



SAP® BusinessObjects™ XI

ALL INFORMATION, ALL PEOPLE, ONE PLATFORM

To optimize business performance and stay ahead of the competition, organizations must confront the gap between strategy and execution. SAP® BusinessObjects™ business intelligence solutions help close the loop between information and action. SAP BusinessObjects XI solutions redefine the way information empowers users, delivering insight through a single, trusted intelligence platform that supports a unified view of structured and unstructured data.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONFRONTING THE GAP BETWEEN STRATEGY AND EXECUTION

Today's organizations are challenged to integrate and make sense of widespread, disparate data; enable collaborative team efforts; and optimize business performance across the entire organization and a dynamic network of partners. To optimize business performance and stay ahead of the competition, organizations must confront the gap between strategy and execution.



Almost all organizations around the world are confronted with the same fundamental business pain – the disconnect between the world of making decisions and the world of executing them. Research from organizations such as the Balanced Scorecard Collaborative indicates that as many as nine out of 10 organizations fail to execute their strategies today. This gap between strategy and execution keeps organizations from optimizing business performance.

This paper identifies key trends and discusses how SAP® BusinessObjects™ business intelligence (BI) solutions help close the loop between information and action. SAP BusinessObjects XI solutions redefine the way information empowers users, delivering insight through a single, trusted intelligence platform that supports a unified view of structured and unstructured data. Additionally, the software offers performance optimization and data quality management functionality, enabling reliable applications, consistent analysis, and informed decision making across the organization.

KEY TRENDS AFFECTING BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION

Three key new trends may affect your organization's ability to optimize its business performance today.

Trend 1: Evolving from Widespread Data to Unified, Relevant Information and Actionable Insights

The nature of information is changing. It is no longer possible to manage your business using only structured information generated within four walls. All information, whether structured or unstructured, from inside or outside the organization, needs to be brought together in a way that is relevant for business decisions. Unlocking the information currently hidden away in e-mails, office documents, and the sea of data available on the Internet is just the first step. Sorting through this mountain of information to generate trusted, relevant insight for a decision maker – and delivering this insight with business context – is far more difficult.

Trend 2: Transitioning from Individuals to Teams

The nature of how people work is changing. It is no longer sufficient for applications to support individual contributors within a functional silo. Your end users need support for how they really get things done – collaborating in teams and communicating across departmental and geographic boundaries, all in a very specific business context. Typically, people who collaborate make better decisions than those who do so in isolation. Increasingly, because of their exposure to easy-to-use, flexible consumer Internet applications, today's business users expect to be self-sufficient, and to create and customize their own solution environments, rather than always relying on IT.

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Trend 3: Moving from Businesses to Business Networks

The nature of how businesses connect is changing. Companies can no longer maintain only arms-length relationships with their customers and suppliers. Your company needs to optimize business performance across a dynamic network of partners with whom it is outsourcing, in-sourcing, off-shoring, and on-shoring. Such business networks empower your company to deliver faster innovation to customers at lower costs by sharing investments, assets, and ideas. But to be successful, you need to be able to collect and share information more effectively.

BUILD YOUR INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM WITH SAP BUSINESSOBJECTS XI

UNIFY ALL INFORMATION

Why an Intelligence Platform Is Essential

Imagine if every person in your business could make better-informed choices and decisions every time because they have the necessary information and context – and imagine the total effect on your business. It's no surprise that BI has been the number-one spending priority of CIOs for the last three years¹, and that many organizations see BI as a mission-critical information infrastructure that is just one of the requirements of being in business. BI is becoming a necessity that requires no more business justification than the organization's operational applications, e-mail system, phone system, or local area network.

A glance at the top priorities of today's executives shows why. In today's fast-moving organizations, BI technology is essential for the consistent execution of strategy by top management, improving customer loyalty, increasing forecast accuracy, and measuring profitability.

Your organization needs business visibility that empowers everyone with the information they need to improve decisions. Your business needs to align strategy with execution, optimize performance by reducing costs and improving productivity, and improve agility by acting on real-time insights. Your decision makers realize that they must take a more coherent approach to information governance, regulatory compliance, and risk management, which all depend on a base platform of trusted, consistent data throughout the organization.

