DATA ANALYTICS

Qlik vs Power BI

Comparison Guide

This guide provides an in-depth comparison of Power BI and Qlik to help you select the right solution for your organization.

Qlik

Table of Contents

When evaluating any BI tool, you should consider both your immediate needs as well as the larger role that BI and analytics can play across departments, customers, and partners. This guide compares Qlik Sense vs Power BI on 14 key factors:

Data Visualizations

Lots of tools can make cool-looking visuals. Your BI tool should let you explore all your data in any direction, directly from within the visualization. That way, you can uncover relationships which you may not have considered when you or an analyst first set up a query. Plus, modern tools offer AI to help you create charts, highlight outliers, and suggest new visuals.

Qlik Sense

Qlik offers over 30 beautiful, fully responsive visualizations that automatically summarize data shape, highlight patterns, and pinpoint outliers. And the associative engine under the hood powers advanced geographic calculation and AI/ML to give you an interactive experience and powerful insights.
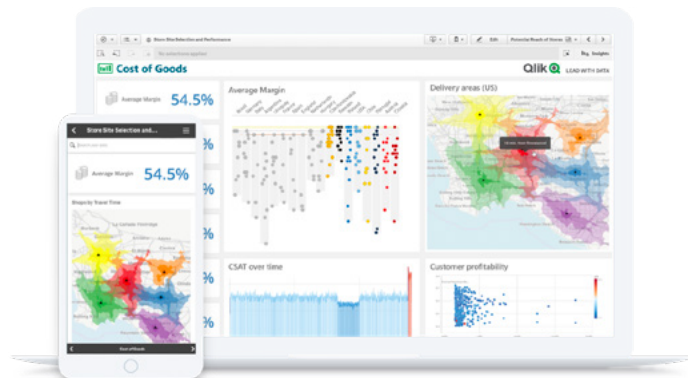
Power BI

Like most top tools, Power BI offers a full range of data visualizations. However, your filtering and exploration will be restricted by preselected query paths. Plus, if you want to view them on different screen sizes, like mobile, you'll need to build different versions because visualizations are created for a fixed screen size.

> **"Not only was the Qlik platform substantially more user-friendly, but we found the visualization possibilities to be highly dynamic."**
>
> -Sravani Nyayapathy*

Interactive Dashboards

Lots of tools can make cool-looking dashboards. But like visualizations, you'll need to freely explore all your data, in any direction, directly from within the analytical dashboard.

Qlik Sense

Qlik's unique analytics engine is purpose-built for interactive, free-form exploration, allowing business users to explore and make discoveries without having to author content. And AI and ML make dashboards even more powerful by adding automated insight generation and natural language interaction.
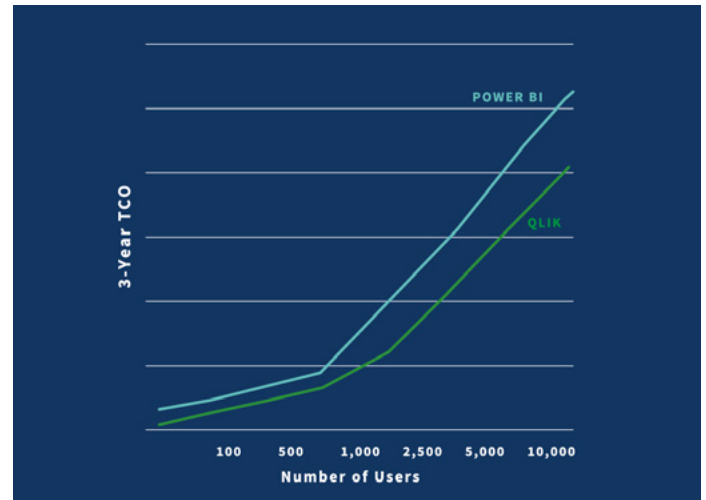
Power BI

Power BI's SQL engine forces you to follow specific paths and limited data. This means that for each query, only a slice of your data is analyzed, so patterns and connections go undiscovered. Except for PowerBI's Q&A feature, the only interactivity you'll have is whatever was explicitly defined by the author.

"The third advantage of Qlik Sense is its Associative Engine. This ability to quickly explore potential correlations between separate data pools is a powerful way to discover new insights."

