

Integration with IBM Cognos 8 BI

The typical enterprise has many different user groups, each with its own specific needs. Their information requirements often span different data sources with multiple security systems. To meet these needs, companies have different applications which handle some aspect of BI stacked on top of each data source. But each new application adds complexity, especially when proprietary or closed components are involved. Increased administration increases the IT workload.

Each new fix adds complications of proprietary components such as security and content management. Global companies face an even more confusing situation because reports need to be created and maintained in different languages.

Overview: Integration with IBM Cognos 8 BI

Focus on openness and integration

- Open access to any data source, from any BI capability.
- Open user access across the Web, with no downloads or plug-ins.
- Open Web standards, including SOAP, XML, WSDL, HTTP(S), CWM, WSRP.
- Complete security coverage from all security providers, with an open API for custom security solutions.
- Open access to existing metadata, and common metadata across all BI capabilities for all users.
- Open, Web services API for integration and extending BI into existing Web applications, or vice versa.
- Web services for Remote Portlets (WSRP) compliant, and open for integration with common Web portals.
- Customizable look and feel.
- Support for all existing infrastructure, including operating system, application server, hardware, and Web environment.

Removing the limitations on BI

IBM Cognos 8 BI is a single product, on a single, proven architecture for all enterprise BI needs. It guarantees reduced IT costs and reduced BI complexity. One of the primary benefits of IBM Cognos 8 BI is its ability to easily integrate with your existing environment, both in terms of IT infrastructure and existing applications.

Leverage your existing IT infrastructure

IBM Cognos 8 BI was designed to leverage your existing enterprise IT assets and infrastructure. This minimizes application complexity and delivers improved reliability, availability, and scalability. IBM Cognos 8 BI is built on the modern, Web services architecture first introduced with IBM Cognos ReportNet™. This design improves and accelerates business decision-making while also offering the implementation and customization agility that IT requires.

Specific features of integration with IBM Cognos 8 BI

IBM Cognos 8 BI offers numerous benefits to IT and business users:

Adaptable to any data source

With IBM Cognos 8 BI, the limitations that have driven IT to adopt multiple applications in order to satisfy the BI needs of different user groups no longer apply. IBM Cognos 8 BI delivers access to all BI capabilities to every type of user. For instance, a single application may be sourced from multiple relational warehouses, multiple OLAP data sources, SAP BW objects, IBM CubeViews, PeopleSoft deployments, and real-time XML data. You can easily develop business intelligence applications against any and all of these sources, with a single solution for reporting, analysis, scorecarding, dashboards, and event management. You can build applications in a development environment and deploy them on production databases. Database connections can be dynamically set at report runtime based on user prompting or session parameters. This data source flexibility allows organizations to achieve a comprehensive view of their business with a single BI solution, a single architecture, and a single source of truth for all users.

Web-based deployment

IBM Cognos 8 BI uses a zero-footprint infrastructure that lets you author, manage, view, and manipulate all business intelligence content through a browser-based solution.

Because it leverages standard Web servers and gateways, it is easier to distribute reports over an intranet, internet, extranet, or through an ASP. You can deploy complete enterprise business intelligence functionality over the Web, to large number of users, and cover their full range of BI needs including:

- Ad hoc and professional report authoring.
- Advanced analysis directly against OLAP and dimensionally-aware relational data sources.
- Scorecarding and dashboards.
- Business event management
- Centralized business intelligence administration.

Enterprise metadata

With IBM Cognos 8 BI, a single metadata solution supports all business intelligence capabilities. The metadata model hides the underlying complexity of enterprise data, delivering a framework of user-friendly terms and value-added business rules to BI applications. This single metadata model lays the foundation for common understanding across all BI capabilities, regardless of location, language, or information requirement. Additionally, IBM Cognos 8 BI provides the ability to both import metadata from and export metadata to a wide range of metadata modeling tools. Built around open metadata standards, the IBM Cognos 8 BI modeling environment supports the Common Warehouse Model (CWM) and enables exchange with any tool that is CWM-compliant.

