

## PeopleSoft Interaction Hub--Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

### Overview

PeopleSoft has instituted many changes to the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub recently, including rebranding the product and offering an extended restricted use license.

#### What Questions are Addressed in this Document?

This document addresses common questions people have had around the Interaction Hub. In particular, the following areas are covered:

- Rebranding of the product, why it was done.
- Restricted use license: functionality that is included for free, what requires a full, paid license. Why it's being offered.
- Relationship to and dependencies on PeopleTools and PeopleSoft Applications.
- Differences between the Interaction Hub and other PeopleSoft features.
- Continuous Release Model. Plans for upgrades and maintenance.

### Customer Benefits

Customers will benefit from the following changes in particular:

- No license cost for the restricted use license of the product.
- More frequent, predictable updates, aligned with PeopleTools.
- Aligns the user experience with business processes—break down the silos between applications.

- Make it easier, faster, and cheaper to craft composite applications with a rich, web site-based user experience.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some common questions we've been receiving about the changes to the Interaction Hub.

### **The Interaction Hub looks like the former Enterprise Portal or Applications Portal. What happened to the Portal?**

Nothing. We've simply rebranded the product. The *PeopleSoft Interaction Hub* is the new name for the former PeopleSoft Portal. This was done for two main reasons. A) We wanted to emphasize the product's primary role in unifying PeopleSoft applications, and its position as a core component of the PeopleSoft ecosystem. While the Applications Portal functionality has been retained by the Interaction Hub--and will continue to be enhanced--our focus for the Hub will be the improved user interaction for PeopleSoft end users. B) We also want to more clearly position the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub relative to Oracle WebCenter, Oracle's technology platform for building enterprise portals. For Oracle WebCenter customers who run PeopleSoft applications, the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub can still serve a useful purpose as a process or role-specific portal for PeopleSoft business functionality.

### **I've heard that there is a free restricted use license available. What features can I use without incurring an additional license fee? What functionality requires a full (paid) license?**

Yes, there is a restricted use license (RUL) available for the Interaction Hub. The RUL has been part of PeopleTools since the 8.50 release. At that point, we granted customers access to the collaboration features of the Applications Portal. We have recently extended the list of features in the RUL to include a number of additional functions. In a nutshell, with the latest RUL for the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub, you can use the following features without purchasing a separate Hub license:

- **Unified Navigation**—Eliminates barriers between applications and provides a common menu/navigation framework across applications. There is even a WorkCenter that guides administrators in the setup process, making it quicker and easier.
- **Branding**—Enables customers to create a visually rich and compelling appearance to their Hub and

applications. This includes creating a look and feel that uniquely represents the customer's enterprise.

- **Collaboration**—Offers Web 2.0 functionality through Collaborative Workspaces and collaborative services that can be easily employed throughout the enterprise.
- **Home Page**—Customers can create a home page that serves as a starting point for many enterprise activities. This is especially useful for HR self-service processes.
- **Email and Calendar Integration** – The delivered pagelets can be used anywhere in the system.
- **Unified worklists and tasks.**

Other Hub functionality requires the full use license. The full use license is appropriate for customers that are using the product in a conventional portal scenario. This includes the following:

- **Management of multiple web sites**—This might include having different sites for different campuses in a system, or having different sites supporting different divisions or countries in a large corporation.
- **Enterprise-wide Blogs and discussion forums**—For companies that want things like a CEO blog, or discussion forums fully distributed across the enterprise.
- **Content Management**—Including news publications and other common content, broadly distributed.
- **Common Portal features** Enterprise-wide calendar, Action Items, Resource Finder, Itracker, Polls

Note that some of these features are available within Collaborative Workspaces as part of the RUL. However, their use in that context is limited to the membership of the collaborative workspace. An example of this is discussion forums. With the RUL, you can have a discussion forum that is limited to the membership of a Workspace, but with the full license, you can offer discussion forums for the entire population of the enterprise.

See the PeopleTools Licensing Notes for your respective PeopleTools release on the [PeopleSoft Portal Solutions](#)

[Interaction Hub 9.1 Documentation Home Page](#) from My Oracle Support.

