

# NEW FEATURES OF OBIEE11G – USING IN THE REAL WORLD

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## INTRODUCTION

It took a very long time but Oracle released the 11g version of Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE11g) in September 2010. And while it was not 100% of what we all wanted it was a most welcome update. The new version added many new features that most of us in the BI industry were asking for since Siebel Analytics was first brought into the Oracle Fold. There are many changes to the backend and frontends of the system. While most of the changes are to the front end there are significant changes to the backend laying the groundwork for a more robust framework to build on.

Management services have now replaced the OC4J Server with WebLogic and an entirely new security model is in place. 11g now adds mainstream OLAP features such as hierarchical columns, custom members and aggregation groups. Enhanced dashboard prompts now allow for better prompting. One very exciting new feature is the integration with Oracle Mapviewer, which now allows for visualizing data using maps.

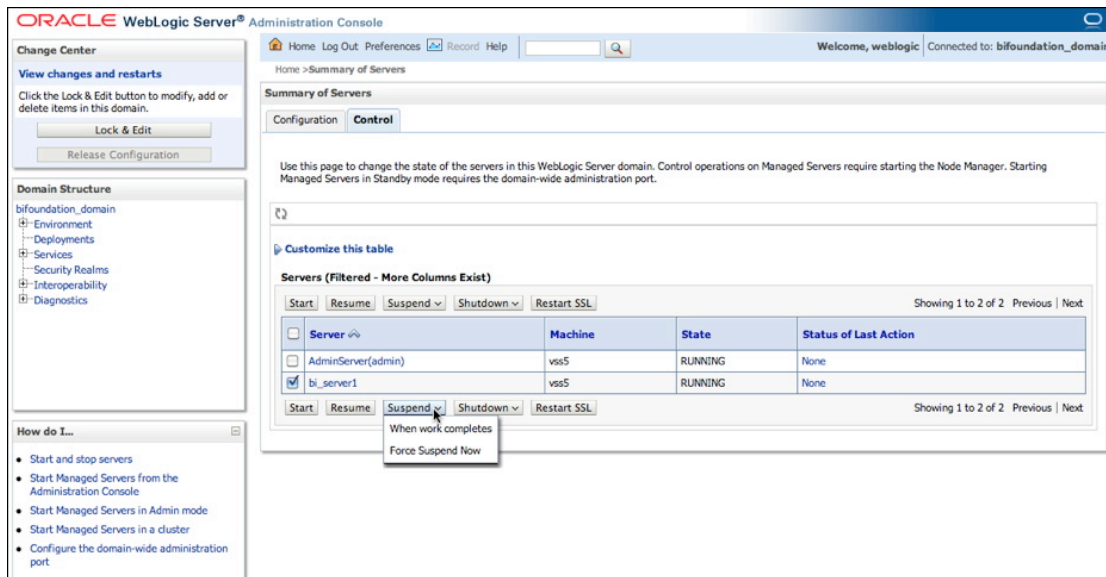
This presentation will present a quick overview of the key new features and demonstrate how they can be used with real world data to enhance any organizations BI experience.

## OBIEE 11G MANAGEMENT

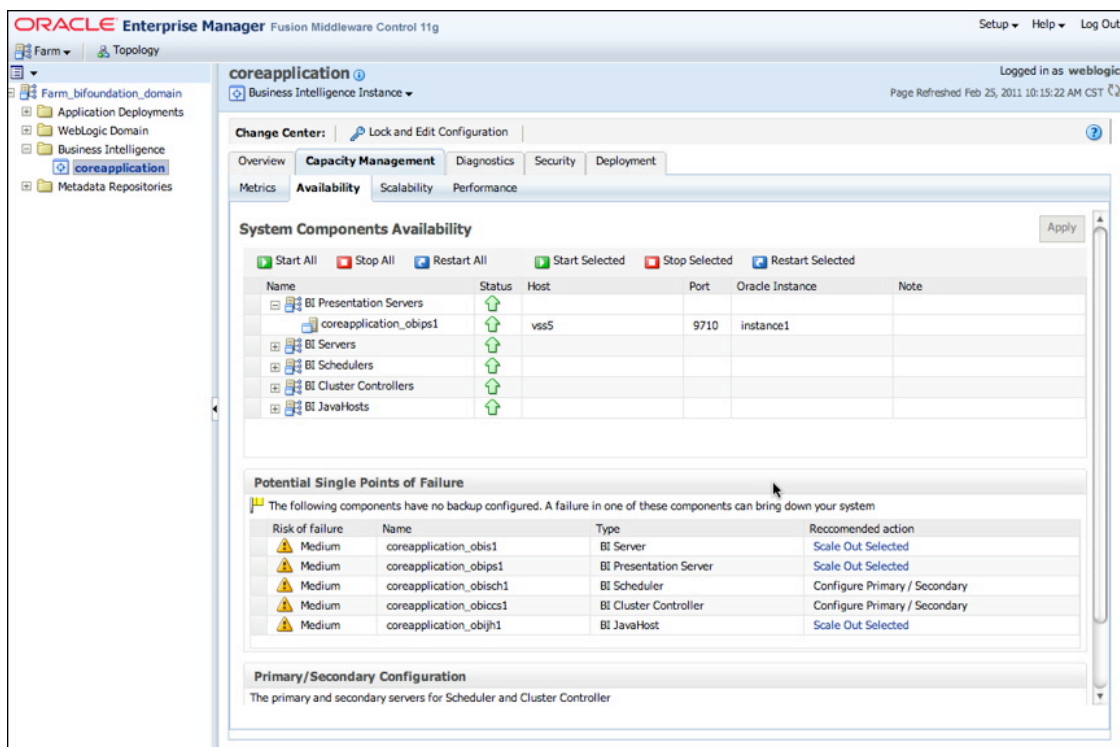
OBIEE 11g introduces the domain concept to administer the BI and presentation services. In previous releases, the BI server and presentation server were independent services that needed to be stopped and started from the command line or the services windows during install, deployment of new **rpd & webcat** files and migration from one environment. In the new release, the Weblogic console, along with Oracle Enterprise Manager provide enhanced interface controls and features for Administration of OBIEE.

