

INTRODUCTION

I am going to talk about the SAP Business Warehouse on an organizational point of view, how companies have utilized it, the benefits they have derived out of it and most of all the competitive advantage they have over their competitors.

BUSINESS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (BW)

SAP AG is the name of the largest European Software Enterprise Company with its head quarters in Germany.

The acronym SAP is Systems Applications Products and BW is Business Warehouse, so SAP BW is Systems Applications Products Business Warehouse and is one of the major enterprise software applications produced by SAP AG which was formerly known as SAP BIW (Business Information Warehouse) but it's now known as SAP NetWeaver BI (www.en.wikipedia.org 2008).

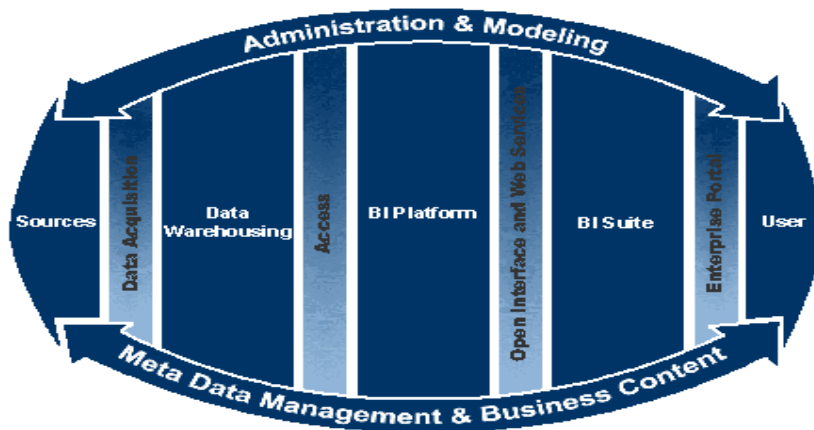
SAP NetWeaver Business Intelligence (SAP NetWeaver BI) paints a complete picture of an organization so as to satisfy diverse needs of its end users from IT professionals to senior managements. It brings together powerful business intelligence infrastructural tools such as Planning, Simulation Capabilities and Data Warehousing functions delivered through Enterprise Portal Technology to integrate data from across the enterprise, transform it into practical and timely information so that managers can make sound decisions.

The supported applications are Data Warehousing, Business Intelligence, Business Planning, Business Insights, Measurement and Management, Open Hub Services, Information Broadcasting and last but not the least the Accelerated Business Intelligence (www.sap.com).

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

SAP business intelligence allows end users usually business managers to obtain information from different systems or external sources in a form that is easily understandable. This is possible as external data sources can be integrated, transformed,

and consolidated in SAP BW with the help of business intelligence platforms and a suite of business intelligence tools as shown in the diagram below.



(Source: www.sap.com)

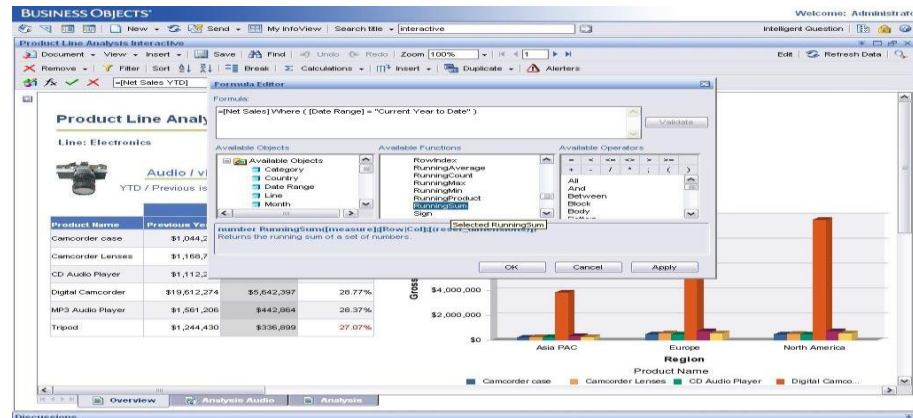


(Source: Saila Huurinainen Presentation)

One of the commonest methods of extracting data from the database is known as data mining and it is the analytical approach that looks for hidden data patterns in large databases and provides insights by analyzing past data and predicting future trends and behaviors (www.ciber.com 2008, www.help.sap.com, www.sap.com, Saila Huurinainen).

ACCELERATED BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

The SAP NetWeaver BI Accelerator functionality improves the performance of queries, reduces administrative tasks and shortens batch processes. Developed as an appliance on Intel processors, the accelerator provides consistent fast response times even as data volumes number of users and analytics increase (www.sap.com).



Ad-hoc query and reporting via the Web
(Source: Saila Huurinainen Presentation)

CONCLUSION

For most organizations that uses SAP BW the benefits are so many but I will only concentrate on the one that I have mentioned above, for instance when an organization check its (TCO) Total Cost of Ownership which is a Financial Estimate designed to help consumers and enterprise managers assess direct and indirect costs commonly related to software or hardware you will notice that it has boosted performance in large data volumes thanks to the agreement that SAP AG made with HP, Intel, IBM and Linux for the design of their respective hardware's which has increased the performance of machines running SAP products.

SAP increases flexibility (ad-hoc queries) of which the advantages are that it enables managers with little experience to define their own reports according to their personal requirements and be able to locate areas easily in clear heading/subheading formats.

It has reduced TCO through the reduction of hardware maintenance and operations as a result of the agreement with specialized hardware manufacturers and managers or clients have had the opportunity of presenting viewing certain information graphically through charts, bars etc and has the chance of viewing requested information stored even on other programs such as Linux, Microsoft and ORACLE.

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