DigitalHive.

USAGE ANALYTICS & DISCOVERY | POSITION PAPER

You Have Thousands of Reports. Nobody Knows Which Ones Matter.

Most BI environments have more content than anyone can manage - and no way to tell what's valuable, what's stale, and what's been built three times by three different teams.

THE POSITION

BI sprawl is not a volume problem. It is a visibility problem.

The average enterprise BI environment contains thousands of reports, dashboards, and data assets. A fraction are used regularly. The majority are stale, duplicated, or orphaned - built for a specific purpose that no longer exists, maintained by no one, and discoverable only by accident.

Most organizations do not know which reports are in this majority and which are in the fraction. There is no mechanism for distinguishing high-value content from noise. Users searching for analytics are as likely to find a report built for a meeting two years ago as they are to find the certified dashboard that the CFO uses every Monday.

This is not primarily a governance failure. It is a visibility failure. Governance requires knowing what exists, who owns it, whether it is being used, and whether it can be trusted. In most enterprise BI environments, this knowledge does not exist at the platform level - it lives with the individuals who built the content, if it exists at all.

The consequence is predictable: users stop searching and start asking. The BI team becomes the directory. Discovery is a conversation, not a system.

> When users can't tell the difference between a certified KPI dashboard and a stale report from three years ago, they treat every number with equal skepticism - or none at all.

This paper documents the six patterns that make analytics discovery fail at scale, examines why volume compounds the problem without addressing it, and proposes an approach that makes the right content findable by the right users at the right time.

THE FAILURE PATTERNS

Six ways analytics content becomes undiscoverable

These patterns appear consistently across enterprise BI environments. Each represents a way that accumulated content becomes inaccessible without intentional intervention.

1. Content is organized by tool, not by business function

Report libraries are structured around the BI platforms they live in, not around the business questions they answer. A business user looking for 'monthly margin by region' must know which platform it was built in, navigate that platform's folder structure, and hope the naming convention is consistent. Most don't succeed.

9.3 hours per week lost per analyst to search and gathering - not because content doesn't exist, but because it cannot be found. - McKinsey Global Institute

2. There is no signal for which content matters

In most BI environments, a report with 500 views per month looks identical to a report with 2 views per year. There is no usage signal, no certification badge, no staleness indicator. Users have no way to identify high-value content without prior knowledge - which most don't have.

30–40% of enterprise BI content is orphaned or stale, with no mechanism for identifying it. - Datalogz, 2025

3. The same report gets built multiple times

When content is not discoverable, teams build what they need rather than finding what exists. The result is report duplication - three versions of the same regional sales dashboard, built by three different teams, each with slightly different calculations and logic. Users can find all three and cannot tell which is trusted.

Duplicate content accounts for 15–25% of total BI portfolio volume in mature enterprise environments. - Dresner Advisory Services, 2025

4. Stale content stays in production indefinitely

Reports built for a specific purpose - a board presentation, a one-time analysis, a project that has since closed - are rarely deprecated. They remain discoverable, with no indicator that they no longer reflect current business logic or that they are not maintained. Users encounter and sometimes use content that has not been relevant for years.

Less than 15% of enterprise organizations have a formal process for retiring stale BI content. - Gartner, 2025

5. Discovery is tribal knowledge

In most BI environments, knowing which report to use for which purpose is knowledge held by individual analysts and power users - not captured in any system. When those individuals leave, the knowledge leaves with them. New team members start from scratch or ask whoever has been there longest.

80% of business users identify 'knowing who to ask' rather than 'knowing where to look' as their primary analytics discovery strategy. - Forrester, 2024

6. Analytics governance cannot be applied to content that cannot be inventoried

Governance programs require knowing what exists before ownership, certification, and lifecycle decisions can be made. In environments where the full content inventory is unknown, governance is applied selectively - to the content that is visible, not to the content that is there.

