Sage ERP Accpac

Everything you Need to Know about Intelligence | FAQ

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WHAT IS SAGE ERP ACCPAC INTELLIGENCE?

Sage ERP Accpac Intelligence is an exciting new product that empowers you to quickly and easily obtain the information they need from their Sage ERP Accpac solution for improved operations and strategic planning. Based on the familiar Microsoft® Excel® application, Intelligence lets you effortlessly create reports and analyze data. Managers can spend more time focusing on information analysis and interpretation and less time pulling the data together.

Business Challenge	Business Value				
Information is difficult to pull together and analyze. Business Impact to resolve –	 Empowers your staff with vital information when they need it! Sage ERP Accpac puts critical information at your fingertips, improving collaboration and productivity. Standard report tomplates some with your solution, so 				
Improved productivity and efficiency	 Standard report templates come with your solution, so you can focus on interpreting information to make faster better business decisions. 				
Poor insight into business metrics and current state of business.	 Respond faster to business trends with the decision- ready comprehensive financial report templates. 				
Business Impact to resolve – Better Visibility into Business, Boost Profitability	 Sophisticated, customizable dashboards transform your data into strategic decision-making intelligence that helps you effectively manage your business. 				
	 Access decision-quality information and significantly improve your visibility into business measurements. 				
	 Unifying all of your data into one solution creates a true view of your business, which is vital to growth and profitability. 				
	 Quickly identify and respond to trends and abnormalities utilizing multidimensional analysis to perform what-if scenarios that go beyond transactional data. 				
	• Support business strategy and decision making through advanced analysis of trends and what-if scenarios. The Analysis module allows you to utilize built-in Microsoft Excel Pivot Tables to get insight into information that goes beyond transactional data. You can create OLAP cubes, which enable multidimensional analysis of large volumes of data, and overcome Excel row limitations.				
Time consuming processes and high cost business intelligence strategies. Business Impact to resolve –	 Schedule reports to run during off-peak hours and distribute through e-mail for timely delivery no matter where recipients are located. 				
Streamline Operations and cut costs	 Seamless integration eliminates redundant data entry and automates your workflow, providing business intelligence in a familiar Microsoft Excel interface. 				
	• View information both textually and graphically to help with daily and long-term planning. In addition, comparative Profit and Loss figures are displayed for both the current month and financial year-to-date figures. You can easily drill down to get further insight into the numbers.				

2

WHAT IS BEING BUNDLED AS PART OF THE SAGE ERP ACCPAC VERSION 5.6 RELEASE?

You will get the Intelligence application, which includes:

- Standard report templates for management (financial reports, dashboard, financial analysis/trends), sales, purchases, inventory and Top five product, customer and vendor KPI reports). Does not include data cubes (requires Analysis module).
- Connection to only one Sage ERP Accpac company database at a time only (although can connect individually to multiple Sage ERP Accpac company databases).

You will also receive a single user License for the Intelligence Report Manager, which allows the user to:

- Author new reports (organizing, creating, editing), as well as filter and aggregate data based on existing data containers and available fields only.
- Set permissions/security for both Intelligence modules and/or licenses as well as individual reports.

WHAT LIMITATIONS APPLY TO THE INTELLIGENCE SOLUTION THAT IS BEING BUNDLED AS PART OF THE SAGE ERP ACCPAC VERSION 5.6 RELEASE?

- Can connect to any number of Sage ERP Accpac companies but only one company at a time.
- Cannot connect to non Sage ERP Accpac databases (the Connector Module is required to connect to additional ODBC sources).
- Cannot add additional fields to standard reports that are not already provided by the data containers (requires Connector Module).
- Cannot perform multi-company consolidations (requires the Connector Module).
- Cannot create reports off modules and/or fields that are not available in the standard data containers (requires the Connector Module).
- Cannot schedule reports to run automatically (requires the Connector Module).
- Cannot import reports created from other Intelligence installations (requires an additional Report Manager and/or Connector Module).
- Cannot run OLAP or cube reports (requires the Analysis Module).