The BI industry has long been a patchwork of disparate technology solutions and vendors. Now, technology advances, greater integration, and, above all, greater industry consolidation have brought us to a sea change in the nature of the industry. For the first time, a standard, integrated platform for BI across the organization is the rule rather than the exception.

In order to succeed, your intelligence platform must be up to the task. That is, it must be able to provide all decision makers, analysts, and business users in your organization with the information they need, when they need it. It must use technology that can effectively be deployed in today's fragmented world of multiple systems, databases, and competing standards.

It is no longer sufficient for applications to support individual contributors within a functional silo. Your users need support for how they really get things done – collaborating in teams and communicating across departmental and geographic boundaries, all in a very specific business context.



Your intelligence platform must be able to bring together all the information required for confident decision making.

Unified View

Traditional BI examined transactions, processes, and events from information stored in structured sources, such as operational systems and data warehouses. Now, you have the opportunity to also provide your users with easy access to the increasing amount of important data that isn't stored in these internal structured systems.

Unstructured Information

Organizations are now learning that a more complete view of their business – including people's opinions, thoughts, and ideas – lies untapped in their unstructured text sources. Some practical examples include customer call records, analyst reports, market blogs, news sites, and comments residing in customer relationship management (CRM) systems, wikis, and financial documents. Whether you are looking at customer sentiment or product feedback across large data sets, the insights found in text can help your organization better understand customer likes, dislikes, and motivations. It also helps identify risks related to compliance and fraud.

SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions comprise a comprehensive intelligence platform with integrated text analysis and search functionality, enabling your organization to combine and complement quantitative information from structured sources with qualitative insight from unstructured sources. Powerful extraction, categorization, and summarization functionality allows your decision makers to quickly identify and understand the concepts, people, organizations, places, and other information that exists only in unstructured text sources. Platform services such as data cleansing, shared metadata, and administration are applied to unstructured data. Meanwhile, accessing and analyzing unstructured data from the same traditional reporting, analysis, and dashboard eliminates the need for you to train users – and supports faster time to insight.

Information on Demand

External data providers have long been an essential part of your operations, from checking customer credit to determining hierarchies of your customer accounts. When measuring your performance, you inevitably have to compare results with information from the outside world, such as overall market performance and that of your competitors. Your intelligence platform must make the integration of external and internal data as seamless and painless as possible.

With our BI solutions, you can establish a comprehensive intelligence platform providing consumable external information that is BI-ready – so your organization can add context to its business intelligence by benchmarking your performance against external market metrics. Information sources include Dun & Bradstreet, eBay transaction data, Employment Development Department, NewsTin, Thomson Financial, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Leveraging SAP and Non-SAP Software Environments

Business applications from SAP as well as from other vendors make up the lifeblood of your operational activities. It is vital that your BI platform be able to combine information across these systems, inside and outside the organization.

Broad Support for SAP Enterprise Software

SAP enterprise software is the foundation supporting the unique business processes of more than 25 industries. Whether or not your company has SAP applications installed, your BI platform must be able to support the robust business processes of your ecosystem of customers, partners, and suppliers. SAP BusinessObjects XI is an obvious choice as the BI platform for your enterprise software, and offers a wide range of deployment options and support for SAP operational and data warehousing environments.

¹ 2008 Gartner Executive Programs CIO Survey, January 10, 2008

Unmatched Application Connectivity

Every organization has a mix of different applications from multiple suppliers, and this situation will continue, with new applications constantly being implemented. Your BI platform must be able to provide executives and business users with a comprehensive view of business processes – no matter what underlying process platform is being used. SAP BusinessObjects XI provides broad, flexible support for standard industry applications and solutions from SAP, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Microsoft, Siebel, JD Edwards, salesforce.com, and hundreds of other environments.

Helping Ensure Trusted Information

Business decisions are only as good as the data used to justify them. The most impressive dashboard is worth nothing if the underlying information is not reliable.

