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FAQs - SSIS, SSAS and SSRS

#### SSIS - SQL Server Integration Services

**Q: What is SSIS? How it related with SQL Server.**

SQL Server Integration Services (**SSIS**) is a component of SQL Server which can be used to perform a wide range of Data Migration and ETL operations. SSIS is a component in MSBI process of SQL Server.

This is a platform for Integration and Workflow applications. It is known for a fast and flexible OLTP and OLAP extensions used for data extraction, transformation, and loading ([ETL](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extract,_transform,_load)). The tool may also be used to automate maintenance of SQL Server databases and multidimensional data sets.

**Q: What are the tools associated with SSIS?**

We use Business Intelligence Development Studio (BIDS) and SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) to work with Development of SSIS Projects.

We use SSMS to manage the SSIS Packages and Projects.

**Q: What are the differences between DTS and SSIS**

| **Data Transformation Services** | **SQL Server Integration Services** |
| --- | --- |
| Limited Error Handling | Complex and powerful Error Handling |
| Message Boxes in ActiveX Scripts | Message Boxes in .NET Scripting |
| No Deployment Wizard | Interactive Deployment Wizard |
| Limited Set of Transformation | Good number of Transformations |
| NO BI functionality | Complete BI Integration |

**Q: What is a workflow in SSIS ?**

Workflow is a set of instructions on to specify the Program Executor on how to execute tasks and containers within SSIS Packages.

**Q: What is the control flow?**

A control flow consists of one or more tasks and containers that execute when the package runs. To control order or define the conditions for running the next task or container in the package control flow, we use precedence constraints to connect the tasks and containers in a package. A subset of tasks and containers can also be grouped and run repeatedly as a unit within the package control flow. SQL Server 2005 Integration Services (SSIS) provides three different types of control flow elements: Containers that provide structures in packages, Tasks that provide functionality, and Precedence Constraints that connect the executables, containers, and tasks into an ordered control flow.

**Q: What is a data flow?**

A **data flow** consists of the sources and destinations that extract and load data, the transformations that modify and extend data, and the paths that link sources, transformations, and destinations The Data Flow task is the executable within the SSIS package that creates, orders, and runs the data flow. A separate instance of the data flow engine is opened for each Data Flow task in a package. Data Sources, Transformations, and Data Destinations are the three important categories in the Data Flow.

**Q: How does Error-Handling work in SSIS**

When a data flow component applies a transformation to column data, extracts data from sources, or loads data into destinations, errors can occur. Errors frequently occur because of unexpected data values.

**Type of typical Errors** in SSIS:

-**Data Connection Errors**, which occur incase the connection manager cannot be initialized with the connection string. This applies to both Data Sources and Data Destinations along with Control Flows that use the Connection Strings.

-**Data Transformation Errors**, which occur while data is being transformed over a **Data Pipeline** from Source to Destination.

-**Expression Evaluation errors**, which occur if expressions that are evaluated at run time perform invalid

**Q: What is environment variable in SSIS?**

An environment variable configuration sets a package property equal to the value in an environment variable.

Environmental configurations are useful for configuring properties that are dependent on the computer that is executing the package.

**Q: What are the Transformations available in SSIS?**

**AGGEGATE**  - It applies aggregate functions to Record Sets to produce new output records from aggregated values.

**AUDIT**  - Adds Package and Task level Metadata - such as Machine Name, Execution Instance, Package Name, Package ID, etc..

**CHARACTER** **MAP** - Performs SQL Server level makes string data changes such as changing data from lower case to upper case.

**CONDITIONAL** **SPLIT** – Separates available input into separate output pipelines based on Boolean Expressions configured for each output.

**COPY** **COLUMN** - Add a copy of column to the output we can later transform the copy keeping the original for auditing.

**DATA** **CONVERSION** - Converts columns data types from one to another type. It stands for Explicit Column Conversion.

**DATA** **MINING** **QUERY** – Used to perform data mining query against analysis services and manage Predictions Graphs and Controls.

