

WBSCM UPDATE

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FEATURES:

SAP NETWEAVER

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE (BI)

DESIGN PHASE PROCESS FOR COTS ERP SAP SOLUTION VS CUSTOM DEVELOPED SOLUTION

This issue highlights two key topics:

- ❖ How SAP NetWeaver Business Intelligence (BI) will assist WBSCM users in accessing, querying, analyzing, and sharing both standard and ad-hoc reports about WBSCM activities.
- ❖ Key differences in designing a COTS ERP-based solution like SAP vs. a custom-developed solution.

Putting the Power of Information in the User's Hands – SAP BI

In the past, WBSCM newsletters have shed light on WBSCM's ability to provide a single source of reliable data. How easy will it be to analyze that data? SAP's Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) BI will provide powerful reporting capabilities for users, giving them analysis and reports in a flexible format that can be easily tailored to their varying needs. Users will have access to the information needed to perform their jobs, and can use it in a remarkable number of ways.

Examples of what WBSCM users can look forward to include:

- ❖ Timely Standard Reports – Out of the box standardized reports will be available on-demand or as regularly scheduled batch reports to satisfy many of USDA's reporting requirements.
- ❖ "You Drive" Drill-Down, Slicing and Dicing for Data Analysis (based on the type of user, e.g. end user, ad-hoc user), users will be able to:
 - Analyze standard reports and information at higher or more detailed levels
 - Design customized "standard reports" based on queries they create and save as "favorites," then run when needed
 - Create new or one-time only ad-hoc queries or reports
- ❖ Fast Delivery – Users will get dependable information quickly, based upon their search criteria.
- ❖ "Do You Want To Continue Where You Left Off?" – BI's navigation capability will let users stop in the midst of designing an ad-hoc query or report, then return to the same screen they were using before they stopped when they are ready to resume work – no need to tab through multiple screens to get there.

- ❖ “Have It Your Way” Report Formats – Users will be able to save, download, and/or analyze data in the formats they need, such as PDF, Excel spreadsheets, and Excel graphics like pie charts, trend lines, etc., that can be inserted into PowerPoint slides. The reports can be emailed, too. Just think of the possibilities!
- ❖ Easier to manage security access – the application’s security functionality will permit data retrieval and viewing to be restricted to only those users with a need to know.

The value of all of these capabilities is high because it will help WBSCM users and program managers get the information they need to make decisions, and evaluate, monitor, and improve supply chain management.

Design With a Difference — How the WBSCM SAP Design Process Differs From Custom Developed Solution Design

April’s newsletter described some of the benefits and differences of designing a business solution based on a COTS ERP package like SAP. Here are some additional differences during the Design Phase:

- ❖ **Early Ability To See and Engage In the Design Process**
Government team members “see” different things during the Design Phase of custom-build and COTS ERP projects, which affects their ability to be involved in the process.
 - **Wait To See:** In custom build, there is less to “see and touch” during the Design Phase, other than paper design documents. Government team

members must wait until the Build Phase begins to get a real sense of the look, feel and functionality of the new solution. The level of client interaction is limited during the Design Phase.

- **See Now:** COTS ERP packages allow Government team members to see functional processes early in the Design Phase, based on pre-built business processes. This makes it easier for them to get engaged earlier in the Design Phase.

- ❖ **“Learn By Doing” Capability Building**

A related difference between custom-build and COTS design is the degree to which team members get to learn the ins and outs of the new system early.

- **Learning about... IT design**
With custom developed solutions, the emphasis is more on the design of an IT application versus the design of an integrated business solution. That is good knowledge to have when you are new to the design process. But it is not so useful if you are not, or if you don’t do systems design for a living. What team members don’t get to learn much about during the Design Phase is how the system will actually work, from either the user’s perspective or that of operations and maintenance. Sometimes it’s hard to see the big picture – how the whole design fits together – until late in the process.

- **Learning about...how the business solution will work**
The COTS ERP design process provides great “experiential learning,” or learning by doing. Through design and integration sessions, team members gain knowledge on the full business solution, and are able to partner more closely with consultants. The focus is more on the business in which they are experts, and understanding how the COTS package will support that business. The USDA Team is gaining this knowledge as they build an understanding of how the individual components work, and how they will interface with existing systems. This knowledge is invaluable in making long-term and strategic design decisions.

❖ **Integrating From A Business Perspective Rather Than Organizational Perspective**

Last month’s newsletter highlighted the difference between “bottom-up” custom design and “top-down” COTS ERP design. It used the analogy of COTS packages having pre-built Lego™ blocks of standard business functions, which are pre-assembled into end-to-end business processes. It described how this enables teams to look at the end-to-end processes early on and clearly see ways to streamline and improve how their organization does its work.

