Whitepaper

Cash Flow & Operations Optimization Business Intelligence Solutions

Turnkey Hardware, Software and Cash Flow / Operational Analytics Framework

With relevant, up-to-date cash flow and operations optimization reporting at your fingertips, you’re positioned to take advantage of opportunities to improve your business and gain a competitive advantage. Accretive Solutions has leveraged its significant expertise in the area of cash flow and operations optimization and teamed up with Cincom and IBM to bring you an “out of the box” solution, providing your organization with rapid and cost effective access to the data that enables your organization to make improved strategic decisions.

The right data, easily accessible by the right people, at the right time facilitates:

- Enhanced decision making in the areas of cash flow and operations
- Improvements in business process and workforce performance
- Reduction in cost to execute data gathering and integration

Integrates Data Analytics Platform

Accretive Solutions’ Cash Flow and Operations Optimization analytics framework running on CincomBI™ and IBM Smart Cube® platforms, provides a set of end-to-end technologies to develop reporting, data warehousing and analytic solutions aimed at optimizing cash management and working capital right “out of the box.” This set includes:

- **Cash Flow Optimization Reporting** – a suite of reports to evaluate cash-flow performance and calculate the impact of variances to targets. These reports include:
  - **Order to Cash**: Order delivery performance, invoice receipt performance and days sales outstanding.
  - **Purchase to Pay**: Payables performance and days payables outstanding
  - **Cash Flow**: Statement of cash flows.
- **Operational Performance Reporting** – a set of dashboards and KPIs giving management a quick view of operational performance.

“In a data-rich world, businesses are inundated with information. Yet used strategically, it can guide decision-making and boost performance. That’s why Business Intelligence is on every CIO’s must-have list” – Gartner Inc.

The IBM Smart Cubes are complete, integrated platforms that incorporate all the necessary hardware and software pre-configured and ready to run your business critical applications. In less than an hour after powering on the Smart Cube, any company with minimal IT skills can have their business applications online.

With IBM Smart Cube®, CincomBI™ and Accretive Solutions’ Cash Flow and Operations Optimization services, you have a turnkey hardware, software and cash flow / operational analytics framework designed to help your business accomplish its objectives.

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IBM Smart Cubes for Power Business Applications. Smarter IT, lower total cost solution

Hardware
• Easy to acquire an integrated and complete application solution
• Everything works together from day one to get your business application up and running quickly
• Efficiently manage and support your Smart Cube and integrated application with minimal skills

The IBM Smart Cubes for business applications are complete, integrated platforms that incorporate all the necessary hardware and software pre-configured and ready to run your business critical applications. In less than an hour after powering on the Smart Cube, any company with minimal IT skills can have their business applications online.

Easy to acquire and quicker to get started with an integrated application solution
Each Smart Cube provides a complete IT environment powered by the latest POWER processor running IBM i (formerly known as i5/OS) plus an IBM and Open Source middleware software stack optimized to securely support and manage business applications. From the IBM Security Systems Proventia firewall protection to IBM Tivoli automatic back up and recovery and much more, the IBM Smart Cube is designed to save you time and money. The fully integrated Smart Cube often cost less to acquire than purchasing separate server and software components required to support most business applications.

Everything works together from day one
The Smart Cubes for business applications are plug and play application ready platforms requiring only 4 easy steps to get your system up and running. Instead of days or weeks of training followed by reading through hundreds of pages of manuals and then spending hours installing the operating system, middleware, security and application software, each Smart Cube is pre-loaded with the specific set of integrated software components necessary to get your business application online and in production quickly.

The IBM Smart Business Application Integrator used by the application vendor ensures that their application works seamlessly with the IBM and Open Source middleware pre-loaded with each Smart Cube to manage tasks including:
• Security: IBM Security Services Proventia Server integrated into every Smart Cube is designed to keep data and applications reliable, available and confidential. It provides real-time reporting on the data and applications that are accessed on the Smart Cube ensuring your business information is protected.
• Backup and recovery: A backup device is built into every Smart Cube. IBM Tivoli Storage Manager automates the Smart Cube’s data backup and provides for one button recovery through intelligent backup and restore that utilize a revolutionary progressive incremental backup and restore strategy. Periodic backup of the Directory Server on the Smart Cube is performed by TSM for Mail.

Near Effortless Management and Support
The IBM Smart Cube can eliminate IT complexity and is near effortless to manage. With key updates, fixes and new releases for all your software automatically downloaded from the IBM Smart Market to the Smart Desk console you can easily manage your IBM Smart Business Solution with minimal IT skills. Common tasks like updating software, monitoring the health of the components of your solution or adding users to applications are automatically performed for you or able to be completed in seconds. And with IBM as the single point of contact for everything including your business application, you can focus on what matters most, your business.
CincomBI provides a complete, integrated set of Technologies with no limits on usage and growth.

Software
CincomBI provides a complete set of end-to-end technologies to develop reporting, data warehousing and analytic solutions. This set includes:

Robust Reporting - A complete reporting framework is provided for report development and print-ready production reports.

Report Management - The CincomBI Server provides a platform for the storage, sharing and scheduling of reports and ETL procedures.

Flexible and Powerful OLAP Analysis - CincomBI provides a web-based online analytical processing (OLAP) capability that leverages standard RDBMS technologies, and can be deployed against existing application databases, operational data stores, as well as data marts and data warehouses.

Comprehensive Data Integration and ETL - ETL components provide a metadata-driven approach to create complex transformations and jobs without the need to write code.

Component architecture allows you to build solutions in a modular fashion and to integrate components of other reporting and analysis systems.

Modular Growth
You don’t need to build a complete analytic solution to start seeing benefits. Right away you can start taking better advantage of your operational data. And over time, you can build more complex business intelligence solutions.