Data Quality

There isn't an organization on the planet that doesn't have a data quality problem. Your BI platform must include the ability to detect, monitor, and improve data quality across all the information sources of the organization. SAP BusinessObjects XI provides a comprehensive global data-quality offering, as on on-premise or on-demand solution. The data quality software supports over 180 different countries and a quantity of

data types rivaling the offerings of any other data quality vendor. By profiling, cleansing, and continuously monitoring your data, SAP BusinessObjects software helps ensure that your business data is correct, consistent, and complete.

Transparency

Providing quality data is not enough. Organizations need to know where the data came from, and what people and processes are affected if data is changed. Consider this analogy, using the example of an express courier provider. Since the courier service delivers on its promise of next-day delivery, package tracking should be unnecessary. But an essential part of the company's offer is the ability to know exactly where the package is, who signed for it, and when. In the same way, in your business, your end users need to be able keep track of what they're using – where their data comes from, how it was calculated, and when it was last refreshed.

SAP BusinessObjects XI provides data lineage without custom programming. Users can see when data was updated, how it was computed, and where it came from – all the way back to the original transactional source. This visibility is critical to helping your users gain better trust in their information. And with new on-demand services, you can cleanse your data without needing any on-premise installation.

Common Terms and Definitions

Your organization can approach "one version of the truth" only if everyone is using the same definitions, rules, and vocabulary. Your BI platform must provide a centralized definition of common metadata that translates business terms into the technical information used to retrieve the data, and acts as a common repository across the organization.

SAP BusinessObjects solutions pioneered the "universe," or semantic layer, and single common metadata for BI. The patented SAP BusinessObjects semantic layer is the foundation for empowering self-service BI and high-productivity report and analysis authoring. It helps ensure a single version of the truth across all your data sources – structured relational DBMS, online analytical processing (OLAP) servers, and even data originally from unstructured sources. It simplifies the complexity of your business data by using common business terms, rather than data language, to access, manipulate, and organize information.

By providing BI functionality that meets the needs of nearly every role and every individual in the organization, businesses can gain smarter, more aligned people, teams, and broader business ecosystems.

Full-Spectrum BI

A successful BI platform has to support all the information access, interaction, and analysis needs of the different profiles of users across your organization, based on a common framework.

Reporting

An operational or enterprise reporting solution is ideal in situations where questions are predefined and the structure of each answer is fairly well known in advance. In this case, the majority of users are information consumers who want snapshots of business activity. Developers and designers create reports that answer the most regularly asked questions and distribute them to hundreds or thousands of users. Examples of these reports include account statements, invoices, regulatory reports, inventory run rates, and standard internal reports. This information is ideal for sharing securely with your customers, partners, and suppliers outside the organization.

Crystal Reports® software is a powerful, dynamic, actionable reporting solution that helps you design, explore, visualize, and deliver reports via the Web or embedded in enterprise applications. It enables your end users to consume reports with stunning visualizations, conduct on-report business modeling, and execute decisions instantly from the report itself – reducing dependency on your IT team and developers. Crystal Reports from SAP is the de facto industry standard for reporting, with the most industry awards, customers, and users, as well as the most reports deployed and embedded in the most applications.

Query, Reporting, and Analysis

Query, reporting, and analysis functionality empowers your users to answer questions autonomously as they arise. This ad hoc query functionality is ideal for data analysts and other business users who need self-service information access

with moderate-to-high amounts of interactivity. Our query, reporting, and analysis solutions expand the scope of analysis and interactivity to virtually all data sources. This can potentially include terabytes of data stored in a centralized data warehouse, data marts, or multidimensional OLAP cubes.

SAP BusinessObjects XI query, reporting, and analysis tools enable your users to identify trends and find root causes in data from relational and OLAP data sources. A range of users, from experienced analysts to mainstream business users, can create queries and perform calculations without needing to understand complex database schemas or Structured Query Language (SQL). SAP BusinessObjects XI provides the query, reporting, and analysis client with both online and offline functionality from a single Web-based infrastructure.

Companies can no longer maintain only arms-length relationships with their customers and suppliers. Your company needs to optimize business performance across a dynamic network of partners with whom it is outsourcing, in-sourcing, off-shoring, and on-shoring. Such business networks empower your company to deliver faster innovation to customers at lower costs by sharing investments, assets, and ideas.

