IBM DB2 Web Query for System i:
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is IBM DB2 Web Query for System i ?

IBM is offering a new Web-based query and report writing product that offers enhanced capabilities over the IBM Query for i5/OS (also commonly known as Query/400) product.

The new product, IBM^{tm} DB2 Web Query for System i, provides several easy to use tools for building Business Intelligence solutions, including reporting and graphing assistant components, a WYSIWYG report "painter," and the optional Developer Workbench for creating more customized reports. Extend DB2 Web Query into multi dimensional analysis with the optional OLAP Module, or provide reports for users on the go with the Active Reports option. Existing Query/400 definitions can be easily modernized through an import function, and then enhanced with the Web-based tools.

2. What are some of the capabilities of this new product?

DB2 Web Query provides the ability to query or build reports against data stored in DB2 for i5/OS databases through browser-based user interface technologies. Build new reports with ease through the Ajax-based WYSIWYG Power Painter component, or leverage the wizard-like Report and Graph Assistant components.

Simplify the management of reports by significantly reducing the number of report definitions required through the use of parameter driven reports. Deliver data to end users in many different formats, including directly into spreadsheets, or in boardroom quality PDF format, or viewed from the browser in HTML. Leverage advanced reporting functions such as matrix reporting, ranking, color coding, drill-down and font customization to enhance the visualization of DB2 data.

Add the OLAP (On-Line Analytical Processing) feature to interact with the data through slicing and dicing and drill-down capabilities. For the end user on the go, choose the Active Reports feature to allow reporting without having to be connected to the server. Build simple dashboards or compound reports with the optional DB2 Web Query Developer Workbench. Use the Developer Workbench to hide the complexities of the database (for example, join logic) from end users through metadata.

3. We are happy with our Query/400 reports. Is there really any reason to move to this new product?

There are several reasons you might want to consider using this new technology:
- Query/400 does not leverage the latest query optimization technology in DB2 for i5/OS (called SQE). DB2 Web Query will offer the ability for the queries to use the query optimization features that have been put into DB2 for i5/OS over the last few years. DB2 Web Query will leverage the improved performance, automation, and monitoring capabilities of SQE.
- The parameterized reporting feature of this new product could substantially reduce the number of reports that have to be maintained individually, reducing the backlog of report writing requests and simplifying the execution of reports for end users.
- Today's requests for information demand that the data be delivered in many different formats. Information must be provided via easy to interpret graphical representations, dashboards, or integrated with spreadsheets. End users want to interact with the data with drill down and pivot functions. The reports must be able to be saved as PDF, PPT, XML, HTML and more. Query/400 is very limited in its ability to meet these demands.

4. Can I continue to use Query/400?

Yes. The new product contains an unlimited user license of the Query/400 technology.

5. How do I migrate Query/400 reports into DB2 Web Query?

Migration of queries is accomplished by way of a process that allows you to select the query or queries you wish to translate and produces the new Web Query report ready to run or to be brought into one of the new end user query components for customization.

Details on how to web enable Query/400 reports are available through IBM Redbooks® at http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg247214.html.

6.   Do I need to rename all my files to use them with DB2 Web Query?

No. You do need to create a synonym of your database(s), but that is a very short process that affectively creates a meta data layer that you can then leverage to remove the complexities of the data base from end users.

7.   Why a web based query and report writing function….wouldn't a Windows based solution be more robust?

The product is based on the latest Web 2.0 and AJAX web technologies, allowing you the functionality and usability usually associated with a Windows environment, but now available to browser based applications. The zero footprint solution reduces complexity and costs, and allows any enterprise browser to be leveraged as the user interface. The AJAX framework allows sophisticated report building capabilities including modeless and modal dialogs, menus, multiple coordinated windows, partial screen updates, and more.