#### **Why is the RUL being offered?**

We want to provide customers with the means to offer their users a rich, web site-based user experience. This is the type of experience users demand from web-based applications these days. The hub helps eliminate cumbersome navigation and removes barriers between PeopleSoft applications and other content. We also want to provide an engaging and intuitive experience that will make your applications more efficient and enjoyable to use. The Hub will help in all these respects.

Making the Hub available through the RUL without license cost opens the door to virtually all PeopleSoft customers to take advantage of these benefits. This means the Hub can now be part of a standard PeopleSoft deployment, serving as a core component of the PeopleSoft infrastructure.

#### **We already own a full license for the Interaction Hub (purchased as the Applications or Enterprise Portal). Does the RUL affect us in any way?**

If you purchased the Applications Portal (or what was formerly called the Enterprise Portal), then you already own a full license and can use the product in an unrestricted fashion. The inclusion of an RUL with PeopleTools does not affect your full-use license.

#### **Are you going to keep enhancing the Interaction Hub? Will it remain a viable product? What are your plans for it?**

Yes, the Interaction Hub is part of Oracle's Applications Unlimited, and we intend to keep enhancing it as we do other PeopleSoft applications. Our main goals are to make the Hub as easy as possible to deploy and administer while we continue to enhance end-user interaction. This means easy installation, setup, and administration with PeopleSoft applications.

#### **PeopleSoft has introduced many enhancements to their user experience. Some of these features—like Operational Dashboards and WorkCenters—look a lot like portal pages. How are they different from the Hub? Do I need the Hub to run them?**

The framework for creating or modifying Workcenters and Dashboards is part of PeopleTools and the standard PeopleTools license. Of course, the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub is also built with PeopleTools and takes advantage of

many of the same features used in the WorkCenter and Dashboard frameworks.

Each of these capabilities--PeopleSoft Dashboards, WorkCenters, and the Interaction Hub can be employed in order to provide applications users a rich and rewarding experience when interacting with PeopleSoft applications. At a high level there are some key distinctions:

- The PeopleSoft Interaction Hub provides a straightforward way for an organization to provide users access to PeopleSoft resources as a rich and responsive website. Customers can easily manage their application "home page" to provide access to self-service transactions, collaborative content, global search and easy navigation to other PeopleSoft resources.
- PeopleSoft Dashboards and WorkCenters provide users a centralized view of specific information, and activities and tasks appropriate to their role or a certain operational area within the PeopleSoft system. PeopleSoft applications use Dashboards and WorkCenters to provide users better access and insight into the information associated with common tasks and business processes.

Here are some unique characteristics of WorkCenters and Dashboards:

- Present a personal view of user's work world.
- Are used for everyday activities and tasks.
- Make navigation and search easier and quicker for daily tasks.
- Contain operational reports and data needed for common tasks and business processes.
- Are strongly role-based.
- Many WorkCenters and Dashboards are delivered by PeopleSoft Apps as standard parts of their products, but those can be altered by customers for their requirements. Customers can create their own for unique roles.

When customers create new Dashboards or WorkCenters, those instances are created in the database of the Applications

of which they are a part. For example, if your enterprise creates a new WorkCenter for a unique role in Financials, that WorkCenter will reside in the Financials database.

Conversely, the Interaction Hub has the following distinctive characteristics:

- Full-featured and robust
- Centrally administered
- Presented to a large audience
- Broad info like Company News
- Used more for infrequent activities like Benefits Enrollment. Not for day-to-day tasks (though users may visit daily for company news and other useful information)
- Used a lot for self-service and access to employer information
- Can serve as launch pad to navigate to WorkCenters or Dashboards
- Deployed by customers or consultants.
- Content management
- Provides unified PeopleSoft applications navigation and single sign-on, and can use unified navigation to assemble pagelets from many content sources

As an application in its own right, the Interaction Hub is somewhat like other PeopleSoft applications in that it has its own database. Its primary purpose is to aggregate content from PeopleSoft and other applications, and provide a gateway for navigation to enterprise resources and information.

**If I implement WorkCenters and Dashboards, will I still benefit from using the Interaction Hub? Can the Hub be used in concert with Dashboards and WorkCenters?**

Yes. Customers can use the Interaction Hub to provide their employees a rich and responsive "launch pad" or web site to gain access to PeopleSoft and other information. In many cases, employees who come to PeopleSoft to simply perform self-service actions such as benefits enrollment, manager tasks, or to manage workflow or expenses, may find all these capabilities on the main Interaction Hub pages.

