2.6 GUIDELINES FOR OLAP IMPLEMENTATION

Following are a number of guidelines for successful implementation of OLAP. The guidelines are, somewhat similar to those presented for data warehouse implementation.

1. **Vision:** The OLAP team must, in consultation with the users, develop a clear vision for the OLAP system. This vision including the business objectives should be clearly defined, understood, and shared by the stakeholders.

2. **Senior management support:** The OLAP project should be fully supported by the senior managers. Since a data warehouse may have been developed already, this should not be difficult.

3. **Selecting an OLAP tool:** The OLAP team should familiarize themselves with the ROLAP and MOLAP tools available in the market. Since tools are quite different, careful planning may be required in selecting a tool that is appropriate for the enterprise. In some situations, a combination of ROLAP and MOLAP may be most effective.

4. **Corporate strategy:** The OLAP strategy should fit in with the enterprise strategy and business objectives. A good fit will result in the OLAP tools being used more widely.

5. **Focus on the users:** The OLAP project should be focused on the users. Users should, in consultation with the technical professional, decide what tasks will be done first and what will be done later. Attempts should be made to provide each user with a tool suitable for that person’s skill level and information needs. A good GUI user interface should be provided to non-technical users. The project can only be successful with the full support of the users.

6. **Joint management:** The OLAP project must be managed by both the IT and business professionals. Many other people should be involved in supplying ideas. An appropriate committee structure may be necessary to channel these ideas.

7. **Review and adapt:** As noted in last chapter, organizations evolve and so must the OLAP systems. Regular reviews of the project may be required to ensure that the project is meeting the current needs of the enterprise.
2.7 OLAP SOFTWARE

There is much OLAP software available in the market. A list is available at http://www.kdnuggets.com/software/dbolap.html another is available at http://www.olapreport.com/market.htm.

The list below provides some major OLAP software.

- **BI2M** (Business Intelligence to Marketing and Management) from B&M Services has three modules one of which is for OLAP. The OLAP module allows database exploring including slice and dice, roll-up, drill-down and displays results as 2D charts, 3D charts and tables.

- **Business Objects OLAP Intelligence** from Business Objects allows access to OLAP servers from Microsoft, Hyperion, IBM and SAP. Usual operations like slice and dice, and drill directly on multidimensional sources are possible. Business Objects also has widely used Crystal Analysis and Reports.

- **ContourCube** from Contour Components is an OLAP product that enables users to slice and dice, roll-up, drill-down and pivot efficiently.

- **DB2 Cube Views** from IBM includes features and functions for managing and deploying multidimensional data. It is claimed that OLAP solutions can be deployed quickly.

- **Essbase Integration Services** from Hyperion Solutions is a widely used suite of tools. The company’s Web sites make it difficult to understand what the software does. It 2005 market ranking was 2.

- **Everest** from OutlookSoft is a Microsoft-based single application and database that provides operational reporting and analysis including OLAP and multidimensional slice and dice and other analysis operations.

- **Executive Suite** from CIP-Global is an integrated corporate planning, forecasting, consolidation and reporting solution based on Microsoft’s SQL server 2000 and analysis Services Platform.

- **Executive Viewer** from Temtec provides users real-time Web access to OLAP databases such as Microsoft Analysis Services and Hyperion Essbase for advanced and ad hoc analysis as well as reporting.

- **Express and the Oracle OLAP Option – Express** is a multidimensional database and application development environment for building OLAP applications. It is MOLAP.
OLAP Analytic workspaces is a porting of the Oracle Express analytic engine to the Oracle RDBMS kernel which now runs as an OLAP virtual machine.

- MicroStrategy 8 from MicroStrategy provides facilities for query, reporting and advanced analytical needs. Its 2005 market ranking was 5.
- NovaView from Panorama extends the Microsoft platform that integrates analysis, solution. Reporting and performance measurement information into a single
- PowerPlay from Cognos is widely used OLAP software that allows users to analyze large volumes of data with fast response times. Its 2005 market ranking was 3.
- SQL Server 2000 Analysis Services from Microsoft. SQL Server 2000 Analysis Services is the OLAP Services component in SQL Server 7.0