

Comparisons of Oracle Business Intelligence (BI) Reporting solutions for CTMS Reporting vs. Actuate vs. Cognos



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Assumptions/Scope/Disclaimer

- Assumption: Audience has a basic understanding of Oracle Business Intelligence (BI), Actuate, and Cognos.
- Disclaimer: The samples provided are for demonstration purposes only. No part of the content of this presentation should be construed for fitness to a particular purpose or a warranty of any kind.

The Players

ORACLE

Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition, OBIEE (the old Siebel Analytics), is the best dashboarding tool on the market and the easiest to use from an end user perspective.

IBM Cognos.
software

Cognos is the best cube building tool on the market.

 **ACTUATE.**

Actuate Reporting is, well, Actuate reporting, and soon unsupported by Siebel applications.

SAP

Business Objects is the best tool for "BI reporting" (financial reporting, production reporting).

The Game



- Business intelligence is the technology and practice of applying information to make decisions.
- This is much more than storing information, which is Data Warehousing.
- Business Intelligence is also more comprehensive than data mining.
- **Information shows its real value when people can use and share it -- when and how they need to use and share it.**
- **This** is business intelligence.

Oracle BI EE+

ORACLE

- Oracle provides both the OBIEE+ platform, which includes Hyperion tools, and pre-built "applications". Oracle does not promote the OBIEE platform as tools to compete vs. Cognos or BO as much as they should, since the platform at a high level has similar capabilities.
- Oracle's direction is to market their pre-built BI applications, built using the OBI EE platform (plus Informatica). These BI apps do a lot of the heavy lifting up front and can be a great way to get a fully functioning environment up quickly.
- OBIEE is datasource "agnostic", so sources can be multidimensional data warehouses, XLS files, transactional databases, XML -- really any source that is ODBC-compliant.
- If you don't have the budget for a full blown BI solution, the OBIEE "standalone" platform gives you plenty of room to establish a BI framework to build on -- and perhaps convince the CEO to spring for the Apps.



What's in the OBIEE box?

ORACLE

- An ETL tool (Informatica)
- A Warehouse Administration tool (DAC)
- A fully designed, ready-to-install data warehouse
- A library of ETL routines designed to extract data from the designated source system into the pre-built warehouse
- A set of metadata configurations that provides typical business interpretations of the raw warehouse data
- A catalog of fully-designed reports based on typical business reporting requirements



- Increased visual appeal includes new background designs and colors. Users can add gradient colors behind charts.
- New chart types: Marimekko, Stepline, Sparkline, Sparkbar and Spark Win/Loss.
- Report annotations: Users can add comments directly within the body of HTML-rendered reports.
- Enhanced suppression: Suppress all types of reports against relational, dimensionally-modeled relational and OLAP sources. Also, users can also suppress rows, columns or rows and columns based on "zero" values, "divide by zero" values, missing values and overflow values.
- Extended filters now include wildcards, range and between operations.
- Associated frames now drill together.
- Strategy Maps and Impact Diagrams now available as portlets that can be integrated into IBM® Cognos® Connection®, IBM® WebSphere®, and Microsoft Sharepoint portals.
- Data lineage: Users can access and view major transformations to data as it moves through the system.



- Executes one query executed against original sources
- Uses one server-side report document, constructed and indexed according to user permissions
- Sends every user a personalized report that includes only their permitted pages
- Lets every user select a preferred file format (Web, PDF, Word, and PowerPoint)
- Includes developer tools familiar to Siebel configurators.
 - Looks like a play into the BI market with the BIRT technology, but the solutions offered do not compare to Oracle BI or Cognos, and while the newer products were never supported by Oracle Siebel applications, next year Actuate is completely replaced out of the box with **Oracle BI Publisher** technology.

Business Objects



- Discover trends, outliers, and details stored in their financial systems without the help of a database administrator
- Get answers to business questions while viewing multidimensional data sets – large or small – quickly and efficiently
- Access the full range of OLAP data sources available within the organization and share results using a simple, intuitive Web interface
- Access multiple different OLAP sources in the same report to get a comprehensive view of the business and the cross-impact that one trend may have on another
- Interrogate, analyze, compare, and forecast business drivers
- Use a comprehensive range of business and time calculations

but.. it's SAP.



Recommendation: Convert Actuate to Oracle BI XML

- Given that Siebel CTMS 8.1 includes a conversion from Actuate to Oracle BI, the CTMS user base should consider conversion strategies from Actuate to Oracle BI
- Conversion Process:
 - Obtain Actuate Report File
 - Convert Actuate Report File to BI Publisher RTF Template File
 - Review the converted file and Adjust/Update
 - Upload the RTF Template and Register
 - Associate the RTF Template with View
- BI Publisher Actuate Reports Conversion Assistant: Metalink ID: 8288024
- Conversion tool produces a log, but it has to be checked for errors/skipped components
- Also, layout might change and needs to be checked manually



Conclusion

- Each of the reporting environments has their individual strengths
- Strategically, Oracle will continue to move to Oracle BI-based reporting solutions
- With the upcoming availability of CTMS-specific dashboards, overtime, this might challenge existing Cognos/Business Objects dashboards and EIS/DSS reporting already in place with legacy CTMS systems or earlier versions of CTMS
- Informatic ETL will also be replaced out of Oracle BI in a future release
- Long term technology investments should therefore be “Oracle-centric”, while short-term “split” reporting strategics between the competing technologies will be more practical in the short term.



Question and Answers

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Biography

Jason Essig, Senior Siebel Architect Expert, DBMS Consulting, Inc.

- Jason is a Senior Siebel Architect Expert for DBMS Consulting, with 10+ years of Siebel configuration and architecture experience.