**DERIVED** **COLUMN** - Create a new (computed) column from given expressions.

**EXPORT** **COLUMN** – Used to export a Image specific column from the database to a flat file.

**FUZZY** **GROUPING** – Used for data cleansing by finding rows that are likely duplicates.

**FUZZY** **LOOKUP** -  Used for Pattern Matching and Ranking based on fuzzy logic.

**IMPORT** **COLUMN** - Reads image specific column from database onto a flat file.

**LOOKUP** - Performs the lookup (searching) of a given reference object set against a data source. It is used for exact matches only.

**MERGE** - Merges two sorted data sets into a single data set into a single data flow.

**MERGE** **JOIN** - Merges two data sets into a single dataset using a join junction.

**MULTI** **CAST** - Sends a copy of supplied Data Source onto multiple Destinations.

**ROW** **COUNT** - Stores the resulting row count from the data flow / transformation into a variable.

**ROW** **SAMPLING** - Captures sample data by using a row count of the total rows in dataflow specified by rows or percentage.

**UNION** **ALL** - Merge multiple data sets into a single dataset.

**PIVOT** – Used for Normalization of data sources to reduce analomolies by converting rows into columns

**UNPIVOT** – Used for demoralizing the data structure by converts columns into rows incase of building Data Warehouses.

**Q: How to log SSIS Executions?**

SSIS includes logging features that write log entries when run-time events occur and can also write custom messages. This is not enabled by default. Integration Services supports a diverse set of log providers, and gives you the ability to create custom log providers. The Integration Services log providers can write log entries to text files, SQL Server Profiler, SQL Server, Windows Event Log, or XML files. Logs are associated with packages and are configured at the package level. Each task or container in a package can log information to any package log. The tasks and containers in a package can be enabled for logging even if the package itself is not.

**Q: How do you deploy SSIS packages**.

BUILDing SSIS Projects provides a **Deployment Manifest File.** We need to run the manifest file and decide whether to deploy this onto File System or onto SQL Server [ msdb]. SQL Server Deployment is very faster and more secure then File System Deployment. Alternatively, we can also **import** the package from SSMS from File System or SQ Server.

**Q: What are variables and what is variable scope ?**

Variables store values that a SSIS package and its containers, tasks, and event handlers can use at run time. The scripts in the Script task and the Script component can also use variables. The precedence constraints that sequence tasks and containers into a workflow can use variables when their constraint definitions include expressions. Integration Services supports two types of variables: user-defined variables and system variables. User-defined variables are defined by package developers, and system variables are defined by Integration Services. You can create as many user-defined variables as a package requires, but you cannot create additional system variables.

**Q**: **Can you name five of the Perfmon counters for SSIS and the value they provide?**

* SQLServer:SSIS Service
* SSIS Package Instances
* SQLServer:SSIS Pipeline
* BLOB bytes read
* BLOB bytes written
* BLOB files in use
* Buffer memory
* Buffers in use
* Buffers spooled
* Flat buffer memory
* Flat buffers in use
* Private buffer memory
* Private buffers in use
* Rows read
* Rows written

#### SSAS - SQL Server Analysis Services

**Q: What is Analysis Services? List out the features?**

Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services (SSAS) delivers online analytical processing (OLAP) and data mining functionality for business intelligence applications. Analysis Services supports OLAP by letting we design, create, and manage multidimensional structures that contain data aggregated from other data sources, such as relational databases. For data mining applications, Analysis Services lets we design, create, and visualize data mining models that are constructed from other data sources by using a wide variety of industry-standard

data mining algorithms.

**Analysis Services** is a middle tier server for analytical processing, OLAP, and Data mining. It manages multidimensional cubes of data and provides access to heaps of information including aggregation of data. One can create data mining models from data sources and use it for Business Intelligence also including reporting features.

Analysis service provides a combined view of the data used in OLAP or Data mining. Services here refer to OLAP, Data mining. Analysis services assists in creating, designing and managing multidimensional structures containing data from varied sources. It provides a wide array of data mining algorithms for specific trends and needs.

