Easier to deploy and manage with IBM Cognos 8 BI

What's new in IBM Cognos 8 BI version 8.3

IBM Cognos 8 BI is the only software delivering the complete range of BI capabilities: reporting, analysis, scorecarding, and dashboards on a single, proven architecture. It's part of the complete and integrated Cognos platform for performance management.

When organizations discover how business intelligence (BI) drives higher performance, they inevitably expand their use of BI, tapping into additional data sources and delivering more information in more ways to greater numbers of users throughout the enterprise.

But as BI solutions grow in size and importance, they can become challenging to maintain and administer, and IT invariably comes under increased pressure to meet service level agreements without exceeding budgets and available resources.

Overview: Easier modeling and management features

To meet this challenge, IT must be able to:

- Build the right metadata model from its initial design
- Revise the model to deliver quickly on changing user requirements
- Identify potential system problems before they become support calls
- Quickly troubleshoot and take action to address the root causes of issues

Other features and benefits of IBM Cognos 8 BI are captured in these issue papers connected with the newest software release, version 8.3: *More targeted information and Support for more user communities.*

Specific features for easier modeling and management

The Cognos approach to modeling and system management

With the release of version 8.3, IBM Cognos 8 BI provides additional capabilities that enable modelers to more easily build and maintain robust models, and that give administrators the ability to manage proactively to prevent problems before they occur.

IBM Cognos 8 BI metadata modeling

It's not easy to build and maintain a metadata model that accurately reflects how the business consumes information. For starters, building it is challenging because data in transactional systems is seldom structured to match the organization's information needs. What's more, once you've built a model, you must update it to reflect inevitable ongoing changes in business needs.

Cognos, an IBM company, has added capabilities that make this easier to do, including:
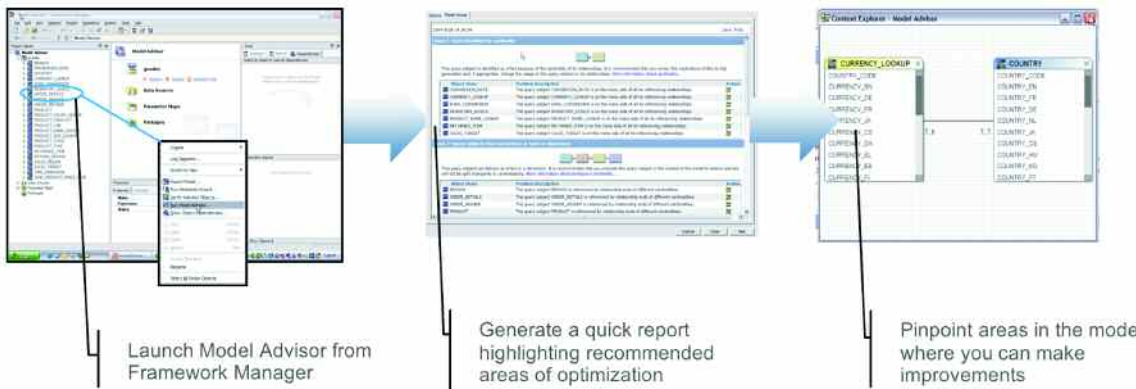
- **Model Advisor.** Use proven-practice guidance to deliver a higher quality model from the start. Model Advisor applies current modeling guidelines to your design, and identifies inconsistencies and areas for review. Links to documentation provide the information you need to understand highlighted issues and take action to address them.
- **Metadata traceability.** Improve your ability to manage change in a model by capturing change details and understanding their impact with improved report dependencies and impact analysis for unpublished models. Initiate action by saving impact assessments for use in automated update scripts.
- **Model remapping.** Easily make physical changes in a model, remapping existing model objects to new or modified physical objects without having to synchronize the database. Modify or replace the physical layer of a model without disrupting end users.

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- **Model branching.** Enjoy maximum flexibility and freedom from dependency limitations, and control the changes included in a model, by enabling multiple developers to work on a model using a workflow to replicate and merge models.