Figure 1: SAP BusinessObjects Polestar Enables Visual, Interactive Data Exploration

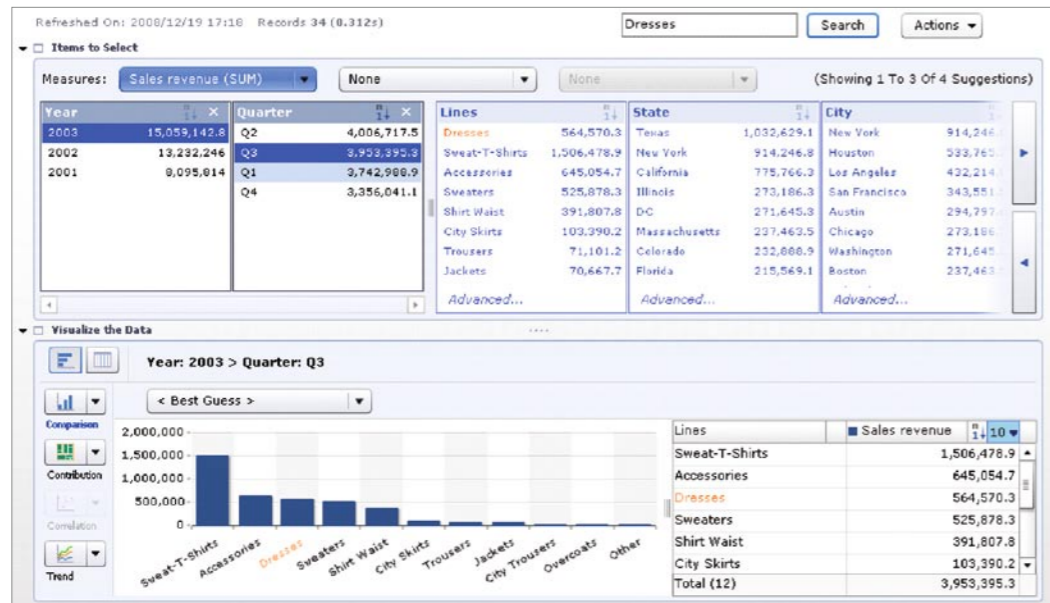


Figure 1 presents an example of how SAP BusinessObjects Polestar brings together the simplicity and speed of search with the trust and analytical power of BI.

Search and Navigation

Reporting and query and analysis features are excellent for businesspeople who have some idea of what they are looking for. But what about users who want to sift and browse through data in the same way they are used to browsing through information sources like the Web? Simplicity and speed of search define a new category of tools, called search and navigation. Rather than just searching documents, SAP BusinessObjects search and navigation tools allow people to locate information hidden in hundreds of internal and external resources, and browse and explore corporate data in an easy and intuitive way.

SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions include SAP BusinessObjects Polestar software, a solution that brings together the simplicity and speed of search functionality with the analytical power of BI to give you immediate answers to your business questions. Business users are able to employ familiar keyword searches to find information hidden in data sources, and then navigate and explore directly on data. No data structure knowledge is required.

Dashboards and Visualization

Dashboards and visualization tools are essential for providing a common view of what's important to your organization or team, in an intuitive way that encourages a culture of information appreciation and use. They enhance visibility into organizational strategy, align actions with that strategy, and allow your users to track key performance indicators (KPI), assign goals, and collaborate and share knowledge.

SAP BusinessObjects XI dashboard and visualization functionality helps drive performance success by representing your business via stunning and meaningful visuals in a consolidated view. Using what-if analysis and forecasting, your organization can proactively manage and monitor business processes.

Predictive Analysis

Human intuition can be augmented with powerful data-analysis algorithms that help automatically forecast trends, identify outlying data values, and determine the most important factors influencing key variables. SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions integrate rich data-mining and predictive analytic functionality, which helps individuals in your company to explore past and present business scenarios, as well as uncover trends and identify outliers to project future outcomes.

Next-Generation Usability

A key goal for BI platforms remains helping you extend the reach of fact-based decisions to all users, not just the estimated 15% that traditionally use BI tools.