**Some of the key features are:**

* Ease of use with a lot of wizards and designers.
* Flexible data model creation and management
* Scalable architecture to handle OLAP
* Provides integration of administration tools, data sources, security, caching, and reporting etc.
* Provides extensive support for custom applications

**Q: What is UDM? Its significance in SSAS?**

The role of a Unified Dimensional Model (UDM) is to provide a bridge between the user and the data sources. A UDM is constructed over one or more physical data sources, and then the end user issues queries against the UDM using one of a variety of client tools, such as Microsoft Excel. At a minimum, when the UDM is constructed merely as a thin layer over the data source, the advantages to the end user are a simpler, more readily understood model of the data, isolation from heterogeneous backend data sources, and improved performance for summary type queries. In some scenarios a simple UDM like this is constructed totally automatically. With greater investment in the construction of the UDM, additional benefits accrue from the richness of metadata that the model can provide.

**The UDM provides the following benefits:**

• Allows the user model to be greatly enriched.

• Provides high performance queries supporting interactive analysis, even over huge data volumes.

• Allows business rules to be captured in the model to support richer analysis.

**Q**: **What is the need for SSAS component?**

* Analysis Services is the only component in SQL Server using which we can perform Analysis and Forecast operations.
* SSAS is very easy to use and interactive.
* Faster Analysis and Troubleshooting.
* Ability to create and manage Data warehouses.
* Apply efficient Security Principles.

**Q: Explain the TWO-Tier Architecture of SSAS?**

* SSAS uses both server and client components to supply OLAP and data mining functionality BI Applications.
* The server component is implemented as a Microsoft Windows service. Each instance of Analysis Services implemented as a separate instance of the Windows service.
* Clients communicate with Analysis Services using the standard the XMLA (XML For Analysis) , protocol for issuing commands and receiving responses, exposed as a web service.

**Q: What are the components of SSAS?**

* An OLAP Engine is used for enabling fast ad hoc  queries by end users. A user can interactively explore data by drilling, slicing or pivoting.
* Drilling refers to the process of exploring details of the data.
* Slicing refers to the process of placing data in rows and columns.
* Pivoting refers to switching categories of data between rows and columns.
* In OLAP, we will be using what are called as Dimensional Databases.

**Q: What is FASMI ?**

A database is called a OLAP Database if the database satisfies the *FASMI*  rules :

* *Fast Analysis–* is defined in the OLAP scenario in five seconds or less.
* *Shared –* Must support access  to data by many users in  the factors of Sensitivity and Write Backs.
* *Multidimensional –* The data inside the OLAP Database must be multidimensional in structure*.*
* *Information –* The OLAP database Must support large volumes of data..

**Q: What languages are used in SSAS ?**

* Structured Query Language (SQL)
* Multidimensional Expressions (MDX) - an industry standard query language orientated towards analysis
* Data Mining Extensions (DMX) - an industry standard query language oriented toward data mining.
* Analysis Services Scripting Language (ASSL) - used to manage Analysis Services database objects.

**Q: How Cubes are implemented in SSAS ?**

* Cubes are multidimensional models that store data from one or more sources.
* Cubes can also store aggregations
* SSAS Cubes are created using the Cube Wizard.
* We also build Dimensions when creating Cubes.
* Cubes can see only the DSV( logical View).

**Q: What is the difference between a derived measure and a calculated measure?**

The difference between a derived measure and a calculated measure is when the calculation is performed. A derived measure is calculated before aggregations are created, and the values of the derived measure are stored in the cube. A calculated measure is calculated after aggregations are created, and the values of a calculated measure aren’t stored in the cube. The primary criterion for choosing between a derived measure and a calculated measure is not efficiency, but accuracy.

**Q: What is a partition?**

A partition in Analysis Services is the physical location of stored cube data. Every cube has at least one partition by default. Each time we create a measure group, another partition is created. Queries run faster against a partitioned cube because Analysis Services only needs to read data from the partitions that contain the answers to the queries. Queries run even faster when partition also stores aggregations, the pre calculated totals for additive measures. Partitions are a powerful and flexible means of managing cubes, especially large cubes.

**Q: While creating a new calculated member in a cube what is the use of property**

**called non-empty behavior?**

Nonempty behavior is important property for **ratio** calculations. If the denominator Is empty, an MDX expression will return an error just as it would if the denominator Were equal to zero. By selecting one or more measures for the Non-Empty Behavior property, we are establishing a requirement that each selected measure first be evaluated before the calculation expression is evaluated. If each selected measure is empty, then The expression is also treated as empty and no error is returned.