-Brad Ringen*

Total Cost of Ownership

There's more to making a BI platform investment than the initial purchase. The Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) factors all the costs associated with using a BI solution. From implementation to usability and scalability over the years. Major cost considerations include infrastructure, systems setup, app development, cloud computing cost management, security, usability, systems admin, and support.

Qlik Sense

Qlik has no additional or hidden costs as you scale. Plus, all features–like alerting and AutoML– are included with Qlik whereas you have to add each at additional cost with Power BI.
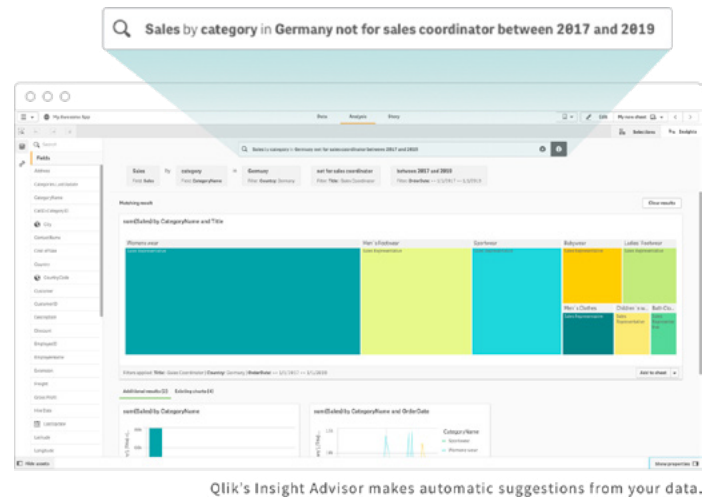
Power BI

Power BI may seem low-cost on the surface. But as you add more users or want to do more complex analysis, Power BI becomes more expensive than Qlik.

"The price comparison is very misleading."

- Tomasz Wojcik, Thermoplast**

Augmented Analytics

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are resetting the expectations of a modern BI tool. Augmented analytics suggests new insights and connections and this helps you quickly analyze your data, increases your productivity, and helps you make better data-driven decisions.

Qlik's Insight Advisor makes automatic suggestions from your data.

Qlik Sense

With AI and ML integrated into its platform at a foundational level, Qlik supports a full range of augmented analytics capabilities. Insight Advisor is an intelligent AI assistant that supports automated insight generation, natural language analytics, and AI assistance. Together these capabilities offer deeper insight, help more people become data literate, and speed time to value.
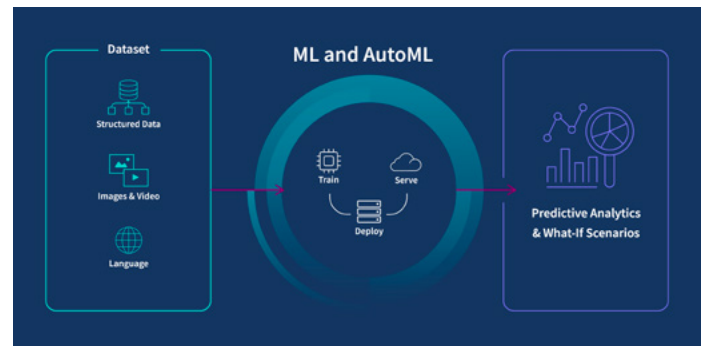
Power BI

A few Microsoft AI features can be accessed with Power BI. Co-Pilot provides a chat bot experience and authoring assistant. And Quick Insights and Q&A support natural language capabilities. However, these two NL features are objects on a dashboard which you'll need to add every time.

"Conversational analytics in Qlik Sense allows us to give the intelligence that people in the field need right where and when they need it."

-Pavan Arora*

Machine Learning and Predictive Analytics

Machine learning is the process of creating models from historical data in order to make future predictions. Automated machine learning allows you to leverage the power of predictive analytics in more user cases not handled by data scientists.

Qlik Sense

Qlik AutoML allows business users to easily create ML models and generate predictive analytics, helping you move from historical analysis to predictive and prescriptive. And with full explainability, you can understand not just what might happen but why, so you can take action. Qlik also works well with your existing data science tools, using a full suite of real-time connectors.

Power BI

Power BI's AutoML capabilities require Azure ML, a separate product made for data scientists and experts that requires additional cost. Plus, Power BI doesn't have nearly as many connectors as Qlik. So, as usual, Microsoft works well only if you have their whole stack.

