



IBM Cognos 8 Business Intelligence for professional users

Contents

- 3 Business problems**
Information at 'business speed'
- 4 Business drivers**
Flexibility delivered
- 5 The solution**
Complete enterprise reporting
Single, collaborative authoring environment
Author once, publish anywhere
- 9 Conclusion**

Abstract

Professional report authors need a single reporting solution that draws data from a variety of sources and enables wide collaboration yet delivers the resulting information rapidly – at “business speed.” IBM Cognos® 8 Business Intelligence includes Web-based reporting tools that allow individuals throughout the organization to join in the creation and delivery of BI reports that are richly detailed, customizable and easy to distribute. This provides the kind of end-to-end view of business operations that supports good decision-making.

Overview

Given that most organizations today have deployed a number of business intelligence (BI), reporting, and dashboard software products; the challenge that this business environment creates is that each product requires concurrent support, administration, and maintenance. Each product may access specific and different data sources that provide only some of the required report options. Without completeness or ease of use, the professional report author must spend too many of its scarce resources to advance every stage of the reporting lifecycle, from support and maintenance, to creation, modification, and distribution; and too much time cobbling together the data from disparate solutions.

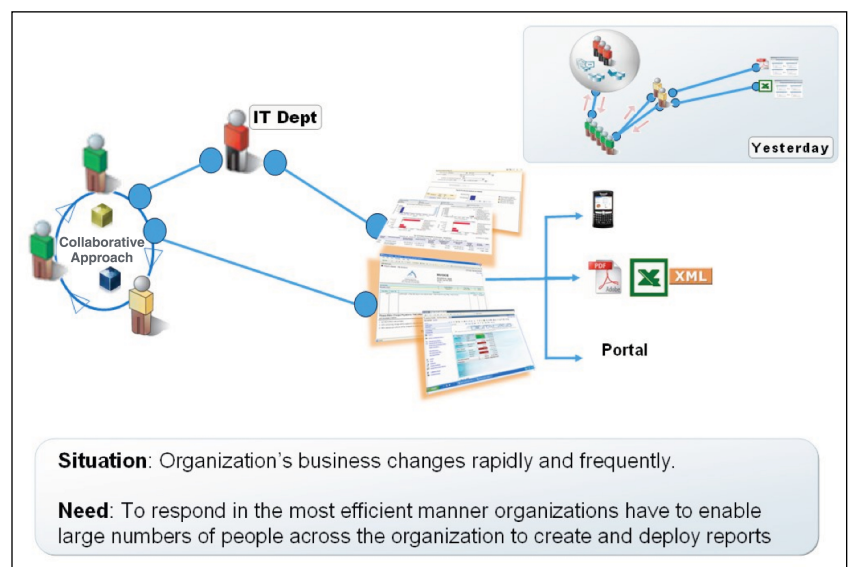
An organization needs an end-to-end view of their business. They require a flexible solution that leverages existing IT infrastructure, is truly scalable, and has the ability to grow. To get that view, professional report authors have been looking for a single, Web-based reporting solution that can address all of their reporting needs.

Business problems

Information at 'business speed'

Reporting requirements have changed dramatically in organizations. Yesterday, professional report authors, working with business managers who wanted relevant information, followed a laborious path to get their reports created. Professional report authors needed to work with business managers to understand the business requirements and expectations, translate those business requirements into report requirements, and then feed the reports back to their business managers and stakeholders. Often, they negotiated back and forth between these groups to make any adjustments. These negotiations resulted in a loss of productivity because, in most cases, professional authors were removed from an organization's business needs and from the drivers for the report creation.

Today, organizations are much more streamlined and the business world is much more competitive. An organization's business changes rapidly and frequently, and, as a result, everything must operate at business speed. In order to respond effectively and produce relevant reports, businesses have to engage a large number of people across the organization to create, collaborate on, and deploy reports. Everyone from executives, professional users, business managers, analysts, to casual users needs to be a part of the report development cycle.



Report development flow in today's organizations

Business drivers

Flexibility delivered

In this environment, the professional report author's role is to take reports that are targeted for wide distribution and make them ready for that distribution, by adding security, optimizing query statements, and ensuring that the reports are correctly branded. The professional report author also needs to determine the best way to distribute the reports, based on the needs of the report consumers.

To help professional report authors set up the most effective reporting environment for the business, they need to ask themselves three questions. What are the reporting needs of the users in my organization? Can the users in my organization leverage the tools and information they need from one authoring environment? How can users distribute reports and information to consumers in different formats and locations as efficiently as possible?

