Planning for High Performance OBI

September 19, 2010

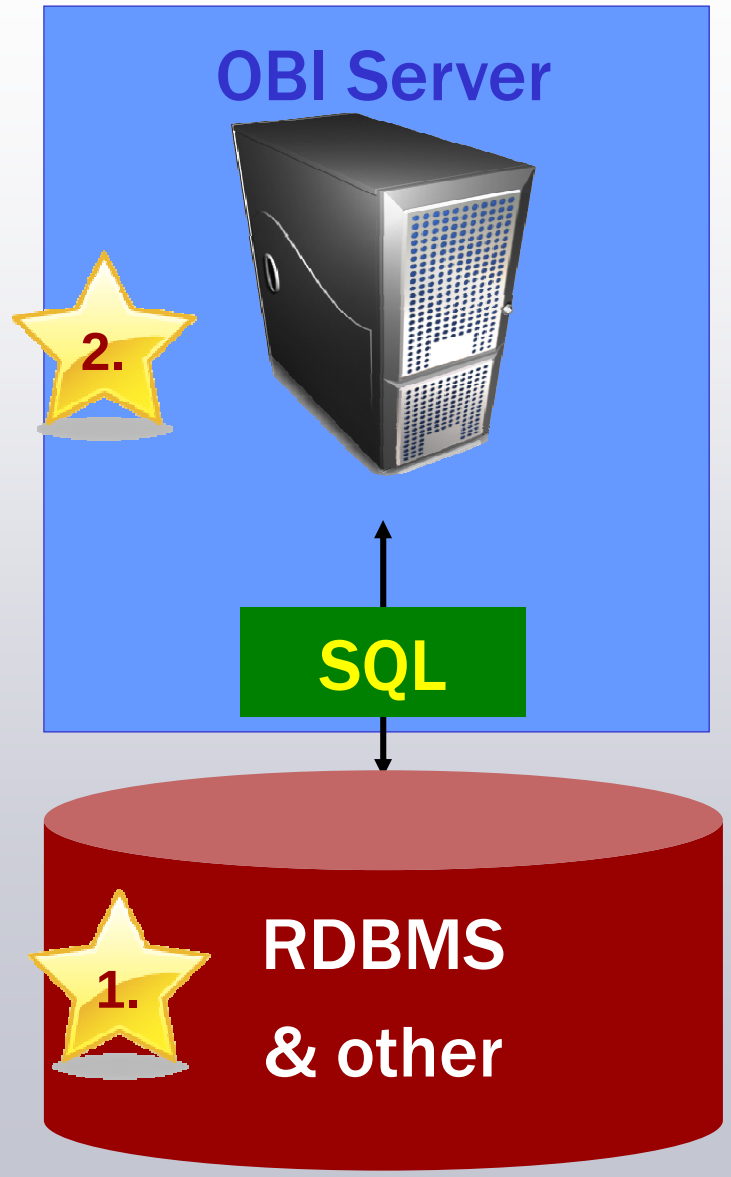
Jeff McQuigg
Sr. Architect, KPI Partners
www.kpipartners.com