"We were stumbling blind, trying to figure out what would stop churn and it was frustrating trying to find something that would move the needle. Now, machine learning has really given us direct clarity as to what will make a difference. Instead of guessing, we now know what will bring results."

-Ben Dean*

Many Use Cases (On One Platform)

Your organization should be able to support all BI use cases using the same data and the same platform. This is because you may have many different types of users, such as analysts, engineers and business people performing many different use cases beyond just visualizing data–like embedding analytics, enterprise alerting, and collaborating on dashboards.

Qlik Sense

Users of all skill levels across your business can engage in the best way for them, from data exploration to real-time analytics, to natural language interaction, on the same platform with a common analytics data pipeline, analytics engine and AI capabilities.
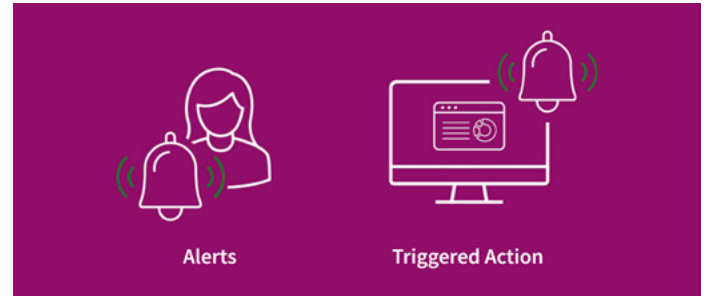
Power BI

Power BI does deliver on a range of common use cases but you'll need to invest in the full stack of Microsoft data and analytics products. Power BI at its core is focused on more basic use cases ("Excel on steroids"), not the full capabilities of a modern BI tool.

"Not only has Qlik's partnership brought us where we are today, but it's been used for dozens of different use cases around our organization."

-Jason Ferriggi*

Triggering Action

It's not enough to create dashboards and visualizations. Your platform should have the ability to initiate action. This can take the form of prompting human action through sophisticated alerting or orchestrating events in downstream systems.

Qlik Sense

Qlik offers intelligent, fully data-driven alerting that is independent of any particular visualizations, delivered through email and mobile push notifications. And with application automation, you can orchestrate events and actions in all kinds of downstream systems and workflows.
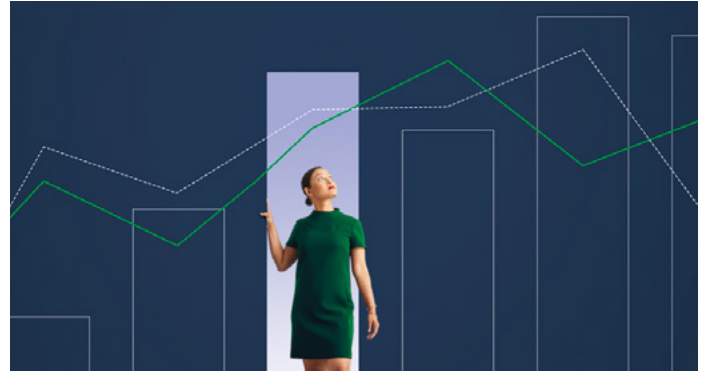
Power BI

Power BI does support basic alerting in the standard offering, but limits you to a subscription based on a single KPI. To match Qlik's capabilities, you'll need to buy Power Automate, a separate product that is not simple for business users to configure.

"We believe the combination of self-alerting and mobility is responsible for the continual growth in our user base"

- Rob O'Neill*

Governed Self-Service

You want everyone in your organization to trust their data, analytics and insights. You also want everyone to work quickly without having to wait for IT or analysts. This means your tool should allow you to control your data and content with a centralized management capability that uses rules-based governance without restricting what users can accomplish.

Qlik Sense

Qlik centralizes and unifies your data and analytics in the cloud, creating governed data models with robust data security. And all content creation happens in the cloud, where it's governed and controlled at every step. Plus, governed libraries provide reuse and standardization for analytics.

Power BI

Power BI takes a decentralized approach, spreading data across people's desktops and the cloud. End-users don't have the ability to create their own viz or make changes to existing ones; they are always dependent on authors. This makes managing data expensive and time-consuming.

