



ORACLE

Oracle Forms Statement of Direction

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Introduction

For over four decades, Oracle Forms has been one of the most widely used application development tools in the world for creating enterprise-class applications against the Oracle Database. Oracle Forms, a product/technology in the Oracle Fusion Middleware family, is made up of two high level components: Forms Developer and Forms Services.

With Oracle Forms Developer, business application developers quickly build, in a declarative rapid application development (RAD) environment, comprehensive Java client applications without writing any Java code. These applications have rich user-interfaces, are deployed in a three-tier architecture, and are available on demand for rapid processing of large amounts of data and rapid completion of complex calculations, analysis and transactions. The development environment provides powerful declarative features, such as wizards, built-ins, and drag-and-drop. Using Forms Developer, an application developer can create fully functional applications from database definitions with minimal coding in a small amount of time. Oracle Forms also provides an open, extensible client user interface model that allows full customization and extension of applications with Java.

Oracle Forms Services provides all the components necessary to deploy Oracle Forms applications in an Oracle WebLogic Server environment. Oracle Forms Services built-in features include transaction management, record caching, record locking, exception handling, and much more. It also provides a critical infrastructure that developers would otherwise have to code and re-code by hand many times throughout all parts of the application. In addition, with the included integration features, connecting an Oracle Forms application to other products and/or technologies is simple.

Oracle Forms continues to be a core component in many Oracle products such as the following:

- Oracle E-Business Suite
- Oracle Utilities
- Oracle Retail
- Oracle Life Sciences
- Oracle Hospitality
- Oracle Insurance

The Current Version of Oracle Forms

Oracle Forms 12c was first released in October 2015 along with many other components in the Oracle Fusion Middleware (FMW) 12c (12.2) technology stack. In addition to the many improvements delivered as part of FMW 12c, Oracle Forms specifically includes many new features and enhancements. Updates included in Oracle Forms 12c offer the ability to not only freshen up the appearance of aging applications, but also greatly improve performance, and make administration easier. The new browser-less client configuration options offer a way to no longer worry about compatibility with constantly changing browser versions and their underlying technologies.

New features in 12c include, but are not limited to the following:

- Easy integration with BI-Publisher
- Forms Application Deployment Services (FADS)
- Browser-less client configurations
- Java Script integration for Java Web Start and Forms Standalone Launcher configurations
- Improved image support
- Form Builder productivity improvements
- Form Builder module auto-backup
- New applet parameters for easily customizing runtime behavior
- New and enhanced object properties
- Customizable Color Schemes
- New and enhanced security features
- New and enhanced JVM Controller features to improve performance and diagnosability
- Performance improvements for record handling
- System Events
- Improved SSO integration
- Improved diagnostic features
- New installation options
- Support for newer Java versions
- Support for newer operating systems

Refer to the [Oracle Forms Documentation Library](#) and the [Oracle Forms](#) product page on Oracle.com for more information about enhancements in current release.

For information on Support availability, refer to the [Fusion Middleware Lifetime Support Policy Guide](#).

Recommendations

Upgrading to the latest version from the immediate previous release is much easier than moving from significantly older releases to the latest. Therefore, Oracle recommends upgrading to the latest release when new versions become available.

Users of Oracle Forms versions older than the current release should begin working on an upgrade plan as soon as possible. Upgrading to the latest version will help to ensure the system has the latest security, stability, and performance updates and features.

Users of versions like 6.o.8 (6i) or older may find it necessary to first upgrade to version 10.1.2 (10gR2) before moving to the latest release. Refer to the [Oracle Forms Upgrade Guide](#) for information about moving from Forms 6 or older. Customers upgrading applications from version 11.1.x to 12.2.1.x simply need to install the new software and use the v12.2.1.x Form Compiler (or Builder) to regenerate all application modules associated with the application to complete the upgrade process. In most cases, application code changes are not expected when upgrading from v11.1 or newer.