WHAT IS AVAILABLE FOR SAGE ERP ACCPAC VERSION 5.5?

There is no difference in functionality for Intelligence from Sage ERP Accpac Version 5.5 to Version 5.6. The product is sold the same way, with the exception of the additional value for customers that move to the current Version 5.6 version (free Report Manager License). Partners can use their Master CD for Version 5.6 to install product for customers that want to remain on Version 5.5. Customer can also order the product for Version 5.5.

IF I BUY INTELLIGENCE FOR 5.5, WILL I GET THE FREE USER LICENSE WHEN I MOVE TO A NEW VERSION?

Yes! When you upgrade the "free" single user license will be added to your activation.

WHAT OTHER MODULES AND LICENSES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE WITH INTELLIGENCE?



Module/License	DESCRIPTION
Report Manager License	Allows authoring of new reports from existing data containers ONLY as well as editing of existing standard reports including filtering and aggregating of data (licensed per workstation). Also supports auto-emailing reports, scheduling reports, publishing report output to html for intranet/internet.
REPORT VIEWER LICENSE	Allows users to run reports in real time, change report parameters at run time and drill-down to detail. Cannot edit or change reports and/or report templates
CONNECTOR	This is your gateway to data access, and allows real time financial and non-financial consolidations as well as connectivity to any ODBC data sources i.e. CRM, HRMS, additional ERP companies. Facilitates creation of SQL queries via a graphical join tool as well as creation of SQL expressions.
Analysis	This module allows the creation/editing of OLAP data cubes to support multi-dimensional analysis via Microsoft Excel pivot tables. Overcome Microsoft Excel row limitations and define your own drill down experience to identify trends and stats in your data.

WHAT STANDARD REPORTS ARE DELIVERED WITH INTELLIGENCE?

In total, Intelligence ships with twelve pre-defined reports and three data cubes to get you up and running immediately. All standard reports and cubes can be copied and/or modified according to your unique business needs.

DASHBOARD ANALYSIS

The Dashboard Analysis report contains a one-page summary of key business information. The report features "Top N" Reporting on customers, items, and expenses, and contains both text and graphics to help with daily and long-term planning. In addition, comparative Profit and Loss figures are displayed for both the current month and year-to-date figures from the start of the current financial year.



FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORTS

Three powerful financial reports are available out of the box. Each of these reports generates comparative balance sheets and/or income statements for any specified financial year, period, quarter, and budget. The Income Statement and Balance Sheet layouts are automatically generated, grouped, and sub-totaled by mapped financial categories or by account group. These reports are readily customizable within Microsoft Excel. It is possible to drill down to the GL Transaction details for any of these accounts.

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GENERAL LEDGER TRANSACTION DETAILS

This fully customizable report displays the account transaction details and relevant date, reference, description, and amount totals. It is possible to transform this report into a monthly trial balance by simply manipulating the Pivot Table within Microsoft Excel. Additional elements can be added to the pivot table for further analysis.

INVENTORY MASTER REPORT

Displays item cost and quantity information over any given date range, as well as relevant item location details. The report can easily be filtered by item number and location, or additional elements can be added to the pivot table for further analysis.



PURCHASE MASTER

This report lists relevant purchase information by vendor and item number for any given date range. The report can be filtered by vendor, item number, or unit of measure. It is possible to add additional elements to the pivot table for further manipulation and analysis.

SALES MASTER

This report highlights pertinent sales information including item sales quantities, costs, and gross profits by customer and product. Similar to the previous reports, additional elements can be added to the pivot table for further manipulation and analysis.

INVENTORY ANALYSIS CUBE

This report allows you to analyze year-to-date stock-on-hand quantities, purchase and sales order quantities, and actual stock values by inventory group. You also receive the ability to perform multilevel drill-down into the required level of detail and a Top N Items graph.

