



Panorama Software and SAP NetWeaver BI

Whitepaper

Business Intelligence (BI) technology can be an enabler to increasing efficiency and more effective decision making. But when the BI technology is too complex or slow to perform there are neither efficiency gains nor can users feel confident about the decisions they make. Panorama NovaView for SAP NetWeaver BI offers enterprises a complete and integrated web-based BI solution with an unparalleled focus on usability and performance—ensuring tools and applications are designed for the user based on business needs. Panorama NovaView for SAP NetWeaver BI delivers best in class BI functionality simplified and delivered into the hands of information workers in the way they work. Panorama has made NovaView the best BI suite for NetWeaver BI enabling it to perform as much as 10 times faster...

Panorama Software and SAP NetWeaver BI

Panorama NovaView for SAP NetWeaver BI offers enterprises a complete and integrated web-based BI solution including analysis, reporting, dashboards, scorecards, modeling and visualization. It focuses on simplifying the user experience by extending the reach of SAP NetWeaver BI and SAP BEx to empower business users to create their own reports, interact with data and collaborate in a unique and intuitive way.

Unlike other BI solutions for SAP NetWeaver BI, Panorama NovaView connects directly to SAP NetWeaver BI, eliminating the need for data or metadata extraction. With Panorama NovaView, business users can access SAP NetWeaver BI InfoCubes, Queries, and Operational Data Stores to build reports, conduct analysis and monitor performance – in a simpler, more user-friendly environment.

The Current BI Landscape for SAP

SAP's BI solution is a pervasively employed data warehouse / analytical enterprise software solution utilized by companies that run their business on back-end SAP operational systems. SAP NetWeaver BI contains a large number of predefined extractors, a large amount of pre-defined business content in the form of InfoCubes, master data, authorization roles, query views and packaged reports / views. The Business Explorer (BEx) is the SAP NetWeaver Business Intelligence component that provides front-end reporting and analysis tools for strategic analyses and decision-making support within a company. These tools include query, reporting, and analysis functions. As an employee with authorization for the Business Explorer, users can evaluate data to varying degrees of detail and from different perspectives on the Web and also in MS Excel.

Unfortunately, SAP's current offerings are heavily weighted to power users, offer limited self-service capabilities, and frequently require further manipulation to get reports in the right format. SAP's BEx tools are loved or hated depending upon a user's role—power users are often the only ones capable of easily using the application, and even users who are comfortable with BI tools tend to emphasize inflexibility of BEx Analyzer and BEx Web.

Also, Netweaver BI, can have limitations in terms of performance so queries can take a long time to execute, making interactivity a long and heavy process that end users don't want to go through

Why Choose Panorama NovaView?

End User Value:

Empowering a wide array of decision making staff with the ability to access and personalize the information they require and easily manipulate data is critical to the success of any BI initiative. SAP BEx Analyzer is a good tool for power users and analysts, but may be too complex for more casual business users. Panorama NovaView uniquely combines deep functionality with ease-of-use which allows customers to deploy a single solution across a diverse user community.

Panorama NovaView extends the value of SAP NetWeaver BI by enabling intuitive end user self service reporting and analytics together with management and executive dashboard solutions. Panorama NovaView for SAP Netweaver BI excels at providing great functionality, and improving end-user client performance.

IT Value:

As opposed to other BI solutions for SAP NetWeaver BI that require an additional metadata or data extraction layer, Panorama NovaView does not have its own platform and works natively on SAP Netweaver BI using the ODBO / MDX standard (for more information click here ([Panorama NovaView - Improving SAP BI Platform Performance \(download pdf\)](#)))

Panorama NovaView also provides a powerful way to reuse all the existing queries created by BEX ensuring not only instant reuse and great ROI but also provides organizations the ability to work simultaneously with BEX and NovaView – Power users can still use BEX while end users can use NovaView.

Key Panorama NovaView differentiators include:

- ▶ Better information worker usability
- ▶ Better executive dashboard capabilities
- ▶ Greater analytical functionality
- ▶ Product flexibility and versatility
- ▶ Enhanced Netweaver BI performance
- ▶ Lower total cost of ownership

Better Information Worker Usability

Panorama NovaView is more intuitive and provides better end-user usability. Most organizations have diverse user bases and the success of the installed solution requires widespread system usage.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Extends analytics to ALL information workers – Panorama NovaView empowers all information workers, including executives, analysts, LOB managers, and power users, by balancing ease-of-use with deep functional capabilities. It provides greater

numbers of users unprecedented access to SAP data in a full interactive manner, as well as the ability to work with and share that information in a way that suits them best. SAP BEx is primarily used by power users which demonstrates why the majority of SAP BW deployments have less than 50 users.