- **Integration of Functions**
In custom design, teams can have a hard time getting away from thinking about “how we’ve always done it” in existing functions-based

organizational units (e.g., the procurement division does X, the finance division does Y). It takes awhile for teams to have break-through to innovative thinking about what is possible beyond these organizational boundaries.

- **Integration of The Business**
COTS ERP’s pre-built business processes help teams springboard quickly to break-through thinking about how to do the end-to-end processes better (i.e., funds to order, source to award, ship to pay). While this difference sounds subtle, its impact is enormous. It’s helping the WBSCM Team fully integrate the work of multiple agencies and departments, reduce hand-offs, and eliminate inefficiencies. The newly created Solution Council is enhancing this cross-process perspective with cross-functional and cross-agency representation and understanding.

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- ❖ The WBSCM Team delivered its final Privacy Impact Assessment on April 30.
- ❖ The team also awarded a contract to **CombineNet** to develop WBSCM’s prototype Bid Evaluation Optimization Solution (BEOS), after evaluating several RFP responses. Upon completion of the prototyping, an award will be made to a vendor for the actual implementation of the BEOS solution. The BEOS solution should improve agencies’ ability to evaluate commodity and freight bids.

- ❖ The WBSCM Team completed an Integration Session for “Funds to Order” processes and an FMMI-R integration session in Kansas City, MO. The WBSCM Team is currently preparing for “Source to Award” and “Ship to Pay” Integration Sessions in May.
- ❖ The WBSCM Team completed its detailed design work with international stakeholders for Release 1 (R1).
- ❖ The Data Management group continues the design of a robust Data Conversion and Data Mapping strategy. Data owners are being designated, the various sources of legacy data are being identified, data conversion program specs are being prepared, and the SRA Team is providing guidance to the government in the critical area of data cleansing. The quality of the converted legacy data is critical to a successful WBSCM implementation.
- ❖ The Agencies began the process of defining the activities associated with change management including the human transition element. MITRE is working with the agencies to facilitate this important part of the move to WBSCM.
- ❖ WBSCM Team members continue to reach out and inform external stakeholders about WBSCM.
 - The team produced a video of the WBSCM proof of concept demo, which will be used at various government and trade conferences.
 - The American Commodity Distribution Association Conference (ACDA) was held

April 5-8, 2008 in Kansas City, MO. Team members attended the conference and supported USDA’s efforts.

- The 2008 International Food Aid Conference (IFAC) was held April 15-16, 2008 in Kansas City, MO. Team members participated in a breakout session on WBSCM.
- The Fruits and Vegetables (FV) Industry Conference was held April 21, 2008 in Chicago, IL. Team members presented an overview of WBSCM.
- ❖ The team is progressing towards the completion of the project’s Design Phase with a Preliminary Design Review (PDR) currently scheduled for late June.



Did you know...?

... that *USDA commodities* account for 15–20% of school nutrition program food purchases

... that USDA’s commodity improvements are keeping pace with current nutrition and health advancements – including more fresh fruits and vegetables, more whole grains, less sodium, sugar and fat

... that bonus commodities are optional foods offered to states and school districts over and above the commodities USDA regularly plans for and purchases with appropriated funds

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- ❖ As part of the ongoing WBSCM learning and collaboration process, SRA and USDA are jointly attending the Americas' SAP User Group (ASUG)/SAP Sapphire Conference May 4-7, 2008.
- ❖ Continuing the transition from different agencies' lingos to WBSCM "SAP speak", here is the latest sample of the new "WBSCM dictionary:" You can access the full [WBSCM terminology guide](#) on the WBSCM Web site!

WBSCM Terms

Sales Organization: Represents an organizational unit within logistics that structures a company according to its sales requirements (e.g., FNS, FSA, FAS, USAID will be setup as Sales Organizations).

Storage Locations: An organization unit allowing differentiation between the various stocks of a material in a plant (e.g. National Warehouses will have two storage locations to separate stock by programs – CSFP, FDPIR).

Division: A way to group materials and services for profitability and sales analysis. (One division will be created in WBSCM.)

WANT TO CONTINUE DEEPENING YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SAP AND ERP?

You can find more information about who else is using ERP, including demos and customer success stories, from the SAP Web site at www.sap.com.

You can also learn more by reading and participating in SAP and related activities. See our December '07 WBSCM newsletter http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FS_A_File/wbscm_update_0712.pdf for a list of suggested sources and events. This includes online communities and chat forums, Web seminars, terminology guides, published reading material, books, and formal events.

NEXT MONTH...



...the WBSCM Team will continue its joint integration cycle sessions.

...our newsletter will feature lessons learned from the WBSCM Team's participation in the ASUG/SAP Sapphire Conference May 4-7, 2008.