



Newsletter Vol. 27 - Introduction

Softengine News is dedicated to keeping you up to date with the latest information regarding SAP Business One systems, Softengine solutions and Best Business Practices.

What's New?

Spotlight on Product – Reporting and Business Intelligence in SAP Business One: Improve Transparency to Drive Success for Small Businesses

Converting raw business data into meaningful information remains an ongoing challenge for most small businesses. In many cases information is scattered all over the company or resides in employees' heads, forcing businesses to rely on manually reconciling data from various systems, people, and reports. Even if businesses have integrated business applications that gather data from various parts of the business, only a few have the tools to transform that data into a format that is useful for a business user. The SAP Business One application provides integrated reporting and analytic tools to help you access the critical business information you need with ease. With the SAP Crystal Reports software, version for SAP Business One, you can generate, explore, and deliver compelling graphical reports that complement the existing reports in SAP Business One. Prebuilt dashboards, enabled by SAP Crystal Dashboard Design software, provide snapshots of key performance indicators such as sales performance, overdue receivables, year-to-date revenue, and service call turnover (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Prebuilt Financial Aging Dashboard in SAP Business One

SAP Crystal Reports bases its reports on live data drawn from all parts of your business, including accounting, sales, purchasing, production, inventory, service, and operations. It allows you to access data not only from SAP Business One but also from the applications of SAP software solution partners and other company software. With complete integration with the Microsoft Office products and a focus on data security, SAP Crystal Reports allows you to choose from a variety of report formats and to control access to the information displayed. You can create groups, assign users to the groups, and then specify access rights that allow only certain people to run the reports.

Integrated Reporting and Analytics

The integration of SAP Crystal Reports with SAP Business One allows you to work with the industry's leading business intelligence functionality in SAP Business One and provides a single, consistent user experience. After you install the SAP Crystal Reports software using a simple, guided procedure, you can access it from the main menu in SAP Business One. You can use prebuilt reports that incorporate best practices, or create and deploy your own reports based on your requirements. Any report designed with SAP Crystal Reports can be imported into the associated menu area in SAP Business One to be natively used within the application.

Reports with Powerful Visualizations

SAP Business One and SAP Crystal Reports allow you to create new reports and customize existing ones using a variety of presentation formats that include interactive drill-down functionality and sophisticated formatting. Together, the software provides reporting for all business processes supported by SAP Business One, including accounting, sales, purchasing, production, inventory, service, and management. You can customize reports by adding standard data fields of SAP Business One or any user-defined fields to a report layout. You can attach messages with personalized information, helping to increase reading rates. Reports can be exported in formats that best fit your specific business needs, including Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, RTF, and XML. You can print, fax, or e-mail them. You can download the SAP Crystal Reports viewer, which enables you to interactively explore SAP Crystal Reports files with or without a network connection – whether in client meetings or on a business trip. With this flexibility, you can stay in touch with your business wherever you are. Moreover, unlike most other enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications on the market, SAP Business One provides prebuilt dashboards ready for immediate use. This eliminates the need to develop dashboards as well as that cost factor, speeds deployment, and increases the satisfaction of users.

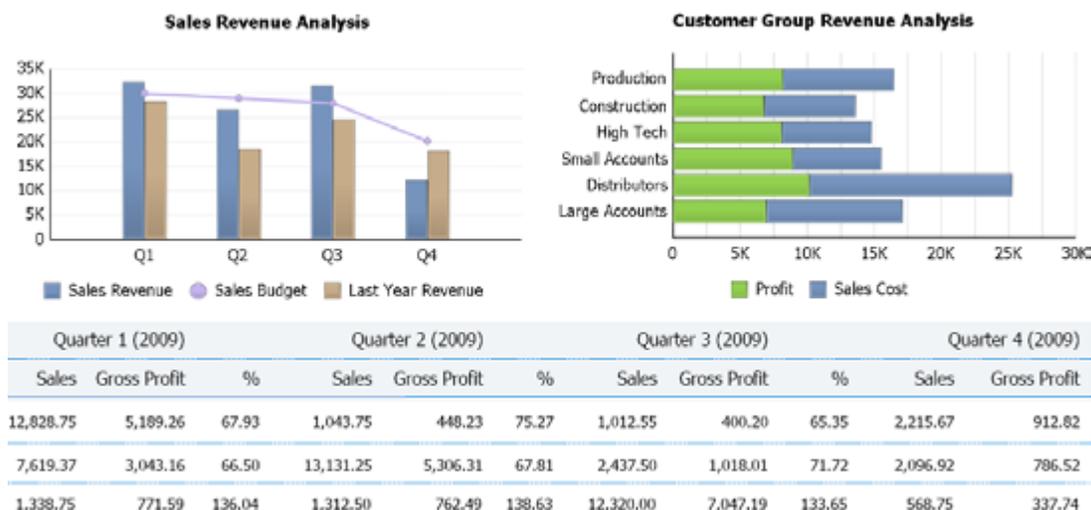


Figure 2: Prebuilt Report Excerpts with SAP Crystal Reports from SAP Business One

