



Newsletter Vol. 51 - 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 - SAP Crystal Reports: Design and Deliver Powerful, Flexible Reports

Everyone needs solid, up-to-date, trustworthy information to do their jobs to the best of their ability. All too often, however, this information seems impossible to get. Company data is locked away in hidden information chambers and seems to require arcane incantations to release it – or at least requires repeated and increasingly loud chanting to the gods of IT.

As the de facto standard in reporting, SAP® Crystal Reports® software is the answer to decision makers' reporting prayers. IT professionals, report authors, and developers have been using SAP Crystal Reports for almost two decades to create powerful, user-friendly, and dynamic reports from virtually any data source. You and your colleagues can transform the sometimes overwhelming amounts of corporate data into richly formatted reports – and deliver actionable information to your business users, inside and outside the organization.

Intuitive Design in Less Time

With SAP Crystal Reports, you can build elegant reports in minutes using its intuitive design interface and efficient workflows. Simply drag and drop objects into the “what you see is what you get” (WYSIWYG) report canvas (see Figure 1.) Smart guidelines (a feature of the report design tool included with SAP Crystal Server software; the tool requires an SAP Crystal Reports 2011 key code to activate) help you insert, move, and align objects with ease by automatically adjusting the layout of the report. You can insert summaries, variances, and other custom calculations into a cross-tabulated row or a column – especially useful for financial reports – without the need for any programming. Built-in bar-code support lets you convert fields to Code 39 bar codes. Just point and click, and you're done.