Organizations without full BI content visibility report 3x higher rates of unresolved governance issues. - PwC, 2025

THE HONEST ASSESSMENT

Why volume-management approaches don't solve the discovery problem

#	Conventional Remedy	Why It Doesn't Solve the Root Cause
1	**Content cleanup programs**	Periodic content audits reduce volume temporarily. Without a sustainable mechanism for content lifecycle management - usage-based signaling, certification requirements, deprecation workflows - the same volume accumulates within twelve months of the cleanup.
2	**Better naming conventions and folder structures**	Naming conventions help only if they are consistently followed - and in most organizations, they are not. Folder structures organized around tool architecture rather than business function do not improve discovery for users who think in terms of business questions, not database schemas.
3	**Data catalogs**	Data catalogs are designed for data teams - not for the business users who represent the majority of the discovery problem. They require users to know catalog terminology, understand data lineage concepts, and navigate an additional platform. Most business users never open them.
4	**Search functionality within individual BI tools**	Search within a single BI tool does not help users who don't know which tool to search in. In multi-platform environments, tool-specific search creates a discovery problem for cross-platform content.

THE FRAMEWORK

5 conditions for analytics content that can be found

#	Condition	What to Ask
1	**Unified catalog across all connected platforms**	Is all analytics content - from every connected BI tool - searchable and browsable through a single entry point, without users needing to know which platform the underlying content lives in?
2	**Usage signals visible at the point of discovery**	Can users see, when they find a report, how often it is used, who uses it, and when it was last accessed - so they can distinguish high-value content from stale or duplicated reports?
3	**Certification and ownership visible before access**	Is certification status, ownership, and last-refresh information visible to users at discovery - so they can assess trustworthiness without opening the report or asking an analyst?
4	**Content lifecycle management**	Is there a sustainable mechanism for identifying, reviewing, and retiring stale content - based on usage signals rather than periodic manual audit?
5	**AI-powered recommendations that reduce search burden**	Does the analytics experience surface relevant content based on role and behavior - so users who don't know what to search for are guided to what they need?

THE DIGITAL HIVE APPROACH

Every report, findable. The right ones, obvious.

Digital Hive creates a unified analytics catalog across all connected BI platforms - making every piece of analytics content searchable through a single experience, enriched with usage data, certification status, ownership, and AI-powered recommendations that surface the right content to the right user without requiring them to know where to look.

Cross-platform catalog in a single search experience

All content from all connected platforms is indexed and searchable through one interface. Users find what they need without knowing which tool it was built in - or navigating multiple platform libraries.

Usage signals that separate signal from noise

Usage data from all connected platforms surfaces which reports are high-engagement, which are declining, and which have not been accessed in months - giving teams the information they need to distinguish valuable content from stale inventory.

Governance metadata at the point of discovery

Certification status, ownership, and refresh information are visible before a user opens a report. The difference between an authoritative dashboard and a stale one-off analysis is visible immediately.

AI recommendations that guide users who don't know what to ask for

Digital Hive surfaces relevant content based on role, usage patterns, and behavior - reducing the search burden on users who rely on tribal knowledge today.

CLOSING RECOMMENDATION

What to do before your next content governance initiative

1. **Inventory before governing.** Governance programs cannot be applied to content that cannot be inventoried. Establish full visibility across all connected platforms before making ownership or certification decisions.
2. **Apply usage signals before manual audit.** Usage data identifies high-value content and stale inventory more reliably and more scalable than manual review. Establish usage visibility before scheduling a content cleanup.
3. **Reorganize discovery around business function, not tool architecture.** Users search in terms of business questions, not database schemas or BI platform folder structures. Reindex content discovery around how users think about their work.
4. **Make governance visible at the point of discovery.** Governance metadata that lives in a separate catalog does not change user behavior. Certification, ownership, and freshness information must be visible the moment users encounter content.

Digital Hive is the unification layer.

A centralized analytics hub that gives organizations visibility, trust, and control across their entire BI ecosystem - without changing a single existing tool.

Connects natively with your existing platforms... and more.

Power BI · Tableau · Qlik · Databricks · Snowflake · SAP Analytics Cloud · Looker · IBM Cognos Strategy · ThoughtSpot · Salesforce · SharePoint · Oracle