



ORACLE ENTERPRISE PLANNING AND BUDGETING

What is Oracle Enterprise Planning and Budgeting (EPB)?

Oracle Enterprise Planning and Budgeting delivers scalable planning and analysis, offering sophisticated data modeling and multi-dimensional analysis in a web environment, tailored for each customer's own business processes.

What are the primary business benefits from implementing EPB?

Enterprise Planning and Budgeting enables you to understand the business better by providing analysis tools to increase visibility into your organization. A framework to manage the critical business processes of budgeting and forecasting allows you to define the rules, tasks, and schedules, ensuring that you control these planning processes and achieve consensus when looking forward. The application enforces consistency while supporting decentralized flexibility. With ongoing monitoring of the business included, you tune plans to improve results and hold individuals accountable. Enterprise Planning and Budgeting is part of the Oracle E-Business Suite, an integrated set of applications that are engineered to work together.

What are some of the key features included in EPB Release 1?

- Sophisticated multidimensional reporting and analysis.
- Configuration of planning, budgeting, forecasting and monitoring processes.
- Powerful data processing including an allocation engine.
- Business calculation templates such as time analysis, share calculations, and analysis of variances.
- Budget entry distribution and approval process.
- Data-based exception alert notifications using responsibility hierarchies.

What are some of the key features included in EPB Release 2?

- Ability to import data from Excel
- Capabilities to create professional quality reporting
- Budgeting in multiple currencies
- Additional calculation templates
- Improved security management
- Support for multiple business areas
- Enhanced business process management
- Access shared data through SQL

Does EPB require running any of the Oracle ERP applications?

No. EPB can be implemented by Oracle e-Business Suite customers but it can also be implemented by organizations who are running other vendors' ERP applications. The latter can deploy EPB by extracting and loading required data into the open FEM interface tables. Non Oracle ERP customers will derive all the business value from EPB as a specialized standalone product.

We have implemented Oracle ERP applications. How do we deploy EPB?

EPB requires Oracle Applications version 11.5.9 or higher. You can choose to upgrade your entire application suite or deploy an independent instance of Oracle Applications release 11.5.9 or higher to implement EPB. In the first scenario, you will derive the full benefits of the pre-built integration between EPB and Oracle General Ledger.

What is the Enterprise Performance Foundation?

Enterprise Performance Foundation a database schema designed as a foundation for EPB and other Oracle Corporate Performance Management planning and analytical applications, such as Financial Consolidation Hub and Profitability Manager (successor to Performance Analyzer and Activity Based Management). It provides a set of predefined and user defined dimensions. There are open interface tables available to load metadata and data into the Enterprise Performance Foundation schema from multiple sources.

We have implemented Oracle Financial Analyzer. How do we migrate to EPB?

Oracle has released migration utilities that will help you convert existing dimensional metadata, fact data, documents, selection rules, calculations and user responsibilities to equivalent constructs in EPB. Oracle Financial Analyzer will continue to have error correction support until end of 2008 with extended support until end of 2010.

What are the functionality differences between EPB and Oracle Financial Analyzers (OFA)?

EPB builds on the proven functionality of OFA, but extends it to include automation and integration of the business processes, data-driven exception alerts targeted to accountable individuals, significant reporting enhancements (annotations, more flexible formatting, more graph types), a new multi-dimensional allocation engine, calculation templates in business terms, and integration with Oracle Workflow. For more details, please refer to the published Feature Comparison: Oracle Enterprise Planning and Budgeting with Oracle Financial Analyzer at <http://www.oracle.com/applications/cpm/epb.html>

What is the user authentication mechanism employed by EPB?

EPB relies on the single sign on authentication provided by Oracle Applications. Users are provided one or more EPB responsibilities appropriate to their organizational role. Integration is provided to Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) services via Oracle Internet Directory.

How does EPB manage user security and accountability?

EPB provides highly flexible mechanisms for setting read and write access by user for each Business Area. Access to input plan or budget data must be explicitly granted to responsible users.

EPB provides a built-in mechanism for business accountability by supporting ownership for the data behind all business metrics tracked in EPB. This ownership construct allows automatic notification of actions and alerts initiated within EPB to appropriate users. Both straightforward organizational hierarchical responsibilities as well as real life dotted-line management can be modeled within each Business Area

What is a Business Area in EPB?

A business area consists of dimensions, hierarchies, levels, attributes and data for discrete operations of the business. Examples of business areas are one for each sets of books, separate consolidated and management results, and viewing data from other Corporate Performance Management planning and analytical applications in EPB. Although each discrete business area are separate instances within EPB, they all reside in a single Application instance

Does EPB require a pre-defined data model or business process?

No. EPB allows you to configure the dimensionality, business rules and business processes to best fit your specific requirements. EPB provides a comprehensive framework to define and maintain the appropriate data model and business processes. EPB is designed to provide you with the deployment and cost-of-ownership benefits of a packaged solution along with the business benefits and flexibility of a configurable solution. EPB easily encompasses lifecycle changes in your business.