SALES ANALYSIS CUBE

This report allows you to analyze sales quantities, gross profits, and amounts by customer, product, and salesperson over multiple fiscal/calendar years. It also provides the ability to perform multilevel drill-down into the required level of detail and includes Trend Analysis Graph.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS CUBE

This report allows you to analyze G/L accounts by Account Group and segment over multiple fiscal years. It also enables multilevel drill-downs into the required level of detail and includes a Trend Analysis Graph.



WHAT DATABASE TYPES DOES INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT?

Intelligence ships with standard reports and cubes for Microsoft SQL and Pervasive.SQL databases for Sage ERP Accpac 5.6 and higher. The Connector module allows reports to be created off any ODBC compliant database for an unlimited number of companies/databases.

WHICH FINANCIAL REPORT SHOULD I USE TO SETUP MY COMPANY FINANCIAL PACK?

There are three financial reports located in the Financial Reports folder in the Report Manager.

FINANCIAL REPORTS D

This report displays balances per General Ledger Account number per financial period for the current financial year, previous financial year and current budget year (budget set 1). Income Statement and Balance Sheet layouts are automatically generated, grouped and sub-totaled by mapped financial categories. All layouts can be fully customized using native Excel. Includes drill down to detailed ledger transactions contained within the Excel workbook report.

This report will force you to map your Sage ERP Accpac account groups to pre-defined Intelligence financial categories in order to create complete income statement and balance sheet layouts with relevant calculations i.e. net profit, gross profit etc.

YOU WILL NEED TO CREATE AND LINK YOUR EXCEL WORKBOOK TO YOUR REPORT IN ORDER TO KEEP MAPPING AND FORMATTING CHANGES.

Use the Financial Reports D when you require your detailed ledger transactions to be available in the Excel workbook to facilitate drill down when disconnected from your Sage ERP Accpac database. Benefits of this are portability and this facilitates non Intelligence users to be able to drill down to ledger transactions within the workbook. There is a drill down limit that is set to 5000 transactions, so

if the required parameter ranges for the drill down exceeds this 5000 row limit; revert to using the Financial Reports S or Financial Reports SB which cater for unlimited transactions.

FINANCIAL REPORTS S

This report displays balances per General Ledger Account number per financial period for the current financial year, previous financial year and current budget year (budget set 1). Income Statement and Balance Sheet layouts are automatically generated, grouped and sub-totaled by mapped financial categories. All layouts can be fully customized using native Excel. This report includes a predefined drill down report to dynamically access detailed ledger transactions.

This report will force you to map your Sage ERP Accpac account groups to pre-defined Intelligence financial categories in order to create complete income statement and balance sheet layouts with relevant calculations i.e. net profit, gross profit etc.

YOU WILL NEED TO CREATE AND LINK YOUR EXCEL WORKBOOK TO YOUR REPORT IN ORDER TO KEEP MAPPING AND FORMATTING CHANGES.

Use the Financial Reports S when you have not added many additional account groups to the standard set supplied with Sage ERP Accpac.

FINANCIAL REPORTS SB

This report displays balances per General Ledger Account number per financial period for the current financial year, previous financial year and current budget year (budget set 1). Income Statement and Balance Sheet layouts are automatically generated and grouped by Sage ERP Accpac account groups. All layouts can be fully customized using native Excel. This report includes a predefined drill down report to drill dynamically to detailed ledger transactions.

This report requires no mandatory manual mapping of Sage ERP Accpac account groups as per the Financial Reports D and S. However, because of this, this report does not automatically create you gross profit and net profit calculations, so these will have to be created manually. Sign control of accounts is not manipulated as they are in the Financial Reports D and S versions, and all account values will be displayed as they are in the Sage ERP Accpac general ledger i.e. Revenue as negative, and this will need to be amended as required.