**Q: What is a RAGGED hierarchy?**

Under normal circumstances, each level in a hierarchy in Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services (SSAS) has the same number of members above it as any other member at the same level. In a ragged hierarchy, the logical parent member of at least one member is not in the level immediately above the member. When this occurs, the hierarchy descends to different levels for different drilldown paths. Expanding through every level for every drilldown path is then unnecessarily complicated.

**Q: What are the roles of an Analysis Services Information Worker?**

The role of an Analysis Services information worker is the traditional "domain expert" role in business intelligence (BI) someone who understands the data employed by a solution and is able to translate the data into business information. The role of an Analysis Services information worker often has one of the following job titles: Business Analyst (Report Consumer), Manager (Report Consumer), Technical Trainer, Help Desk/Operation, or Network Administrator.

**Q: What are the different ways of creating Aggregations?**

We can create aggregations for faster MDX statements using Aggregation Wizard or thru UBO – Usage Based Optimizations. Always, prefer UBO method in realtime performance troubleshooting.

**Q: What is WriteBack? What are the pre-conditions?**

The **Enable/Disable Writeback** dialog box enables or disables writeback for a measure group in a cube. Enabling writeback on a measure group defines a writeback partition and creates a writeback table for that measure group. Disabling writeback on a measure group removes the writeback partition but does not delete the writeback table, to avoid unanticipated data loss.

**Q: What is processing?**

Processing is a critical and resource intensive operation in the data warehouse lifecycle and needs to be carefully optimized and executed. Analysis Services 2005 offers a high performance and scalable processing architecture with a comprehensive set of controls for database administrators.

We can process an OLAP database, individual cube, Dimension or a specific Partition in a cube.

**Q: Name few Business Analysis Enhancements for SSAS?**

The following table lists the business intelligence enhancements that are available in Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services (SSAS). The table also shows the cube or dimension to which each business intelligence enhancement applies, and indicates whether an enhancement can be applied to an object that was created without using a data source and for which no schema has been generated.

| ***Enhancement*** | ***Type*** | ***Applied to*** | **No data source** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time Intelligence | Cube | Cube | No |
| Account Intelligence | Dimension | Dimension or cube | No |
| Dimension Intelligence | Dimension | Dimension or cube | Yes |
| Custom Aggregation | Dimension | Dimension (unary operator) or cube | No |
| Semiadditive Behavior | Cube | Cube | Yes> |
| Custom Member Formula | Dimension | Dimension or cube | No |
| Custom Sorting and Uniqueness Settings | Dimension | Dimension or cube | Yes |
| Dimension Writeback | Dimension | Dimension or cube | Yes |

**Q: What MDX functions do you most commonly use?**

This is a great question because you only know this answer by experience.  If you ask me this question, the answer practically rushes out of me.  “CrossJoin, Descendants, and NonEmpty, in addition to Sum, Count, and Aggregate.  My personal favorite is CrossJoin because it allows me identify non-contiguous slices of the cube and aggregate even though those cube cells don’t roll up to a natural ancestor.”  Indeed, CrossJoin has easily been my bread and butter.

**Q: Where do you put calculated members?**

The reflexive answer is “in the Measures dimension” but this is the obvious answer.  So I always follow up with another question.  “If you want to create a calculated member that intersects all measures, where do you put it?”  A high percentage of candidates can’t answer this question, and the answer is “In a dimension other than Measures.”  If they can answer it, I immediately ask them why.  The answer is “Because a member in a dimension cannot intersect its own relatives in that dimension.”

**Q: How do I find the bottom 10 customers with the lowest sales in 2003 that were not null?**

A: Simply using bottomcount will return customers with null sales. You will have to combine it with NONEMPTY or FILTER.