IBM Cognos 8 Business Intelligence (BI) is designed to meet this challenge. It is the industry's first Web services-based solution that provides the complete range of BI functionality in a single product on a single, proven architecture. IBM Cognos 8 BI offers organizations the complete solution for all components of the reporting lifecycle: collaborative reporting; complete enterprise reporting; reports that can be authored once, and consumed anywhere; and a solution that is adaptable to any data source.

The solution

Complete enterprise reporting

How does IBM Cognos 8 BI meet all the reporting needs of the professional report authors in my organization?

IBM Cognos 8 BI provides a complete range of reports in one authoring environment, and supports delivery of content across any consumption media. Depending on their job, professional report authors need to deliver reports that address the needs of executives who want "at-a-glance" view of information

via dashboards; business managers who need to go from summary to detail to understand business performance; business analysts who want to monitor strategic goals clearly and consistently across the organization; and line managers who want production reports to monitor business unit activities. Professional report authors may also want to publish reports, or monitor and communicate strategic goals. They may also need to analyze data to identify strengths and weaknesses in operations, gain multiple perspectives on business performance, and link to details about specific issues. By linking reporting to scorecarding, professional report authors can gain a better understanding of the issues driving strategy.

With IBM Cognos 8 BI, professional users can interact with information in the way that best suits them. Professional report authors have flexibility to deliver information in the most suitable form to address diverse user requests and can leverage this single BI solution to meet the range of reporting needs. This type of solution maximizes the value of BI across all user communities within an organization.

Single, collaborative authoring environment

Can you use IBM Cognos 8 BI to create an environment where business users leverage the tools and information they need in one authoring environment?

Professional report authors need an intuitive, distributed working environment where they can easily access, create, share, and leverage relevant content from anywhere – the corner office or across the globe. They know that their business users require a single, consistent view of information so that everyone works with the same numbers.

As reports move through an organization, it is difficult to capture the progress that has been made during the adhoc reporting stage, when authoring a professional report for wide consumption. Other reporting solutions force a complete report redesign as the report migrates from the ad-hoc portion of the solution to the professional authoring solution – adding costly time and losing critical ‘business intelligence’ that has been built into the report. IBM Cognos 8 BI allows professional report authors to harness business knowledge from all parts of the organization. This collaborative, open environment fosters better understanding of report requirements, alignment around these requirements, and faster response to user requests. All of which lead to higher productivity for professional report authors.

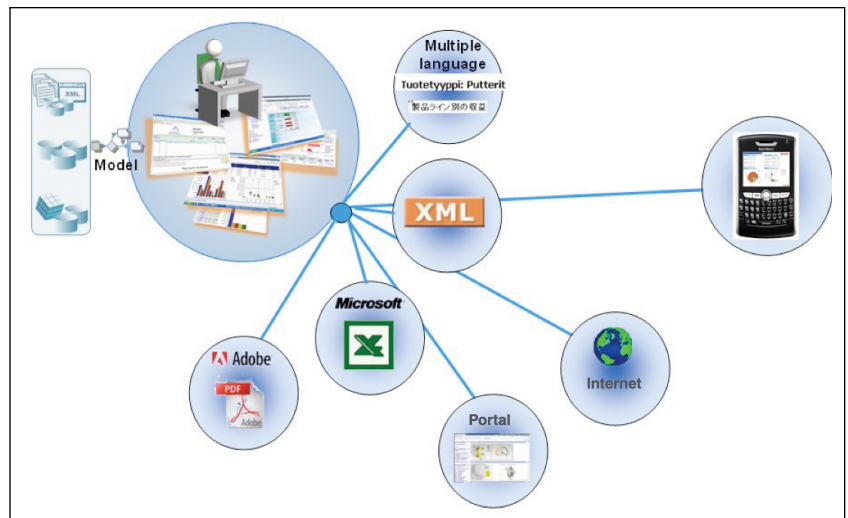
Report authors and consumers have different skill levels and roles within the organization and, as a result, they need authoring interfaces that best suit their needs. Business authors may need professional authors to enhance their initial queries, and then broadly distribute the resulting report, but a business author wants self-service reporting without the need for complex coding or formatting. Professional report authors want a solution that leverages and enables collaboration – the sharing of consistent business knowledge across the organization – at business speed.

