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Introducing the SAS® Business Intelligence Platform

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ABSTRACT

The SAS® Business Intelligence Platform is a suite of software services, components, and practices for building intelligent enterprise information delivery applications that exploit the analytic and presentation power of the SAS System. The design of the SAS Business Intelligence Platform is a set of Java application programming interfaces that run outside of the traditional SAS server. This Java-based foundation and infrastructure provides powerful, easy-to-use Business Intelligence (BI) applications and custom development capabilities for the Web.

INTRODUCTION

The BI market is undergoing rapid evolution as pressure increases to improve business performance with fewer resources. Corporations are pushing decision-making authority closer to the operational level, where it can have an immediate impact in pursuing strategic enterprise objectives. New technological advancements in Web-based and wireless applications provide increased information access and mobility to the enterprise. Economic pressures are driving consolidation of Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, where centralized storage and processing of information for Web-based access and distribution are the norm. Additionally, there is an increasing push to embed and extend BI functions into domain-specific and customized enterprise applications in order to achieve focused divisional performance. All of these trends lead to new realities and challenges to BI functions, where enterprises are seeking a few strategic vendors rather than the plethora of disparate departmental implementations.

THE NEW BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE PARADIGM

To meet the new expectations of immediate availability of information and the range of choices of how information can be accessed, analyzed, and presented to support decision-making, BI technology must provide the:

1. IT department with the ability to prepare and express the vast array of information available in enterprise information data warehouses and data marts in a form that is consumable by business analysts and decision makers. The value to IT is the ability to disseminate consistent information across the enterprise, while minimizing the need to store redundant data. IT also benefits from being able to serve more enterprise customers in a form that they can readily consume and therefore be more efficient with the utilization of IT resources.
2. Business Analyst with the ability to access the appropriate information efficiently and to distribute their results through the most effective channel. Business Analysts should not be required to have in-depth programming, data management, or database query language skills in order to succeed. Instead, they need to focus on the exploration and the analysis of information and then have the ability to easily distribute their results to the Decision Makers who need it.
3. Decision Makers with the ability to quickly and easily access the reports that provide the information required to make timely decisions. BI is ultimately driven by how Decision Makers consume and interact with the information that they receive. Providing the ability for Decision Makers to be self sufficient in information discovery and collaboration with other stakeholders will result in significant improvements in business performance.

Providing a technology foundation that satisfies the above requirements enables enterprises to extend decision-making capabilities into more levels within the organization, to create quicker response times, to improve productivity, and to rapidly impact the operational level.

THE SAS® BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM

To meet the growing BI challenges corporations will be facing, SAS is introducing the SAS Business Intelligence Platform, a new major architectural revision of the SAS Business Intelligence offering.

The SAS Business Intelligence Platform supplies an information and analysis reporting architecture that enables end-users to focus on analysis, rather than data structures and programming syntax. At the core is a virtual data model that surfaces only the relevant slices of the physical data, providing users the ability to utilize and extend the metadata within data warehouses to provide access to relational and multidimensional data. The virtual data model is then leveraged by standardized reporting, ad-hoc query and report authoring, distribution, and subscription services to facilitate Web-based applications. Developers can also leverage these services across a set of publicly available Java-based application programming interfaces.

SAS will use the SAS Business Intelligence Platform to create the next generation of pre-packaged analytic applications that can be extended and maintained using accepted standards based application development environments. The SAS Business Intelligence Platform provides the common foundation upon which SAS, consultants, and customers can build and deploy:

- High-value, focused analytic applications
- Web-based BI interfaces to support enterprise-level consumption.

The SAS Business Intelligence Platform is designed to enable the development and deployment of query, reporting, analysis, and publishing applications that integrate the analytic power of SAS with an open and standard application development environment.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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