These consoles simplify the deployment of new RPDs and presentation catalogs, and also provide a tool for the review of logs and diagnostics. The introduction of Weblogic as the application server also simplifies install and configuration of OBIEE cluster configurations. The management of users and groups has now moved to the WebLogic Console as well. The BI AdminTool is no longer used to add and maintain users, but it is still used for data security so those functions have not changed from 10g.

The screenshot below shows the Web logic Server Console that is used to startup an OBIEE domain. The control tab contains options for starting / Stopping the BI Server Domain.



The screenshot below displays the deployed BI components in the Enterprise Manager. Thru Oracle Enterprise Manager, administrators can use an intuitive web interface to manager all aspects of the OBIEE system services. Enterprise manager provides the framework and tools necessary for process monitoring, diagnostic monitoring and logging, upgrading, and patching for entire BI System.



Enterprise Manager can be used to troubleshoot a host of issues with the BI System. For example to handle slower performance complaints it is possible to monitor performance, view logs and analyze bottlenecks then by perform any of the following steps:

- Configure caching parameters
- Scale out additional servers
- Deploy modified metadata that improves performance

## NEW FEATURES ON THE FRONT-END

There have been a host of changes to the web front-end of OBIEE. There is now a unified framework that includes a new “Home” page which allows users and developers simple one-click access to anything they need to do. The catalog has been totally restructured so that all objects, whether it is a query, filter, dashboard, report or alert, can be accessed using the same interface and with a minimum of keystrokes. This makes creation and management of reports, dashboards, reports and alerts (now called actionable intelligence) much easier and intuitive. Saving time and effort in the long run.

## HIERARCHICAL COLUMNS, AGGREGATE MEMBERS AND GROUPS

With OBIEE11g Oracle has brought in what is called a “hierarchical column” which allows for presenting a dimension hierarchy in an analysis report within a single column. The advantage of the hierarchical column is that it offers a better user experience in navigating within a hierarchy and reduces report real estate.

In prior releases of OBIEE, navigating through a dimension hierarchy was limited to drilling down from one level to the next which added new columns to the output. This behavior is still available in 11g but has been renamed to “attribute column”. The new hierarchical columns provide a more OLAP like experience where interaction with the hierarchy offers the ability to expand and collapse levels within the same column by using the plus(+) and minus(-) icons adjacent to the displayed member. The screenshot shows what this looks like, notice that this that more data is shown on a single web page.

OBIEE11g also supports the traditional Level Based hierarchies but now they support skip and ragged levels as well as value-based hierarchies. This means that is now possible to model more “real world” dimensional models. This hierarchical column supports all these types of hierarchies and now allows for the display of the new Grouping Feature where members of a hierarchy can be grouped into a separate aggregate group. The members in the group retain their hierarchical members (descendants), which allows for drilling within the group. This is also shown in screenshot below.