Agenda

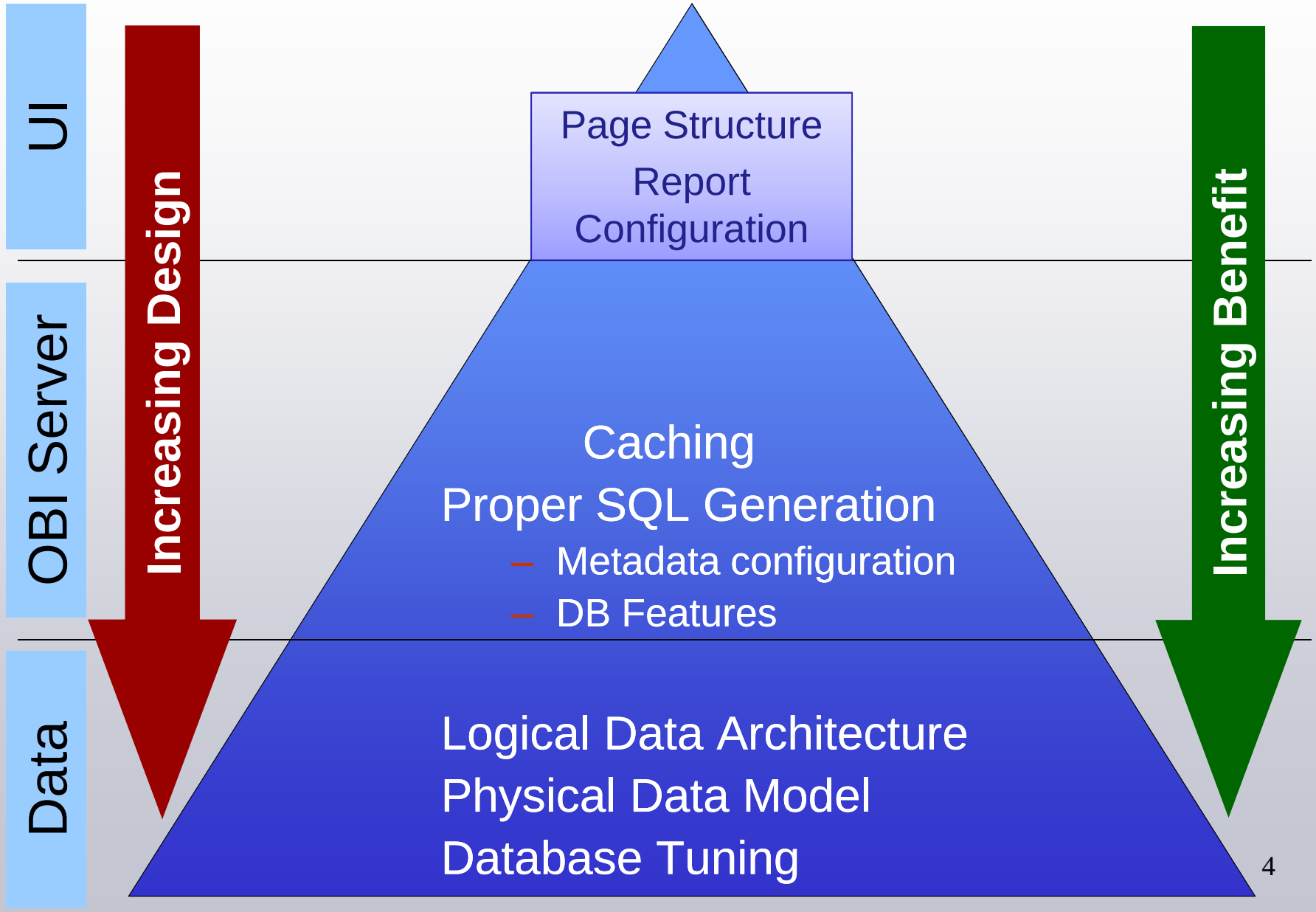
- Introduction
- Logical Data Architecture
- Physical Data Model
- Physical Database – Oracle Focused
- OBI Server
- User Interface
- Q&A

The Big Picture

- OBI/OBIEE is a ROLAP engine
  - Relational OLAP
- ROLAP BI Tools = SQL Generation engines
- Great Performance in a nutshell:
  1. Proper Data Design
  2. Proper SQL

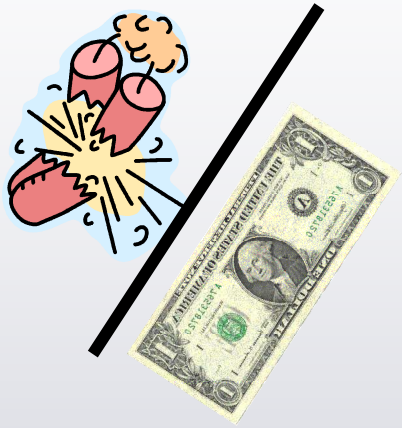


Tuning Focus



Great Performance Preview

- Most of Great Performance is achieved before the 1st report is ever run
- 95% of great performance comes down to
  - Data Design
  - Database Tuning
  - Generating the corresponding *Perfect SQL*
- This will be the focus for today's seminar



