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SAP ANALYTICS

Business Intelligence Statement of Direction

May 2024



Executive summary

This document provides guidance to our SAP BusinessObjects customers on the product directions of SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP BusinessObjects solutions.

SAP Analytics Cloud is SAP's strategic analytics & planning offering and is changing the way our customers run their business, by allowing them to analyze their data in context and to make better and faster decisions. The integration of analytics and planning augmented by AI in one native cloud solution allows to move from insight to action, brings analytics closer to the point of decision, and provides trusted insights from customers' most valuable data.

With more than 30 years of innovations, **SAP BusinessObjects Business Intelligence platform (SAP BusinessObjects BI)** equips thousands of companies which reliably manage enterprise reporting use cases at scale. With upcoming versions following 4.3, available on premise and as managed cloud, your investments are safe beyond 2030.

In alignment with SAP standard maintenance strategy, we will switch from yearly support packages to minor releases every 2 years, with Mainstream Support for 3 years followed by Customer Specific Maintenance. This new model will address the need for more stability while keeping regular updates.

As version 4.2 will reach end of priority one support at the end of 2024, we strongly recommend you to upgrade to BI 4.3 to benefit from the best support level as several thousands of companies already did.

We plan to deliver SAP BusinessObjects BI 2025 in Q4 2024. With this new release, we will continue the modernization started in version 4.3 and streamline the suite by focusing on the core components while providing alternatives for unsupported ones. Going forward, our strategy is based on 3 pillars: reach more business users, increase power users' productivity and reduce total cost of ownership.

For companies willing to move analytics workloads to the cloud, we offer 2 complementary options: SAP BusinessObjects BI operated in a private cloud and SAP Analytics Cloud. **SAP BusinessObjects, private cloud edition** is an opportunity to shift from a maintenance contract to a subscription model while leveraging your existing investments in SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions. SAP Analytics Cloud is recommended for new applications, use cases and users.

SAP Analytics Cloud

SAP Analytics Cloud's vision is to provide trustworthy analytics for any user from any context. The closed loop from insight to action allows customers to identify challenges, analyze options and execute decisions from one place. Our knowledge of customer data and integration to business process enable customers to rapidly deploy analytics to address their most important business problems. You can find a product description [here](#), and roadmap [here](#). Going forward, we have four main investment areas:

Enterprise Analytics

SAP Analytics Cloud allows every employee to consume information in their preferred way. End users can interact with stories or natural language, power users can slice and dice using Data Analyzer and analytics developers can build complex dashboards distributed to large audiences. It is particularly good at self-service on live data combining simplicity for users with governance for IT. It is also flexible; stories can be extended using JavaScript/CSS to provide tailored experiences, deployed to mobile, delivered as presentations, and embedded in applications and portals for consumption anywhere. It also addresses common enterprise reporting scenarios, allowing the creation of personalized formatted stories with multi-page tables for [scheduled distribution](#). Going forward, we plan to extend both calculation and table capabilities to allow more powerful reporting. We also find customers replacing static distributed reports with live interactive stories allowing many combinations of data question in an efficient, modern experience.

eXtended Planning & Analysis

SAP is the only provider in the market which incorporates BI & Planning in one product. This integrated approach allows customers to modernize their BI with advanced capabilities like AI, private data and simulation so everyone can plan & forecast, resulting in better decisions. A key part of the value is the deep integration between workflows. This includes actuals plan comparisons using IBCS best practices in every story to enable all users to monitor execution against corporate KPI's. Our automated advanced analytic engines incl. predictive reduce human effort, allowing more time for strategy. Customers use SAP Analytics Cloud for planning in every LoB including Financial, Workforce, Strategic, Sales and Marketing.

SAP Integration

SAP Analytics Cloud provides live connectivity to SAP data sources like SAP HANA, SAP BW, SAP S/4HANA, SuccessFactors, IBP, SAP Datasphere and SAP BusinessObjects universes. As we bring SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP Datasphere closer together, customers will benefit from additional live connectivity, cloud semantic layer, cross source modelling, and storage/compute elasticity. We also include more than 150 [business content](#) packages leveraging industry best practices to accelerate time to value, from months to weeks. Packages include stories, models and semantics, requiring just an application connection to be deployed.