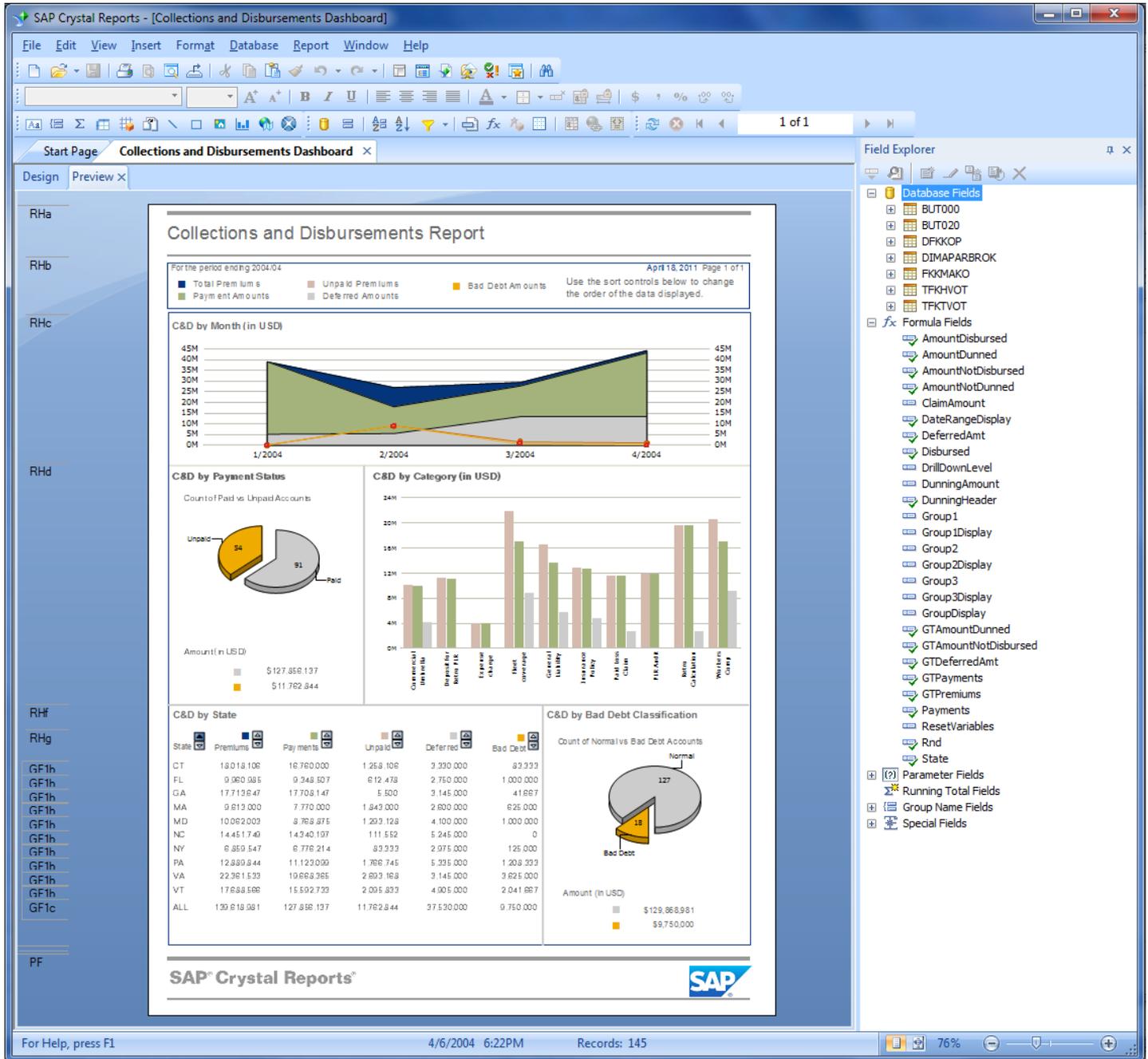
Presentation-Quality, Flexible Reports

Enhance your reports with the software's extensive charting and visualization options. You get access to a comprehensive library of user-friendly interactive charts, maps, gauges, and sliders, and can quickly embed them into your reports, without having to write any program code. Conditional formatting allows fine-grained control of report appearance, with rich formula language that can embed business logic within reports.

Business users have great flexibility in creating and formatting reports, right down to details like the size of a report page. You're not limited by the standard page sizes set by printers. Instead, you can customize page sizes and page

breaks, and can combine portrait- and landscape-oriented pages within the same report, to create an optimal viewing environment.

