

Global Banking & Finance

Feeding Excel with Secure, Live Data Enables Financial Analysts to Quickly Reconcile Dozens of Subsidiary Banking Operations

Product

MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Customer

A global bank group

Key Customer Requirements

- Excel solution for Oracle Database 11g
- Live access to Oracle OLAP data using Excel for ad hoc analysis and reporting
- Ironclad data security
- Rapid response times for data queries
- Proven connectivity from a trusted vendor

Customer Environment

Database: Oracle Database 11g OLAP Option on Oracle Linux (centrally located)

Clients: Windows PCs running Microsoft Excel 2010, 2007 and 2003 (enterprise distributed network)

About MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is an easy to install driver for your PC that utilizes the MDX query language. It directly connects familiar applications like Microsoft Excel to your Oracle OLAP database for powerful ad hoc query and analysis. Learn more or download a free evaluation at www.simba.com/oracle.

About Simba

Simba Technologies Inc. is the recognized world leader in standards-based data access products and solutions. Simba works with leading companies globally to deliver first class data connectivity solutions. Simba is an industry pioneer in relational and multi-dimensional data connectivity, as well as MDX query language technology. For more information, visit www.simba.com.

“Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP driver provides Excel's hot connection to the group's latest Oracle-stored data. Instantaneous access to live data ensures up-to-date information, drives faster and more efficient analysis, and delivers the bank group with a competitive edge.”

Simba's customer, a global bank group, operates major financial services franchises around the world.

The bank group was looking for a new Business Intelligence (BI) and analytics reporting platform to replace and improve upon an aging and unsupported system. It had been using Seagate Holos and Oracle Database 9i to enable its financial analysts to slice, dice, analyze and reconcile general ledger data within its banking operations. The system required data to be extracted, analyzed and then copied into Excel for final reporting and sharing. Holos had provided the bank group's analysts with much of the ad hoc analytical capabilities they required, but the solution was out-dated, introduced risk via extracted and shared data, and generated reports based on stale information. It needed to be replaced.

Choosing a Solution to Make Better, Faster Decisions from Real-Time Data Analysis in Excel

The bank group employs hundreds of financial analysts that use thousands of

spreadsheets for analysis and reconciliation of general ledger data. As such, it determined that its new BI strategy would heavily leverage Microsoft Excel as a front-end tool of choice.

Having chosen Oracle Database 11g with OLAP Option as its upgraded data warehouse, the bank group sought options to best leverage Excel's powerful, built-in BI capabilities on its data. It wanted a high-performance solution that would directly connect Excel to live data – eliminating data extraction, speeding analysis and ensuring a single version of the truth. Such a solution would enable its analysts to slice, dice, analyze and reconcile financial data using Excel's native user interface and built-in BI capabilities.

The bank group evaluated its options. Oracle's BI Spreadsheet Add-in was built for Oracle Database 10g, not 11g, and provided an “Excel-like” user experience; however, it was not Excel, nor did it offer Excel's familiar user interface. Likewise,

MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP Benefits:

- ✓ Enables direct, live connectivity from Microsoft Excel to Oracle Database OLAP Option
- ✓ No mid-tier server needed
- ✓ Fully integrated with Microsoft Excel
- ✓ Entire solution consists of an easy-to-install, client-side driver
- ✓ Easy to deploy and maintain
- ✓ Fully secure, using Oracle-level security
- ✓ Low Total Cost of Ownership
- ✓ Requires no training
- ✓ Eliminates spreadmarts
- ✓ Enables easy, integrated reporting with entire Microsoft Office Suite
- ✓ Added support for other standards-based multi-dimensional BI tools in addition to Excel
- ✓ Leverages the tools you have without the need to purchase, learn and support new products

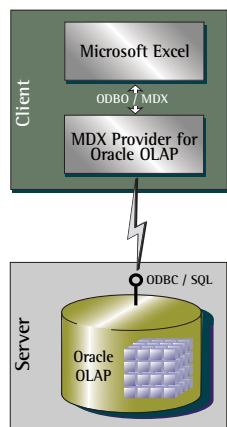


Figure 1: MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP Architecture

extracting data into a mid-tier server capable of Excel connectivity simply was not desirable. Data extraction would slow analysis, result in stale information and add unnecessary and troublesome complexity to securing data. Concluding its search, the bank group found Simba's solution as the most viable option for using Excel against its Oracle OLAP data.

The Familiar and Powerful Capabilities of Excel – Powered by Real-Time Enterprise Data

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP product is the most talked about and highly recommended Excel solution for Oracle 11g. Pervasive in forums and reviews, it's recognized as the de facto solution for directly connecting Excel to Oracle OLAP data. Simba's status as an Oracle Partner further assured the bank group of the solution's quality.

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is an easy to install, client-side driver that directly connects familiar OLAP applications like Microsoft Excel, SAP BusinessObjects BI Suite, or arcplan Enterprise to an Oracle OLAP database for powerful ad hoc query, analysis, dashboarding and reporting. It supports connectivity to Oracle Database 11g OLAP Option.

The bank group evaluated Simba's product in a proof-of-concept pilot program and indeed found that it was the exact solution that it was looking for to feed Excel with secure, live data. The pilot program proved the capabilities of the solution: it was secure, provided direct data connectivity from Excel to the Oracle database, and leveraged Excel's familiar interface and native analytic functionality for powerful BI. Subsequently, the bank group rolled out the new platform immediately to its UK banking operations with plans to extend the

solution to additional banking subsidiaries in other operational regions.

Using the solution, the bank group's financial analysts can quickly reconcile dozens of subsidiary banking operations directly from within their familiar Excel spreadsheets. Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP driver provides Excel's hot connection to the group's latest Oracle-stored data. Instantaneous access to live data ensures up-to-date information, drives faster and more efficient analysis, and delivers the bank group with a competitive edge.

No data extraction takes place. Data remains securely in the Oracle database, and Oracle-level security permissions govern access and control. No extraneous security layers or mid-tiers are used. Users gain instant and secure access to data using Excel as their preferred tool, while IT benefits from simplified platform architecture and easy maintenance.

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP provides greater ease-of-use and power to the bank group's analysts by combining all of Excel's analysis and reporting capabilities with the scalability and power of Oracle for in-database analytics. No user training is needed beyond Excel. Users are able to make use of the latest Excel functionality, such as drill-through, to quickly audit underlying data to make informed decisions. For the bank group, the result is fewer reconciliation headaches, deeper analysis, faster results and a single version of the truth.