Generative AI

SAP Analytics Cloud is heavily investing in AI for natural language query, natural language generation and content creation leveraging the Business AI capabilities of SAP Joule. Within the next 12 months we intend to add AI capabilities to all major workflows as detailed in the recently updated [Generative AI for planning and analytics statement of direction](#).

SAP BusinessObjects BI

SAP BusinessObjects BI suite equips thousands of customers across the globe which rely on a robust and scalable solution for enterprise reporting scenarios to manage critical use cases. Proud of this heritage, we are committed to support every customer, and with upcoming versions, your investments are safe beyond 2030.

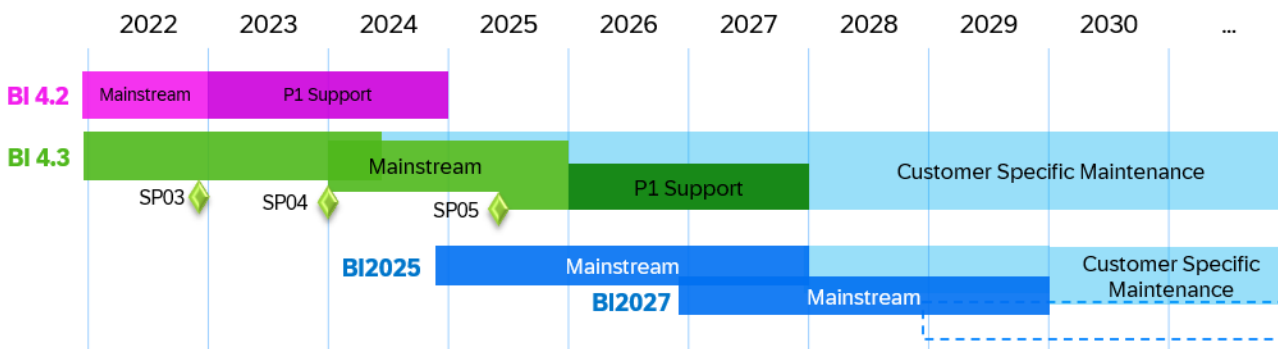
New maintenance strategy

Starting with BI 2025, we plan to align with [SAP standard maintenance strategy](#).

Practically, we will move away from support packages delivered every year and supported only during 18 months to minor releases delivered every 2 years and supported during 3 years (Mainstream Maintenance). We already plan for a next release, BI 2027, which should be available in Q4 2026, and supported until at least 2029, and we will revisit our roadmap on a regular basis.

With this, we will better address the need for stability expected by customers and keep some vehicles to deliver incremental innovations.

All versions from BI 4.3 will benefit from Customer Specific Maintenance as soon as Mainstream Maintenance ends. During this phase, support service is provided, but no software updates or fixes.



We strongly recommend you to upgrade to BI 4.3

As version 4.2 will reach end of Priority One Support at the end of 2024, and with BI 4.3 Support Package 4 available since December 2023, already several thousands of customers are live on version 4.3. Customer Specific Maintenance starts with BI 4.3 and will not be offered for BI 4.2.

We strongly recommend all remaining customers to upgrade to version 4.3 to benefit from the latest features, up-to-date platforms, connectivity, and security standards. Update from any 4.x version is simple as no artefact format has changed – which means that no migration is needed.

Version 4.3 brings a modern user experience for the BI Launchpad and for Web Intelligence, using HTML5, with no Java required, and many long-awaited improvements. This version will be maintained until end of 2027, with Mainstream Maintenance ending at the end of 2025, followed by two years of Priority One Support.

SAP BusinessObjects BI 2025 and beyond

We plan to release the first version of SAP BusinessObjects BI 2025 in Q4 2024. In order to accelerate the go live to production for early adopters, we plan to run an Early Adopter Care Program during first months of 2025, after which BI 2025 will be Generally Available. If you want to benefit from exclusive support from Product Group during this program, please contact us at sapaskanalytics@sap.com.

With this new version, we will continue the modernization started in version 4.3 and streamline the suite by focusing on the core components while providing alternatives for unsupported ones. Our strategy is based on 3 pillars: reach more business users, increase power users' productivity and reduce total cost of ownership.

