valantic

SAP Analytics

E-Paper

Contents

Foreword

Dear Readers:

You can feel it each and every day and see it almost everywhere you look: ever more data is being generated, changed, and saved. At the same time, the underlying processes, conditions, contexts, and technologies are changing, which creates complexity that has to be penetrated - in terms of content, process, organization, and technology - in order to be able to evaluate data correctly and use it to answer analytics questions. This is true of current data, historic data, and forward-looking data that is derived from these. To sum things up: we're moving from change to change.

In this e-paper, we want to present our SAP Analytics portfolio. Whether when coaching, implementing or operating these solutions, we always ensure that we select the right architecture for our customers. To provide for the change-to-change situation, we generally recommend
a stable and robust architecture based on SAP BW/4HANA as data warehouse with an SAP Analytics Cloud for the reporting, accompanied by data governance as exemplified by our customers' specialized departments. To support planning processes, it has long been necessary to consider many specialized and process aspects that can be mapped very well with the SAP Analytics Cloud, SAP Business Planning & Consolidation or Integrated Business Planning or a combination of these.

Advanced analytics solutions (use cases from IoT, Big Data, AR, etc.) are also becoming ever more important; we integrate these in order to improve forecasts and provide extensive self-service analyses, for example. Our claim is always

Stefan Blinkmann
valantic | Director SAP Analytics

to

help our customers with the strategic design of reporting, planning applications, and processes, as well as integration and modeling of data with SAP technology as professionally as possible. Here, our personal experiences as in-house consultants for SAP application companies also play an important role. Our customers can always rely on us to work with them, to use our expertise and experience to select the best possible analytics solution for their challenges and implement it with state-of-the-art technology and methods. This is how we deliver long-term added value for our customers.

If you are facing challenges in SAP Analytics, my colleagues and I will be glad to make an appointment for a personal conversation. We'll be happy to talk to you!

Sincerely yours,
Stefan Blinkmann
valantic | Director SAP Analytics

What are the benefits of business analytics and what's the difference between business analytics and business intelligence?

"Business Intelligence" (BI) and "Business Analytics" (BA) are frequently used synonymously and inconsistently, both in general usage and in consulting companies' service descriptions. However, the distinction between these processes is critical for a strategic orientation of the analysis of companies' data. For with regard to the specific added value, valantic makes an essential distinction between BI and BA:

Business Intelligence For questions and analysis, BI generally focuses on past and present data and its interpretation: What was and why did something happen?

Business Analytics, by contrast, expands this view to include a company's future developments and places the data in a "forward-looking" context: How will something be and what can we influence?

As an example – and this can be expanded to include various sectors – there are essentially four questions that most companies ask:

1. What were sales and profit figures for the past year?

2. Why did sales and profits develop that way and not another way?

3. What will anticipated sales and profits be in the next five years?

4. What can we do to positively influence the anticipated sales and profits?

While with its historic focus, business intelligence focuses on the first two questions, business analytics takes up the last two questions with its expanded view.
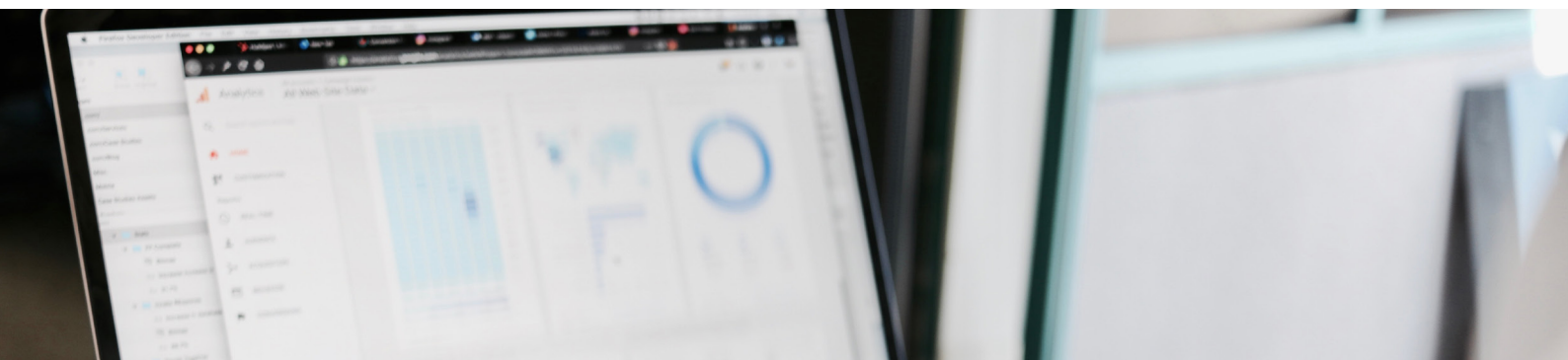
Analysis and evaluation of events and data are always important for companies' success if it is to be based on more than just "gut feeling." Among other things, data analyses help management and controlling create annual reports. Sales managers are interested in how individual team members, products or marketing actions are performing. Perhaps their colleagues in HR are searching for new insights about past and future HR structures and department management. And individual employees are interested in quick analyses and evaluations that will allow them to provide meaningful reporting to the management.