Others may use the home page to gain quick access to key Dashboards or WorkCenters, or to search for specific company information and quickly navigate to the PeopleSoft transaction pages in order to begin or complete a task.

WorkCenters, Dashboards and the Interaction Hub can thus be used together in complimentary ways. For example, suppose you are an HR Manager. You might start your day by logging in to the Interaction Hub to do your yearly benefits enrollment. You might also check the Company News, the CEO's blog, review your payroll statement, and make a change to your personal profile.

After doing that, you want to get down to your daily activities. The user experience can be designed so that you can launch your Manager Dashboard directly from the Hub. In the Dashboard you might check the status of your projects, view how your direct reports are doing, analyze data in a pivot grid to assist decision support, review your open positions, and so on. In this type of arrangement, the Interaction Hub and the Dashboard serve different but complimentary purposes.

**Is the Interaction Hub a part of PeopleTools? Is it embedded in the PeopleSoft Applications?**

No, the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub is a PeopleSoft application just like other PeopleSoft applications such as HCM, Financials or CRM. PeopleTools now includes a license for you to use this application to enhance your users' experience through a centralized web presence or PeopleSoft web site. It provides rich content and content management as well as a number of key capabilities that will help users to find and interact with their PeopleSoft application information and tasks.

The capabilities of the Interaction Hub extend well beyond just typical portal features, and will benefit all PeopleSoft customers, even if they don't need another portal.

**What about infrastructure? What do I need in my system to install and run the Interaction Hub?**

The Interaction Hub is much like other applications in that it requires a database instance and PIA infrastructure such as an appserver and webserver for deployment. The Hub takes advantage of many PeopleTools features to serve its purpose, but it does not reside in PeopleTools.

You have many options in how you choose to deploy the Hub. The Interaction Hub has a smaller footprint than most other applications, and typically consumes fewer resources. There may be times when the Interaction Hub receives considerable traffic, however. Certain enterprise events like Benefits Enrollment or a pay period end, may result in heavy user traffic. These loads must be considered when planning your architecture.

**Do I need the full license of the Hub to aggregate content from outside of PeopleSoft applications?**

No, you can consume content from other providers using the Restricted Use License of the Interaction Hub.

**We have PeopleSoft HCM, PeopleSoft ELM, and PeopleSoft HelpDesk and we want to deploy these globally from a single starting point. Do we need the full license of the Interaction Hub?**

That depends. If you are deploying globally, you may want to design different and unique sites for your operations in different countries. In that case you would have multiple sites, which would require the full license. If your enterprise can function with a single PeopleSoft web presence, you could aggregate HCM, ELM, and HelpDesk content, deployed using the RUL. A single site can still have multiple homepage tabs to deploy role/process specific content organized in multiple tabs and role based branding to support needs to specific groups of users.

**We have a heterogeneous environment using PeopleSoft HCM, HR HelpDesk, and Business Intelligence apps, with 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications for performance and learning. We'd like to deploy all this from a single starting point. Can we do that with the Interaction Hub? Would we need to buy a full license, or will the RUL be sufficient?**

You can do it with the RUL as long as you deploy the content in a single site. The Interaction Hub can consume and present content from PeopleSoft and external providers

**We'd like to deploy multiple sites for different communities. For example, we have different campuses within our university system. Can we use the RUL for that? How does one define a 'site'?**

Having multiple sites requires the full license. A site is described as a web site (equivalent to a Portal Registry in PeopleTools terminology) targeted to a specific set of users,

typically with its own unique branding and site-specific content. So for example, if you require different URLs for different campuses within your system, this would require different sites, and mandate the full license.

Similarly, customers who wish to provide access to PeopleSoft through one site for employees and another for customers, or one site for exempt employees and a completely separate site for hourly workers would need to purchase a full use license to the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub.

**Can we have more than one branding theme with the RUL? How do you define a Brand? Can we have more than one brand/theme as long as we have a single site?**

The Interaction Hub provides role-based branding, which means customers can deploy multiple branding themes and their users see the portal branded according to the roles assigned to them. A brand or branding theme is typically composed of header, footer and other style elements. The header is typically aligned with other websites that a customer runs in the enterprise in accordance with their organizational identity.