"**Not everyone is a data geek. Creating a simple-to-use application gives everyone—regardless of their comfort with data—the tools they need to better perform their job.**"

-Michael Taylor*

Mobile BI

As workforces become more mobile, keep in mind that you and your teams need to be able to explore and analyze data and share insights wherever you happen to be.

Qlik Sense

Qlik offers a fully-native mobile app with its analytics engine running locally and push alerting. With responsive design and touch interaction native to the Qlik platform, you get fully interactive online and offline exploration and integrated alerting without having to redesign apps for mobile access.

Power BI

Power BI has a mobile app but it only allows for viewing, not creating, and offers limited alerting. Plus, reports are only responsive if they were built to be viewed on mobile.

Scalability

You need a complete, up-to-date view of all relevant data. Plus, you may need to support hundreds or thousands of users across your organization. This means you'll need a tool that can handle data at any scale without compromising performance or driving up costs and can integrate and combine data from any source, as close to real-time as possible.

Increasing Users, Data Scale & Analytic Complexity

Qlik Sense

Qlik's associative engine provides instant calculation performance, even with massive data sets, real-time data, unanticipated questions, and high numbers of users. And, with Qlik's robust incremental update and partial reload features, you can keep data fresher in a much smaller build window.
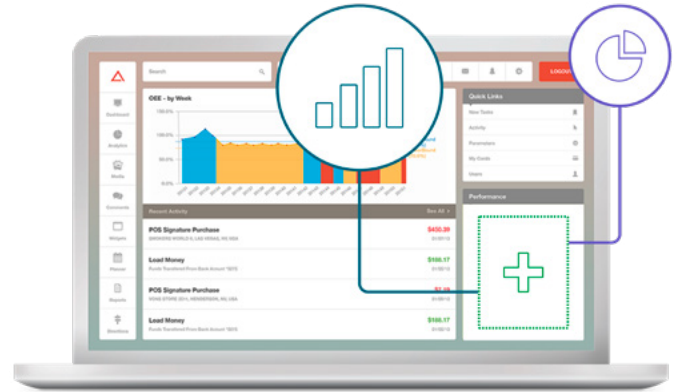
Power BI

Microsoft will make you pay extra if you want to scale. Once you pass Power BI Pro's low data limit of 1GB per data set, you have to upgrade to Premium (or use live query, which will slow everyone's work to a crawl). Even when Microsoft works with big volumes it will always come with a much higher cost or much lower performance.

"Near the beginning of our journey with the analytics platform Qlik, we had about 2,000 users. However, as word spread, the number of interested staff grew exponentially. Roughly a year later in 2020, we had nearly 20,000 users on the platform. As of the first quarter of 2021, more than 35,000 people were engaged."

- Axel Goris*

Embedded Analytics

Embedded analytics refers to incorporating full analytics capabilities within other applications, processes, and portals across an organization. It lets your employees, partners, suppliers, and customers make better, data-driven decisions from within the systems they already use.

Qlik Sense

Qlik's platform was built API-first using modern standards. This means you can embed a dashboard–and individual numbers, values, and metrics–within the latest web and application technologies.
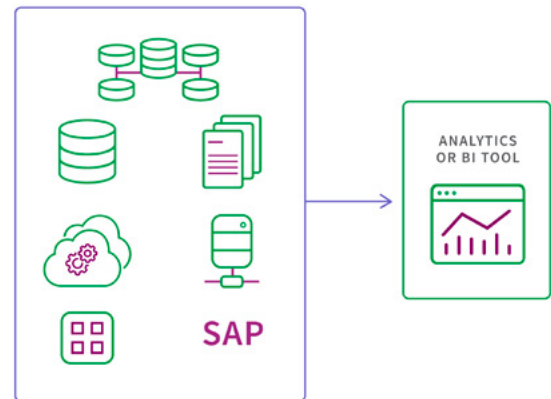
Power BI

Power BI does make it possible to embed dashboards and objects within other apps. However, Power BI is not API-first and many capabilities are not available in its SDKs, the more relevant being the lack of self-service.

> **"Qlik's complete set of open APIs enables us to fully customize analytics solutions, rapidly develop new custom apps, visualizations, and extensions, and embed fully interactive analytics within the applications people use every day."**
>
> - Aaron Growitz*

Combining Data Sources

To get a holistic view of your business, your BI tool should be able to easily bring together data from hundreds of data sources such as apps, databases, streaming data, and cloud services. Robust data prep and combination capabilities are essential for applications that go beyond just a single source. And, they must not be limited by the complexities of SQL.

