# IBM Cognos Planning: Performance begins with enterprise planning

## Highlights

- Establishes a foundation for best-in-class performance by helping you define goals and create a clear-cut strategy for excellence

- Integrates operational and financial planning on demand for immediate visibility into resource requirements and future business performance

- Helps you build budgets and forecasts faster and more efficiently – with high participation from across the enterprise – for true predictability and accountability

- Makes it easy for Finance and business units to devise, compare and assess alternative business scenarios, conditions, cases and assumptions in minutes – without IT intervention
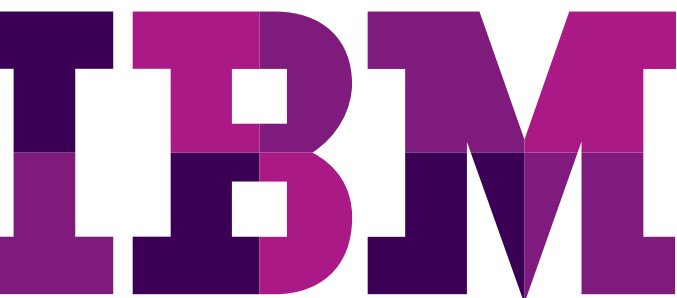
## Overview

IBM Cognos® Planning helps you build enterprise-wide budgets and forecasts faster and more efficiently – based on your specific business drivers. Owned by Finance, it offers everything you and your team need to establish a foundation for best inclass performance.

Cognos Planning is a fully integrated, state-of-the-art, highly scalable solution for planning, budgeting and forecasting. It integrates operational and financial planning on demand for immediate visibility into resource requirements and future business performance.

With Cognos Planning, you can access current actual data to assess fiscal performance, build flexible plans and models to fit your business needs, and proceed from "what is" to evaluate the what-if scenarios critical to forecasting future performance. The result: true predictability and accountability across the enterprise.

## IBM Cognos 10: Intelligence Unleashed
*Smarter Decisions. Better Results*

Cognos 10 delivers a revolutionary new user experience and expands traditional business intelligence (BI) with planning, scenario modeling, real-time monitoring and predictive analytics. With the ability to interact, search and assemble all perspectives of your business, Cognos 10 provides a limitless BI workspace to support how people think and work.

Cognos 10 enables organizations to outperform by providing:

- **Analytics** that everyone can use in a BI workspace that sharpens individual skills to answer key business questions
- **Collective intelligence** with built-in collaboration and social networking to connect people and insights to gain alignment
- **Actionable insight** everywhere in mobile, real-time and business processes to instantly respond at the point of impact

Built on a proven technology platform, Cognos 10 is designed to upgrade seamlessly and to cost-effectively scale for the broadest of deployments. Cognos 10 provides you and your organization the freedom to see more, do more—and make the smart decisions that drive better business results.

## Technical specifications
### Powerful business modeling, calculation

Rather than forcing you into a solution that may not fit your business model, Cognos Planning adapts to suit your organization and environment. Your financial analysts can easily create business rules and structures in the Cognos Planning architecture and modify the model as your organization evolves.



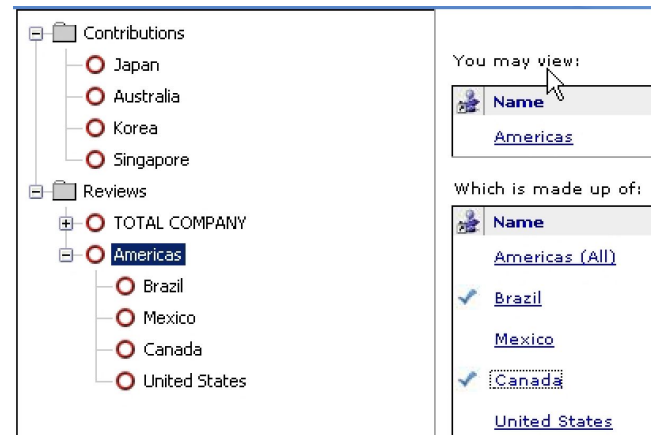*The browser-based grid interface enables easy access and use.*

Cognos Planning readily accommodates changes such as added locations, new or discontinued product lines, and restructured cost centers so you and your extended planning team can devise, compare and assess alternative business scenarios, conditions, cases, and underlying assumptions. And since Cognos Planning is designed for finance professionals, you won't need IT to manage changes to your model or assumptions.