It is recommended to use Financial Reports SB when multiple Sage ERP Accpac Account Groups have been created, as this version of Financial Reports will auto-generate your Income Statement and Balance Sheet layouts grouped by the Sage ERP Accpac Account groups, which will get you closer to your desired Financial Statement layout result than the other versions of Financial Reports.

Please note: The menu to generate the financial reports will typically only be used when initially setting up your reports, and it is not intended to be used on every run of the report.

All financial reports essentially will produce the same results i.e. GL account balances for the chosen two years of data. Native Excel can be used to further format and massage the report layouts to meet your requirements.

Can I do multi-company consolidations (financial and non-financial)? Intelligence enables financial and non-financial consolidations from an unlimited number of companies. To perform multi-company consolidations, the Connector module is required.

Two "Consolidated Financial" reports exist and the same rules apply as to which version (Consolidated Financials S or Consolidated Financials SB).

All child/sub reports and standard reports related to the Consolidated Financials in the Multi Company Consolidation folder need to have the relevant Sage ERP Accpac companies checked on to support the required consolidation, as per the figure below.

Select Databases to Consolidate	
SAMINC	
SAMLTD	
UnSelect All Select All	DK Cancel

Alternatively, more flexible consolidation options across non-financial modules can be achieved using the PICKLIST functionality within the Connector module.

WHAT DO THE DIFFERENT COLOR ICONS INDICATE IN THE REPORT MANAGER?

Intelligence supports three main report types:

- 1. Reports with a blue icon e.g. Sales Master
- 2. Reports with a green icon e.g. Dashboard

3. Reports with a yellow icon e.g. Financial Analysis

- Standard report
- Union report
- Cube report

Please note: The standard for all Union reports is to have the underlying sub or child reports hidden using the "Report Hidden" check box which is available by checking on the "Show Advanced" check box in the Report Manager.

The exception to this rule of hiding the sub or child reports is for the Consolidated Financials S report which is found in the Multi Company Consolidation folder in the Report Manager. The reason that these reports are not hidden is that they need to have relevant Sage ERP Accpac companies checked on against each sub or child report in order to support the consolidation.

CAN I CREATE REPORTS OFF ALL DATASOURCE/DATABASE TYPES?

Intelligence ships with standard report templates and data cubes for both Microsoft SQL and Pervasive.SQL database types. Apart from this, standard reports and OLAP data cubes can be created off any ODBC compliant datasource offering total flexibility.

CAN I CREATE REPORTS USING INTELLIGENCE AND MAKE THEM AVAILABLE IN SAGE CRM AS DASHBOARDS?

The SageCRM Analytics Component allows any report, Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and/or metrics created using Intelligence to be embedded within SageCRM as a dashboard-type report.



This SageCRM component is made available as a download from the Sage Development Partner website for all Intelligence users. You can add drill-down functionality on any of these reports, allowing you to view the underlying data by simply clicking on any graph included with the relevant report. SageCRM automatically refreshes the html report output every five minutes.

WHAT OTHER FEATURES DOES INTELLIGENCE PROVIDE?

- Create scheduler commands that can be plugged into any scheduler to allow reports to be automatically run at predefined intervals.
- Supports auto-emailing of reports to chosen distribution lists.
- Supports publishing of your report output in HTML to an intranet or the internet.
- Allows report output to be saved to a predetermined file server or location.
- Switch output mode in the Report Manager to Screen (SQL Debug), so that when running a report the SQL query that is generated by the report for the Data extraction stage is intercepted by a SQL Debug window. This window allows the raw SQL statement to be viewed and tested.

HOW DOES LICENSING WORK?

Licenses will be tied to a User Name and Workstation so the licensing is not "concurrent" licensing as is the case with most other Sage ERP Accpac modules.

Report Viewer and Report Manager Licenses can be purchased for specified numbers of users while the Connector Module and Analysis module are only licensed as ON or OFF. If the Connector and/or Analysis modules are switched on, then anyone with a Report Manager License can access these modules (unless they have been restricted through security mechanisms).