- Dashboards and Answers impact performance to a lesser degree
  - Highlight a few basic UI design issues
- Caching will be briefly discussed
- Not discussed today:
  - OBI Server settings
  - Clustering

KPI Partners - Leaders in Oracle BI and EPM

Largest and Most Experienced ORACLE BI Services Company

- Over 80 consultants with 55+ in USA and 30+ in India
- Strong presence in San Francisco, Southern California, Atlanta, Boston, New York City, Washington DC, Chicago and Toronto

PNC Bank wins 2008 Oracle Customer Excellence Award

Extensive customer references and accolades

- Pillar Partner for Oracle Business Intelligence in Southern California, Northern California, North East and South East Regions
- PNC bank won Oracle's 2008 customer excellence award
- Netshops and PNC Bank presented at Oracle open world 2008
- Novartis Pharmaceuticals awarded "Above and Beyond" award to KPI Partners
- 5 customers presented at Oracle Open World 2009

Proven Implementation Methodology

- Templates of Process Maps that ensures a successful deployment

Leader in innovation

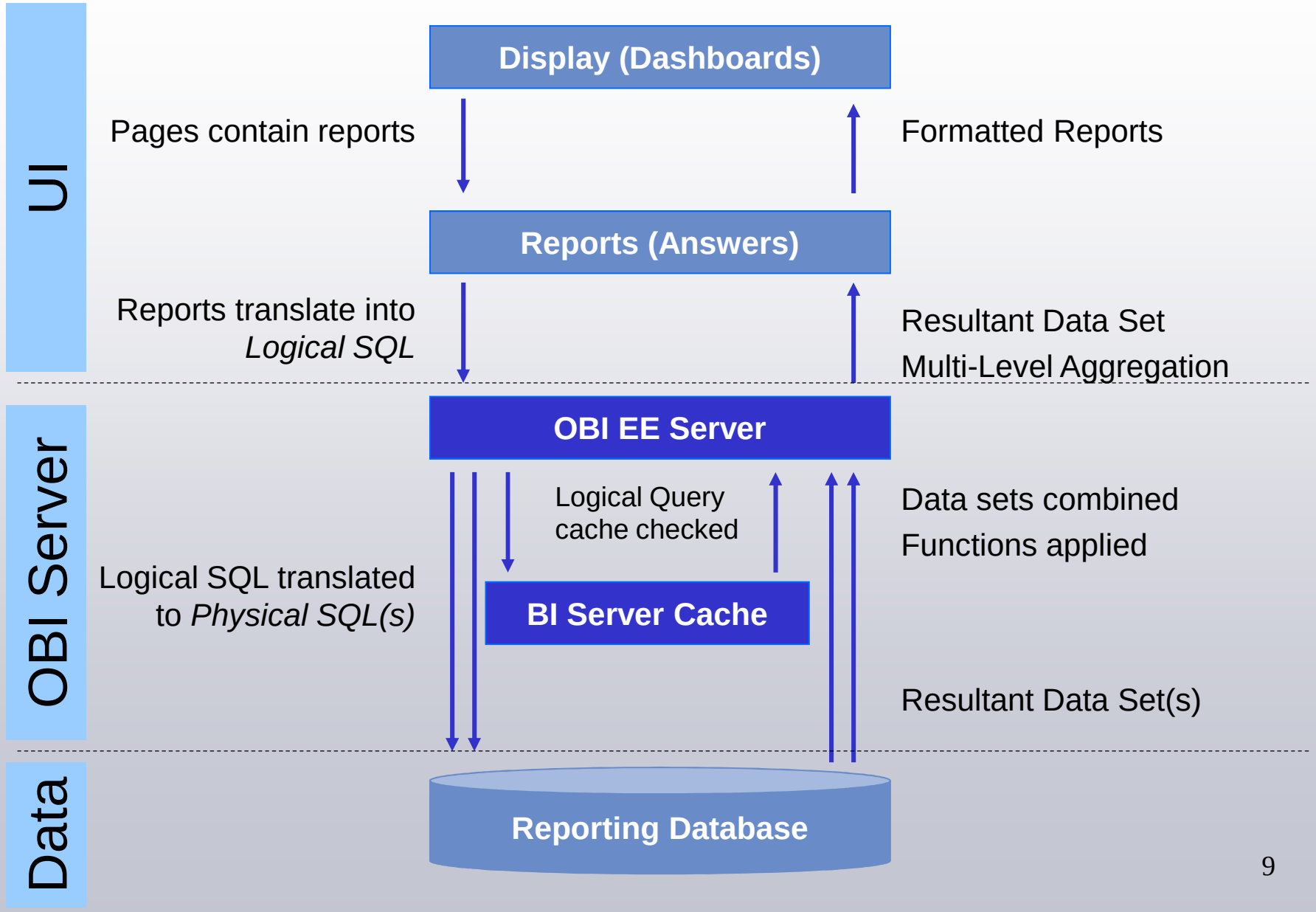
- First partner to integrate EBS, BI applications, OBIEE and Hyperion

