The End is Near! Planning Your SAP® BusinessObjects™ 4.2 Upgrade

Unsupported technology is everyone's nightmare scenario. But, it's inevitable that every good software program will evolve and will ultimately reach end-of-life, requiring upgrades. Both SAP BusinessObjects 4.0 and 3.1 are winding through their respective final months of tech support, with 4.0 ending Priority One Support in December, 2017 and 3.1 following just 12 short months later.

Product Version	Mainstream Maintenance	Priority One Support Phase
Prior to XI 3.1	Out of Support	Out of Support
BOBJ ENTERPRISE XI 3.1	Dec 2015	Dec 2018
BI PLATFORM 4.0	Dec 2015	Dec 2017
BI PLATFORM 4.1	Dec 2018	Dec 2020
BI PLATFORM 4.2	Dec 2020	Dec 2022

Highlighting New Features

I recently co-moderated a webinar outlining all the reasons why BusinessObjects 4.0 and 3.1 users should be planning now to make the switch to BI 4.2 SP4. The list of features is impressive, as BusinessObjects 4.2 SP4 is focused on strengthening how you engage your business users with better features and tools. Those features are highlighted by a new, interactive Web Intelligence (WEBI) interface with new charts that will help explain and provide better insight. There is also a geo-encoding feature, displaying information on interactive maps. Additionally, with the new version of BI 4.2, your team can leverage SAP BusinessObjects Lumira 2.0 Discovery and Designer. Lumira storyboards can consume personal data, universe content, SAP HANA® and more to present data with amazing insight and design. SAP is the only visualization tool that allows you to start with an engaging end-user interface and then enhance the developed content into a corporate dashboard standard – it's easy and saves time and effort.

BI 4.2 Enhancements

New charts and custom charts	Mass change from Unv to Unx	Publish a report if there's data
BI Commentary	Calculation Extensions	Date Compare Functions
Global Input Controls	Server Group Enhancements	Right to Left Alignment
Geo encode data and map	BI Prompt Variants	Big Number support
Shared Webi Elements	DHTLM Catch-Up	Multi Column Selection
Time Compare Functions	References Enhancements	SAP Analytics Cloud Support
Native HANA Support	Parallel Querying	Change Data Source Wizard
Better Selection Support for BEx	SAP HANA Online mode	Enhanced Webi Viewer Interactions – Sort, Rank
Freehand SQL Support	Merge Variables	

The new BI LaunchPad interface is ready for touch screen interaction and all WEBI and Crystal Reports are immediately supported and transferred to this mobile-friendly platform. Looking for all of your scheduled content to be in one place? SAP has you covered with its new schedule reports interface.

Upgrade Sooner, Not Later

Given the time and budget constraints that most organizations face at year-end, it's likely objections will be raised when the "upgrade now" conversation begins. Here's some ammunition you can use to offset those concerns:

> **» BI Suite Conversion**
> This is the time to convert from BusinessObjects Enterprise Premium to BI Suite. Not only is the new software packed full of additional products and features, it also provides a simplified license model. Converting to BI Suite provides access to new tools like Lumira and Mobile. Plus, you get the benefit of a concurrent session-based licensing model (CSBL) that is hardware independent, allowing you to cut restrictive CPU ties.

Why now? Because right now you get **100% credit for your current license value** to use towards the new CSBL model.

» New Features
Support for new databases, browsers, OS and mobile devices is great for IT but the 4.2 upgrade is all about usability and customer engagement. Leverage WEBI smart data elements and extract key report charts and metrics and reuse them throughout SAP BI 4.2. Comment on your reports inline within the desktop or mobile experience. Interact with your existing WEBI reports with filtering, sorting and ranking and experience this on the desktop or on mobile. The SAP Lumira 2 release simplifies the development experience and allows power users to easily combine data, providing a mature design environment that supports drilling, data enrichment, storytelling, and more.

» Access to the best DESKI conversion tool
If you have Desktop Intelligence (DESKI) reports, there are so many features in BI4.2 that help convert those WEBI reports. Free Hand SQL in DESKI to WEBI has been an issue in migrations before, but now WEBI supports free hand SQL and the conversion is painless during an upgrade. DESKI conversion tool is better and more successful than ever, making this a prime time to move those reports to a more engaging and dynamic ad hoc application.

» Bulk conversion from UNV to UNX in WEBI reports
Are you ready to move your universe from UNV format to UNX but the effort to move the reports and do the testing seems overwhelming? We are currently working with clients to provide turnkey solutions for identifying reports still in use, converting the universe, converting the WEBI reports and fully testing all content without impacting users or BI teams.

What's Better than Free?

Start planning for tomorrow by building a solid foundation today, while taking the guesswork out of an upgrade. Protiviti is currently offering a FREE BI on BI assessment. This assessment, conducted using the 360Eyes evaluation tool, looks at your current SAP BI environment and determines proper hardware sizing for the new environment, recommends licensing and provides insight and best practices on security, deployment and scheduling. We will also identify the content and users to be migrated and/or archived, saving time in testing and long-term maintenance costs.

I encourage you to begin planning your BusinessObjects 4.2 SP4 upgrade strategy. Contact me by email at bob.zenker@protiviti.com to get started.

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Bob Zenker is a long-time member of Protiviti's Data Management & Analytics team, and brings extensive experience in data management and visual insight to his current role as a Director. He has worked with more than 600 U.S. and international companies of varying sizes, providing integrated solutions that reduce complexity and focus on the "elegant interaction" of business needs and technology. His areas of specialization include: SAP BusinessObjects, SAP Lumira, SAP Cloud Analytics, AWS, Tableau, data modeling, server architecture, BusinessObjects SDK, portal integration, dashboard and report design.