

Accelerating EPM Deployment

With Planning in the Cloud

SUMMARY

In today's challenging planning environment, reliance on spreadsheets is woefully inadequate and fraught with peril. Packaged planning and forecasting solutions can help alleviate these difficulties, yet may remain out of reach for many organizations that do not have adequate IT resources or capital budgets to justify the investment.

New cloud-based solutions, such as Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service, Oracle's first enterprise performance management (EPM) solution for the cloud, opens up opportunities for organizations of all sizes to streamline planning and forecasting, accelerate deployment, and reduce costs.



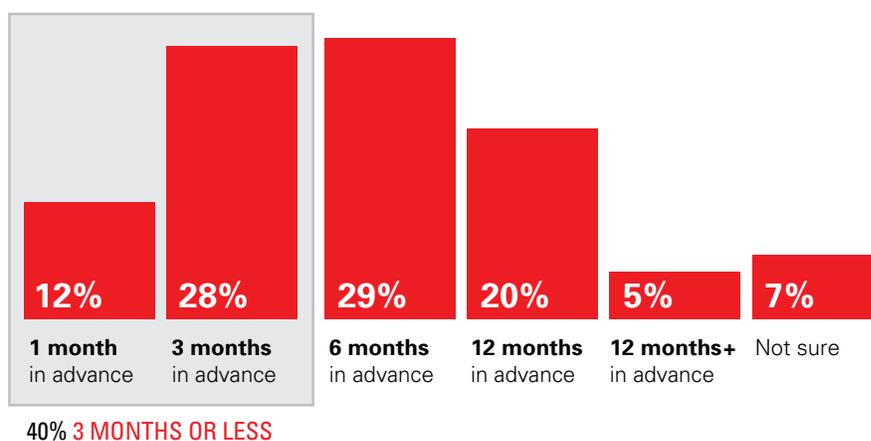
TODAY'S ENTERPRISE PLANNING CHALLENGES

DROWNING IN SPREADSHEETS

The planning environment has changed considerably for most organizations in today's global economy.

Global recession, erratic growth and recovery, and market volatility all make accurate planning and forecasting a challenging process. In fact, a 2010 survey by CFO Research Services revealed that 40 percent of CFOs can only accurately forecast one quarter into the future (Figure 1).

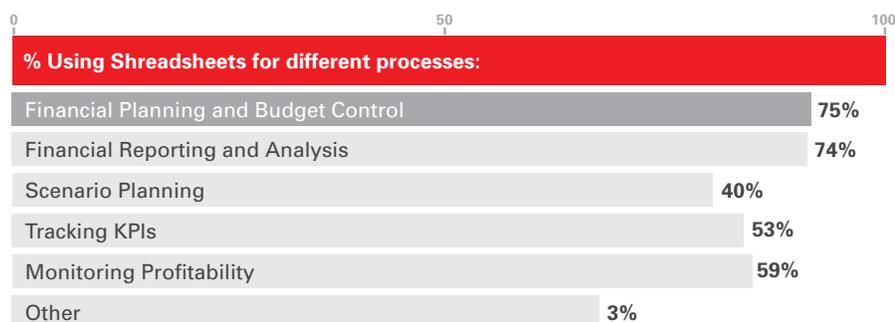
Figure 1: Challenges in Forecasting



To make matters worse, a recent Oracle survey on planning and forecasting revealed that 93 percent of finance managers globally are drowning in spreadsheets. This was especially true in the area of budgeting, planning, and forecasting, with 75 percent of respondents indicating they used spreadsheets in this area (Figure 2). While spreadsheets are easy to use and are the preferred tool of finance professionals, they are not well suited for enterprisewide processes like planning.



Figure 2: Finance Managers Drowning in Spreadsheets¹



When organizations are overly reliant on spreadsheets to support planning activities, they face challenges around time, quality, flexibility, and cost.

Long planning cycles result in missed opportunities and obsolete plans. Data integrity and quality issues show up in the form of errors in Excel spreadsheets, version control problems, and lack of audit trails.

Disconnected processes create a lack of flexibility and responsiveness to changes. And finally, too much time spent gathering information and not enough time to analyze it results in costly waste of resources with questionable benefits.