Simple Access with Adaptive Interfaces

BI platforms must include interfaces for all types of users – including those that are not comfortable with traditional reporting and query and analysis. This typically requires interfaces that are much closer to the discovery and browsing techniques that your end users are accustomed to using on the Web.

SAP BusinessObjects XI includes a number of intuitive, next-generation usability functions. It includes discovery functionality that combines the speed and simplicity of search with the power and reliability of BI – so you can immediately answer questions as easily as you use Internet search engines.

Working in a Familiar Business Environment

Your business users need to be able to access information through the familiar interfaces and workflows that they already use in their daily work. SAP BusinessObjects XI provides personalized intelligent information in the environments your business staffers use every day.

From their desktops, business analysts and decision makers can use BI widgets to monitor key metrics and information that matters to them. We've also integrated BI functionality with the Microsoft Office environment, embedding up-to-the-minute corporate data in secure, sharable Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Word documents, or in e-mail messages using Microsoft Outlook. SAP BusinessObjects XI also allows your organization to immediately access information from the broadest set of wireless devices, enabling your remote workers to stay up-to-date and make decisions using the latest information.

Aligning Teams and Business Networks

Your BI solution needs to enable individuals in your organization to easily share insights within the business and across boundaries, to collaborate more broadly in teams, and to communicate across boundaries to your customers and partners.

Simplified BI Deployment

With SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions, your IT department can quickly deploy BI applications, be prepared to respond to future changes, and add services as needed over time. Automated life-cycle management tools simplify your ability to modify, reconfigure, or upgrade your deployment.

Insight Through Cross-BI Deployment Federation

Despite BI rationalization efforts, many BI deployments continue to exist as information silos within an organization. SAP BusinessObjects XI comes with federation functionality. Across multiple intra-organization or even cross-business network BI deployments, individuals and teams can easily replicate reports, analyses, and even security models.

Improved Relationships via Next-Generation BI Extranets

By incorporating BI into your ecosystem of customers, suppliers, and partners, your organization will be able to respond to market changes more quickly, build and maintain a competitive edge, and achieve improved customer satisfaction. A pioneer in BI extranets, the SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions offers software-as-a-service (SaaS) reporting and analysis deployment options to enable rapid time to deployment, cross-network collaboration, and value-chain visibility.

LEVERAGE ONE PLATFORM

A BI platform must be a single, integrated environment that covers the needs of IT and the business.

Complete, Integrated Data and BI Services

It's no longer enough to try to pull together a coherent solution from multiple different data integration, data quality, and metadata management tools. Your BI platform should include all of these data services as part of a single layer.

Figure 2 depicts SAP BusinessObjects XI as a single platform for all BI and information management services.

Data Integration

Your BI platform must be able to integrate information from all the disparate data sources inside and outside of your organization, including unstructured and

XML data – and with high performance. SAP BusinessObjects XI BI solutions are designed to provide an easy-to-use data integration environment with integrated data quality, data lineage, data auditing, data access and movement, and transformational functionality in one platform. No separate or different skills and training are needed for one or the other, as with separate heterogeneous applications. This single-platform approach allows for better staff utilization, more effective project management, and lower cost of ownership.

Data Quality

A data quality solution must be able to process any type of data, of any volume, from any geographical location, regardless of country origin. Additionally, it must be available in real-time transactional operations, batch high volume, or as a service that can be called from any other application in-house or remote.

Information consumers need data cleansed at the point of creation – whether it's your customers filling in online forms or bulk loading data into a data warehouse.

SAP BusinessObjects XI is a complete, global data-quality offering. The solution provides data quality support for over 180 different countries, including names, addresses, products, and encoding forms, and provides the flexibility to work with an unmatched quantity of data types, with both on-premise and on-demand options.

Change Management

Your BI platform must be able to keep track of all changes made to the system, from both an administration and data point of view. This means, for example, that your administrators should be able to see the effect of a change to one of the data sources on all the documents

and dashboards available to employees. SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions incorporate change management functionality, providing source-to-user impact analysis.