Qlik Sense

Qlik's associative engine is the key to combining many different types of data from many different sources, at scale, without the limitations of SQL-joins. And, with both graphical data transformation and powerful scripting, you can deal with the most complex of data preparation challenges.
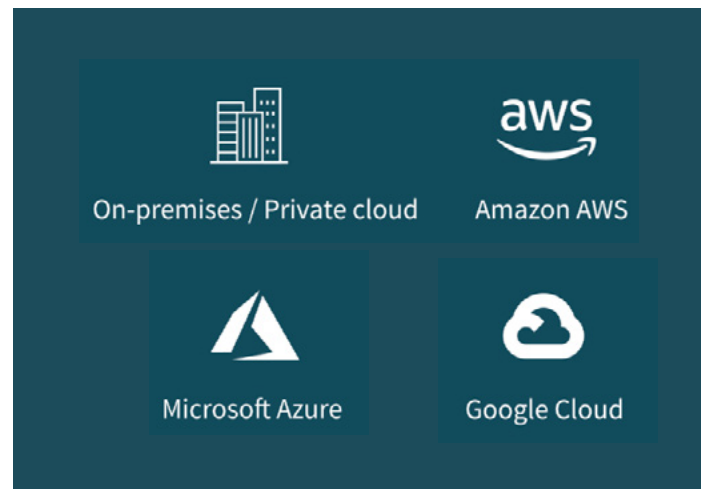
Power BI

Making data integration work on Power BI requires you to purchase additional products from the Microsoft stack. You can have good performance with One Lake (part of Microsoft Fabric) but you're required to pay additional capacity and storage fees for One Lake. And even then, it can be difficult to manage the disparate offerings.

"Databases can be huge, with information coming from multiple sources. Qlik's associative selection model and powerful data engine make it simple to turn piles of data into wisdom."

-Sandra Norman Andersen*

Platform Architecture

You shouldn't be limited in your cloud strategy or where your data resides. Your BI tool should have a platform-agnostic, multi-cloud architecture that lets you deploy in any environment, from on-premise to cloud to hybrid.

Qlik Sense

As an independent platform, Qlik offers you total freedom and control for your data, whether it resides in one or more cloud environments or on-premises. Qlik provides a full enterprise SaaS environment and on-premises or private cloud deployment options.

Power BI

With Power BI, you're locked in to Azure. There's no hybrid option, and if you want to host on premise, you'll have to use a very limited version of Power BI.

Data Literacy Support

Most vendors will teach you how to use their tool. Today, you need more. You need people at all levels of your organization to be data literate. They should be able to ask the right questions of data and machines, make data-driven decisions, and communicate meaning to others.

Qlik Sense

Qlik makes it easy for anyone, at any skill level, to explore their data. Plus Qlik offers data literacy training programs for any user. More collaborative experience where users are able to make copies of projects and experiment and explore on their own.

Power BI

Power BI only provides self-service access to authors. And once these authors have published content, it's only available with very limited interactivity. All other users must go back to the author for a new report when they want to explore deeper.

"We use features like Qlik Continuous Classroom to help people to develop data literacy."

-Vladimir Baklanov*

Should you compare QlikView vs Tableau?

No. QlikView was Qlik's first product introduced over 30 years ago, leading the data discovery revolution. Many customers still use and love QlikView and while Qlik continues to support them, Qlik Sense has been the lead product for almost a decade.

When Power BI compares itself to Qlik, they focus on QlikView. This is misleading, as they're not comparing themselves to the modern platform, Qlik Sense.

This results in misinformation and confusion for the customer.

Compare Qlik Sense vs. QlikView

ABOUT QLIK

Qlik, with the recent addition of Talend, delivers an industry-leading portfolio of solutions for data integration, data quality, and analytics. This includes advancements in real-time data, AI, ML, and automation. The most successful organizations are investing in ways to make sense of the increasing amounts and varieties of data from diverse sources. The challenge is to effectively integrate, analyze, and act on the data while ensuring its trustworthiness. With more than 40,000 active customers in over 100 countries, Qlik's solutions work with virtually any data source, target, architecture, or methodology, to ensure customers have the data they need, whenever they need it.

*Upshot by Influitive Interviews

**Qlik User Survey

Qlik Q ®