

SAP HR Reporting

How to get the most out of it?

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INTRODUCTION

“I need the new HR system to produce on time, accurate and user friendly reports which can be converted into statistics, modified as needed and saved for future reference.” ... this or similar types of wishes are always expressed by HR Managers when they first talk about installation of their new SAP HR system. As a human resource executive, you want all the advantages of a human resources information system (HRIS). You want employee information, all kinds of reports and a user-friendly system. HR and Payroll Managers have the duty of producing a wide range of reports on a weekly, monthly or ad-hoc basis, and often their out-of-date system has either a poor or limited reporting functionality. Who does not remember having to run several reports at the same time and then manually converting the data to achieve the required result? Another common problem often heard is HR Managers having to wait up to four weeks until the IT department has a resource available to program a new report into their HR system. The reporting functions with SAP are one of the main reasons why clients have chosen it rather than another software package, especially because it allows the analysis of multidimensional data. The HR component provides a comprehensive selection of predefined reports for evaluating and analyzing human resources data. Accessed in a special menu, the reports are intuitive and easy to use. There are multiple selection options available allowing to modify the reports to suit specific requirements, for example, to restrict the data displayed. There is the option of saving defined reports for re-use and report results can be converted into HTML format to make them accessible via Internet, company intranet, or e-mail.

SAP HR Reporting

Standard Reports

Each component within Human Resources Management includes standard reports that can be accessed using the SAP EASY ACCESS menu. These reports are listed in a report tree and comprise all major reports a HR Manager would want to execute within a certain area, e.g. Headcount divided into sex, position held per department, and cost center in Personnel Management, Wage types listings in Payroll, Absence Reports in Time Management etc. All these standard reports can be displayed, filtered and sorted according to your needs.

Ad Hoc Query

If, in addition to the wide range of standard reports provided, company-specific reports are required, reporting tools such as ABAP Query and AdHoc Query can be used. The handling of these reporting tools is a simple procedure which requires no special programming knowledge to create complex, menu-guided

reports.

Human Resources Information System (HRIS)

The Human Resources Information System is a reporting tool integrated with SAP HR that lets you request reports from inside Structural Graphics (which is a graphic representation of your organization with all departments, positions and employees). From here, reports from different components, such as Payroll, Benefits, Time Management etc. can be run from one screen without having to switch to a number of different applications for the data needed.

SAP Business Warehouse

SAP BW supports strategic human resources reporting through the integration of SAP HR, SAP R/3 Financials, and Logistics data. This integration facilitates reporting on metrics which measure the overall performance of the organization, not only the human resources issues.

For example BW provides information about the level of workforce availability to support strategic staffing, absences and leave accrual, data on wage and salary costs, (with detailed breakdowns), reporting on vacancies and the effectiveness in which they are filled, cost per applicant, and average length of time in a position.

Other ETL Tools

There are other ETL (Extraction, Transformation and Loading) tools available in the market for reporting outside of SAP. Some of these tools are bundled with pre configured SAP HR data marts. These data marts can be modified or extended very easily. SAP Business Warehouse can be extended easily with the help of these tools also.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Until recently, despite the extensive variety of reports to choose from, unless users had some experience it was often difficult for occasional users such as HR co-coordinators to use the tools efficiently. However, via its ENJOYSAP initiative, SAP has provided a much simpler, intuitive and flexible user interface for reporting. These developments were prompted by many suggestions SAP received from customers about how report definition might be simplified. New graphical controls in screens provide many options for organizing reports more flexibly and attractively. Data can be displayed in lists or graphs, the tree control makes it easier for the employee to see the levels analyzed in a hierarchy and HR users can even design and create their own graphs to show table data from a report. The settings used to define reports are grouped together on tabs in R/3

Rel4.6.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OF YOUR SAP HR REPORTING FUNCTIONALITY

Does this mean that a new system, such as SAP, with a broad HRIS will facilitate the struggle HR Managers have to go through at the end of each month? You probably guessed the answer – it does not. There are several reasons:

- All too often the reporting module is left out until the end of the project and by then, time and resources may run out to devote much attention to the urgently needed reporting functionality and
- Even though easy to use, HR users within the department still need adequate and sufficient training to be able to run, manipulate and create new reports.
- Reporting on the actual payroll results is a very complex procedure that SAP is still refining. The payroll reports are becoming more and more accurate, but they are still 'stabilizing' (we will soon have a separate Research Note on payroll reporting).

What happens when you are the person responsible for the new SAP HR Information system and after your consultants are gone, you realize that not only you can't obtain the data you hoped the new system would provide in an easy fashion but also you are unable to run very simple reports the older system was handling?

The key is to follow some very simple steps which are applicable to the reporting functionality in particular in order to maximize the use and functionality of your system and last but not least your investment into SAP HR.

❖ State your reporting goals and objectives

Identify the areas, which need improving and prioritize. Describe what you would like to improve and what you expect the new system to do. Identify goals and objectives – what do you need and why and what results do you expect? E.g., SAP needs to give us a full analysis of labor costs per work order. Once you have defined your goals, ensure that these are understood as being as important as the rest of the HR implementation – make your expectations clear from the start

❖ Define difficult areas

Describe to consultants what you perceive as being a more complicated area. The earlier such issues are addressed, the more time there is to deal with them!

❖ **Think Broadly**

Envisage the future requirements, if you can. Explain these to the consultants and ask for a broader solution to avoid duplicate or rework later. It will save you time and money. Ask what your information system needs will be in the next few years. What other applications will be needed? When will you need them? Will they share the same information needs as this application? Discuss these areas with your consultant so that future developments are taken into consideration.

❖ **Test, test and test**

Throughout the implementation, test the system to verify whether it does what you expect it to do as far as reporting is concerned and log all problem areas. Discuss problems with your consultant and ensure action is taken to solve these.

❖ **Documentation**

Insist on consistent and precise documentation standards. There will be situations when you will have to refer to it and that moment will come sooner than you expect! In general, configuration, specifications and end-user procedures and system navigation paths should be documented in detail. Lack of or poor documentation, can not only set the project back by weeks causing unnecessary delays but also cause unnecessary frustration after go-live.

❖ **Knowledge Transfer and Training**

It is absolutely vital that the whole HR team receives adequate end-user training before the end of the project. This training should start before users start to test the new system and finish before the end of the project so that users are comfortable with the new reporting functionality, able to identify major problem areas and ask for help before the project team leaves. Ideal case is that if some of HR Team members get involved in the implementation from the beginning.

LOOK AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

Once the new HR system is live, it is necessary for you to leverage your investment. Managers should check whether the reporting functionality is used correctly by expanding the knowledge of their key users, by providing continuous training and by developing and sharing a “Best Practices” strategy on how to use the system. With time, as everybody gains more experience with the new system and a better understanding of it’s full reporting potential; all users will be

more comfortable and can increase their contribution to all areas of the organization.