Figure 1: Simplified Report Design with New Intuitive Interface



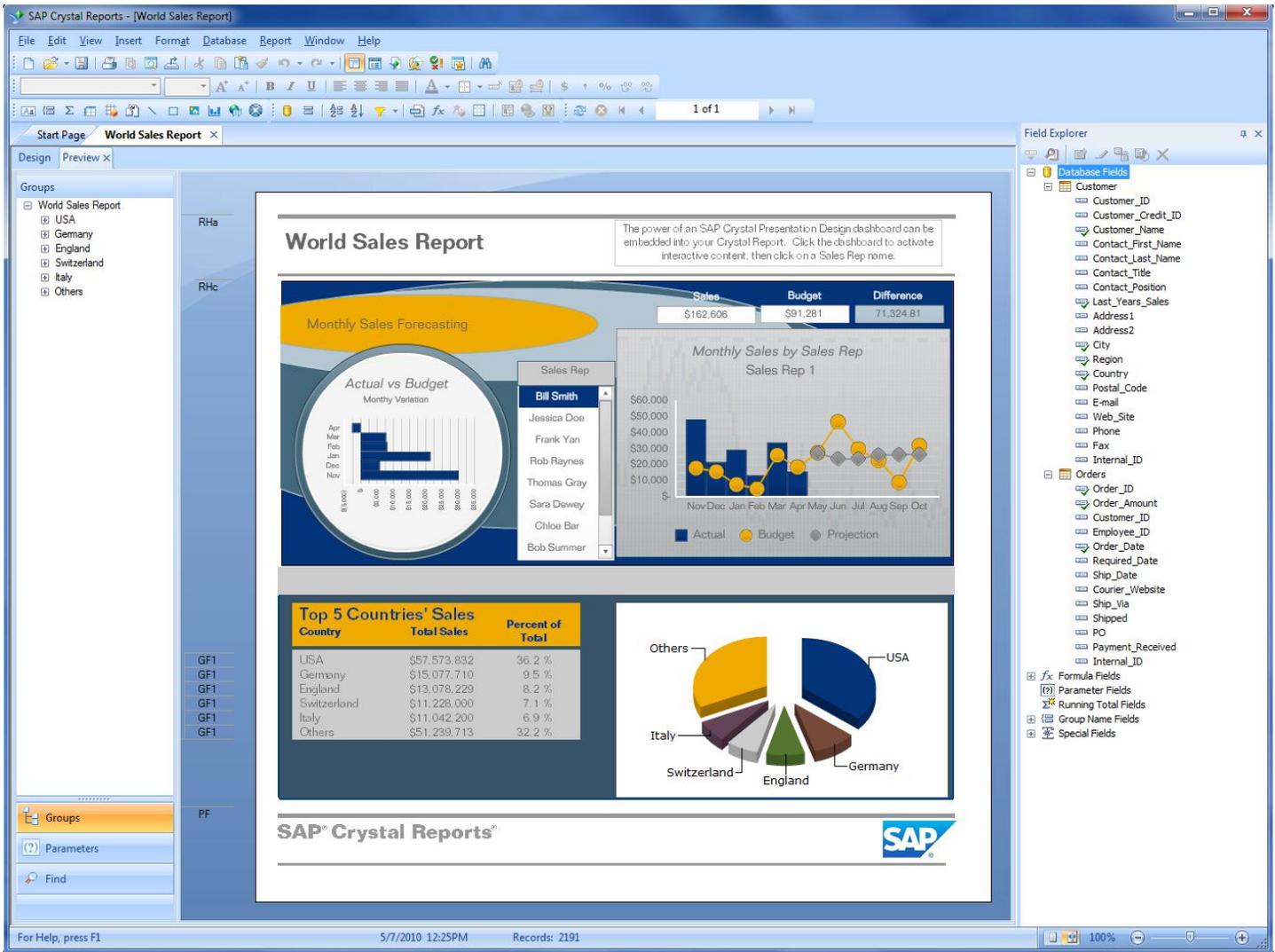
Code-Free Interactive Visualizations

Deliver interactive dashboards and stunning report visualizations through the software's integration with SAP Crystal Dashboard Design software and Adobe Flash. (See Figure 2.)

End users can explore data and make informed decisions with visual what-if scenarios created in SAP Crystal Dashboard Design and embedded in a report. Sliders, gauges, and dials enable you to visualize the potential outcome of decisions dynamically, without leaving the report file and without any coding.

SAP Crystal Reports lets you take operational reporting to the next level, allowing you to insert dynamic charts, graphics, and video files in your reports. Integrate your reports with operational workflows by embedding Adobe Flex applications to perform tasks such as database write-back. You can embed SWF files in the report or link them via a Web site. Again, no coding is required.

Figure 2: Insertion of Interactive Dashboards and Visualizations Made Easier



Powerful Data “Mashups”

Develop powerful mashups that pull data from various sources into a single report. Without any coding, you can integrate components designed in Adobe Flash and Adobe Flex, and significantly expand the scope of your application deployment. Additionally, you can combine the flexibility of XML and Web services with report formatting and visualization by linking report data to sophisticated data mashups, such as third-party mapping systems. Plus, the integrated salesforce.com driver facilitates access to your customer data, allowing you to turn it into actionable business information.

Interactive Report Viewing

With fewer – and more flexible – reports, users are empowered to answer more business questions, significantly reducing dependency on developer and IT support. Business users can explore information interactively without having to re-

query the database. SAP Crystal Reports viewer lets you employ features such as report sorting, filtering, and report reformatting. Optional parameters provide for complex user-driven filtering scenarios.

Reports from Virtually Any Data Source

Data sources include native connectivity, open database connectivity (ODBC), object linking and embedding database (OLE DB), and Java database connectivity (JDBC) to relational databases as well as online analytical processing (OLAP), Web services, XML, enterprise data sources, and salesforce.com (via the salesforce.com driver).

Multilingual Reporting

We've made it possible to create reports in up to 22 languages, including Chinese (simplified and traditional), Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil), Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, and Turkish. You can control the report content locale, sorting, grouping, and formatting that matches the local language customs and conventions.

Export and Platform Support

Render reports in almost any format and enjoy faster and easier integration with your industry-specific business processes – without the need for custom coding. If our default export formats don't meet your requirements, then you can create your own by using custom Extensible Stylesheet Language Transformations (XSLT). These transformations are embedded in the report file and are triggered by users from within the viewer when exporting to XML. This provides a powerful, flexible hook for transforming data from SAP Crystal Reports into any format and integrating it into other applications.

With the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (XLSX) export feature, more Excel data can be exported to a single worksheet, without spanning multiple worksheets. If you need to lock down reports to prevent unauthorized users from modifying the report design, the new RPTR format provides a read-only report (RPT) export option, giving you the confidence that users won't be able to modify these reports. RPTR files cannot be opened by any SAP Crystal Reports design tool. SAP Crystal Reports 2011 is certified compatible with Microsoft Windows 7.

Leverage High-Volume Publishing in SAP Crystal Server

With SAP Crystal Server software, you can publish personalized invoices, statements, and other reports to thousands of recipients – and still lower your administration costs. The data-driven publishing features of SAP Crystal Server also help you to conduct cost-effective one-on-one marketing campaigns and other personalized, high-volume reporting.

Create multiple reports based on different data sources, load the reports with data, and personalize the reports for each recipient. You can also combine the reports into a single file (such as PDF) and then distribute the reports to a dynamic list of recipients – all with a single action. The content can be archived, printed, or e-mailed in separate actions or simultaneously, making scheduling much faster and easier.

For more information about SAP Business One and Crystal Reports, please contact Barry Lederman: 818.704.7000, blederman@softengineusa.com or visit www.sap.com/sapcrystal.

This promotional e-mail provides information on Softengine's products and services that may interest you. If you prefer not to receive e-mail from us in the future, please reply with subject: Unsubscribe.