# 5 Indispensable Quality Management Software Tools

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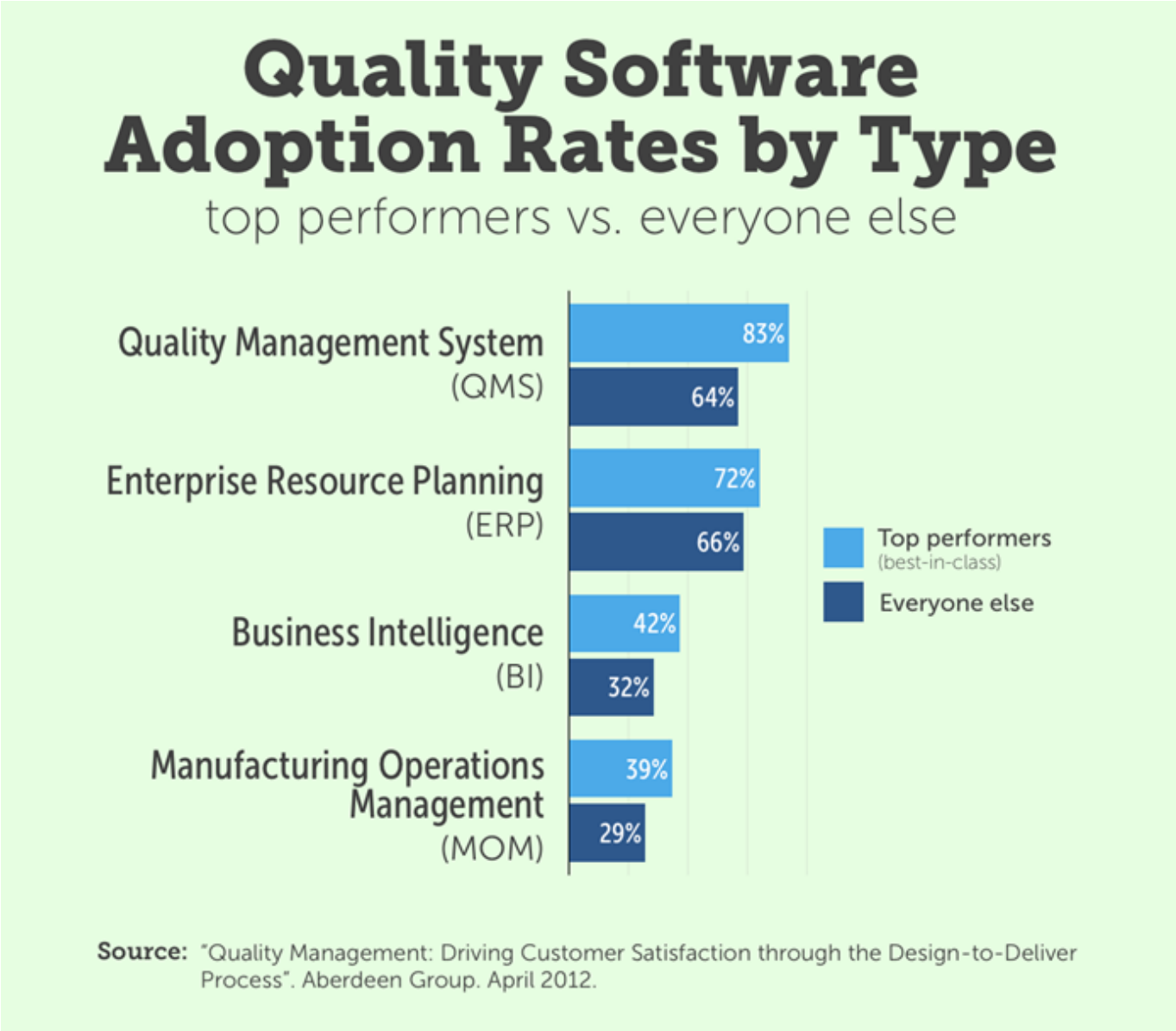
It’s probably not too controversial to suggest that software can accelerate quality management capabilities. In fact, it sounds a lot like common-sense. But in the world of quality management, common-sense is just a starting point, rather than a destination. The truth resides in the final numbers and it’s critical to bring them to bear when judging the effectiveness of any approach.

So how does the use of quality management software affect overall business performance? The relationship seems to be unequivocally positive. In a 2011 survey, the Aberdeen Group found that “best-in-class manufacturers” had substantially higher quality management software usage rates than everyone else (83% compared to 64%).




Aberdeen defines “top performers” or “best-in-class” as the top performing 20% of businesses. For more info see Aberdeen’s full report [1].

Given their impact on corporate performance, it’s no shock to find a plethora of commercially available quality management software options on the market. In fact, quality management software systems come in many combinations of product scope, platform, industry-focus, integration capabilities, and other functional dimensions.

Despite the variety, quality management systems do have one thing in common. They all pull functional solutions from the same rich tradition of quality management thinking. It’s a management tradition that takes the objectives of testability and improvement seriously. And, unsurprisingly, some particularly robust answers have emerged to the question of which quality tools provide the most value. In fact, it’s these core functional structures—or tools—that tend to be repeatedly implemented in quality management software programs.

In order to understand precisely which of these tools offer the most practical

benefit, I spoke with a Six Sigma master black belt and got his opinion.

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