Cognos Analytics ‹

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Manage external data

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You can supplement your enterprise data with your own external or personal data file by using the **Manage External Data** tool 📝 in IBM® Cognos® Analytics - Reporting.

You import your own data file and start reporting on it right away. After you import the file, it is protected by the same IBM Cognos security as your enterprise data. As a result, you can report on your data in a secure and private environment.

You can use the following types of files:

– Microsoft Excel (.xls) spreadsheet software files   **12.1**

  The **Manage External Data** tool supports external data sources from Microsoft Excel up to version Microsoft Excel 2007.

  For an up-to-date list of the environments that are supported by Cognos Analytics, including information about operating systems, patches, browsers, web servers, directory servers, database servers, and application servers, see Software Product Compatibility Reports (https://www.ibm.com/software/reports/compatibility/clarity-reports/report/html/prereqsForProduct?deliverableId=DA295E70A6F611E88A70560C75A2DCDE).

– Tab-delimited text (.txt) files

– Comma-separated (.csv) files

– XML (*.xml) files

  Your XML files must adhere to the IBM Cognos schema specified at `c10_location`/bin/xmldata.xsd. For more information, contact your IBM Cognos administrator.

  This schema consists of a `dataset` element, which contains a metadata element and a data element. The metadata element contains the data item information in item elements. The data element contains all the row and value elements.

  For example, the following simple XML code produces a table with two columns (Product Number and Color) and two rows of data.

```
<?xml version="1.0" ?> <dataset xmlns="http://developer.cognos.com/schemas/xmldata/1/"
xmlns:xs="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"> <metadata> <item name="Product Number"
type="xs:string" length="6" scale="0" precision="2" /> <item name="Color" type="xs:string"
length="18" scale="0" precision="8" /> </metadata> <data> <row> <value>1</value>
<value>Red</value> </row> <row> <value>2</value> <value>Blue</value> </row> </data> </dataset>
```

To work with your external data by using the **Manage External Data** tool, you start with an existing IBM Cognos package. You import data from your external file into the package and create links between data items in your file and data items in your enterprise data source. You then publish a new package that you can use to create reports that use your data and your enterprise data, or reports that use only your data. You can link your external data with both dimensional and relational data sources.

Before you can import your own external data file, your IBM Cognos administrator must grant you permission for the **Allow External Data** capability that is found within the **Reporting** capability. You must also have permissions to use IBM Cognos Analytics - Reporting.

Packages that contain external data

When you import external data into a package with the **Manage External Data** tool, you do not overwrite the original package. You create a new package that includes the original package, the new external data, and any links or relationships that you defined between the two. By default, the new package is saved in the **My content** area of the IBM Cognos Analytics with Watson portal, with **External Data** appended to the original package name. You can change where your package is published.

> ℹ **Note:** The current content language is used to create the new package, and users cannot select the language for the package. For example, the content language in the IBM Cognos Analytics with Watson portal is set to English. External data is imported into the GO Sales (query) package, and a new package called GO Sales (query) External Data is created. If the content language is changed to a different language, the package name is not translated, even though GO Sales (query) is a multilingual package.

IBM Cognos samples

Sample external data sources in Microsoft Excel (.xls) format are provided with IBM Cognos Analytics with Watson. You can import these sample files into the Sample Outdoors Company sample reports that are found in the **GO Data Warehouse (analysis)** or **GO Data Warehouse (query)** package.

You can find sample external data source files on the server where IBM Cognos Analytics with Watson is installed. Locate the **Team content** ❯ **Samples** ❯ **Models** ❯ **Sample file_GO sales.xls** file to explore how to work with external data.

To obtain these files, contact your IBM Cognos administrator.

– **Preparing to work with your external data**

To work with your external data, follow the process in this section.

– **Import data**

You select the file to import from your own computer, or from your local area network.

– **Map data**

If you want to create reports that contain data from both your external file and from your enterprise data, you must link at least one query subject from your package or from an existing report to a data item in your external data. This mapping creates a relationship between your external data and your enterprise data. For example, your external data contains information about employees, including an employee number. You map the employee number from your external data file to the employee number in your enterprise data. This ensures that your data is integrated smoothly.

– **Finish importing data**

You can change how query items from your external data file appear after they are imported into IBM Cognos Analytics with Watson. For example, you can change the number of decimal places or the default summary.

– **Publish the package**

You can change the name and location of the package with your external data to help you differentiate between data packages.

– **Edit your external data**

After you import your data, you can change the data mappings and options that you originally specified and republish the package.

– **Delete your external data**

You can delete your external data from within the package that you created if you no longer need it.

– **Running a report that contains external data**

Reports that contain external data run the same way as reports that contain only enterprise data. If you have access to the report, you will also have access to the external data included within the report.

– **Making your reports public**

After you create a report that uses your external data, you may want to make it public to share it with coworkers. They can run your report using your external data file that you made available on a public network drive that the IBM Cognos server can access. They can also use their own version of the file. If they use their own version, the file must contain the same columns as your original external data file that you used to import the data and create the report. In addition, you must clear the **Allow server to automatically load file** check box in the **Select Data** page of the **Manage external data** wizard.

Parent topic:

→ Working with your external data