



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Decision Lens?

Decision Lens works with leading organizations to bring structure and quality to key decisions. Our comprehensive software solutions enable you to manage the strategic alignment of goals and priorities with investments in projects, products, people and suppliers. Decision Lens offers both desktop and Web-based versions, and the software is group-enabled. It allows you to bring together multiple and diverse stakeholders to structure and evaluate key decisions, whether in one meeting room or from locations around the globe. The result is a more accurate, repeatable, and transparent process for decision making, even when the drivers and considerations are subjective and intangible.

### Why would I use Decision Lens?

Making good decisions is the most important activity for any organization. Yet most organizations today lack any process for robust decision making. Called “BOGSAAT” (Bunch Of Guys and Gals Sitting Around A Table), today’s decision-making has changed relatively little from how it was done decades ago.


Decision Lens helps you prioritize, plan better and change course quickly when you need to. Fortune 500 companies including Johnson & Johnson, eBay, and National Grid, and government organizations such as Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy, NASA, and USDA among many others are already using this powerful, proven tool. Decision Lens is used to:

- Develop a priority-based alignment between your strategic and business plans. You will clearly, concisely structure the decision criteria along with the relationship and definitions of those criteria, and then perform pairwise trade-offs to hone in on the exact priority of each criterion.
- Bring together a group of diverse stakeholders from across the organization to develop priorities. Participants collaborate either in-room or from around the globe through the Web.
- Look across your business to evaluate the value of the initiatives that you plan to invest in; understand key industry risks; do “what if” analyses; and return scenarios to maximize your asset portfolio.
- Allocate your resources to the highest value activities.
- Make the best use of your financial and human resources.

### How does Decision Lens work? Is Decision Lens based on a robust decision-making methodology?

Yes. Decision Lens is based on advanced analytical methods designed to support decision makers **in structuring decisions, quantifying intangible factors and evaluating choices** in a **comprehensive and rational framework**.

The underlying methodology, called the **Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)**, was first developed by mathematician and decision scientist



Dr. Thomas Saaty while he was a professor at the Wharton School of Business. His methods have been applied to assist organizations in allocating billions of dollars towards selecting the best projects, vendors, people and organizational strategies.

The **Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)** enables decision makers to **structure decisions hierarchically** with the overall goal of the decision at the top of the model, strategic objectives in the higher levels, evaluation criteria in the middle levels, and alternative choices at the bottom.

The AHP provides a structured framework for setting priorities on each level of the hierarchy using **pair-wise comparisons**, a process of evaluating each pair of decision factors at a given level on the model for their relative importance with respect to their parent.

The **consistency** of the judgments is tracked using the rigorous math analytics behind the AHP to validate the decision process. In cases where inconsistency is above 10% it is recommended that the criteria and judgments be revisited.

Decision makers are then able to create a **model of their priorities** where the weight of the decision is distributed from the goal downwards.


If a user increases the weight of a criterion, the alternatives that performed well on that criterion will always get higher scores. This **sensitivity analysis** is portrayed graphically in the Decision Lens software products and is extremely valuable for testing the impact of changing priorities on alternative business decision choices.

In Decision Lens, the AHP is integrated with a **linear programming optimizer** to enable decision makers to define business rules for budget allocation. They can then allocate resources across investment alternatives to maximize business value. Using this optimization capability, organizations can effectively manage investments in projects and people using a true portfolio-based framework rather than a project-based framework.

## What are some examples of decision applications that I could use Decision Lens for?

Decision Lens and the AHP have been applied to numerous decision challenges. Following are some examples:

- Business Planning and Budget Allocation
- Business Process Prioritization
- Capability Analysis/Planning
- Capital Planning
- Engineering Trade Studies
- Facilities Planning
- Grants Management
- HR Succession Planning/Talent Management
- Intelligence Analysis
- IT Architecture
- IT Portfolio Prioritization/Budget Allocation
- Marketing
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Performance Management
- Policy Development
- Product Development
- Quality Function Deployment
- R&D Planning
- Requirements Prioritization
- Risk Management
- Six Sigma
- Strategic Planning
- Transportation Planning
- Vendor/Best Value Source Selection



## Is Decision Lens difficult to implement?

**No.** Decision Lens has been specifically designed for both ease of use and ease of implementation. You can literally be up and running in minutes, and complete your first decision sessions on day one. Decision Lens offers 2 different products.

**Decision Lens Suite Desktop** can be downloaded to any PC and set up in minutes. This powerful platform is Vista®- ready, and has integrated resource allocation capabilities, full reporting and the ability to export all data to Excel spreadsheets. Decision models are kept locally as files on the PC, and the software is group enabled for in-room meetings. Decision Lens comes with keypads for audience participation in criteria prioritization and evaluation of alternatives against those criteria.

- Identify and organize the decision variables, including key objectives and related factors.
- Evaluate numerous and often competing alternatives among other participants or stakeholders.
- Test the outcome by performing “what if” sensitivity analysis.
- Apply the results in order to create and optimize budgets.
- Communicate the findings across your organization easily with the integrated reporting capabilities.

**Decision Lens Web** is a Rich Internet Application that has all of the dynamic interactivity, color and utility of the desktop version but is accessed through the Internet, enabling participants and facilitators to collaborate and contribute from locations anywhere in the world. The application requires no software downloads or installations—it is accessed directly through your browser.

The integrated Web Suite Lobby is a central portal where your organization can manage and save decisions. While allowing you to share key information with others, the Web Suite Lobby also gives you control over who has access. This secure web-based application utilizes Decision Lens’ patent-pending management and control access framework, which enables you to define different roles and permissions for users—from voters, to reviewers, to backup facilitators and more.

Remote users can participate in same-time online conferences or use At-Your-Convenience Voting™ in Async mode, where they can cast their votes at different times but seamlessly integrated with the group’s model.

The integrated chat capability allows you to collaborate with other remote participants, moving the process forward, encouraging participation, and eliciting key information—all while dramatically reducing the amount of time and travel needed.

Models are completely interchangeable between the desktop and Web applications. For those who have used the powerful features of the Decision Lens Suite desktop, you will find it simple to upload your Decision Lens models to the Web version and vice-versa.

Decision Lens Web is also keypad enabled. Users can participate in the meeting room, over the Web, or using both at the same time. There is no limit to the number of keypad collaborative meetings that can be held in the same session. For example, you may have in-room participants in two locations using keypads, and the remainder on the Web, all working simultaneously on the same decision.