- ▶ Proof Point #2: WYSIWYG information access – Panorama’s what you see is what you get approach provides an interface that is fully drag-and-drop enabled. Unlike SAP NetWeaver BI, all features are easily exposed to end users allowing non-technical business users to access the information they need to make critical business decisions in a timely manner.
- ▶ Proof Point #3: Flexible choice of user interface – Unlike SAP NetWeaver BI, Panorama NovaView extends BI to all decision makers across the enterprise by providing multiple ways to interact with business data; these include Web access, portal integration, a desktop client, PowerPoint, and MS Excel. In addition, Panorama supports both a Java applet and DHTML interface extending thin client options.
- ▶ Proof Point #4: Seamless transition between scorecards, analytics and reporting – SAP NetWeaver BI is three distinct environments with little cross over capability – these include Excel (Analyzer), Web applications (Web Analyzer), and Reporting. The added development slows the information access cycle and creates brittle technical environments. Panorama NovaView Scorecards provides a tight integration with analytics, reporting and visualization. In addition, Panorama Smart Reporting supports one click moves between analysis and reporting within a single interface.
- ▶ Proof Point #5: Consistency across interfaces – Panorama NovaView is one integrated suite of all BI applications and provides a consistent look and feel between the different client options which promotes a better user experience and reduces training time and costs. Users of SAP NetWeaver BI complain about the functional and visual differences between BEx Analyzer interfaces, Reporting, and BEx Web Analyzer.
- ▶ Proof Point #6: Query performance and user scalability – Users waiting several minutes while the system runs complex queries is not acceptable in today’s hyper-competitive business environment. Query performance has been an area SAP has been trying to improve for a number of years. It recently released the “BI Accelerator” for companies where cost is not an issue. Panorama’s web-based infrastructure massively scales to a large number of users inside and outside the firewall. Panorama’s enhanced security, smart data caching, connection pooling, and query optimization enables users to leverage the solution at any time and from anywhere.

Greater Functional Depth and Breadth

Deeper and more intuitive functionality allows enterprises to gain a competitive advantage with faster decision making cycles. Panorama NovaView provides more functional depth to help information workers access actionable data and make the best business decisions.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Exposing advanced analytics to business users – Many analytic capabilities that Panorama intuitively exposes to the business user, such as Sorting on characteristic

value (members), strong Filtering, Top/Bottom N, Sets creation, formulas and more, require a SAP BEx IT Specialist to have access to the Query Designer and have extensive BEx configuration knowledge.

- ▶ **Proof Point #2:** Advanced exception handling – Bubble-up exceptions and custom exceptions automatically identify whether discrepancies exist in performance metrics between high level data hierarchies and their contributing branches. Panorama's unique way of handling exceptions, users receive proactive alerts to data variances or missed targets that occur at the bottom level of hierarchies. SAP recently added a new wizard-like exception dialog to BEx in an attempt to expose exception handling to users, but the UI did nothing to change actual exception functionality.
- ▶ **Proof Point #3:** SAP offers a first generation reporting tool – BEx Report Designer is a new formatted report tool targeted at IT analysts and power users. Once report templates are created in the client application, consumers have no control over its format or structure. Panorama NovaView offers an integrated, Web-based solution and enables rich analysis functionality including slicing, nesting, grouping, filtering, dynamic parameters, exceptions and bubble up exceptions. In addition, NovaView users can easily format and distribute reports to meet production requirements.
- ▶ **Proof Point #4:** Offline analytics – NovaView offers unique offline package definition tools, enabling administrators to create off-line packages for subscribers and export them. Users can then proceed to work offline with the packaged data, and upload processed information back into the server when convenient. SAP BEx only supports static reports to be created and distributed to end-users.

Product Flexibility and Versatility

Flexible deployment capabilities of Panorama NovaView extend the value of the system and can deliver a competitive advantage. Providing deep functionality while allowing organizations to customize, extend, and configure the technology is a key Panorama differentiator.

- ▶ **Proof Point #1:** Single application for all user classes – BEx users must be extremely knowledgeable on how BW stores data and business users often complain about the difficulty they experience in using core SAP functionality, even for tasks such as running standard SAP reports, printing documents, or simply trying to get at their data. This leads to a frequently cumbersome IT-centric approach to running even the most basic business processes within SAP.
- ▶ **Proof Point #2:** Support for Microsoft Analysis Services – Unlike SAP NetWeaver BI technologies, Panorama NovaView fully supports MS Analysis Services. Panorama NovaView enables BI delivery options for Microsoft SharePoint, dashboards, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Visio as well as SAP's Portal and more. Today Panorama can present data from multiple data sources on one page enable collaboration between the different components. In the future, Panorama will be able to integrate data between components using through master data management.

- ▶ **Proof Point #3:** Panorama Software provides supreme flexibility to customers – Panorama does everything possible to ensure customers' success. The Company will customize software to meet customer specific needs, provide them with executive-level contacts, provide rapid response to any question, etc.

Better performance and scalability

Panorama NovaView can overcome performance limitations in most SAP BW implementations, its performance enhancing technology can generate lightning fast responses.