SELECT { [Measures].[Internet Sales Amount] } ON COLUMNS ,

BOTTOMCOUNT(

NONEMPTY(DESCENDANTS( [Customer].[Customer Geography].[All Customers]

, [Customer].[Customer Geography].[Customer] )

, ( [Measures].[Internet Sales Amount] ) )

, 10

, ( [Measures].[Internet Sales Amount] )

) ON ROWS

FROM [Adventure Works]

WHERE ( [Date].[Calendar].[Calendar Year].&[2003] ) ;

**Q: How in MDX query can I get top 3 sales years based on order quantity?**

By default Analysis Services returns members in an order specified during attribute design. Attribute properties that define ordering are "OrderBy" and "OrderByAttribute". Lets say we want to see order counts for each year. In Adventure Works MDX query would be:

SELECT {[Measures].[Reseller Order Quantity]} ON 0

, [Date].[Calendar].[Calendar Year].Members ON 1

FROM [Adventure Works];

Same query using TopCount:

SELECT

{[Measures].[Reseller Order Quantity]} ON 0,

TopCount([Date].[Calendar].[Calendar Year].Members,3, [Measures].[Reseller Order Quantity]) ON 1

FROM [Adventure Works];

**Q: How do you extract first tuple from the set?**

Use could usefunction Set.Item(0)

Example:

SELECT {{[Date].[Calendar].[Calendar Year].Members

}.Item(0)}

ON 0

FROM [Adventure Works]

**Q: How can I setup default dimension member in Calculation script?**

You can use ALTER CUBE statement. Syntax:

ALTER CUBE CurrentCube | YourCubeName UPDATE DIMENSION , DEFAULT\_MEMBER='';

#### SSRS - SQL Server Reporting Services

**Q: What is SSRS?**

SQL Server Reporting Service is one of the server-based software systems that generate reports developed by Microsoft. It is used for preparing and delivering interactive and variety of printed reports. It is administered through an interface that is web based. Reporting services utilizes a web service interface for supporting and developing of customized reporting applicatons. It can be competed with Crystal Reports and other business intelligent tools.

**Q: Explain SSRS Architecture?**

Reporting services architecture is comprises of integrated components. It is multi-tiered, included with application, server and data layers. This architecture is scalable and modular. A single installation can be used across multiple computers. It includes the following components: - Report Manager, Reporting Designer, Browser Types Supported by Reporting services, Report server, Report server command line utilities, Report Server Database, Reporting Services Extensibility, Data sources that is supported by Reporting Services.

**Q: Explain Reporting Life Cycye?**

The Reporting Lifecycle includes - Report designing – The designing is done in Visual Studio Report Designer. It generates a class which embodies the Report Definition. - Report processing – The processing includes binging the report definition with data from the report data source. It performs on all grouping, sorting and filtering calculations. The expressions are evaluated except the page header, footer and section items. Later it fires the Binding event and Bound event. As a result of the processing, it produces Report Instance. Report instance may be persisted and stored which can be rendered at a later point of time. - Report Rendering: Report rendering starts by passing the Report Instance to a specific rendering extension (HTML or PDF formats). The instance of reports is paged if paging supported by output format. The expressions of items are evaluated in the page header and footer sections for every page. As a final step, the report is rendered to the specific output document.

**Q: How to finetune Reports?**

To tune-up the Reporting Services, follow the below mentioned ways: - Expand the Server or utilizing the reporting services of another database server. For better embedding of report contents, report application’s logic and characteristics can have a duplicate copy of data. - Replication of data continuously. Using nolock, the issues of locking can well be resolved and the performance of the query can be improved. This can be done by using dirty read at the time of duplicating the data is unavailable.

**Q: What are Data Driven Subscriptions?**

Reporting Services provides data-driven subscriptions so that you can customize the distribution of a report based on dynamic subscriber data. Data-driven subscriptions are intended for the following kinds of scenarios: Distributing reports to a large recipient pool whose membership may change from one distribution to the next. For example distribute a monthly report to all current customers. Distributing reports to a specific group of recipients based on predefined criteria. For example send a sales performance report to the top ten sales managers in an organization.

**Q: What is Linked Report?**

**Q: What are different types of roles provided by SSRS?**

**Q: Difference between Logical Page an Physical Page in SSRS.**

Logical page breaks are page breaks that you insert before or after report items or groups. Page breaks help to determine how the content is fitted to a report page for optimal viewing when rendering or exporting the report. The following rules apply when rendering logical page breaks: Logical page breaks are ignored for report items that are constantly hidden and for report items where the visibility is controlled by clicking another report item. Logical page breaks are applied on conditionally visible items if they are currently visible at the time the report is rendered. Space is preserved between the report item with the logical page break and its peer report items. Logical page breaks that are inserted before a report item push the report item down to the next page. The report item is rendered at the top of the next page. Logical page breaks defined on items in table or matrix cells are not kept. This does not apply to items in lists.