### Features and benefits

Cognos Planning provides unprecedented power and flexibility. It enables you to build consistent, interconnected business models for organizations of any size with these capabilities and benefits:

- **Rapid development.** Cognos Planning lets you build a model in days – not months. And you can import data from sources like ERP applications to further accelerate the process.
- **Sophisticated modeling.** Cross-functional planning processes rely on complex logic and dependencies. Cognos Planning quickly delivers sophisticated linked models that accurately reflect your business.
- **Flexibility.** With flexible modeling features, you can revise underlying business logic and principles quickly and easily and then see the impact of the changes.

- **Less time on process, more time on analysis.** The proprietary high-speed, bi-directional calculation engine in Cognos Planning lets you evaluate models and test assumptions in minutes to support truly informed business decisions.
- **Eliminates unproductive spreadsheet activities.** Avoid tracking down numbers, fixing broken links, and debugging macros. Instead, Cognos Planning offers sophisticated features like break-back, multidimensional slicing-and-dicing, and drill-down to help you explore data fully and efficiently. On-demand information flow enables you to create flexible rolling forecasts and provides greater visibility into future operating performance.
- **Break-back.** This unique capability automatically spreads high-level, top-down targets over any profile – like previous period actuals or projected seasonality – and over multiple dimensions such as products, customers, territories or time periods, without anyone needing to define special business rules.
- **Multi-dimensional analysis.** Cognos Planning makes it easy to compare and manipulate data in multiple dimensions, perspectives or versions. For example, you can compare targets among teams and individuals with current and historical actuals and with external benchmarks to quickly determine the viability and consistency of your targets.
- **Unified view.** Cognos Planning provides a unified view of your plan with key metrics and essential underlying information. With a single version of corporate reality, you can spend your time making business decisions, rather than debating data definitions and accuracy.
- **Publish capabilities.** Publish features help you rapidly transfer data for reporting in downstream databases and OLAP tools.
- **Extended analytics and reporting.** Conformance with IBM Cognos Business Intelligence means that you can extend your planning with enhanced analytics and reporting:
  - Perform financial analysis and highly complex profitability and operational analysis with IBM Cognos TM1
  - Gain greater insight with enterprise reporting, scorecards, analysis, dashboards, event detection and notification.



*The Contributor workflow page in Cognos Planning offers personalization features including hierarchy support and the ability to select and personalize subsets in a multi-list view. When users can personalize views of their responsibilities, their planning is inherently easier and faster.*

## High participation planning

With Cognos Planning, organizations can easily engage thousands in the planning process, collecting data from managers and staff from different divisions and geographies. Users work simultaneously, yet retain rapid server response, because Cognos Planning is optimized for user performance. The client requests data from the server only as needed and saves only data that has changed. Complex calculations are performed at the client, giving users instantaneous response and sparing the server unnecessary traffic during periods of high use.

## Advanced personalization

Cognos Planning blends enhanced planning and analysis features to improve productivity and accuracy, and to empower users to take greater control of their part of the planning process. These personalized features include: hierarchy support, sorting and hiding, freeze panes, user tab management, calendar selector, zoom and word wrap. Such capabilities enable planners to build consistent, sophisticated views of the organization and provide broader context for forecast data entry.

## Bridge the finance-to-business language gap

Cognos Planning users enter operational data – either numerical or text values – in their own business language, rather than in unfamiliar financial terms. A user might enter the number of units sold, purchased or needed. Cognos Planning then uses predefined formulas to translate that information into financial data such as gross revenue, net income or earnings per share. The result is enhanced clarity and accuracy.

## Flexible data entry

Cognos Planning templates are both easy to deploy and easy to use. Users only enter data that is relevant to their functional areas. Enforcement of corporate policies is facilitated with validation rules that review data entry values prior to submission. Templates are easily customized by reorienting columns and rows and displaying or hiding empty or zero-filled fields.