The single server-based code installation and thin client implementation of DB2 Web Query offers the following potential benefits:

•   Lower installation costs—no client software needs to be loaded
•   Lower maintenance costs—upgrades, patches need only be installed on the server
•   User administration savings
•   Simpler and more controlled document backup and archiving—everything is stored in i5/OS
•   Simpler and more controlled security and compliance administration—leverage i5/OS security and auditing features

8.   What additional features are available with the IBM DB2 Web Query for System i product?

DB2 Web Query features include:

•   Active Reports

     The Internet makes vital information easily accessible to large numbers of people. But what about mobile workers who are frequently disconnected from the Web - such as sales reps who spend most of their time visiting clients or service professionals who travel from customer site to customer site?

     With the DB2 Web Query Active Reports feature, users like these can take the power of business intelligence with them wherever they go. By combining data and interactive controls into a single, self-contained HTML file, Active Reports deliver analytic capabilities in a completely portable and disconnected environment, with absolutely no software required. Users can manipulate reports in various sort orders, filter data by different criteria, and chart information for visual impact - anytime, anywhere.

•   OLAP Module

     Business analysts know that even a slight variation in the way they look at data often uncovers previously indiscernible trends and relationships and produce remarkable insights. But if each

new view required a new report request, more time would be spent building and processing reports than analyzing results and taking appropriate action. The OLAP feature solves the data analysis issues that business analysts face by adding in-depth, built-in analytical processing to the product's robust and scalable enterprise reporting and information delivery capabilities.

In order to use the OLAP features, meta data needs to be defined to establish data relationships. This meta data is defined through the Developer Workbench feature.

- Developer Workbench

  The DB2 Web Query Developer Workbench feature is an open and intuitive environment that allows for rapid development of more customized Web-based reports. It includes an HTML layout painter for building compound reports or dashboards, combining multiple reports onto a single view.

  The Developer Workbench's synonym editor is used for building metadata to hide complexities of the data from end users, such as decomposing date fields, applying pre and post calculation rules, or any of the hundreds of data manipulation functions. You can use the metadata interface to define relationships in the data, such as defining the hierarchy of dimensions that automates the drill down function of the OLAP feature.

- Run Time User Enablement

  This feature provides flexibility in user licensing to simplify management and reduce costs in situations where support for a large community of run time users is required.

  The DB2 Web Query product, without this feature, requires a named user license for anyone creating, editing, or running reports. With the Run Time User Enablement feature, one or more user licenses can now be defined as a group of run-time only users. If you are familiar with Group Profiles, this is similar in concept. Each member of the group is able to run reports concurrently under the single user license.

  Unlike Query/400, DB2 Web Query's parameterized reporting capabilities and OLAP and Active Reports features mean many more capabilities are available to end users without having to edit the query definition. In other words, the need for end users to have editing capabilities is significantly reduced with DB2 Web Query when compared to Query/400, which required almost all users to have full developer access.

9. Will I need to download data to a PC Server or install a Windows server to sit between the client and the System i server?

Many enterprise reporting tools on the market force you to move your data out of DB2, or require multiple servers to support various reporting functions. The IBM product is an i5/OS and thin client implementation, simplifying the whole reporting infrastructure for System i customers. Software upgrades are simplified, reliability can be increased, network traffic is reduced, and security and auditing may be simplified.

10. Can I query remote DB2 for i5/OS databases within my enterprise with DB2 Web Query?

Yes, the DB2 Web Query server component can reside in a single copy of i5/OS and allow you to query databases (DB2 for i5/OS) in another partition on the same server or on a different server in your enterprise.

11. Can I run DB2 Web Query on V5R2 or V5R3?

No, V5R4 is the minimum OS level required for DB2 Web Query.

