

SAP® BusinessObjects™ EDGE PLANNING AND CONSOLIDATION

STREAMLINE PLANNING AND REDUCE BUSINESS RISK

CFOs and other senior managers are under tremendous pressure to maximize profitability, reduce operational costs, minimize risk, and improve stakeholder confidence. That pressure is even higher in a slow economy when revenue forecasts are at risk and profitability is in danger.

To be effective, business leaders need reliable, up-to-date financial and operational data both for planning purposes and for budgeting, forecasting, analysis, and statutory and management reporting. They need to be able to integrate corporate and departmental planning, model cost scenarios, and perform sensitivity analysis in order to determine operational budgets based on strategic plans and assumptions. They also need a way to help ensure a fully documented audit trail and compliance with regulatory mandates such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act for consolidating and reporting company information. The key to their success is an effective planning and consolidation environment.

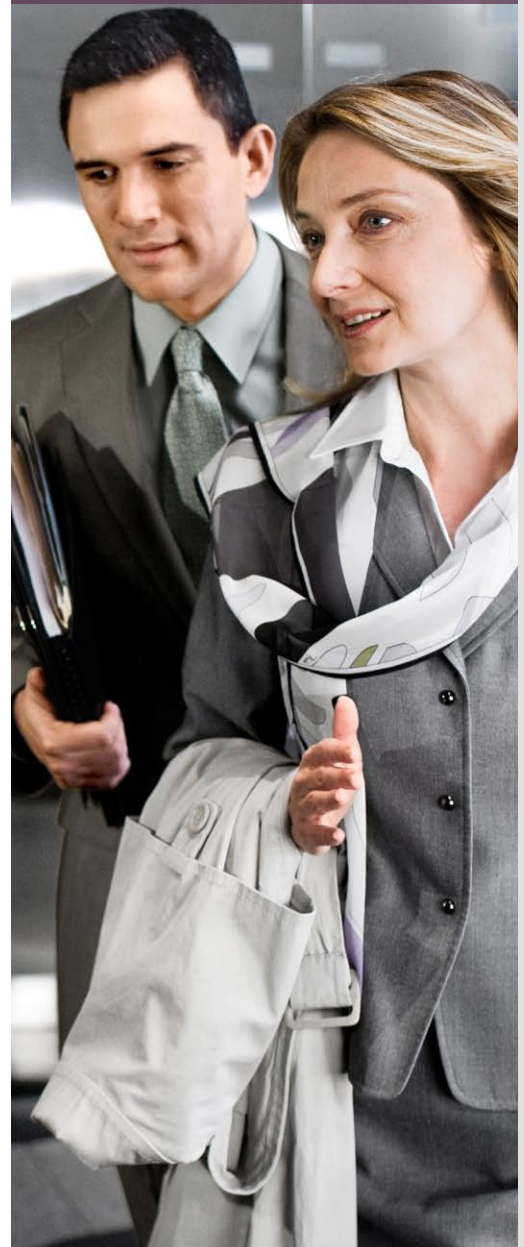
Midsize companies face the additional pressure of having to operate with limited IT resources. Hence, they often resort to unmanaged spreadsheets for planning and consolidation, rendering the process chaotic, frustrating, and ineffective. The spreadsheets give them familiar modeling functionalities but lack structured processes and centralized data – resulting in significant time and manual effort throughout the planning process. Budgeting can quickly deteriorate into a “spreadsheet nightmare” in

which operations managers submit unrealistic budgets, executives change figures without the operations managers’ knowledge, and version control problems multiply. There is a risk of errors resulting from a lack of checks and balances when entering or updating data. Statutory consolidations can be equally problematic when data is distributed across different departments, systems, and even countries.

The problem is made worse when critical operational and financial information is scattered across multiple applications and databases, or trapped as unstructured data residing in employee spreadsheets or e-mail attachments. Changing to a packaged software solution is usually too complex and expensive to meet the needs of midsize organizations. That’s why most of these organizations continue to settle for unmanaged spreadsheets – and to operate at a significant competitive disadvantage.

The SAP® BusinessObjects™ Edge Planning and Consolidation application addresses these issues by providing an integrated planning, budgeting, forecasting, and consolidation solution designed specifically for midsize organizations. The solution bridges the gap between the creation of financial and business plans and the daily operation of those plans – and does so at a cost midsize organizations can afford. By offering an integrated set of planning and budgeting tools and providing an intuitive, user-friendly solution, it helps align plans across the entire organization – driving

To manage performance efficiently, midsize companies need a unified planning, budgeting, and consolidation solution. The SAP® BusinessObjects™ Edge Planning and Consolidation application streamlines the planning process and produces management reports that instill confidence and reduce business risk.



great results no matter the size of the organization. That's why many midsize companies are turning to SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation.

Designed for Users, Built for Business

SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation gives you access to reliable corporate data and optimizes your planning and consolidation processes. The application is designed for all business users and gives everyone across your enterprise personalized, role-based access to functionality that is user focused, process centric, forward looking, and unified.

User Focused

SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation is designed for ease of use. Features include:

- **Native interface to familiar tools** – Familiar applications such as Microsoft Office, as well as an intuitive, 100% thin-client Web interface, serve as native interfaces to the application. This feature allows, for example, access to Microsoft Excel spreadsheets that are linked directly to “live” operational data; as data is updated in real time, so is the spreadsheet. Working with tools they know well, users need minimal training.
- **Intelligent action panes** – These panes present users with relevant, context-sensitive selections based on where they are in an application and their security profile, enabling them to understand what to do, when to do it, and why – again with minimal training.