## Choice of interface

For added flexibility, Cognos Planning offers a Microsoft® Excel® interface as an alternative to the well-known Cognos Web browser. The browser offers line managers and staff simple, controlled participation in planning, budgeting and forecasting, and immediate access to a complete, secure set of linked, role-specific planning templates.  Users can quickly tab through them, enter data where required, and evaluate calculated results and summaries prior to submission. And the Microsoft Excel interface offers finance personnel and others with more sophisticated needs the flexibility to integrate detailed personal or shadow systems with enterprise plans, budgets, and forecasts.

## Minimal training

Because Cognos Planning is intuitive and supports either a Web browser or a familiar, convenient Microsoft Excel interface, little or no training is required to take advantage of its robust functionality.
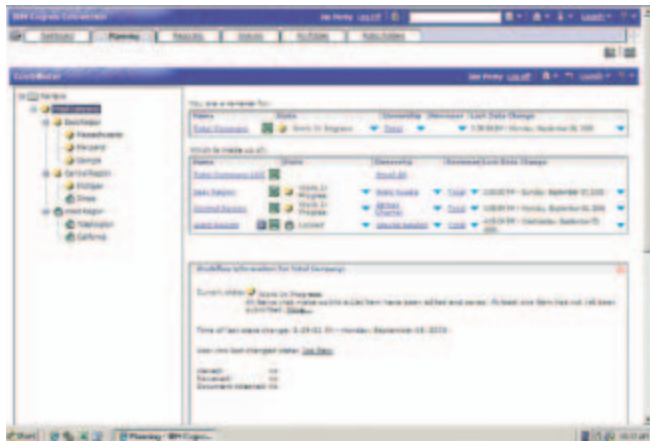


*Advanced personalization features, including the ability to collapse or expand hierarchies such as time dimensions, enable more accurate and timely planning contributions and faster cycle times.*

## Streamlined workflow management

After entering required information, Cognos Planning users can either save their work and return to it later, or submit it for review. At any point, designated reviewers can easily monitor workflow status – not started, in progress, or ready for review – with intuitive, color-coded icons. Reviewers can also send email to groups based on hierarchy or workflow status. After work is submitted, a customizable interface displays the details of individual submissions, an overview of all submissions, or a combination of both. Aggregate totals are shown to help pinpoint areas that need revision. Reviewers can request modifications and if last-minute revisions are needed, totals may be adjusted without compromising accuracy.

## Track participation—easily

Cognos Planning automatically monitors the entire planning process and gives you the status of every participant, so the planning cycle proceeds at the speed of the fastest plan contributor, not the slowest. It also promotes helpful dialogue among participants, streamlining cycles even further.

*Streamlined workflow management tracks participation quickly and easily.*

## Mobile planning

You can plan wherever and whenever you want without a network connection. Cognos Planning knows when users check out plans to work offline and automatically synchronizes plans and forecasts when they check back in.

## On-demand aggregation

Cognos Planning instantly aggregates updates to plans and results and lets you see the impact of new forecasts and plan contributions dynamically, with no overnight batch processing and no user lock-outs.

## Localized planning ownership

A key requirement of effective planning and forecasting is speed. The ability to turn around a planning cycle – from executives to the front-line planners and back – is critical to maintaining accuracy and accountability. If you operate in a global environment, why should Tokyo have to wait for New York to kick off a process? So why build a 24-hour turnaround of key activities such as adding users, moving data or creating reports, into your planning process? Cognos Planning puts capability and control in the hands of financial or operational plan administrators who support the enterprise-wide planning process. Distributed administration and localized planning process ownership eliminate material delay while the overall plan administrator retains control.
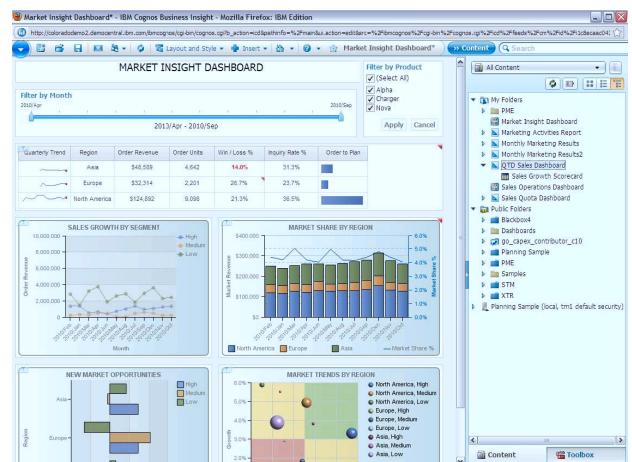
## Online administration

Cognos Planning lets you change data structures, user access rights, model parameters and much more without taking the system offline. Users have the 24x7 availability that is a must for global enterprises.