What is a Business Process in EPB?

Users with the Business Process Administrator responsibility can create and maintain business processes for planning, budgeting, forecasting, and monitoring the business in each Business Area. Examples of a business process are Strategic plan, Annual budget, Quarterly rolling forecast, and Month end variance analysis. You define each business process by specifying its data model, solve, tasks, and schedule. Typical tasks are data loads, worksheet distribution, worksheet submissions, data processing and exception alerts. Business Process executions can be calendar or event driven.

Does EPB provide workflow management capability?

Yes. EPB Business Processes and notifications are enabled by Oracle Workflow technology. Once the business processes have been defined, Enterprise Planning and Budgeting monitors their schedules and initiates a new process run of each business process appropriately. Task execution is controlled by Oracle Workflow and this automation reduces the administrative effort and cycle time.

Can EPB run several Business Processes concurrently?

Yes. Many EPB business processes can be in active execution concurrently. This mirrors the business reality of today's continuous and dynamic planning and budgeting activities. You can choose to retain several past runs of business processes in EPB and report against them, such as historical versions of the budget. Older business process runs are then automatically deleted.

Does EPB provide what-if analysis functionality?

Yes. EPB provides an extensive set of features to input values within a personal workspace and recalculate their incremental impact across the organization iteratively. This functionality is provided within the data collection worksheets. Users can also create personal dimension members and extend hierarchies to perform their analyses. Final inputted numbers can be submitted to the shared EPB workspace subject to validation against targets and approvals.

Does EPB provide hooks to add customization code?

The initial release of EPB focused on a comprehensive set of standard functionality rather than extension hooks. The configuration options and rich functionality included is expected to eliminate or minimize the need for customizations in your implementations. There are published hooks available in Oracle Workflow, one of the underlying components. In the second release of EPB, to streamline the administration for global companies, APIs in the area of security management, business process management and SQL access to the shared data were added.

Does EPB support report publishing requirements?

EPB provides extensive document authoring, formatting and sharing functionality directly to the end user. Documents include crosstab and large collection of graph types. EPB also provides through the integration with Oracle XML Publisher the ability to create and distribute professional quality reports.. This capability enables the creation of companywide and/or personalized briefing books in multiple formats (e.g., Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Adobe PDF and XML)

Does EPB provide integration with Microsoft Excel?

EPB documents can be exported to an Excel readable HTML file format. Document layout and formatting is preserved in the exported file. In addition, you have the option to import data from Excel workbooks into EPB worksheets. This enables you to enter and view data offline, leverage Excel's full functionality for data formulation, and most importantly retaining the organizational control of the data processing (e.g., Plan, Budget, Forecast, etc), targets and the approval/rejection process within EPB.

An OLAP Excel Add-in that will allow secure access to the EPB data stored within Analytic Workspaces is also under development. This is planned for a future release of EPB.

Does EPB support multi-currency?

Yes. EPB enables you to manage currency conversion as an integral part of the business process and control rates and currency strategies centrally. For Actuals, EPB supports the flexibility to load functional, entered or translated balances from Oracle General Ledger or outside source through the Enterprise Performance Foundation. EPB also provides a choice for the end user to enter data (e.g., plans, budgets, forecast, etc), by selecting the preferred currency or currencies and automatically convert this data to the parent currency during the consolidation process. Furthermore, the data can also be converted into additional currencies for reporting and analysis.

How is Enterprise Planning and Budgeting licensed?

Licensing is on a named user basis, with the full license being \$2,995 per user and the read-only (or limited) license being \$595 per user. These prices both include a run-time version of the database and the OLAP option. OFA/OSA customers can migrate their licenses to EPB on a 1-for-1 basis, which includes a run-time version of the database and the OLAP option.

Does EPB replace Oracle Demand Planning (ODP)?

No. ODP continues as a separate product within the Oracle APS suite. With Oracle Applications 11.5.10, the underlying architecture has shifted from the Oracle Express Server platform to the Oracle 9i Database plus OLAP option. A direct integration link is planned between ODP and the Oracle Enterprise Performance Foundation thus integrating demand planning data with EPB.

Does EPB replace Oracle Public Sector Budgeting (PSB)?

No. Current version of EPB is a generic product and will not address some of the Public Sector market specific features (i.e. Position Budgeting, Integration with HR Position Control, Posting Budget Journals and Budget Revision) available in PSB.

We have bought PSB but not yet implemented. Should we implement?

PSB currently incorporates line item-based budgeting and position-based budgeting. If you are planning to incorporate PSB for position-based budgeting as part of your HR and GL implementation, and are going to leverage the two way integration between both (HR for position budgeting, and GL for budget journals and budget revisions), then you should continue with PSB. If your requirements are more around line item based budgeting, long range planning, and complex analysis then you may want to evaluate EPB to see if there is a fit.