Traditionally, only past or present-related

data is considered for this. Today, however, companies need to do more than just keep an eye on the past and present; they don't just want to know how and why business has developed positively or negatively. Instead, they want to use existing information and deploy new technological approaches to identify future entrepreneurial potential and detect and defend against possible dangers.

The benefit of business analytics as compared to business intelligence is the ability to use data **to answer more than just questions relating to the past.** With business analytics, it is possible to **predict and control future developments.**
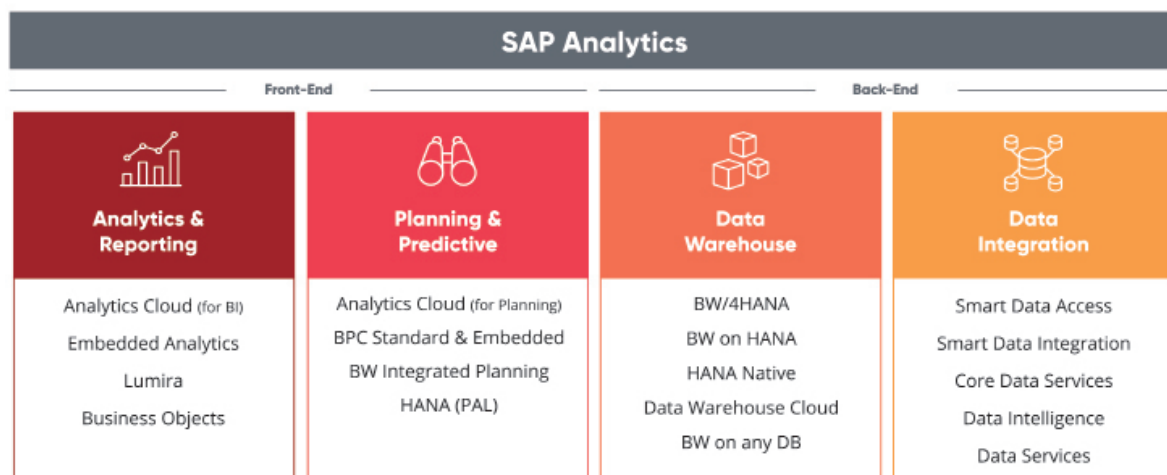
SAP Analytics: generate added value from data

The quantities of data arising from digitalization are becoming ever larger and more confusing. Modern SAP Analytics solutions help companies structure and analyze these giant quantities of data. Here, valantic attaches great importance to ensuring that users can analyze and make decisions on a solid database. For we examine the complete data life cycle: generation, integration, modeling, and analysis. But also storage, protection, archiving, and deletion.

We are convinced that the interplay of all participants is the crucial success factor with regard to analytics projects: This is why data management and analytics methods have to be adapted optimally to the user's data and requirements. The tools only provide support.

Our expertise includes the entire SAP portfolio for analytics and data warehouse solutions, including SAP BW/4HANA, SAP Analytics Cloud, SAP BW on HANA, SAP Lumira, and SAP Data Services. Furthermore, we also rely on native data warehouses with SAP HANA, the SAP Data Warehouse Cloud, and SAP Data Intelligence.