		Revenue							
		Total Time							
		2008							
		2008 Q1				2008 Q2			
		2008 Q3				2008 Q4			
		2009				2010			
Total Products	Genmind Corp	16,792,560	5,470,146	932,961	2,672,378	1,441,689	423,117	5,036,331	6,286,083
	Stockplus Inc.	13,566,400	4,574,096	741,234	2,191,716	1,227,819	413,327	3,999,836	4,992,468
	Tescare Ltd.	19,641,040	6,455,758	1,033,491	3,245,622	1,669,336	507,310	5,963,833	7,221,449
BizTech	Genmind Corp	6,638,825	2,192,909	376,077	1,064,310	577,364	175,158	1,999,213	2,446,703
	Stockplus Inc.	6,289,013	2,136,281	361,774	989,802	573,723	210,983	1,839,924	2,312,808
	Tescare Ltd.	8,072,162	2,661,551	431,809	1,325,976	685,449	218,318	2,462,950	2,947,660
Communication	Genmind Corp	2,920,284	899,128	162,373	438,735	219,250	78,771	908,519	1,112,638
	Stockplus Inc.	4,240,828	1,405,532	235,636	647,880	374,437	147,579	1,228,562	1,606,733
	Tescare Ltd.	3,724,305	1,228,831	179,706	628,925	326,636	93,564	1,141,531	1,353,943
Electronics	Genmind Corp	3,718,541	1,293,781	213,705	625,575	358,114	96,387	1,090,694	1,334,066
	Stockplus Inc.	2,048,185	730,749	126,137	341,922	199,286	63,404	611,362	706,075
	Tescare Ltd.	4,347,857	1,432,721	252,102	697,051	358,813	124,754	1,321,419	1,593,718
FunPod	Genmind Corp	6,674,101	2,208,040	379,356	1,112,519	549,015	167,150	1,968,610	2,497,451
	Stockplus Inc.	3,448,054	1,123,130	186,146	530,059	317,494	89,431	984,165	1,340,760
	Tescare Ltd.	7,377,844	2,392,018	380,614	1,218,792	618,980	173,632	2,207,565	2,778,262
HomeView	Genmind Corp	3,479,633	1,069,197	177,528	495,550	315,311	80,809	1,068,508	1,341,928
	Stockplus Inc.	3,829,333	1,314,686	193,315	671,855	336,603	112,914	1,175,746	1,338,901
	Tescare Ltd.	4,191,034	1,402,189	221,068	700,854	364,907	115,360	1,293,318	1,495,527
Hot Products	Genmind Corp	6,745,760	2,117,535	337,647	1,047,151	556,629	176,108	2,001,707	2,626,518
	Stockplus Inc.	4,315,039	1,516,319	255,707	774,003	346,365	140,244	1,224,600	1,574,120
	Tescare Ltd.	7,762,002	2,490,454	338,620	1,277,676	687,457	186,701	2,353,559	2,917,989
Camera	Genmind Corp	2,944,394	956,202	171,198	470,167	245,994	68,842	860,294	1,127,898
	Stockplus Inc.	1,495,109	531,747	91,765	265,213	128,359	46,410	381,834	581,527
	Tescare Ltd.	3,295,602	1,098,828	142,405	583,275	300,668	72,479	985,180	1,211,594
Cell Phones	Genmind Corp	2,155,126	655,182	82,108	351,183	165,440	56,451	659,225	840,719

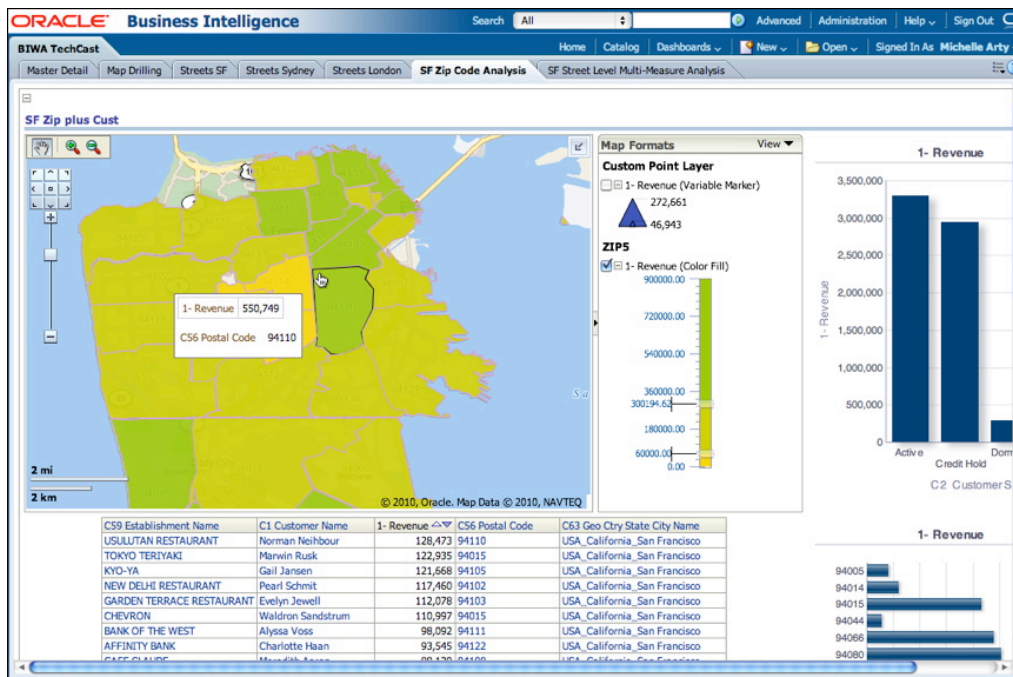
## NEW PROMPTS AND DASHBOARD VISUALIZATIONS

In response to user requests additional prompt types have been added to 11g. It is now possible to use checkboxes, radio buttons and multi-select listboxes in the user prompts. A new prompt called a “Slider” allows for selection of data ranges along a scale.