12. Will I have to buy DB2 Web Query if I already own Query for iSeries?

Customers who have a V5 license to IBM Query for iSeries (5722-QU1) and a current Software Maintenance agreement for i5/OS and Selected Products can upgrade to DB2 Web Query for System i (5733-QU2) Base product. This upgrade provides entitlement of DB2 Web Query for System i in the same processor group as the entitlement to IBM Query for iSeries which is being upgraded. It includes an entitlement to the base product and the base quantity of users. Additional users and options are available for a charge. After this upgrade is installed, license rights to IBM Query for iSeries as a standalone product are ended. However, the new entitlement to DB2 Web Query for System i includes entitlement to use 5722-QU1 code on machines which are licensed for DB2 Web Query for System i.

IBM Query for iSeries (Query/400) support will continue to be provided by IBM i (i5/OS) SW Maintenance. DB2 Web Query support is provided by a separate SW Maintenance agreement.

13. Can I use DB2 Web Query to build a data warehouse?

This base product from IBM is designed as an end user reporting tool, that can be used effectively for operational or data warehouse reporting purposes. Additional tools (e.g., ETL) are available to build a data warehouse or data marts to support the enterprise reports built with the DB2 web query product.

14. What is the relationship with Information Builders?

IBM has an agreement with Information Builders to provide a customized version of their WebFOCUS® product to IBM.

Additionally, several components from Information Builders, delivered as part of their WebFOCUS or iWay® product suites, allow you to enhance your reporting environment while preserving your DB2 Web Query reports. Some examples include:
- Report Caster, a facility to schedule and distribute reports in batch mode
- ERP Adapters to connect to many popular i5/OS based ERP solutions (for example, an Oracle/JDE adapter which provides "data dictionary" and security awareness, so the query product can evaluate the data properly while honoring application security and integrity rules).
- Adapters to query most popular database management systems , such as DB2 9, Oracle, or Microsoft® SQLServer™
- Data Migrator, a light weight Extract Transformation and Load product designed to automate the building of data marts or data warehouse.

Some of these features from Information Builders may require WebFOCUS. For more information on these additional features, refer to: http://www.informationbuilders.com/systemi

15. I already own WebFOCUS. Is that a problem?

No, that should not be a problem at all. We would suggest you continue to work with Information Builders directly. Information Builders can supply you with information about how you can get the new adapter for Query for iSeries.

16. How does this compare to other products on the market?

While a comparison is too exhaustive for a FAQ format, there are several key differentiators that this product offers (some of these functions require additional adapters):

- Product Maturity - the WebFOCUS technology has been in the marketplace for over nine years.
- Audience. The product is not just for developers, but also for end users or any information consumer.
- Combine multiple data sources into a single report

- Web or desktop authoring vs. fat client only
- Excel Support, e.g., automatic generation of excel pivot tables or hyperlinks for drill downs, formula and color coding retention
- Low cost Relational OLAP Functionality enabled with a few clicks of a mouse button
- Powerful disconnected support
- Pure i5/OS Server and thin client implementation
- Leverages the latest DB2 for i5/OS query optimization technologies
- Leverage DB2 for your reporting environment without having to download to another database

17. IBM recently announced plans to acquire Cognos. Should I buy Cognos instead?

As noted above, there are many factors in choosing a solution to meet your query, report writing, or analytical requirements. DB2 Web Query is designed as an i5/OS centric query and report writing tool, and offered as an affordable upgrade from Query/400. The product is designed specifically for i5/OS and DB2 for i5/OS usage, including native, heritage, and query/400 adapters in the base product. All components of the reporting server, including the meta data layer and OLAP functionality, can reside in i5/OS. IBM has many offerings for Business Intelligence to serve multiple marketplaces and accommodate different customer requirements, and what is right for you will depend on your requirements, including budget.

We suggest you continue to work with your IBM or IBM Business Partner to craft the right solution based on your specific requirements.

18. Is Websphere Application Server required?

No. DB2 Web Query ships with its own lightweight application server.

19. Where can I find out more info about this product?

More info, including a "Getting Started" tab and self-running demo, can be viewed at http://www.ibm.com/systems/i/software/db2/webquery.

An IBM Redbooks® is accessible at http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg247214.html or contact your local IBM System i representative or IBM Business Partner for more information.