Yet, despite these challenges with current tools, the adoption of packaged enterprise performance management software is still not widespread.

This is evidenced by relatively low EPM penetration rates among ERP install base customers.



Friendly's

“The addition of Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service to Oracle’s cloud portfolio offers us more choice in deployment. We found Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service particularly easy to use with good response times and all the functionality that we expect from a sophisticated planning application.”

—Steve Tevault,

Database Administrator,
Friendly’s Ice Cream

New technologies like cloud make it easier to get off of spreadsheets and adopt best practices, such as rolling forecasts and driving the planning process beyond finance to the broader community of line managers.

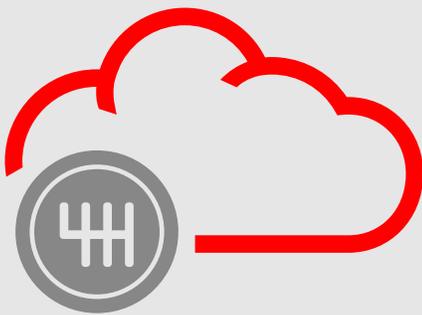
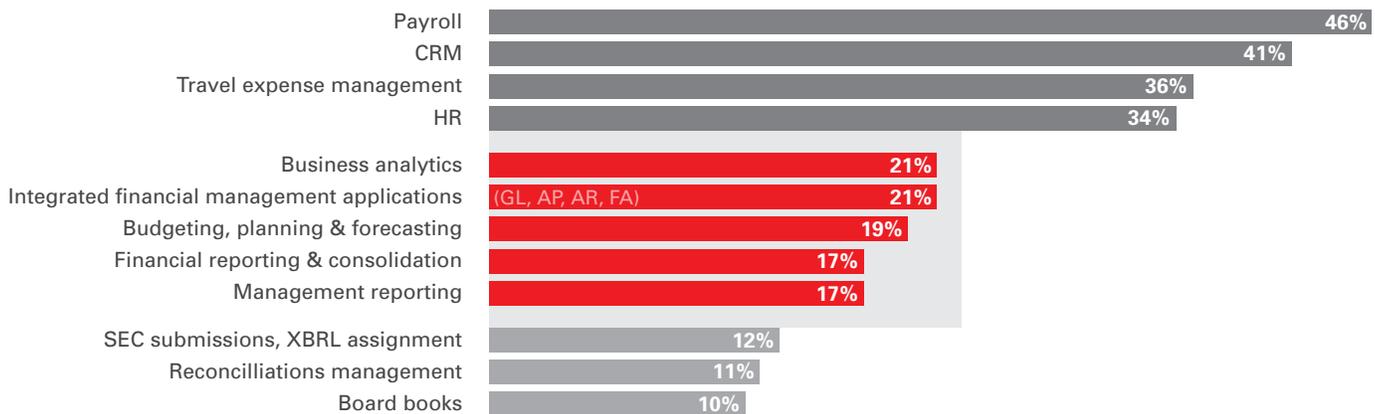
Gaining the input and intelligence of line of business managers becomes much more feasible with a cloud-based model that can be easily and flexibly rolled out across the organization.

Whereas a couple of years ago, we still saw reluctance in the Finance department around adopting cloud applications, largely driven by security and data confidentiality concerns, this is changing rapidly.

A 2013 Gartner Financial Executives International (FEI) CFO Technology Study showed an increasing interest in the SaaS model, where only 16 percent (up from 9 percent in 2012) of firms said that they would never imagine half of their enterprise transactions being delivered by SaaS.

Instead, during the next four or more years, 84 percent of CFOs (up from 53 percent in 2012) said they believe that half of their transactions will be delivered through SaaS. It appears that 34 percent in 2012 have made a SaaS directional decision, as there were no “don’t know” responses in 2013². As CFOs shift their attitudes toward cloud, we are also seeing the SaaS model for EPM applications gaining traction. In the 2013 Gartner FEI study, budgeting, consolidations, and reporting selections showed a continued movement to cloud where almost one in five companies sees themselves using SaaS (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Movement Toward EPM in the Cloud³



In conversations with CFOs, some of the reasons they cite in favor of cloud-based finance systems include the resource allocation flexibility that comes with avoiding large upfront investments, the ability to avoid fixed capital investments during periods of corporate or economic uncertainty, and timely access to the latest software capabilities.