SmartCaching speeds query performance by using the cache on the NovaView server first, before sending the query to the SAP BW OLAP processor. The result sets from previously used NovaView queries for views and reports are stored in highly compressed tables on the NovaView server, providing nearly instantaneous response times, even for complex queries.

The advanced caching mode uses an algorithm to determine what views should be cached, and in what order. In this way, every step a user takes to get to the final answer becomes part of the cache. Any step of the query can be accessed by another user from the cache, without the query going back to the OLAP processor.

Proof point: Query performance and user scalability – Users waiting several minutes while the system runs complex queries is not acceptable in today's hyper-competitive business environment. Query performance has been an area SAP has been trying to improve for a number of years. It recently released the "BI Accelerator" for companies where cost is not an issue. Panorama's web-based infrastructure massively scales to a large number of users inside and outside the firewall. Panorama's enhanced security, smart data caching, connection pooling, and query optimization enables users to leverage the solution at any time and from anywhere.

For more go to Panorama NovaView - Improving SAP BI Platform Performance ([download pdf](#))

Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Software application vendors often use the catch phrase "lowest TCO" to differentiate their products. The liberal use of the phrase has desensitized most technology buyers to vendors' claims, but savvy evaluators understand that choosing a solution goes far beyond looking at apparent ease-of-use and the upfront costs. TCO consists of all costs, direct and indirect, incurred throughout the life cycle of an asset, including acquisition, deployment, operation, and ongoing support.

- ▶ **Proof Point #1:** Effective administrative controls – Panorama NovaView is built to be managed with fewer resources enabling customers to lower operational expenses. Panorama NovaView takes full advantage of the security and settings of NetWeaver BI ensuring customers can manage all this in one place.
- ▶ **Proof Point #2:** Centralized administration and management – One of the major disadvantages of having a series of client and server-side SAP BI components (Excel add-in, iViews, Web applications, Reporting, etc.) is the lack of consolidated administrative

functionality. Panorama NovaView provides a single managed solution. Users can manage security, views and so forth on the Panorama NovaView server and NetWeaver BI. This even applies to all BI reports and views, whether they are in Excel, SAP Portal or Microsoft's Reporting Services.

- ▶ Proof Point #3: Data-level security – Above and beyond normal security and user authentication, administrators of Panorama have the ability to control security at different levels from a single, central server. The product supports role-based security and leverages BEx and NetWeaver BI security. Using the security capabilities of Panorama NovaView enable advanced collaborative scenarios that are hard to achieve using the BW security.
- ▶ Proof Point #4: Less implementation effort required – SAP NetWeaver BI requires extensive implementation resources and special IT skills (i.e. ABAP developers, BW experts, and experienced BEx analysts). With Panorama, a POC can be completed in a matter of days and a full project ranges from weeks to a small number of months, greatly reducing the time-to-market.
- ▶ Proof Point #5: Robust development environment and tools – The Panorama SDK & API offers a rich environment for solution development compared to the capabilities of BEx and the SAP Portal. With Panorama, users can truly change the behavior of the application and make it look and feel like a completely different product. With SAP Web Access Designer the ability to modify the components and write code is very limited and much more complex.

Summary

Empowering a wide array of decision making staff with the ability to access the information they require and easily manipulate data is critical to the success of any BI initiative. Panorama NovaView extends the value of SAP NetWeaver BI deployments by delivering advanced yet intuitive analytics to a wider user group, enhancing existing analytic functionality, and improving end-user client performance. Panorama NovaView provides one product for all BI applications that provides a seamless and consistent user experience and centralized administration. It provides greater numbers of users unprecedented access to SAP and Microsoft SQL data, as well as the ability to work with and share that information in a way that suits them best – all while delivering the lowest total cost of ownership.

About Panorama

Panorama Software empowers global organizations with the ability to rapidly identify trends, maximize business opportunities and improve corporate performance and results through enterprise business intelligence and Proactive Business Management solutions. Panorama® NovaView™, the company's flagship solution, amplifies the impact of the information worker through a tightly integrated and complete suite of analysis, reporting, scorecard, dashboard and data modeling

applications that support the two leading Business Intelligence platforms, SAP (NYSE: SAP) and Microsoft (NASDAQ: MSFT). Panorama NovaView allows end users to freely explore their data using scalable and intuitive applications.

Founded in 1993, Panorama is a leading innovator in Online Analytical Processing (OLAP) and Multidimensional Expressions (MDX). Panorama sold its OLAP technology to Microsoft Corporation in 1996, which was rebranded as SQL Server Analysis Services and integrated into the SQL Server platform. Panorama supports over 1,000 customers worldwide in industries such as financial services, manufacturing, retail, healthcare, telecommunications and life sciences. Panorama has a wide eco-system of partners in 30 countries, and maintains offices throughout North America, EMEA and Asia. More information is available at www.panorama.com