**Q: User want only to display only pdf as export option in report Manager. How to acheive this?**

**Q: Name and Describe few console utilities for SSRS?**

**Q: Name few Endpoints exposed by SSRS 2012?**

**Q: Describe different Processing Modes offered by SSRS?**

**Q: When to Use Null Data driven Subscription?**

Create a data-driven subscription that uses the Null Delivery Provider. When you specify the Null Delivery Provider as the method of delivery in the subscription, the report server targets the report server database as the delivery destination and uses a specialized rendering extension called the null rendering extension. In contrast with other delivery extensions, the Null Delivery Provider does not have delivery settings that you can configure through a subscription definition.

**Q: How can you monitor the report Usage?**

**Q: How does the report manager work in SSRS?**

Report manager is a web application. In SSRS it is accessed by a URL. The interface of this Report manager depends on the permissions of the user. This means to access any functionality or perform any task, the user must be assigned a role. A user with a role of full permissions can entire all the features and menus of the report. To configure the report manager, a URL needs to be defined.

**Q: What are the Reporting Services components?**

Reporting services components assist in development. These processing components include some tools that are used to create, manage and view reports. A report designer is used to create the reports. a report sever is used to execute and distribute reports. a report manager is used to manage the report server.

**Q:SQL Server Reporting Services vs Crystal Reports.**

Crystal reports are processed by IIS while SSRS have a report server. Caching in Crystal reports is available through cache server. On the other hand, caching in SSRS is available for Report history snapshots. Crystal reports have standards and user defined field labels. SSRS allows only user defined field labels.

**Q: What is Report Builder?**

Report Builder is a business-user, ad-hoc report design client that allows users to design reports based on the business terms (Report Builder model) they are familiar with, but without needing to understand database schemas or how to write SQL or MDX queries. Report Builder works with both SQL Server and Analysis Services data sources.

**Q: How does Report Builder support Analysis Services cubes?**

Report Builder supports relational SQL and Analysis Services data sources in SQL Server 2005. To create a model for Analysis Services cube, go to Report Manager or Management Studio, create a data source for your Analysis Services database, and then select the Generate Model option to create the model.

**Q: How do users use Report Builder with SQL Server data sources?**

While models that provide access to SQL Server Analysis Services are automatically generated on the report server, the Report Builder Model Designer can be used to generate or modify the models that are built on top of SQL Server relational databases. These model-building projects are a new type of project within a Visual Studio–based development shell.

**Q: How do I get Report Builder to generate a parameter that can be set by users viewing the report?**

In the filter dialog box, click the name of the criteria that you would like to prompt the user for when viewing the report. For example, for the criteria Order Year=2000, click Order Year. Select the Prompt option in the drop-down list.

**Q: What new data source types were added in SSRS 2012?**

In addition to the data source types available in SSRS 2005 (SQL Server, Oracle, ODBC, OLE DB), the following have been added in SSRS 2008: SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services SQL Server 2005 Integration Services SQL Server 2005 Report Builder Models XML (through URL and Web services) SAP

**Q: How can I add Reporting Services reports to my application?**

Visual Studio 2005 (Standard and Enterprise editions) contains a set of freely redistributable Report Viewer controls that make it easy to embed Reporting Services functionality into custom applications. Two versions of the Report Viewer exist, one for rich Windows client applications and one for ASP.NET applications.

**Q: Do I need a report server to run reports in my application?**

In addition to publishing reports to a report server, you can build reports using the Report Designer that is directly integrated with Visual Studio language projects. You can embed reports directly in any Windows Forms or ASP.NET Web application without access to a report server. The data access in embedded reports is a natural extension of the Visual Studio data facilities. Not only can you use traditional databases as a source of data for your reports, you can use object collections as well.

