

## Oracle BIEE 11g: Worth the Wait



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After three years of waiting with bated breath (well, nobody holds their breath that long!), Oracle is launching Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE) 11g this week. The product is due to ship in a few weeks.

In case you haven't been tracking Oracle's BI strategy over the past few years, their strategic BI product is now largely based on capabilities from the Siebel acquisition back in 2005. Oracle Discoverer, Reports, and Hyperion Interactive Reporting (Brio) are still supported but not strategic. Essbase is still considered the premier OLAP option, although OBIEE has robust ROLAP capabilities.

Where the previous release fell short was in usability, interface appeal, and integration with Essbase. OBIEE 11g is a big improvement, with capabilities that go far beyond improving core BI. For example, the new scorecard module seems one of the most robust, intuitive and certainly most integrated on the market to date.

Another new capability I'd highlight is their Actionable Intelligence. Within pre-built analytic applications, Oracle had the concept of guided analysis in version 10. For example, if a call center representative is looking at a list of orders and pending payments by customer and sees that payments are increasingly late, the main report could link to related content to show the volumes, amounts, correspondence and so on. What's new in 11g is that a decision-maker can be guided not only to other content, but also, can invoke a process. In this case, issuing a credit hold or sending a late payment notice could be actions to invoke. The actual Web service or script to invoke is defined outside of the BI Server and then registered as potential actions. Once registered as actions, they can be embedded within a dashboard, report or alert notification. The process of defining the actions and accessing them seemed straight forward. This capability is certainly a competitive differentiator and makes the concept of "insight to action" a reality. That it can be consistently implemented and leveraged by all users in various use cases and interfaces makes "Actionable Intelligence" even more attractive.