**What are the major considerations for implementing the Hub? Security integration? Navigation integration?**

For implementing the Hub as an aggregator of PeopleSoft applications, customers must consider security setup, navigation setup, branding, and use of content and collaboration features. In addition, you should think about other information assets that complement the delivered PeopleSoft application functionality that may need to be exposed using the Hub. With specific respect to security, the focus needs to be on figuring out the system of master records for User profiles and synchronizing this with all PeopleSoft applications during initial deployment and ongoing operations. For aggregating application content, customers can leverage the Unified Navigation feature of the Interaction Hub.

**I understand that the Interaction Hub uses the continuous release model. Can you explain how that works for this product?**

The Interaction Hub is indeed on a continuous release model. This was done to get important functionality to customers on a more timely and predictable basis. This model gives customers time to plan their adoption of new features and capabilities. In addition, it allows us to take advantage of the

latest PeopleTools features because the Hub releases are closely aligned with PeopleTools releases. PeopleTools can have a profound effect on the user experience of PeopleSoft applications including the Interaction Hub.

Rather than producing large releases that occur every two or three years, we are delivering enhancements and fixes to the Hub based on Feature Packs. Feature Packs are a delivery mechanism supplementing the existing delivery mechanisms of bundles and maintenance packs.

Feature Packs consist of a roll-up of new features and updates, and at delivery, Feature Packs include the roll-up of capabilities and updates previously delivered in bundles and maintenance packs. Oracle will re-certify upgrades and integrations.

Interaction Hub Feature Packs will be released approximately every 12-18 months, and will be aligned with the latest version of PeopleTools.

**How does the Interaction Hub relate to PeopleTools? Are there dependencies? How about dependencies between the Hub and content providers like PeopleSoft applications?**

The Hub was developed with PeopleTools and runs on PeopleTools as do all PeopleSoft applications. The advantage to this is that it makes integration with PeopleSoft applications much easier than with other portal products. The Interaction Hub and PeopleSoft also use the same PeopleSoft security model, which facilitates integration and single sign-on.

There are no dependencies between the Interaction Hub and PeopleSoft applications, but the Hub must be running on the same version (or later) of PeopleTools as the most recent applications Tools version. For example, if you are running Financials on 8.51 PeopleTools with HCM on 8.52 PeopleTools, the Hub must be running on 8.52 Tools.

There are some dependencies between the Interaction Hub and PeopleTools. Releases or Feature Packs of the Hub require certain releases of PeopleTools. See this [paper](#) for detailed information.

**Does the Interaction Hub use PeopleSoft security? Does it affect my PeopleSoft applications?**

Yes, as noted in the previous question, the Interaction Hub uses the same PeopleSoft role-based security as PeopleSoft

applications. Using Unified Navigation in Interaction Hub, security is implemented real-time based on the user and role assignment in PeopleSoft applications. This makes content aggregation and deploying composite applications through the Interaction Hub much easier.

**Does the Hub come “out-of-the-box” with applications? Is PeopleSoft delivering the Hub pre-built with PeopleSoft application content?**

Not at this time. With the recent releases, we have been making it easier to deploy the Hub and configure it to be integrated with other PeopleSoft applications.

**Do we still have to license Portal Packs? Can we still use Pagelet Wizard?**

No, Portal Packs have never depended on the PeopleSoft Portal and still do not require the PeopleSoft Interaction Hub. The inverse is also true: you don't have to have the Hub to use Portal Packs. PeopleSoft Portal Packs are separately licensed application content including pagelets and queries that can enrich a home page. Many customers have purchased Portal Packs because the included information extends the value to the users of their PeopleSoft application.

The PeopleSoft Pagelet Wizard is part of PeopleTools and does not require the Interaction Hub.

**Where can I get more detailed information on the Interaction Hub licensing? What about general information about Hub functionality?**

More information can also be found here:

[Oracle.com](http://www.oracle.com)

[My.oracle.support](#) (filter on PeopleSoft, and search on *Interaction Hub* and *Applications Portal*)

[PeopleTools Blog](#)

[PeopleSoft Information Portal](#)



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