## Right-sized planning

Cognos Planning manages security with complete flexibility. Advanced pre-defined selection options ensure that users see only those templates or portions of templates that they need to see. Viewing options can be set for entire business units, workgroups – even individuals. Detailed instructions, including customized headlines and drop-down boxes with optional webpage links, can be tailored for each template, so relevant information and expectations are always communicated.

Single-sign-on user authentication allows administrators to control and share security for all IBM Cognos solutions with a single set of common users, user class definitions, and appropriate control of single-user ability to view and modify data. A single sign-on can enable user access to all applications. Access to planning information is integrated with the Cognos security model, providing optimal data access to all valid users.



*Planners can assemble and view Cognos Planning data such as regional revenues and forecast headcount with IBM Cognos Business Insight, a unified workspace for IBM Cognos Business Intelligence, where users can display multiple objects simultaneously for a full view of their business.*

# Feature overview
## Enterprise management and control

Cognos Planning brings process and data integrity to critical, but often cumbersome, business processes. It enables highly scalable and flexible planning, including managed workflow and collaboration, data management, version control and modeling flexibility to support a wide range of integrated enterprise planning applications.

## Broad planning functionality

Cognos Planning offers broad flexibility, a wide range of native features, and unique functions like annotations and break-back. Top-down planning is effortless: Users can even perform complex what-if analysis by entering commands directly into cells, rows and columns.

## Linking personal spreadsheets with enterprise plans

Cognos Planning lets spreadsheet users link personal models and desktop detail directly to the enterprise plan. The plan is synchronized as spreadsheet information changes, linking sophisticated models, reducing risk, and easing migration to an enterprise-wide planning and forecasting standard.

## Planning to support your ERP environment

Cognos Planning enhances and extends applications from Oracle and SAP® with certified integration to SAP NetWeaver®. It lets companies optimize existing strategic investments while enjoying all the benefits of a proven planning solution.  In fact, with Cognos Business Intelligence, planners can access virtually any corporate data source, regardless of platform, and provide detailed, understandable views of that data to all users, regardless of location. It also offers innovative tools that allow diverse users, from executives to managers and BI analysts, to access and analyze information from their desktops or mobile devices while on the road, sharing information and gaining new insights through collaboration, making better decisions faster.

## Extended analytics and scorecard and report integration

To help optimize financial performance management, Cognos Planning also links to other IBM Cognos solutions for advanced analysis of complex operational or profit aspects of the business, management and financial reporting, scorecards and dashboards, event detection, and notification.

Companies can also enhance their financial processes by using information from the planning process with solutions such as IBM Cognos Financial Statement Reporting (FSR). Cognos FSR automates the production of highly formatted financial tables for qualitative discussion and analysis for Board of Director and managerial reporting.  With Cognos FSR, companies benefit from controls and auditability of their financial reporting process and it enables finance professionals to focus on high-value analysis instead of manual reporting tasks. Cognos Planning data can also be used in conjunction with IBM SPSS solutions, the industry-leading statistics solution, which helps your organization uncover unexpected patterns and associations and develop models to guide front-line interactions. So you can prevent high-value customers from leaving, sell additional services to current customers, develop successful products more efficiently, or identify and minimize fraud and risk.

## About IBM Business Analytics

IBM Business Analytics software delivers complete, consistent and accurate information that decision-makers trust to improve business performance. A comprehensive portfolio of business intelligence, advanced analytics, financial performance and strategy management and analytic applications gives you clear, immediate and actionable insights into current performance and the ability to predict future outcomes.

Combined with rich industry solutions, proven practices and professional services, organizations of every size can drive the highest IT productivity and deliver better results.

## For more information

For further information or to reach a representative:
**ibm.com/cognos**

## Request a call

To request a call or to ask a question, go to **ibm.com/cognos/ contactus**. An IBM Cognos representative will respond to your enquiry within two business days.

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