HOW CAN I SECURE THE INTELLIGENCE REPORTS AND MODULES?

MODULE LEVEL SECURITY

Each Intelligence module that can be launched from the Sage ERP Accpac UI will follow the standard Sage ERP Accpac Roles, Users and Authorization processes that Sage ERP Accpac uses for securing all its other modules. Using the standard security screens in Sage ERP Accpac it will be possible to Allow or Restrict given users (through Roles) from launching the relevant Intelligence modules.

REPORT LEVEL SECURITY

To provide more granular level security at a report level, an Intelligence Security Manager is provided that allows users to be granted access to run specific reports only. For this the following rules will apply:

- Report Level Security at installation will by default be switched off and must be switched on within the Security Manager to take effect.
- Only users added to the Administrative role will be allow to Add/Edit/Delete reports within the Report Manager.
- The list of Users within Sage ERP Accpac will be synchronized with the list of users in this Security Manager.

REPORT SCOPING

Intelligence provides the concept of Report Scoping, where a report can be 'scoped' or made available only when logged in to certain companies. A report that is deemed useful across all companies should be Scoped Globally (this is the default for each report).

Since a site may have more than one set of company data (e.g. a holding company that has five separate companies) it may be necessary to have some reports that are specifically for one, for multiple or for all of the companies. In this scenario it may be useful to make certain reports visible only when logged in to a given company and Intelligence report scoping caters for this.

The most common scenario where a report would be Scoped is probably where Financial Reports are customised. Since customizing these reports usually involves keeping a set of account numbers in a report's excel template, these customised reports become useful only within the company for which they have been customized.

CAN I USE INTELLIGENCE WITH MULTI-CURRENCIES?

Yes! The standard reports available within Intelligence allow you to view your reports in multiple currencies. The financial reports that auto-generate your Income Statement and Balance Sheet accounts are based on Functional currency.

WHAT ARE "PASS THROUGH VARIABLES"?

Pass Through Variables enable the queries (or SQL statements) that are sent to the Database Systems during report execution to be affected at run time. Where ordinary Parameters are used to modify the filtering element (or WHERE clause) of a query only, Pass Through Variables can be used with Parameters to modify other parts of the query. Pass Through Variables must be used in conjunction with a reports Parameters to be effective.

Pass Through Variables are an advanced report writing facility and require a strong understanding of the Intelligence Connector Functions and of basic database query concepts. Pass Through Variables are a special type of Container Expression and are defined within containers in the Intelligence Connector Module.

Pass Through Variables can also be effectively used to pass common Parameter Values through a series of Union Child Reports within a Union Report. In this way a Union Report may be configured to use one pop up Parameter screen to parameterise a number of Union Child Reports.

HOW CAN I OVERCOME EXCEL'S ROW LIMITATIONS?

Overcoming the row limitations in Excel (Excel 2003 caters for around 65,000 rows of data and Excel 2007 caters for around 1 million rows of data) can be achieved in a number of ways.

- Filter or parameterize your data to limit the number of rows that are delivered into Excel.
- Aggregate your data using the Report Manager aggregate function, to reduce the number of rows delivered into Excel. This solution can/should then be supported with the dynamic drill down tool functionality that is available in the Report Manager, to define drill down queries to provide the level of detail required from your aggregated data.
- The Analysis module facilitates the creation of OLAP (Online Analytical Processing) data cubes, catering for multi-dimensional analysis of you data using Microsoft Excel pivot tables.

DOES THE ANALYSIS MODULE HELP OVERCOME ROW LIMITATIONS?

The cubes that ship with the Intelligence Analysis module function with both Microsoft SQL and Pervasive.SQL databases but require Microsoft Excel 2007 or higher to function.

Please note: OLAP data cubes can be created using the Intelligence Analysis module and browsed with Microsoft Excel 2003.