We want **SAP BusinessObjects BI Platform** to remain a trusted, robust and scalable platform for enterprise reporting scenarios. Therefore, we will simplify the upgrade to new versions so that the whole process is quicker and safer, use standard authentication protocols to increase integration between systems and allow immediate access to key information in the BI Launch Pad.

We will certify the latest versions of supported platforms as well as the latest security standards. Likewise, we plan to certify new data sources and latest versions of already supported ones. Here again, we will focus on the most-widely adopted use cases: **single source .unx universes** and direct data connectivity.

SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence is a powerful business intelligence tool that enables organizations to make informed decisions based on actionable insights through an intuitive user interface. Its value proposition lies to its strong link to the Semantic Layer (universes) enabling an incomparable no-code ad-hoc query experience and in its ability to deliver real-time data analysis and reporting.

Within BI 2025, Web Intelligence will receive a significant upgrade, enabling users to go beyond transactional reporting and data preparation thanks to three main innovations:

- We will enhance analytical reporting capabilities to allow users to create captivating dashboards, using an expanded array of new visualizations and interactive controls that can be used in new canvas formats bringing a richer interactive experience.
- A new offline access capability will enable users to access data and reports on the go through a new offline artifact format: users will access insights, charts and data even without an internet connection, facilitating effortless sharing with others, with no SAP BusinessObjects dependency at all.
- Efficiency will be enhanced and achieved through a user-friendly interface that simplifies report generation for everyone, from beginners to experts; streamlined creation workflows and advanced customization options will further enhance their productivity.

As the proven world standard of pixel-perfect reporting, **SAP Crystal Reports (Windows only*)** will continuously provide easy to consume, highly formatted and information rich documents with enhanced Crystal Reports viewer.

Within BI 2025, SAP Crystal Reports will focus on innovations to empower the transition to a strategic stack by providing more connection capabilities and reach more casual users with a brand-new desktop viewer:

- With the new "SAP BW (DSL)" driver, users are able to connect and consume BW OLAP connections.
- The enhanced relational Unx Universe connection keeps reports synchronized with underlying Universe, provides more filter options on data, and also allows delegating sorting and ranking to the underlying universe.
- A brand-new desktop viewer for SAP Crystal Reports on Windows brings a faster and reliable experience to casual users and enables them to access reports even when disconnected.

**SAP Crystal Reports 2020 services are supported on Windows only from version 4.3 SP2 onward. Customers running the SAP BusinessObjects BI suite on UNIX or Linux clusters need to host SAP Crystal Reports servers on dedicated Windows servers. This distributed deployment is fully supported and this [blog post](#) details how to set this up.*

SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office and **SAP Lumira Designer** will be maintained and supported, but no new feature will be delivered.

Please refer to [SAP roadmap explorer](#) to stay up to date about future releases of SAP BusinessObjects BI.

We will provide alternatives

To maximize the value for our customers, we will focus ongoing investments on the most-widely adopted SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions and we will not deliver the following components with SAP BusinessObjects BI 2025:

- SAP BusinessObjects Universe Design Tool and .unv universes,
- Multi-source universes and associated connectivity,
- SAP Lumira Discovery,
- SAP Crystal Reports for Enterprise,
- SAP BusinessObjects Analysis, edition for OLAP,
- SAP BusinessObjects Live Office,
- SAP BusinessObjects Mobile.

In terms of platforms, we will stop supporting AIX and Solaris after version 4.3 and will focus on our preferred operating systems: **Windows** and **Linux**.

As we did for the upgrade to version 4.3, we will make sure that the upgrade to the new release is as smooth as possible and will provide enough overlap so that each customer can upgrade at their own pace.

We are recommending alternatives for the following use cases:

- .unx universes authored with Information Design Tool already cover all Universe Design Tool and .unv universe use cases and we strongly recommend their use. Migration from .unv to .unx is fully supported by SAP tools. You can find more details on the migration process in this post: [UNV is dead, long live UNX](#).
- There are several types of multi-source universes. Different SAP solutions can be used to achieve same data federation use cases, from Information Design Tool to Datasphere. You can find more details on the alternative solutions in this post: [BusinessObjects Multi source Universes Alternatives](#).
- As communicated in this [note](#), SAP Lumira 2.4 will receive mainstream maintenance until end of 2025, followed by two years of priority one support until end of 2027, after which we will stop supporting Discovery. We strongly recommend to transition analysis applications and data discovery use cases to SAP Analytics Cloud stories. You can read more about SAP Analytics Cloud benefits in this blog: [Accelerate your move from SAP Lumira Designer to SAP Analytics Cloud](#).
- SAP Crystal Reports for Enterprise was introduced with SAP BusinessObjects BI 4.0, but never reached large adoption. We will stop supporting it and recommend customers to either use SAP Crystal Reports, or Web Intelligence. Different criteria in your current enterprise reporting configuration must be taken into consideration to decide which is your best target tool. Note that to help customers move to SAP Crystal Reports, we started supporting .unx universes with Crystal Reports 4.3 SP4. You can find more details on the migration process in this post: [Moving from Crystal Reports for Enterprise to Crystal Reports](#).
- For SAP data sources BW and HANA, we recommend transitioning your AOLAP analysis to SAP Analytic Cloud Stories or Data Analyzer. For other OLAP data sources, an OLAP .unx universe can be an alternative, in conjunction with Web Intelligence. You can find more details on the alternative solutions in this post: [SAP BusinessObjects Analysis, edition for OLAP Alternatives](#).
- Microsoft Excel in combination with Web Intelligence OData access or SAP Crystal Reports OData access and Analysis for Microsoft Office can be strong alternatives for SAP BusinessObjects Live Office use cases. You can find more details on the alternative solutions in this post: [SAP BusinessObjects Live Office Alternatives](#).
- For report consumption on Mobile devices, we will improve the BI Launch Pad and report viewers responsiveness on smaller screens and recommend accessing reports through a mobile web browser interface. You can find more details on the alternative solutions in this post: [SAP BusinessObjects Mobile Alternatives](#).

Move your analytics to the cloud

Benefit from a managed cloud infrastructure

With **SAP BusinessObjects Enterprise, private cloud edition**, we offer a predefined package operated by SAP on the main hyperscalers, including software, support, technical managed services, and infrastructure. This is a great opportunity to shift from a maintenance contract to a subscription model while leveraging your existing investments in SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions.

Here are some of the key benefits:

- The latest version of SAP BusinessObjects BI is always available, thanks to yearly upgrades,
- 2-tier landscape: development/test and production by default, with optional additional tiers,
- Pre-configured hardware landscapes optimized for performance,
- Choice of hyperscaler infrastructure includes AWS, Google Cloud Platform, Microsoft Azure,
- End-to-end SLA 99.7%, backup and restore included within standard service scope,
- Opportunity to modernize the SAP BusinessObjects BI deployment, such as consolidate into one global instance, rationalize unused resources, simplify lifecycle management, and adjust license mix.

For customers ready to move to the cloud, SAP offers a conversion program called the Cloud Extension Policy that allows for a partial (or full) termination of SAP BusinessObjects BI on-premises maintenance when replaced with a new SAP Analytics Cloud contract or SAP BusinessObjects Enterprise PCE contract. In conjunction with a less expensive focused license, the savings can be used to start moving your BI use cases to the cloud, and benefit from all the innovations in SAP Analytics Cloud.

Customers will continue to have the choice for their infrastructure for SAP BusinessObjects BI solutions, either on-premise or in a managed cloud operated by SAP.

Transition to SAP Analytics Cloud

SAP Analytics Cloud is SAP's strategic analytics & planning offering and customers should consider it for new applications, use cases and users. Rather than a big bang approach, we recommend to gradually move workloads from SAP BusinessObjects to SAP Analytics Cloud, and along with our partner community, we are committed to support every customer through this journey.

Please refer to our [move your analytics to the cloud](#) portal to learn more about benefits and resources.

We want to hear from you

The SAP BusinessObjects BI suite remains a key component of our Analytics strategy and we are committed to our customers. Please help us fine tune our roadmaps by providing your input through the dedicated influence channels: [SAP BusinessObjects BI Platform](#) and [SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence](#).

SAP Community is the one stop shop for keeping up to date about SAP products and leverage other users' expertise: please visit <https://pages.community.sap.com/topics/bi-platform>.

We appreciate your feedback and will answer your questions at sapaskanalytics@sap.com.

To know more about our portfolio, please visit www.sap.com.