Our portfolio focal points in the SAP Analytics sector

SAP Analytics			
Front-End		**Back-End**	
Analytics & Reporting	**Planning & Predictive**	**Data Warehouse**	**Data Integration**
Analytics Cloud (for BI)	Analytics Cloud (for Planning)	BW/4HANA	Smart Data Access
Embedded Analytics	BPC Standard & Embedded	BW on HANA	Smart Data Integration
Lumira	BW Integrated Planning	HANA Native	Core Data Services
Business Objects	HANA (PAL)	Data Warehouse Cloud	Data Intelligence
		BW on any DB	Data Services

Analysis and reporting with SAP

If you want to make decisions, you need facts and information in clear forms and displays. As complex and multi-layered as the data's path from collection to reporting may be, in the end, what matters is a clear, meaningful visualization.

SAP Analytics Cloud

The SAP Analytics Cloud is the strategic product for visualizing and analyzing data. It also supports planning processes and forward-looking analyses, so-called predictive analytics.

Embedded Analytics

Embedded analytics enable operative reporting in SAP S/4HANA. Evaluations are provided to the corporate processes directly and without delay.

SAP BusinessObjects & SAP Lumira

The on-premise alternative to SAP Analytics Cloud is SAP Business Objects. With the add-in SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office, users have a powerful tool for reporting with PowerPoint and Excel. With SAP Lumira, it's possible to create extensive visualizations and report formats.

Planning & predictive analytics with SAP

Planning is the "freestyle" analytics discipline. For no planning fits precisely and yet it is essential for the company to control business. Planning processes can be complex, for partial plans generally have very different horizons, degrees of detail,

and influencing factors. However, in the end, the point is to have an agreed-upon, integrated overall plan in which all planning data is presented in a common context.

SAP Analytics Cloud

The SAP Analytics Cloud also supports planning thanks to ready-to-use planning models and various planning functions such as allocations, versioning, etc., which link actual reporting to forecasts and budgets. A special highlight

is normally used for small and medium-sized department-controlled planning and consolidation processes. SAP BPC Embedded has a sharply centralized, IT-driven focus and is normally used for larger solutions.

SAP HANA Predictive Analytics Library (PAL)

There are a lot of machine learning processes available in the SAP HANA Predictive Analytics Library (PAL).

is the value driver tree for simulating planning scenarios.

SAP Business Planning & Consolidation

The SAP Business Planning & Consolidation (BPC) variants Standard (newly "optimized for S/4HANA") and Embedded have different goals. SAP BPC Standard

SQL, R, and Python make it possible to use algorithms from classification, regression, time sequence, and association analyses.

Data Warehouse mit SAP

A central data warehouse as Single Point of Truth for the structured storage and

evaluation of essential processes and data is still a central component of any IT architecture.

SAP BW/4HANA

BW/4HANA is the latest generation of the classic SAP BW and is based completely on HANA technology. We help companies on their path to BW/4HANA and share our experience about greenfield, in-place, remote, and shell conversion with them.

SAP BW on HANA

With the BW on HANA version, many users are already taking a big step toward BW/4HANA. In the process, they are already

enjoying the benefits of HANA technology and preparing themselves optimally for BW/4HANA.

SAP HANA Native

SQL-based data warehouse solutions can be developed with SAP HANA. The potential of the HANA technology with all existing functions, the machine learning library, algorithms, and the integration of R, Python, etc. supports a whole series of new use cases.

SAP Data Warehouse Cloud

The SAP Data Warehouse Cloud is a sensible extension of an existing business analytics architecture. With this tool, specialized departments

can incorporate new data sources without the help of the IT department; they can also produce data models and create their own evaluations.

SAP BW – the end of maintenance is near

The SAP Business Information Warehouse (SAP BW) and Business Explorer Suite (BEx) have been in use for many years. The maintenance window for SAP BW 7.5 remains open until 12/31/2027. If companies are using a system older than SAP BW 7.4, however, maintenance will end on 12/31/2020. That's why there is pressure to act; users will have to do something quickly.

Data integration as the basis of every analysis

Extracting data, transforming, cleansing, and loading it is the basis of every report and analysis. That's why the harmonization of technology, business rules, and data quality are extremely important. The following tools can offer users professional support:

Smart Data Access & Smart Data Integration

Smart Data Access (SDA) and Smart Data Integration (SDI) are part of the new generation of data integration tools and are used with HANA or the cloud platform. SDA is used for virtual access to data. SDI expands functions to include replication and transformation.