Once on the latest version, it is further recommended that application developers take advantage of new features and technologies that can help enhance and modernize outdated applications. Oracle Forms offers many unique features not found in most html-based web applications. As an example of one such feature, with the phasing out of browser plug-in technologies, transitioning to a browser-less solution like Forms Standalone Launcher (FSAL) will not only help to overcome problems associated with maintaining browser and Java plug-in compatibility, it can also help to improve application performance and stability. Administrators can choose between the traditional "embedded in browser" (*supported with Internet Explorer 11 only*), semi browser-less, or fully browser-less configurations. This important feature is only found in Forms 12.2.1+.

By upgrading and modernizing your existing Oracle Forms investment, end-users can work more efficiently and productively. More importantly, by retaining, modernizing and improving your existing applications, the high cost of a complete application rewrite using other technologies can be avoided.

Organizations desiring mobile solutions or modernization beyond the scope of what Forms can provide should not abandon their Oracle Forms investment. Instead, these organizations should consider extending existing applications by exposing the needed data through other technologies like Oracle's [Visual Builder](#). Another way to avoid starting from scratch is to consider the offerings of Oracle Partners who specialize in working with Oracle Forms. Oracle Partners can provide products and services an organization may need to upgrade, modernize, and/or mobilize applications at a much lower cost than starting from scratch with existing or alternative technologies. In some cases, using an alternative technology may not be avoidable, but in many cases, an application face-lift is all that is needed and this can be easily accomplished using the latest Forms release.

For organizations wanting to take advantage of Oracle Cloud, consider using Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) for the Oracle Forms environment. To accommodate the application's database needs, consider Database Cloud Service (DBCS) or Autonomous Database (ADB). In order to avoid the time and effort required to install and configure the software, consider using [Oracle Forms for Oracle Cloud Infrastructure](#), only available from Oracle Cloud Marketplace. More details below.

Oracle Forms for Oracle Cloud Infrastructure

The Oracle Forms VM image in Cloud Marketplace is a ready-to-run VM image that allows you to rapidly provision an Oracle Forms environment in OCI. By deploying the Oracle Forms image in OCI, you can dramatically reduce the time and cost to develop, test, and deploy Oracle Forms applications.

<https://cloudmarketplace.oracle.com/marketplace/app/OracleForms>

With Cloud Computing being such an important part of today's I.T. landscape, Oracle is investigating what possibilities the Cloud may offer for the Oracle Forms product and its customers. Using Oracle Forms in the Oracle Public Cloud could offer significant cost savings simply by reducing the typical cost of hardware upgrades and maintenance.

Oracle Forms Roadmap Ahead

Oracle continues its commitment to Oracle Forms. New releases are planned and new features and other improvements are being considered. New releases are planned to include some of the following enhancements, as well as others. Which new features may be included will vary depending on market demand, feasibility to deliver, and Oracle business decisions. Here are a few examples of possible improvements:

- REST support for accessing data
- New user interface (UI) improvements
- Design-time productivity improvements
- Performance improvements
- New and enhanced object properties
- Forms Standalone Launcher improvements
- Administration improvements (Fusion Middleware Control)
- New and improved integration with various Oracle products and technologies
- Enhanced security features
- New configuration options
- Support for new Java versions
- Support for new operating systems
- Improved provisioning options of Forms in Oracle Cloud

Oracle Partners

Working closely with Oracle Partners, Oracle will continue to investigate possible mobile and other modernization solutions and how they may apply to Oracle Forms customers. Oracle Partners who specialize in technologies like Oracle Forms typically have years of experience doing installations, upgrades, and application development. They are an excellent resource especially when your own organization may not have the staff required to perform any one or more of these tasks.

More information about the Oracle Partner Network can be found at:

<https://www.oracle.com/partnernetwork>

Refer to the [Oracle Forms](#) on the [Oracle.com](#) for the latest information and downloads.

Conclusion

While Oracle Forms may be a mature application development technology, it remains widely used by many organizations around the world. Oracle's continued commitment to this product means that updates are planned for the coming years. The ability to use Forms in Cloud has now become much easier with the announcement of availability in Oracle Cloud Marketplace. Plans to improve this offering and develop future images are also planned, so using Forms in Cloud is something that should be on any organization's roadmap.

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