Integrated Administration

Your BI platform should provide all administration through a coherent central interface, including servers, security, auditing, publishing, scheduling, data access, and so on. SAP BusinessObjects XI provides information management (IM) and BI integration, with complete, integrated data and BI services, including data lineage, impact analysis, common auditing, metadata generation, common security, and more.

Adaptive and Extensible Services

Your BI platform must be flexible enough to integrate with existing complex information environments, and it must be available in a way that allows it to be used throughout every information-using process.

Agile Information Management

Your BI platform must be able to access information in real-life environments, at any level of preparation and aggregation. In other words, a full range of interfaces should support access from raw operational systems to data marts, data federation, data warehouses, and so on. Your BI solution should provide the highest-possible performance in each of these environments by leveraging the specific nature of the environment, indexes, and other features.

SAP BusinessObjects XI offers agile information management functionality. Data marts can be created from ERP systems quickly – in some cases, even in days or weeks instead of months. Data federation functionality enables IT to quickly integrate data virtually while extraction, transformation, and loading (ETL) plans are still being designed. Change management functionality helps ensure that system changes do not create headaches throughout the information chain.

Flexible, Open Service-Oriented Architecture

A service-oriented architecture (SOA) is essential for a BI platform to support the needs of an agile organization. Your BI platform should support easy, comprehensive access to detailed functionality through software development kits (SDKs), application programming interfaces (APIs), and Web services.

With an adaptive, SOA-based BI platform, IT can securely manage and control content and users in a BI deployment. Multiserver support, fault tolerance, and intelligent load balancing help ensure that you can extend information to all users, when and how they need it. Our information infrastructure software also delivers multilevel caching, cross-platform support, and comprehensive system administration.



Figure 2: SAP® BusinessObjects™ XI – A Single Platform for All BI and Information Management Services

SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions provide an enterprise-wide information infrastructure that allows your organization to make every person, process, and decision more intelligent. With an intelligence platform, you can close the loop between information and action.

CONCLUSION

SAP BusinessObjects XI includes a set of shared services used across the product line. This approach has many advantages, including flexibility, scalability with failover and fault tolerance, and extensibility, so you can add new services without jeopardizing system availability.

SAP BusinessObjects XI provides SDKs for enterprise application developers to build application and portal integrations on top of the platform. We recognize the need for comprehensive support of different development environments, so SAP BusinessObjects Enterprise XI software provides SDKs for .NET, Java, and Web services.

The BI industry has long been a patchwork of disparate technology solutions and vendors. Now, technology advances, greater integration, and, above all, greater industry consolidation have brought us to a sea change in the nature of the industry. For the first time, a standard, integrated platform for BI across the organization is the rule rather than the exception.

Choice of Delivery Model

Today's BI platforms must be available in whatever deployment model best fits in with your organization's needs.

On-Premise

An on-premise BI solution requires all of the BI and data services integrated on a single, common platform. SAP is a global leader in BI software, with more than 46,000 on-premise customers – including over 80% of the Fortune 500.

Software as a Service

The same BI platform technology should be available as either an on-premise or on-demand offering – and your organization should be able to combine both without having to compromise. SAP BusinessObjects

software is available as a complete SaaS BI offering, including reporting, query and analysis, data integration, data quality, data warehousing, and external information on demand.

Appliance

Many organizations do not have the resources to maintain and manage components of data warehousing and BI applications internally. BI appliances offer these companies a combination of hardware and software, packaged together to provide a complete, simple, and affordable solution to gathering and analyzing data. BI appliances give you a preinstalled and preconfigured application that reduces installation, configuration, and deployment time to lower the total costs associated with running multiple, disparate software solutions independently.

A leader in BI, SAP has partnerships with leading appliance vendors, including Hewlett-Packard Development Company, IBM Corporation; Netezza Corporation, and Teradata Corporation.