Core Data Services

The Core Data Services views are an exciting new possibility for querying data via logical views and evaluating it. Our focus is on using this data service in the SAP S/4HANA system in order to enable operative reporting and the forwarding of data to an SAP BW/4HANA.

SAP Data Intelligence

This platform focuses on Big Data, the Internet of Things (IoT), and machine learning. Worth highlighting is the large selection of connectors to SAP and non-SAP systems. These can be used to orchestrate data streams and data governance initiatives company-wide supported with the metadata layer.

Data Services

With SAP Data Services, you have an established ETL tool in your business analytics portfolio. We have extensive experience with the implementation of complex data processing in SAP and non-SAP systems.

How high is your digital maturity on the "Be data-smart scale"?

By **Diana Krüger**,
Marketing Manager, valantic

Stefan Blinkmann has worked in the SAP Analytics sector for many years and has a lot of experience when the concern is to generate knowledge from data. We spoke to him about how the analytics business has changed in recent years and which trend topics companies can expect with the advance of artificial intelligence, Big Data, and predictive analytics.

Stefan, valantic has worked as an SAP partner in the analytics sector for years now. How has your business developed in recent years and what are your focal points today?

Perhaps the most important development is that the speed with which new requirements should be implemented with analytics solutions

Stefan Blinkmann
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has increased rapidly. In my opinion, this requires a re-thinking of the BI methodology and of how analytical systems should be enhanced. Furthermore, the data sources, data depth, and data domains have multiplied , which also increases the complexity. Here it may seem surprising that we stand by our established focal points, including „flexible architectures,"

"data governance," and "data management." Even if many things should be "agile," in the end, our customers expect precise, valid analyses for their decisions.

supporting planning processes. From our point of view, the system axis S4-BW4-SAC is the core and will be a component of any planning process, for without actual data, there can be no planning.

Which analytics topics are currently in the most demand?

The SAP Analytics Cloud (SAC) is in great demand right now. Many people are re-orienting themselves and developing their own road map with the cloud in order to replace old forms of reporting. The demand for planning components in the Analytics Cloud is also increasing, and we are coaching our customers on the development of their first applications. In the business warehouse environment, most of our customers are working on BW on HANA and preparing for BW/4HANA. But we believe one of the greatest challenges is the question of what planning solutions will look like in the future. With SAC, SAP Business Planning & Consolidation (BPC), Integrated Business Planning (IBP), and S4, there are a range of options for-

What, in your opinion, is the greatest benefit that customers can achieve with the introduction of SAP Analytics solutions?

Honestly, I believe that the essential benefit of the analytics tools does not lie in the tools themselves, the figures that are prepared or the reports that are filled for possible decisions. In the end, these also matter, but the greatest added value arises in the process of successive creation and optimization of the underlying process. The maturity of a company on the "Be data-smart scale" increases if users get to the bottom of the influencing factors that change the data; that is, the company's processes. My favorite illustration of this is as follows:

the controller settles on an order item and goes with it as "attribute" on the data record through to management reporting and examines what happens to the data on the way through the systems to the report. For me, this is truly data lineage with data governance in action.

What general trends do you see coming at you and the customer in the analytics sector in the next few years?

Definitely data governance, which I regard as a still underestimated and unloved discipline for generating valid insights from the growing quantities of data. Without minimally invasive data governance, which ensures sufficient data quality through a continuous process, it will be difficult to keep a grip on corporate data. That's why our customers who are focusing on S/4HANA now appreciate our approach, which uses the business warehouse for this. We want to ensure that the old ERP data will be consolidated with the new S4 data via the BW (on HANA)/BW/4HANA and remain as transparent and clean

as possible. Only this way can the comprehensive view of corporate reporting remain stable. Data governance is indispensable for this.

What influence do topics such as Big Data, machine learning (ML), and predictive analytics have on the SAP Analytics world?

Now that it is technically possible to process large quantities of data - especially unstructured data - at high speed, there are new opportunities in the SAP Analytics sector. Just to name a few examples: The "Smart features" of the SAP Analytics Cloud use ML algorithms for automated forecasts. HANA's Predictive Analytics Library offers extensive ML functionalities; and large quantities of data can be processed with SAP BW/4HANA. Especially with Big Data, you have to take a careful look to determine whether it's really "Big Data" or a large volume of structured data that should be integrated.

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