



How Important is Benchmarking to Your Organization?

In 1993, research and consulting firm, Bain & Company, launched a multi-year research project to obtain the facts about management tools and trends. Their objective was two-fold; provide managers with the information necessary to identify and integrate tools that will improve bottom-line results and understand how global executives view their strategic challenges and priorities.

Over the past 16 years they have completed 12 surveys and assembled a database that includes 9,933 respondents from more than 70 countries across the globe. This year 1430 completed surveys were received from a broad range of executives. This year's survey focused on 25 of the most popular tools and techniques used by senior management.

The results of the survey show some interesting facts:

- **Benchmarking** passed Strategic Planning as the most used tool. Strategic Planning had been the most used tool every year since 1997.
- The tools used vary by industry. The heaviest users are Consumer Products, Pharma & Biotech, Food & Beverage, and Chemicals & Metals. The lightest users were Utilities and Energy, Construction & Real Estate, and Financial Services.

While some tools stand out as winners and losers, no tool is right for everyone. Here are the top ten tools from the survey.

	<u>Usage</u>	<u>Satisfaction</u>
Benchmarking	76%	3.82
Strategic Planning	67%	4.01
Mission and Vision Statements	65%	3.91
Customer Relationship Management	63%	3.83
Outsourcing	63%	3.79
Balanced Scorecard	53%	3.83
Customer Segmentation	53%	3.95
Business Process Reengineering	50%	3.85
Core Competencies	48%	3.82
Mergers and Acquisitions	46%	3.83

QuEST Forum excels in providing opportunities for companies to benchmark their products and services. In fact, a requirement for companies that become TL 9000 certified is that they provide benchmarkable data which can be used to create trend charts that show best in class, the industry average, and worst in class. Consequently, each company certified to TL can compare themselves to the industry and make key decisions regarding quality and customer satisfaction.