Newsletter Vol. 48 - 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 - A Road Map to Better Data-Driven Decisions.
Running a company without complete visibility is like driving at night without lights; it's incredibly hard to avoid obstacles. In the case of a business, staying on the road means having the information you need: cash flow, profit and loss, customer buying patterns, inventory levels, and more. Without accurate financial and operational data, you can't assess profitability – let alone make sound tactical and strategic decisions.

Increase Visibility, Insight, and Accountability
As a small or midsize business, you need powerful yet affordable analytics, business intelligence (BI), and mobile functionality – so you can get the information you need to make better business decisions. To do so, you need to start with trustworthy data from your enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. You must derive insights from predefined and ad hoc reports, interactive dashboards, and rich visualizations. Then you need to deliver information when and where your employees need it. The result? Increased visibility, insight, and accountability that help you manage day-to-day business and drive profitable growth. Let's look at a road map for better data-driven decisions.

Start Here: Get the Latest, Most Accurate Information
All the speed and analytic horsepower in the world are nothing without trustworthy information. To improve decision making, you need to deliver the right data to the right employees at the right time. And to do that, you must be able to pull complete, consistent, and accurate data from a wide range of sources. Information is a strategic asset – one that helps employees understand opportunities and risk, make better decisions, and comply with regulations while minimizing IT costs.

When you gather data from multiple sources – from databases, to Twitter feeds, to your own legacy systems – you must then consolidate it and turn it into meaningful, relevant information that drives better decisions. The next step is making this high-quality data available wherever and whenever your users need it. With the embedded analytics of SAP® software, employees can access information and insights directly from trusted applications – helping analyze performance, evaluate risk, collaborate, and speed decision making. Let's see how this works in practice, with a focus on data integration and management. The SAP Business One application with embedded analytics brings information from remote databases into local memory. Real-time access to transactional data allows your employees to explore more information, supporting faster, better-quality decisions. Workers who once had to search manually through hundreds of forms, for example, can now save time and reduce errors with the freestyle search option of SAP Business One. Or let's say you want to expand your business. You might start by checking your company's financial status. You

can use SAP solutions to get an overview of cash flow, including projected transactions and incoming and outgoing payments. You find that your company owes a considerable amount of money, and you want to investigate further. Accurate, timely data helps you pinpoint a crucial debt: you owe $266,000 to one of your suppliers. You can then drill down to review current invoices for a quick, accurate look at your financial standing. Need powerful data management? The Edge edition of SAP BusinessObjects™ BI software includes a version with data management that adds powerful data parsing, cleansing, and address syncing to your business intelligence solution. This prepackaged functionality can be deployed more quickly, giving employees access to reliable, timely data that supports informed decisions.

Stay On Track: Get Insightful Ad Hoc or Interactive Reports
You need information you can trust, but just as critical is having that information when you need it. At today's speed of business, requisitioning a report from IT just won't cut it. Instead, you need:
- A single, trusted infrastructure that gives employees and partners self-service access to information and insight
- A powerful BI solution that gives employees real-time access to key performance metrics such as sales, cost of goods sold, and profitability – with minimal IT involvement
- A way to present information intuitively, facilitating deeper insight

What if a store manager could know which stores are selling out of high-demand products and then quickly move inventory to prevent outages? What if a collections manager could identify accounts slipping further into collections and then reassign top agents to handle them? With SAP software, you get industry-leading operational and financial reporting plus world-class ad hoc reporting and visualization technology. The result? Empowered, informed users throughout your organization. Let's say you're a manufacturing CFO and you're trying to protect margins and profitability. You see that the proportion of customer invoices with unauthorized deductions is rising – a threat to profit margins, receivables, and days sales outstanding. Using an SAP Business One solution, you pull up an up-to-the-minute chart on your dashboard detailing unauthorized deductions and learn that most arise from one customer group. You then drill down further and find that one particular customer, known to make regular high-value purchases, is largely responsible. Now you can take action to improve your performance.

Accelerate Now: Extend Analytic Power to Mobile Devices
In today's work environment, the need for timely business intelligence doesn't end when you leave the office. To make time-sensitive decisions on the road, managers need around-the-clock real-time visibility into project schedules, available resources, key performance indicators (KPIs), and more. To close a deal or stay competitive, sales reps need to answer customers' critical questions in the moment – not after they return to the office. And to resolve problems without additional on-site visits or resources, service personnel need up-to-date maintenance and account information.
The answer: analytics solutions that work both in the office and on the road – and that bring together transactions, analytics, and real-time information to deliver targeted industry-and role-specific analytics to your favorite mobile device. Employees with mobile access can find answers, resolve customer issues, and access and act on real-time business insights in the office or on a plane – whenever and wherever they need to make decisions. SAP supports mobile analytics in many ways. Your sales reps, for example, can use SAP Business One on iPads to access information on the go – capturing orders in seconds and transmitting them instantly to the back office to speed fulfillment. The intuitive iPad-based sales model facilitates rapid adoption and offers real-time access to customer, product, and order data. Your sales reps can schedule customer appointments via an automatically synchronized mobile calendar – enabling them to make more customer visits.

Reach Your Destination: Make Better Data-Driven Decisions
SAP Business One, delivered with a complimentary version of SAP Crystal Reports® software, includes a library of predefined reports, layouts, and graphical presentation options. As a result, you can generate, explore, and deliver compelling insights – from the big picture down to the smallest detail.
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