- **Self-service reporting** – Any user can access information and create reports without having to make requests to IT. Simple drag-and-drop interfaces enable users to create reports with ease. They can create custom reports or adapt the packaged reporting templates that come with the software to meet your corporate standards. These functionalities are especially helpful to small and midsize organizations that have limited IT resources.

Process Centric

One of the challenges facing finance departments is to ensure that staff and line-of-business managers follow consistent processes across the enterprise. Without the right process support in place, even small deviations can throw off key figures.

Self-service process flows guide users through each step in a process and help ensure that the required steps for a given process, such as closing the books, are completed. Business process flows are automatically tracked and audited. The software comes with prepackaged process flows for common processes, such as quarterly or annual budgeting, that business users can modify without help from IT.

Forward Looking

With SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation, you can leverage your historical operations and financial data to model business scenarios and provide rolling forecasts. The application automatically analyzes data and delivers critical information such

as reasons and root causes. This functionality can help you assess what happened in the past and make risk-adjusted plans to improve future performance. In addition, the application provides automated variance and root cause analysis. With this feature, you can quickly find explanations for variances – and root causes – so you know where to focus management attention.

Unified

The centralized data repository contains up-to-date actuals from your operational systems in addition to plans and budgets for the coming year. This gives you instant access to a complete picture of how your business performed and how it is expected to perform. Should you need to drill into the specifics – to compare marketing expenditure last year to the budget for this year, for example – you can do so from one application. Activities such as budgeting and statutory reporting are transformed into efficient, collaborative processes that foster confidence. With a greater understanding of company performance, combined with insight into risk probabilities, you can make better decisions that help manage risk and contribute to future business results.

Business Planning

With SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation, you can perform activities such as planning, budgeting, forecasting, predictive analysis, and reporting with familiar and intuitive tools.

Planning and Budgeting

You can perform bottom-up and top-down financial and operational planning with a single application and user interface. You can collaborate on plans, manage stakeholder interactions, track versions and changes, engage managers in the planning process, and help ensure clear ownership and accountability. Planning processes are supported by workflows and automation that help ensure that the right people participate at the right time. And you can incorporate unstructured data, such as Microsoft Office documents and e-mail, to help tell the story behind the plans.

The application also supports a streamlined process for preparing budgets that align with strategic plans. A Web-based interface allows widely distributed stakeholders to work together on spreadsheets, both online and offline. And because you start with a single, consistent version of operational and financial data – both real-time and historical – you can have confidence in the integrity and accuracy of your budgets.

Forecasting

Business process flows are tightly linked to the data and processes that support planning and budgeting. What-if modeling and scenario-planning functions enable assessment of budgeting in real time. Additional analytic functionality enables you to produce more accurate plans and budgets, create rolling forecasts, and incorporate real-time actuals with historical data for the most effective forecasting possible.

Reporting and Analysis

With SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation, you also gain a solution for financial and operational reporting and analysis. You can perform production and management reporting (including exception reports), financial and operational analysis, and multidimensional analysis. The software also provides a “park-and-go” feature that captures the data you are currently working with so that you can then work on it remotely offline.

Consolidation

SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation meets your legal and management consolidation and reporting requirements for a fast close process. Because a centralized data repository contains up-to-date actuals from your operational systems, you always have instant access to harmonized charts of accounts. This can shave weeks off your consolidation process while simultaneously supporting compliance with regulatory mandates such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Specifically, you gain a single, centralized view of performance data and can generate clear, transparent financial statements and reports relating to, for example, profit and loss, cash flows, and balance sheets.

In addition, the software helps you compare budget-to-actuals data; automate the intercompany elimination process; gain transparency into corporate transactions at all levels; manage any number of currencies; and perform

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conversions, allocations, and eliminations. Automated reports support all reporting standards, including generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) International Accounting Standards (IAS), and the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). Finally, the software improves compliance with regulatory and financial standards and generates a fully documented audit trail.

Find Out More

For more information about SAP BusinessObjects Edge Planning and Consolidation, or about other SAP BusinessObjects Edge solutions, call your SAP representative or visit us at www.sap.com/solutions/sapbusinessobjects/sme/edgeseries/edge-planning-consolidation/index.epx.

Summary

With the SAP® BusinessObjects™ Edge Planning and Consolidation application, you can streamline operations, instill confidence, and reduce risk. The solution provides planning, budgeting, and forecasting functionality together with support for financial consolidation and reporting operations.

Business Challenges

- Reduce cycle time for planning and budgeting and improve user productivity
- Improve the accuracy and reliability of statutory, regulatory, and management reports
- Streamline the statutory consolidation process
- Keep compliance and auditing costs down
- Enable planning and consolidation with limited use of IT resources

Key Features

- **Business planning and budgeting** – Streamline and automate by using a collaborative top-down and bottom-up approach
- **Forecasting** – Produce more accurate plans and budgets, create rolling forecasts, and incorporate real-time actuals with historical data analysis
- **Reporting and analysis** – Gain one-click access to up-to-date production and management reporting and to financial, operational, and multidimensional analysis
- **Consolidation** – Centralize all performance-related data, shave weeks off consolidation processes, and improve compliance

Business Benefits

- **Reduce cycle time** in creating and approving budgets by enabling finance and line-of-business managers to collaborate on the development of budgets
- **Empower finance** to own and modify common business processes without IT assistance
- **Enable calculated decision making** by taking risk probabilities into account
- **Increase user productivity** with minimal training, thanks to native access to familiar tools
- **Minimize business and compliance risk** by enabling fully transparent finances and reporting and a fully documented audit trail
- **Reduce dependence on IT** by using self-guided workflow and self-service reporting and analytics features

For More Information

Call your SAP representative, or visit us online at www.sap.com.

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