Maximize Productivity with Interactive Reports

On-report sorting, filtering, and reformatting allow you to explore information interactively without having to re-query the database. This means that you can answer business questions faster and with fewer reports, which significantly reduces report proliferation and dependence on IT. For example, you can access the specific report information you need in seconds by selecting the desired data view from the report viewer's parameter panel. You can improve your operational efficiency by integrating reporting with existing processes and executing business decisions from within reports. By embedding Adobe Flex applications, you can integrate operational workflows in your reports to perform such tasks as database write-back. Reports can be customized to provide users with "approve" and "reject" buttons. A comments box can be included, allowing readers to send instant feedback. You might integrate a "buy" button in a report that links to an online store, enabling readers to place an order directly from the report. By using SAP Crystal Dashboard Design software in conjunction with SAP Crystal Reports, you can perform whatif scenario modeling directly in your reports and visualize the potential outcome of your decisions. This strong decision-support tool delivers answers to any number of business questions within a single report, thereby reducing report proliferation in your organization.

Expand the Scope by Adding Crystal Reports Server

By adding SAP Crystal Reports Server software, you can expand the scope of your application and enhance the value to your business in many ways. SAP Crystal Reports Server provides all the data access and features of SAP Crystal Reports in a managed, secure server environment. You can automate the production of reports at prescheduled times and set up automated delivery using e-mail or print. You can save reports to a shared directory on the server or directly to the business intelligence portal. SAP Crystal Reports Server adds security at both the report level and the data level. Reports and folders can be made visible only to certain users or groups. Data-level security allows the same report to show different rows of data to different users. By utilizing the business intelligence portal, which is an online user portal, you can deploy SAP Crystal Reports Server as a Web-based information solution and enable your employees to access, view, and interact with reports securely over the Web.

Integration with Excel 2007

Users love to export their Crystal Reports to Excel, where they can chop, change and re-arrange the data as they see fit. Crystal Reports has always had an Excel export, but with Crystal Reports 2011, this has been updated to support Excel 2007 and produces .XLSX files which can have up to 1 million rows in them. In addition, this export format uses compression technology to make smaller file sizes.

Business Benefits of SAP Business One and Crystal Solutions

- Faster and better decision making thanks to timely and accurate reports based on critical company data across financials, sales, customers, inventory, service, production, and operations
- Cost savings resulting from reduced time and effort required to generate reports and reduced dependence on IT
- Improved access to critical business information anywhere people require it, in the format in which they need it, and at any time

What's Next?

Explore...Report...Share...Yes, it's that easy!

Everyone knows that business intelligence solutions can provide users with huge advantages like improved processes, actionable intelligence from data, and an edge over the competition. **SAP BusinessObjects BI OnDemand** provides all of this but through a hosted solution. And, because it's offered as "software as a service" (SaaS), users can be up and running in a matter of minutes.

A Complete and Intuitive On-Demand Solution for Business Intelligence Users

The SAP® BusinessObjects™ BI OnDemand solution is a comprehensive, software as a service (SaaS) offering that allows users to access business intelligence (BI) anytime. With an intuitive interface, it helps business users explore, report, and share data "in the cloud." Its ease-of-use allows users to be up and running with no prior experience or training; and it provides access to visually navigate data from any source using SAP BusinessObjects Explorer technology. A casual user can then combine this data, create powerful visualizations, and share all this with others in just a few clicks.

How SAP BusinessObjects BI OnDemand Works

Using the interface in the SAP BusinessObjects BI OnDemand solution, you can follow an intuitive process to upload a spreadsheet, bring in different data sources, and explore your data with the software's unique search and browse functionality. The integrated solution lets you create accurate, timely dashboards and reports. That means you no longer need to pull together sales reports from various sources or manually create pivot tables, charts, and graphs. You can also perform ad hoc "what-if" analyses. And there's no need to share spreadsheets and reports via e-mail or paper – instead, you can share the information online.

See a demo of Crystal BI OnDemand: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsqM2dbyCeU>

Spotlight on Social Media-Smart Device Convergence Creating 'Gutenberg Moment'

The phrase "Gutenberg moment"—an inflection point when a new medium changes not just what people can do but how they think—has been used in recent years to describe the far-reaching effects of the Internet, iPads and smart-phones. Now retail is having its own Gutenberg moment, created by the convergence of smart devices and social media and set in motion by powerful shopper-driven forces. It's a combination that is literally changing the rules of the game for retailers, forcing them to move beyond "customer-centricity"—a concept that has been overused to the point of losing most of its meaning—to something more aligned with fast-moving marketplace shifts. **Retail Info Systems** calls this new concept **Engagement-Centric Retailing**, a concept that taps the consumer and technological forces that are creating new methods for interactive collaboration, one-to-one personalization and the ability to listen and learn what you need to know to succeed.

For more information about how SAP Business One application enables you to simplify and automate **Reporting and Business Intelligence**, please contact Barry Lederman: 818.704.7000, blederman@softengineusa.com

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