The Analysis module facilitates the creation of OLAP data cubes that support multi-dimensional analysis of your data, using Microsoft local cube technology known as .cub files. The Analysis module allows you to overcome Microsoft Excel row limitations by facilitating the creation of multi-level dimensions that aggregate your data into your chosen levels and enables browsing of the cube and drill down into the required level of detail. Bear in mind that cubes will need to be rebuilt at your chosen refresh rate, so that your cube reports are off the most up to date data. Refer to scheduling reports. Local data cubes in excess of 1GB can still deliver good browsing performance.

HOW DO I IMPORTING AND EXPORT REPORTS?

Intelligence allows a report to be created in a system, exported and re-imported on a totally separate and non-related system.

An exported Intelligence report consists of the following three components:

- 1. Data container (metadata describing the data to be made available for reporting off)
- 2. Report Components (includes data columns, filters, parameters etc.)
- 3. Excel template (defines the way the data will look when delivered into Excel)

Importing and exporting is not supported with the single user (Report Manager) that comes bundled with Sage ERP Accpac Version 5.6.

By purchasing an additional Report Manager/s, one would be able to import reports onto a Sage ERP Accpac connection only, so would only be relevant for Sage ERP Accpac Reports.

For total flexibility of importing reports onto multiple connection types, the Intelligence Connector module is required.

HOW DO I DEFINE DYNAMIC DRILL DOWNS?

Intelligence facilitates the creation of dynamic drill downs into any Sage ERP Accpac table and or module as well as any ODBC compliant database, i.e. CRM, HRMS etc, and can be edited/created by clicking on the Report Tools menu in Microsoft Excel.

Some of the standard reports in Intelligence ship with pre-configured drill down reports i.e. Financial Reports ships with a GL Transactions by Account Drill and the Dashboard ships with both a Top Customers by Product and Top Products by Customer report.

Dynamic drill downs can be configured to extract data in a grid style output for best performance and data can still be exported to Excel to facilitate further analysis. Dynamic drill downs can be configured to extract data in a formatted Excel template as well. Dynamic drill downs can be triggered from Macro buttons off the Excel worksheet.

CAN INTELLIGENCE HELP WITH UNION REPORTING?

Intelligence enables multiple individual or child reports to be triggered from a single parent report and allows the respective data extracted from each individual report to be directed to a named sheet in the Excel workbook/template. All of this unrelated data can then be consolidated into a one page summary using standard Excel functionality to create dashboard type report.

HOW DO I UTILIZE SYSTEM VARIABLES?

System Variables can be used with Parameters and Filters to dynamically determine a comparison Value at report Run Time. An example of this is where a report is run and expected to return data for the current day. In this example a Filter could be set on the report for a Date field and the filter comparison value (or comparator) could be set to the system Variable @DATE@. When the report is run the system variable @DATE@ in the filter comparator will be replaced with the current date. Note that the set of available System Variables defined can be extended by adding Custom System Variables to the **Alchemex.ini** file under the section **[GlobalSysVars]**. These Custom System Variables are hard coded values in the **Alchemex.ini** file and cannot contain script logic.

To obtain a list of all available system variables (Standard and Custom) select the Sage ERP Accpac Intelligence Home object in the Report Manager and from the Tools menu choose Show System Variables. A list of all available System Variables will be displayed.

CAN I LAUNCH INTELLIGENCE FROM OUTSIDE OF SAGE ERP ACCPAC?

Intelligence can be launched from outside of Sage ERP Accpac where it will not consume an Sage ERP Accpac user license. This is useful when wanting to provide a reporting or BI license to somebody who does not require a full user license.

To launch Intelligence in this way, click on All Programs >> Sage Accpac >> Sage Accpac Intelligence.

HOW DO I CREATE REPORT SHORTCUTS?

Intelligence caters for report shortcuts or PR* files to be created that allow these reports to be executed from off the Sage ERP Accpac Desktop or from off the Windows Desktop.

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