Enterprise security

IBM Cognos 8 BI leverages your existing enterprise security providers for user authentication. Users are authenticated using corporate LDAP, NTLM, or other security provider rather than using an application-specific authentication method. For organizations that have developed their own custom security mechanisms, an API exists allowing IBM Cognos 8 BI to leverage those critical resources. This eliminates added administration and the need to replicate existing security models. Moreover, you can also move forward with changes to your security approach with confidence, knowing that IBM Cognos 8 BI will support you. IBM Cognos 8 BI allows users to utilize multiple security authentication providers simultaneously. This saves you time, money, and resources, and ensures that you can continue with a security approach already familiar to users.

Platforms

IBM Cognos 8 BI offers platform independence on Windows, Unix, or LINUX. You can deploy IBM Cognos 8 BI across different operating systems and heterogeneous platforms in a distributed multi-server implementation.

Application servers

IBM Cognos 8 BI leverages J2EE application server technology for dispatching. IBM Cognos 8 BI can be configured to run in any of the following J2EE environments:

- Apache Tomcat (included with IBM Cognos 8 BI)
- IBM WebSphere
- SAP NetWeaver
- BEA WebLogic
- Oracle Application Server 10G

Unparalleled BI application integration

Application integration with IBM Cognos 8 BI is flexible and open. Because IBM Cognos 8 BI is built on an open, Web services architecture, it can be readily integrated with any existing applications and customized for your specific requirements. Additionally, the openness of IBM Cognos 8 BI means that existing applications – such as business process management applications – can be embedded directly within the solution. The Cognos 8 BI Software Development Kit (SDK) provides a single application programming interface (API) that delivers complete openness and the ability to access broad BI functionality.

The SDK is exposed as a Web service, so application development can be done in the programming language or environment of choice, including Java, the Microsoft .Net Framework, COM, and Perl. Examples of functionality offered by the IBM Cognos 8 BI SDK include the following:

- Creation/modification of reports and queries.
- Creation/modification of the models or security content.
- Call or interact directly with Cognos BI content.
- Creation of custom interfaces.
- Simultaneous modifications to multiple report and query specifications.
- Control over scheduling and distribution.
- Associating reports with events.

IBM Cognos 8 BI customization

The IBM Cognos 8 BI interface can be readily customized to suit your requirements. Style-based customization can be set on a per-user basis, allowing different users completely different styles all from the same server.

IBM Cognos 8 BI application integration offers these key features:

- Reporting, analysis, scorecarding, dashboards, and event management capabilities that integrate readily with other applications.
- Embedded dynamic web applications within authored reports.
- Complete flexibility in defining personal folders, as well as personal and shared content pages.
- Several out-of-the-box “portlets” for integrating with major Enterprise Portal Environments.
- Ability to change the colors, fonts, images, and overall appearance of one or more components.
- Global changes to the appearance of all Cognos 8 BI component interfaces can be made without affecting product functionality.
- Fully exposed, single Web services API.

Summary

IBM Cognos 8 Business Intelligence is the only BI solution designed to leverage all environments and deliver on all BI requirements. It significantly reduces enterprise IT complexity and cost, and drives return on investment from your IT assets. It provides complete application-to-application integration. It allows you to re-brand, isolate the power of individual capabilities, integrate with existing portal or Web service environments, and easily customize the look and feel for any type of user. It offers a single architecture for developing custom applications or satisfying your requirements. IBM Cognos 8 BI is built for openness, and eliminates BI complexity for IT and business users.

Better performance management

IBM Cognos 8 BI is the only solution that provides complete BI functionality in one product, on a single, proven architecture. It delivers seamless reporting, analysis, scorecarding, dashboards, and event management. This simplifies your IT environment and the way everyone works with information. The result is high user adoption, better decisions, and greater agility across the organization. IBM Cognos 8 BI is the clear choice for BI standardization and a cornerstone of better performance management.

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>.



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