Operational Reports and Dashboards. The reporting framework and CincomBI Server can be used to develop and manage reports directly against operational data. Support is provided for a number of data sources.

Analytics with Operational Data. For some solutions, the power of OLAP can be utilized without having to implement a complete data warehouse. With CincomBI’s flexible ROLAP (Relational Online Analytical Processing) architecture, OLAP in-memory cubes can be built directly from operational data sources.

Data Cleansing and Data Integration. Some reporting solutions require data cleansing and data integration from multiple data sources. A complete data warehouse solution may not be necessary but instead, an integrated, cleansed staging database can be developed. CincomBI’s ETL components provide the cleansing and integration facilities.

Data Warehousing. A data warehouse will be the best solution when large amounts of operational data must be optimized for analytics or when direct access to operational data is not practical. CincomBI’s ETL components provide a complete set of extract, transform and load functions and advanced warehouse mappings.

Analytics with Data Warehousing. Of course, OLAP reports and dashboards can be used with data warehouse sources to build scalable data warehouse and analytic solutions.
CincomBI allows business users to concentrate on decision-making and performance analysis. CincomBI’s easy-to-use graphical facilities empower business users to develop their own reports, or modify standard reports, without depending on IT solution developers.

Dashboards
Dashboards allow you to combine multiple reports and views to give you a clear picture of current business performance. You can use gauges to give instant visual meaning to measures. The dashboard can provide links to other dashboards or detailed reports to probe information in even more depth.

Analysis Views
Analysis Views are similar to Reports but allow you to dig deeper into the results. Pivot tables allow you to “slice and dice” data to examine it from different points of view. You can drill down to see sub-categories or roll up to see summaries. You can also see the origins of data used for each measure. Charts can be added to the page and adjusted for any type of presentation.

Reports
CincomBI provides a reporting framework to maximize your use of business intelligence information. Reports can be structured to meet your organizational structures and performance improvement objectives. Reports can integrate data from a variety of sources and can be delivered in a variety of formats such as Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat, HTM, etc. Complex layouts can be easily developed using tables, cross-tabs or charts for screen display or print.

Ad Hoc Analysis
CincomBI integrates with Microsoft Excel allowing you to use familiar Excel Pivot Tables and Charts with your business intelligence data. You can dynamically create tables and charts using drag and drop operations. This allows you to explore and perform ad hoc analysis without advanced knowledge of multidimensional methods. Drill-down and summary operations are provided to enable you to further explore and understand trends.
Good cash management means never having to say, “The check is in the mail.”

Analytics Framework

The key differentiator of this solution is that CincomBI offers cross-function, operational focused reports and dashboards right “out of the box.” These reports and dashboards provide an operational cash flow view of the Sales Order and Purchasing functions of your business. They are intended to provide insight into operational and structural causes of liquidity issues, as well as practical guidance to optimize cash and improve forecasting. They are a direct result of Accretive Solutions’ extensive experience in providing Cash Flow and Operational Optimization services to clients of all sizes and industries across the U.S.

Cash Flow Optimization Reports Examples

- **Order to Delivery Performance** – Identify functional locations that are habitually slow in getting invoices into customer’s hands. Delays during this phase are usually a result of internal process problems and result in poor cash flow as well as poor customer satisfaction.

- **Delivery to Invoice Performance** – Identify customers who habitually pay slowly or require significant interaction to receive payment. This helps identify “high-maintenance” customers in order to strategically address root causes and further improve cash flow.

- **Payables Performance** – Identify payment options for open payables by showing the impact of taking discounts, versus paying on time or paying late, at an invoice level. This helps provide real cash flow options in order to make best use of your cash.

Multidimensional Reports and Tools

Multidimensional reports and tools allow analysis of multidimensional data where information is presented in a form that can immediately be understood by business users. This is usually in a tabular or graphical form where more detailed information can be obtained by drill-down or breakdown lists. These are often referred to as On-Line Analytical Processing (OLAP) tools.

CincomBI allows you to deliver analytic information in a variety of ways. A majority of the users will probably be “BI consumers.” They receive reports and utilize dashboards. These can be distributed via e-mail or embedded in operational systems using Web interfaces.

Casual users will directly use CincomBI tools for more exploration and analysis. They can utilize Web-based pivot tables and ad hoc report designers to construct reports with little training from IT.

Power users can construct more complex queries utilizing query tools and Microsoft Excel. Analytics support for Excel allows you to use familiar Excel Pivot Tables and Charts with OLAP data.
About Cincom
For nearly 40 years, Cincom’s software and services have helped thousands of clients worldwide simplify the management of complex business processes. Cincom specializes in the areas of business where simplification brings the greatest value to managers who want to grow revenue, control costs, minimize risk and achieve rapid ROI better than their competitors.

Cincom serves clients on six continents including BMW, Citibank, Boeing, Ericsson, Penn State University, Milacron, Siemens, Rockwell Automation and Trane.

For more information about Cincom’s products and services, contact Cincom at 1-800-224-6266(USA), 1-513-612-2769 (International), send an e-mail to CincomBI@cincom.com or visit our website at www.cincom.com/CincomBI.

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Ask IBM
For answers to general questions about IBM from within the continental United States, call 800-IBM-4YOU; from outside the continental United States, call 404-238-1234.

About Accretive Solutions
Accretive Solutions is a national professional services firm solving problems in Accounting and Technology. From start-ups to the Fortune 500, business leaders rely on Accretive Solutions to provide the experienced professionals to meet their toughest challenges and transform their businesses.

For more information about Accretive Solutions and how we can help your organization with effective cash and operations optimization solutions, please email us at info@accretivesolutions.com, call your local Accretive Solutions representative.