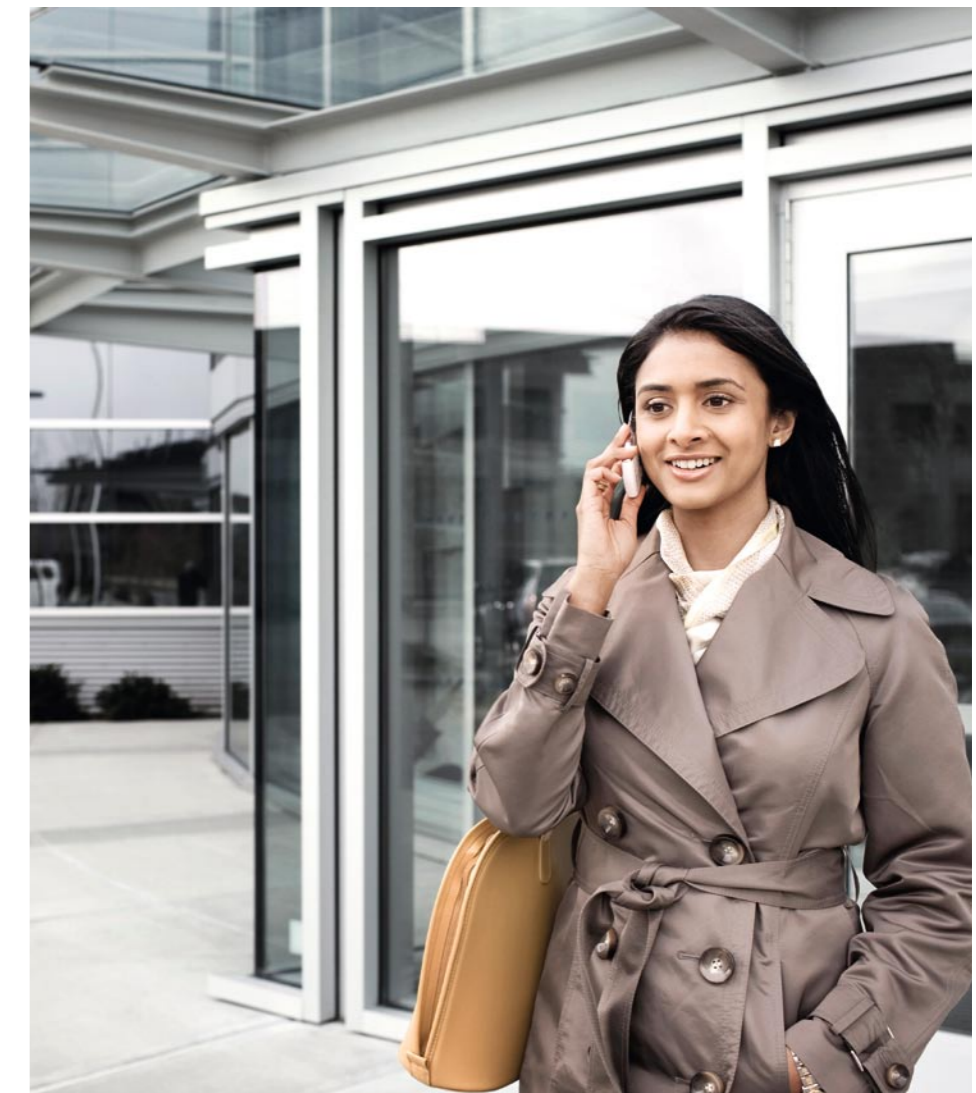
Intelligence platforms are essential for today's organizations. SAP BusinessObjects XI solutions help transform the way your organization works – making every person, process, and decision more intelligent. Now, with our leading BI solutions, you can turn massive data volumes into both a strategic asset and a competitive weapon.

Key business benefits include:

- **Comprehensive BI solution** with strengths in reporting, query and analysis, search and navigation, dashboards and visualization, and predictive analysis
- **Relevant information and actionable insights**, making every person, process, and decision more intelligent
- **Immediate, self-service BI**, with simplified deployment to more users across your organization and its ecosystem of customers, partners, and suppliers
- **Trusted and accurate information** supporting enterprise-wide operational and analytical initiatives
- **Complete, integrated platform** for meeting BI and information management needs
- **Unified view** of virtually any data source and application regardless of format or location, thanks to tailored integration with existing IT infrastructures

For More Information

To learn more about SAP BusinessObjects XI and SAP BusinessObjects business intelligence solutions, visit our Web site at www.sap.com/sapbusinessobjects.



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