The fact that traditionally risk-averse CFOs are open to moving their mission-critical finance systems into the cloud should be a clear indication to all companies that cloud services are fast becoming the go-to strategy for finance executives looking to access the latest technologies quickly and cost-effectively to support their corporate objectives.

ORACLE HYPERION PLANNING IN THE CLOUD

As we see our customers’ attitudes and requirements shifting toward cloud, we want to meet those changing needs. Thus, Oracle is making its market-leading Oracle Hyperion Planning solution available in the cloud on a subscription basis with a new offering called Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service.

Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service removes the barriers to adoption of on-premises applications and makes it much easier for businesses of any size to deploy a world-class planning and budgeting solution in a matter of weeks.

Most Hyperion EPM customers have deployed the applications on-premises. And over the past five years, Hyperion EPM applications have been available as a hosted solution through Oracle Managed Cloud Services (formerly called Oracle On Demand) or many of our hosting partners around the world.



But now we are moving our EPM applications into Oracle Cloud and making them available as SaaS-based solutions. Moving to cloud-based applications has the potential to remove the adoption barriers for many organizations that didn’t have the IT resources or budget for packaged software applications in the past.

By way of background, Oracle Hyperion Planning is a market-leading application that accelerates planning, budgeting, and forecasting. It’s built to leverage the powerful Oracle Essbase calculation and business rules engine, and includes a web or Excel interface, robust workflow and process management, and prebuilt functionality to address the most

complex planning and budgeting requirements and best practices in this area. Oracle Hyperion Planning supports driver-based planning to help connect operational assumptions to financial outcomes, and it supports a hierarchical planning process that encompasses both corporate finance and the lines of business within an enterprise.



“The pre-delivered training in Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service is a great value-add to the customer. This training helps to accelerate deployment by facilitating onboarding, education, and buy-in for the product when rolled out.”

—Maria Hugo,

Enterprise Systems Manager,
Salmat



Oracle Hyperion Planning has seen rapid adoption over the past 10 years, with more than 3,700 organizations having deployed the solution. And many of these deployments have become quite large, many with more than 1,000 users and a few with more than 5,000 users.

The results that our customers have achieved with Oracle Hyperion Planning have been impressive. Most often cited is the ability to reduce budgeting and forecasting cycle time (Figure 4).

Customers have also reduced reliance on spreadsheets and improved the accuracy of their forecasts. And in many cases, customers have justified the investment based on the potential to reduce the amount of FTEs dedicated to the budgeting and forecasting process. This allows finance resources to be shifted to more value-added activities and away from the drudgery of collecting and consolidating spreadsheets.

Figure 4:
Results achieved with Oracle Hyperion Planning



Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service provides all the functionality of Oracle Hyperion Planning, including agile forecasting, predictive planning, rich scenario analysis, and interactive dashboards.

All the infrastructure, reporting, migration, and data integration components of Oracle Hyperion Planning are included.

Specific enhancements for the cloud have been added to accelerate deployment and usage and to simplify and minimize administration and maintenance. Rapid start kits, intuitive application creation wizards, run-time diagnostics, and migration tools allow organizations to deploy robust financial applications in weeks, accelerating time to value.

Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service includes integration capabilities that enable data load from legacy or third-party applications to Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service on Oracle Cloud, allowing you to import high volumes of data.

Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service can also be integrated with Oracle Fusion Financials Cloud Service to enforce closed-loop processes for planning, budgeting, transacting, and measuring results.

THE MOST COMPLETE, MODERN, FLEXIBLE, AND SECURE ENTERPRISE CLOUD

Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service is built upon the robust Oracle Cloud, and, as pointed out above, integrates with your other on-premises and cloud applications.