With these capabilities, modelers gain visibility into their models – they understand them better and can more easily assess the impact that model changes will have on reports. From design to production, modelers can make changes faster and more easily, to produce robust models that are geared to business users' exact needs.

Launch Model Advisor from Framework Manager

Generate a quick report highlighting recommended areas of optimization

Pinpoint areas in the model where you can make improvements

Model Advisor helps new modelers understand the modeling process, and gives experienced modelers a diagnostic tool to quickly implement model changes that reflect evolving business needs.

Enhanced IBM Cognos 8 BI system management

In a single, intuitive interface, Cognos Administration now provides IT with improved visibility into BI system activity, and the flexibility and control needed to manage the system proactively.
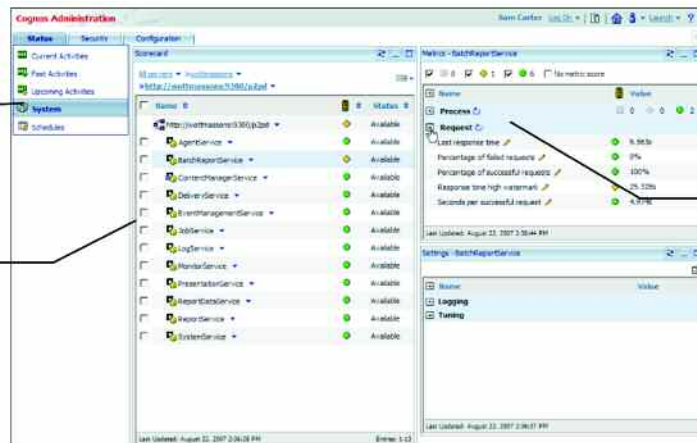
With Cognos Administration, system managers can see at-a-glance all relevant system metrics, quickly spot those flagged as potential problems, drill down to find the causes, and take steps to identify problems before they happen.

Cognos Administration features and benefits include:

- **Intuitive, at-a-glance metrics.** Easy access to hundreds of system metrics provides immediate insight into what is happening and why. Administrators see a snapshot of system health, including the state of the servers, dispatchers, and services that make up the Cognos environment.

- **Proactive administration.** Configure metrics thresholds and alerts to notify administrators when a threshold is crossed, ensuring you take action before an issue becomes a problem.

- **Role-based administration.** Allocate tasks across the team, providing different administrators with different capabilities, so they can fulfill their responsibilities without needing access to other system management areas.

- **Queue prioritization.** Assign or reset the priority of a scheduled report to ensure that higher-priority items run first.

- **Resubmission capabilities.** Resubmit failed reports and other jobs on behalf of users from the run history, without needing to respecify submission criteria.

With Cognos Administration, system managers have the insight they need to ensure their IBM Cognos 8 BI environment functions optimally to meet business needs. They can easily monitor all aspects of the BI environment – from the dispatchers that route requests, to the reports currently running – and use that information to plan system down time, interact with first-alert Enterprise Management Systems (EMS), and understand and make needed changes to schedules and request priorities. They can spot emerging issues and reduce support call activity by acting to prevent problems before they happen.

Cognos Administration provides at-a-glance insight into what is happening with key BI metrics, and can notify administrators when action is needed.

Greater insight and efficiency for higher performance

With IBM Cognos 8 BI version 8.3, modelers have the tools they need to build better models and quickly revise them as business information needs change. IT administrators have the visibility and flexibility they need to manage their enterprise BI environment proactively, solving issues before they become problems, resolving problems faster and more effectively, allocating administrative tasks effectively, and prioritizing and controlling job processing.

IBM Cognos 8 BI maximizes the return on your BI investment by ensuring that IT provides the consistently high levels of quality service needed for you to stay competitive and drive higher performance.

About Cognos, an IBM company

Cognos, an IBM Company, is the world leader in business intelligence and performance management solutions. It provides world-class enterprise planning and BI software and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance. Cognos was acquired by IBM in February 2008. For more information, visit **http://www.cognos.com**.

For more information

Visit the Cognos Web site at www.cognos.com

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To request a call or ask a question, go to www.cognos.com/contactme. A Cognos representative will respond to your enquiry within two business days.