## MAPS AND LOCATION ANALYSIS

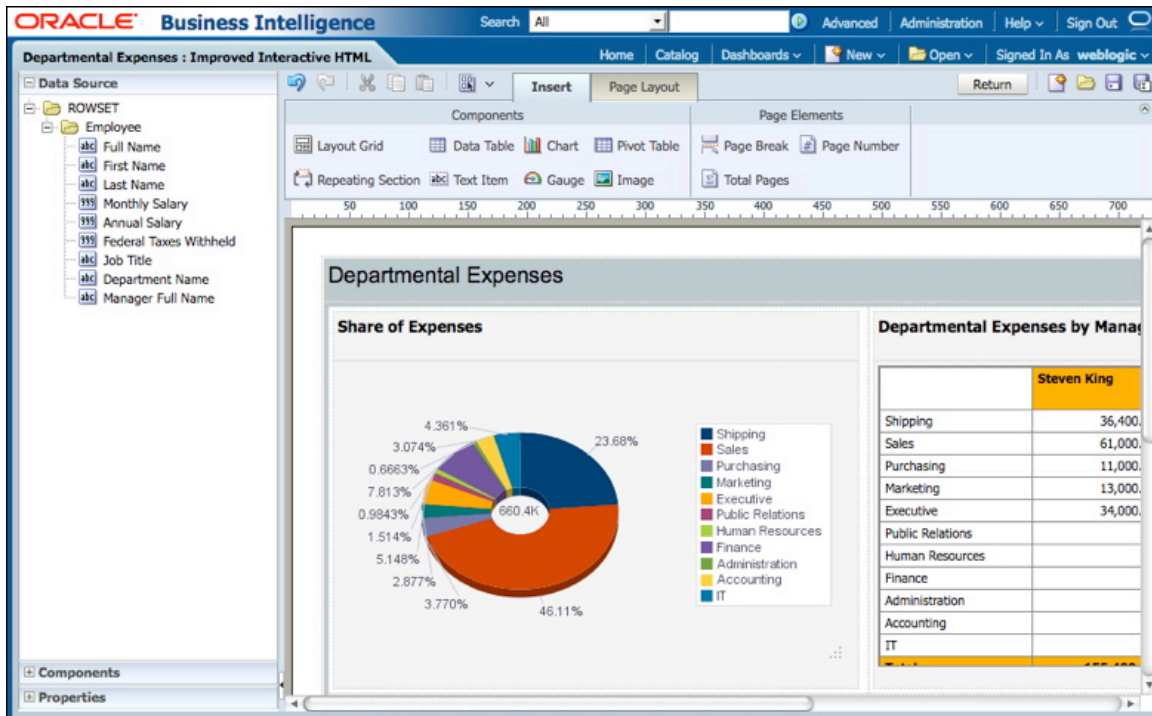
One of the most interesting new features in OBIEE 11g is the ability to create maps and then overlay reporting components and visualizations on top of maps. For example if you are doing zip code based sales analysis, its easy to color code each zip code in a region right within the maps. It is also possible to overlay pie charts, bar charts in the maps thereby providing an extensive visual analysis capability Oracle even provides a complementary set of maps from NAVTEQ to get started with.





## BI PUBLISHER

With OBIEE 11g there have been several improvements in BP Publisher. BI Publisher is now much more tightly integrated with the OBIEE. The reports, styles and models are all part of the same unified catalog. Clicking on the objects brings up the appropriate BI Publisher tool. The data modeler is now a separate and distinct tool, which makes defining the models much better and consistent. The most significant and most welcome addition is the new web based layout editor. This new tool, shown below, provides the ability to create reports entirely from the web. This means that we do not have to jump out to Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat to create pixel perfect report layouts.



## CONCLUSION

It has been over 3 years in the making but OBIEE11g is finally out and while it is not perfect it is a most welcome upgrade to 10g. Surprisingly enough the learning curve is not too steep and it is well worth considering the upgrade. And even though it is a first release it is very stable. The additions of hierarchical columns, step based prompts, and maps make it very attractive for those organizations that have been clamoring for such things for years. While I will admit not everything that I wanted was included in this release, I still got a majority of the features we wanted. And rumor has it there may be more coming sooner than it took to get this release.