Not all clouds are created equal, and one size does not necessarily fit all. Unfortunately, many organizations are finding out the hard way that the value of lower up-front costs is often overshadowed by the inherent problems with most first-generation and/or point solution cloud applications. Customers who entrust their business to multiple niche cloud providers are not realizing the full promise of the cloud in terms of functionality, control, and flexibility. In fact, a recent survey showed that operational silos are often preventing organizations from realizing the promise of improved business performance from cloud applications.

In the survey, more than half of respondents (54 percent) say their department has experienced staff downtime in the last six months due to cloud integration problems.

In fact, departments not even using cloud apps have been affected by their colleagues who are.

More than half of businesses **(54 percent)** have suffered from missed deadlines and three-quarters of respondents **(75 percent)** have had their ability to innovate impaired by poor integration of their cloud applications, which has left applications isolated from the rest of their business functions⁴.



**HAVE HAD THEIR ABILITY
TO INNOVATE IMPAIRED
BY POOR INTEGRATION
OF THEIR CLOUD
APPLICATIONS**



“We are excited about the new Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service. A cloud-based solution has the potential to help us free up resources to focus on continued innovation and growing our business internationally.”

—Elaine McKechnie,

Head of IT,
Baxters Food Group

Oracle delivers a full suite of integrated, enterprise-grade applications services. By choosing Oracle Cloud, businesses can avoid the fragmented data and business processes that can result from using multiple, siloed clouds from different vendors.

Oracle has invested many years and billions of dollars in R&D and strategic acquisitions to offer the most comprehensive, modern, flexible, and secure cloud on the planet.

Companies of all sizes rely on Oracle's broad suite of applications and enterprise-grade platform, all of which offer social, mobile, and business intelligence capabilities.

DEPLOY HOW YOU WANT

Our goal is to provide the most flexible deployment options to our customers. That can include on-premises deployments, pure cloud-based deployment, or a hybrid approach where development is done in the cloud, then testing and production deployment is on-premises.

Many companies are assessing cloud options in parallel with traditional upgrades of on-premises solutions.

But they are wary of the integration issues between cloud and on-premises solutions and do not want to be locked into a particular approach, say, a niche vendor that can only offer deployment in the cloud with no way back.

For many, the flexibility of deployment holds the key to the way forward; that is, the ability to adopt public, private, and hybrid clouds as desired and to alter the mix when business circumstances dictate. But very few software vendors can hope to offer this range of choice and even fewer can leverage their own hardware and database technology to optimize performance.

Oracle has been offering applications in the cloud for more than **13 years** and is one of the few vendors that can comprehensively support the disparate needs of small, medium, and large multinational organizations in the cloud with flexible, modern, and secure applications.



"We are extremely excited about the new Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service offering. We expect this solution to enable customers to get up and running quickly and streamline their planning, budgeting, and forecasting processes, all with lower up-front costs and investment risk than a traditional on-premises solution."

—Neil Sellers,

Director, Qubix

For organizations who own or are considering Oracle Hyperion Planning, there are a number of options to take advantage of the new cloud offering.

For new applications, customers can develop and deploy in the cloud, or develop in the cloud and then deploy on-premises.

Existing Oracle Hyperion Planning customers may wish to support new divisions or subsidiaries that want their own Oracle Hyperion Planning application. They may also wish to move their existing applications to the cloud, such as upgrading from an earlier Hyperion release. And, as described above, customers always have the option to move back on-premises if needed or as business needs change.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

EPM IN THE CLOUD

As our customers' attitudes shift toward leveraging the cloud for even their finance functions, Oracle is moving to provide more flexibility and choice in deployment options.

Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service is the first of Oracle EPM applications to be offered in the cloud. In the future, you will see Oracle offering additional EPM applications in the cloud, providing fast time to value, simplicity of configuration, and prebuilt content for deeper integration and easy extensibility.



Features of Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service:

- Flexible Workflow, Plan Management and Reporting Capabilities
- Deep MS Office Integration
- On-Premises Option In and Out of Cloud
- Drill Through and Source Integration
- Application Diagnostics
- Guided Demo Application
- Guided Implementation Navigation
- Built-in Starter Kits
- Excel-Based Admin Capabilities.



For more information about Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service, go to;
cloud.oracle.com