**Q: Can you import Microsoft Excel data to SSRS?**

Reporting Services does not import data. It only queries data in whatever format it is stored in their native storage system. I will assume that you're asking whether you can create reports and use Excel spreadsheets as data sources. The answer is Yes, Reporting Services supports a wide variety of data sources, including Excel files. You'll get the best performance with the built-in native .NET providers but you should be able to connect to any ODBC or OLE-DB data source, whether it comes from Microsoft or a third-party company.

**Q: Can we deploy SSRS reports on our personal website?**

Your reports can only be deployed on a reporting services site. Your only option for viewing them from other sites is an HTTP link. Some tools, like SharePoint offer controls allowing you to view reports in the context of the other websites, but the report is still deployed to and hosted from reporting services.

**Q: Can we use datagrids for our report in SSRS?**

I've got an ASP.NET project that populates a datagrid. I'd like to use the datagrid as my datasource for my report using SQL Server Reporting Services. Is this possible? The simple answer is no. However, nothing's ever simple. A set of reporting controls was added in Visual Studio 2010 allowing you to report in a dataset, on data that was supplied by you. So, if you retrieved your data into a dataset, bound the datagrid to the dataset so it had data to display, you could then use that dataset as the datasource for the reporting controls. These are then client-side reports, not server reports though.

**Q: What are the drawbacks of reporting in SSRS?**

For many years, Microsoft had no direct solution for reporting with the SQL Server besides Crystal Reports. Now, they have SQL Server Reporting Services, but it does have several drawbacks. It is still complex to understand the complete functionality and structure of this new component, and many users are still relying on the reporting application they are more familiar with, which is Crystal Reports. Also, components in SSRS like Report Builder and Report Designer are meant for different users for different aspects of the report process, yet complete understanding and exposure to both is important to utilize both functions fully and extensively. There are also issues when exporting very large reports to Microsoft Excel, as it can lead to a loss of data.

**Q: Will running SSRS on Windows XP limit the number of users?**

Yes, but not because of SSRS. The Internet Information Services (IIS) component of Windows XP only allows a small number of users to connect to the website at once. As SSRS runs via IIS, this would prevent more than a few people from using SSRS at once. Also, the only edition of SSRS that will install on Windows XP is the Developer Edition. This edition can not be used for production use. You need Standard or Enterprise Edition for production use, which requires a Server OS to install on (Windows 2003 Standard, Windows 2008 Standard, etc).

**Q: Are there issues when exporting SSRS reports into Microsoft Excel?**

When my users are trying to export a SSRS report into Microsoft Excel, one or two columns in the report appear to merge together. Why might this be? Exporting from SSRS is not always perfect, even if you stay within the Microsoft range of products. If you have extra resources, you could splurge for an add-on that offers much better control over exporting to Excel, such as OfficeWriter. From my experience, though, it is usually headers or footers that cause exporting issues. If any of these headers or footers overlap with data columns in your report, you will find that the exported version of the report has merged cells. Also, check columns next to each other to make sure that there is no overlap, as well.

**Q: How to send a SSRS report from SSIS?**

Often there is a requirement to be able to send a SSRS report in Excel, PDF or another format to different users from a SSIS package one it has finished performing a data load. In order to do this, first you need to create a subscription to the report. You can create a SSRS report subscription from Report Manager. At the report subscription you can mention the report format and the email address of the recipient. When you create a schedule for the SSRS report, a SQL Server Agent Job will be created. From the SSIS, by using sp\_start\_job and passing the relevant job name you can execute the SSRS report subscription.

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* [Classroom Training](http://sqlbitraining.com/T-SQL_Classroom_Training.html)
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* [Video Training (VBT)](http://sqlbitraining.com/T-SQL_Video_Training.html)
* [Online Training](http://sqlbitraining.com/SQLDBA_Online_Training.html)
* [Classroom Training](http://sqlbitraining.com/SQLDBA_Classroom_Training.html)
* [Corporate Training](http://sqlbitraining.com/SQLDBA_Corp_Training.html)
* [Video Training (VBT)](http://sqlbitraining.com/SQLDBA_Video_Training.html)
* [Online Training](http://sqlbitraining.com/MSBI_Online_Training.html)
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