI/Tableau |

**Step 3 – Gartner Magic Quadrant Analysis**

The most recent Gartner Magic Quadrant for Analytics and Business Intelligence Platforms(2025) places Microsoft Power BI in the **Leaders quadrant.** This quadrant represents vendors with both a high ability to execute and strong completeness of vision. The Gartner Methodology defines Leaders as tools that deliver proven performance today while also shaping the future direction of the market.To verify this placement, the Microsoft Power BI Updates Blog (2025) confirmed Microsoft was again named a Leader. This was cross-checked with other Gartner Magic Quadrant insights from ThoughtSpot and other Leaders such as Salesforce (Tableau), Google Looker, Qlik, and Oracle.

**What this placement means for Power BI:** Being in the Leaders quadrant shows that Power BI is trustworthy, widely adopted, and innovative. For SLU, this provides confidence that the tool can centralize fragmented alumni, student, and employer data and deliver reliable, interactive dashboards. The placement also shows Power BI will continue to evolve with AI, integration, and scalability, making it a future-ready solution to solve SLU’s data challenges.

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AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Image Ref: <https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/blog/microsoft-named-a-leader-in-the-2025-gartner-magic-quadrant-for-analytics-and-bi-platforms>

**Step 4 – Critical Analysis Questions**

* 1. **Based on Gartner Peer Insights, where does your solution fall in the Magic Quadrant?**

**Based on Gartner Peer Insights and Microsoft’s official Power BI blog, Microsoft Power BI is placed in the Leaders quadrant of the 2025 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Analytics and Business Intelligence Platforms.** Microsoft highlights that this is the eighteenth consecutive year as a Leader, and the seventh year ranked highest for Ability to Execute and furthest for Completeness of Vision. This recognition confirms Power BI’s strong execution, innovation, and reliability for organizations like SLU.

* 1. **What does this quadrant placement mean in terms of market positioning and reliability?**

Being in the Leaders quadrant means Microsoft Power BI is reliable and has a strong place in the market. It shows the tool works well, is widely used, and trusted by many customers. It also means Microsoft keeps improving it, has a clear future, and is stable as a vendor. Overall, this makes Power BI a safe and dependable choice for analyzing and centralizing data

* 1. **Compare and contrast insights from Gartner Peer Reviews** vs. **Magic Quadrant analysis**.

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| **Comparison: Gartner Peer Reviews vs. Magic Quadrant Analysis** | | |
| **Aspect** | **Gartner Peer Reviews** | **Gartner Magic Quadrant Analysis** |
| **Focus** | Real-world user experiences and feedback | Strategic, market-wide analyst evaluation |
| **Strengths Highlighted** | Easy integration with Microsoft tools, strong reporting, cost-effectiveness | Strong ability to execute and completeness of vision; long-term leadership |
| **Challenges Noted** | Learning curve for DAX, performance issues with large data, premium licensing costs | Broader view; may not reflect every daily user challenge |
| **Perspective** | Bottom-up (individual users and organizations) | Top-down (industry-level positioning and innovation roadmap) |
| **Overall Insight** | Shows how the tool performs in practice | Shows how the tool competes and leads in the global BI market |

* 1. **If your solution is not listed in Gartner:**

4.1. **How can you measure whether it is widely used or effective?**  
If a tool is not listed in Gartner, we can check how many people use it, how many companies trust it, and in what industries it is used. If schools, governments, or big companies use it, that shows it is reliable. We can also see if it helps save time, cut costs, or make better decisions. For open-source tools, active communities, training, and developer support also show how useful and popular it is.

**4.2. Are there other** **ratings, adoption metrics, or third-party recommendations** **available?**

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| **Other Ratings, Adoption Metrics, and Third-Party Recommendations** | | |
| **Category** | **Source / Example** | **Details** |
| Peer Review Platforms | 1. [Capterra](https://www.capterra.in/software/176586/power-bi)  2. [G2](https://www.g2.com/products/microsoft-microsoft-power-bi/reviews) 3. [Software Advice](https://www.softwareadvice.com/bi/microsoft-power-bi-profile/) | Provide verified user reviews, peer-to-peer comparisons, and customer ratings. |
| Independent Analyst Reports | [Forrester Wave 2025](https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/blog/microsoft-named-a-leader-in-the-forrester-wave-business-intelligence-platforms-q2-2025/) | Recognize Microsoft as a Leader; compare BI tools on execution, adoption, and customer value. |
| Adoption Metrics | [Microsoft Power BI Blog](https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/blog/microsoft-named-a-leader-in-the-2025-gartner-magic-quadrant-for-analytics-and-bi-platforms) | Reported 30M+ monthly active users (2025), with adoption across education, government, finance, and healthcare. |
| Customer Case Studies | [Power BI Customer Stories](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/power-platform/products/power-bi/#Customer-stories) | Make-A-Wish Foundation and Lumen Technologies demonstrate real-world impact. |

**Conclusion:** From this research, Microsoft Power BI proves to be a strong solution for SLU’s data challenges. It offers powerful features, strong market credibility, and positive user feedback. Gartner Peer Insights shows its practical value, and Gartner Magic Quadrant confirms its leadership in the BI market. Overall, Power BI is a reliable and effective choice to centralize alumni and employer data and support better decision-making at SLU.