IBM Cognos 8 BI gives all users who are part of the reporting development cycle access (with the appropriate permissions and security) to BI data, across multiple data sources, resulting in higher productivity and faster turnaround for business needs. The tool's zero-footprint, Web-based deployment enables fast global rollouts without having to deploy version-sensitive client software, reducing the burden on IT and ensuring that there are satisfied, more productive users in the organization. By combining data to deliver a complete view of information to the business that insulates the business from the physical complexity, IBM Cognos 8 BI eases the burden on professional report authors. Accessing heterogeneous data sources means that business users will not demand distinct products to meet their unique needs. It means that business users have a complete, consistent view of information. It enables the breaking down of data silos. And it ensures that professional report authors can deliver a timely enterprise view.

Author once, publish anywhere

How can users distribute reports and information to consumers in different formats and locations?

Professional report authors know that their users want to read reports on different devices and in different languages, often distributing reports to multiple consumers at the same time. Professional report authors want to ensure that critical operational data reaches the right individuals, at the right time, so that they can take action quickly. Business users also need to be able to distribute reports and business-critical information to a large consumer base, quickly and efficiently. With traditional point reporting solutions, professional report authors needed to create separate reports for each consumption method. For example, one report for the Web, one report for PDAs, etc.



Author once; consume anywhere

IBM Cognos 8 BI distributes information to users wherever they are, regardless of environment or consumer format. The same report can be delivered to any consumer media without re-authoring – BlackBerry, Microsoft® Windows Mobile®, and Symbian devices, Microsoft Office, third-party portals, or Web pages. Professional report authors have fewer reports/objects to create, manage, and update. There no longer is the need for business users to install or learn new software, because BI is available anywhere users can access the internet. Professional report authors can respond to user request more quickly, and this automated, flexible system of delivering reports ensures that information is consistent across an extended enterprise.

Globalization of operations forces the creation of multiple reports to satisfy different languages and different business needs. To support a global enterprise and ensure that the right report is delivered to the right part of an organization, multilingual reporting allows authors to create a single report, and deploy in more than 25 languages.

With increased demands on time and resources, business users want to have certain information pushed to them so they do not have to spend the time looking for information. In the world of information overload, it is critical for the right people to identify when a certain event occurs and ensure that the appropriate action takes place. With the bursting capabilities in IBM Cognos 8 BI, reports can be distributed efficiently to a mass audience in multiple output formats, destinations, and views. Event-driven BI automates the detection, management, and communication of time-critical business events or issues. IT can set alerts and deliver information to decision makers anywhere, resulting in more targeted information, greater agility and user self-service and easier manageability for IT.

Conclusion

As they strive to decrease their costs and the complexity of their reporting environment, professional report authors have been looking for a single, collaborative, Web-based reporting solution that can address how to deliver information at business speed. Professional users want a solution that gives them what they need to author enterprise reports to distribute to a global audience; multiple users with many different needs across a wide range of mediums. IBM Cognos 8 BI is the enterprise performance management solution that allows everyone in an organization to participate in the creation and delivery of the reports that help make better business decisions.



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2009

IBM Canada
3755 Riverside Drive
Ottawa, ON, Canada K1G 4K9

Produced in Canada
January 2009
All Rights Reserved.

About IBM Cognos BI and Performance Management

IBM Cognos business intelligence (BI) and performance management solutions deliver world-leading enterprise planning, consolidation and BI software, support and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance. IBM Cognos solutions bring together technology, analytical applications, best practices, and a broad network of partners to give customers an open, adaptive and complete performance solution. Over 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries around the world choose IBM Cognos solutions.

For further information or to reach a representative: www.ibm.com/cognos

Request a call

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

IBM, the IBM logo and ibm.com are trademarks or registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both. If these and other IBM trademarked terms are marked on their first occurrence in this information with a trademark symbol (* or ™), these symbols indicate U.S. registered or common law trademarks owned by IBM at the time this information was published. Such trademarks may also be registered or common law trademarks in other countries. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at "Copyright and trademark information" at www.ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml.

Microsoft, Windows, Windows NT, and the Windows logo are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both.

References in this publication to IBM products or services do not imply that IBM intends to make them available in all countries in which IBM operates.

Any reference in this information to non-IBM Web sites are provided for convenience only and do not in any manner serve as an endorsement of those Web sites. The materials at those Web sites are not part of the materials for this IBM product and use of those Web sites is at your own risk.