About Jeff McQuigg

- Senior Architect at KPI Partners
- 9 years Siebel Analytics & OBI consulting experience, 18 years overall
- Developed many of Siebel's early Analytics v7.0 best practices & wrote part of the certification exam
- Personally been involved with over 30+ OBI projects in every capacity (BI Architect, Data Modeling, RPD Metadata, Business Analyst, Report Developer, ETL Architect/Developer, Project Manager)
- BI & OBI Thought Leader:
  - Longtime IT Toolbox Blog & now greatobi.wordpress.com
  - Co-Moderator of new architect-level OBIEE Enterprise Methodology discussion board
  - Frequent Oracle Open World Speaker
  - Developed OBI Deployment Methodology, deliverable templates and all Training programs with Metricsphere
- Currently day-to-day managing & architecting a $2.1 million custom DW & OBI project

Logical Data Architecture

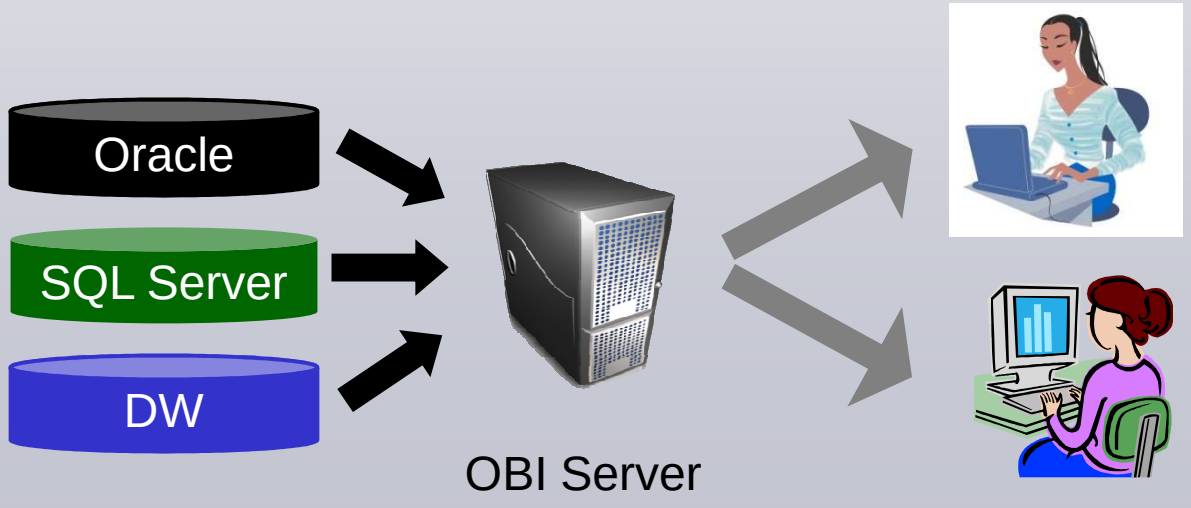
Anatomy of an OBI Query



Logical Data Architecture - Centralize

Step #1: Consolidate

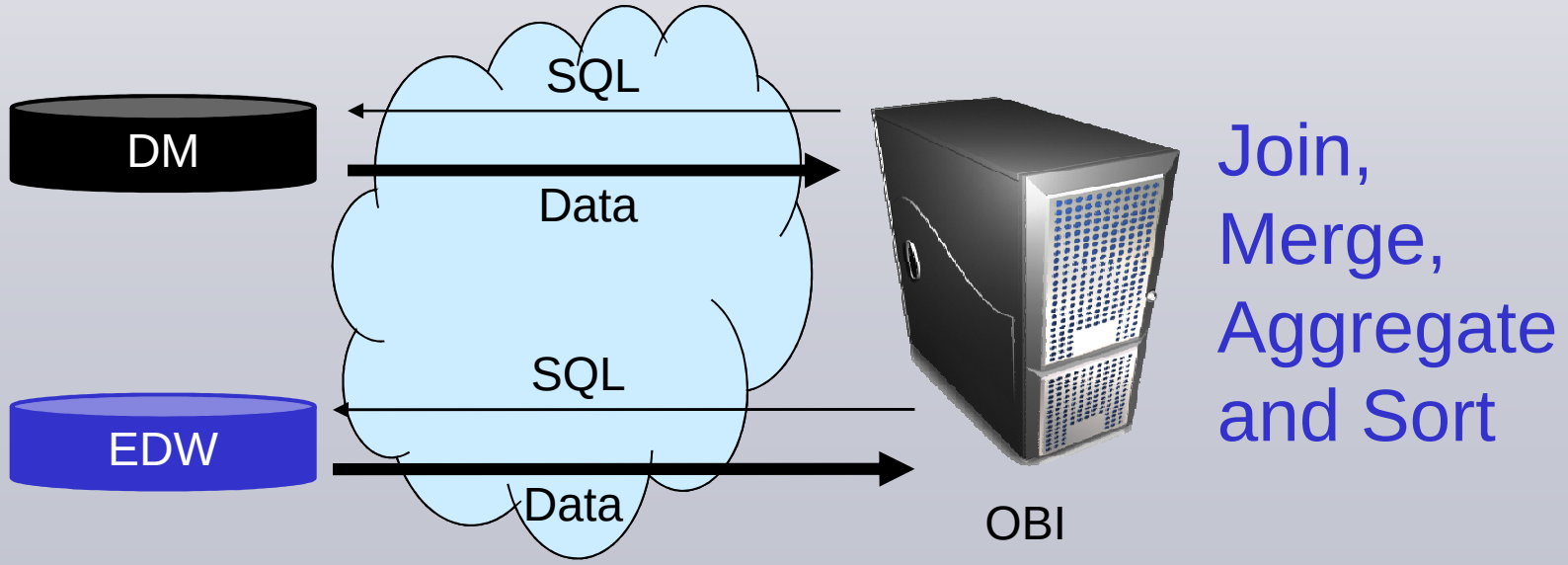
- Data can reside in multiple physical places
  - OBI can map to each database
- Federation – “Play the data where it lies”
  - nQuire/Siebel Analytics/OBI strength from Day 1
  - Enterprise Information Integration (EII)
- Virtual Database with distributed tables



Logical Data Architecture - Centralize

Federated Model – Good for the Oracle Sales Pitch

- OBI generates queries for each data source
- Data returns from each data source
  - Sometimes at a low level grain (detail records!)
- Data must then be integrated on the OBI Server
  - Essentially 'Network Joins'
- Large data over the wire = poor performance
  - Good for prototypes and small sources, such as forecast XLSs



Logical Data Architecture - Centralize

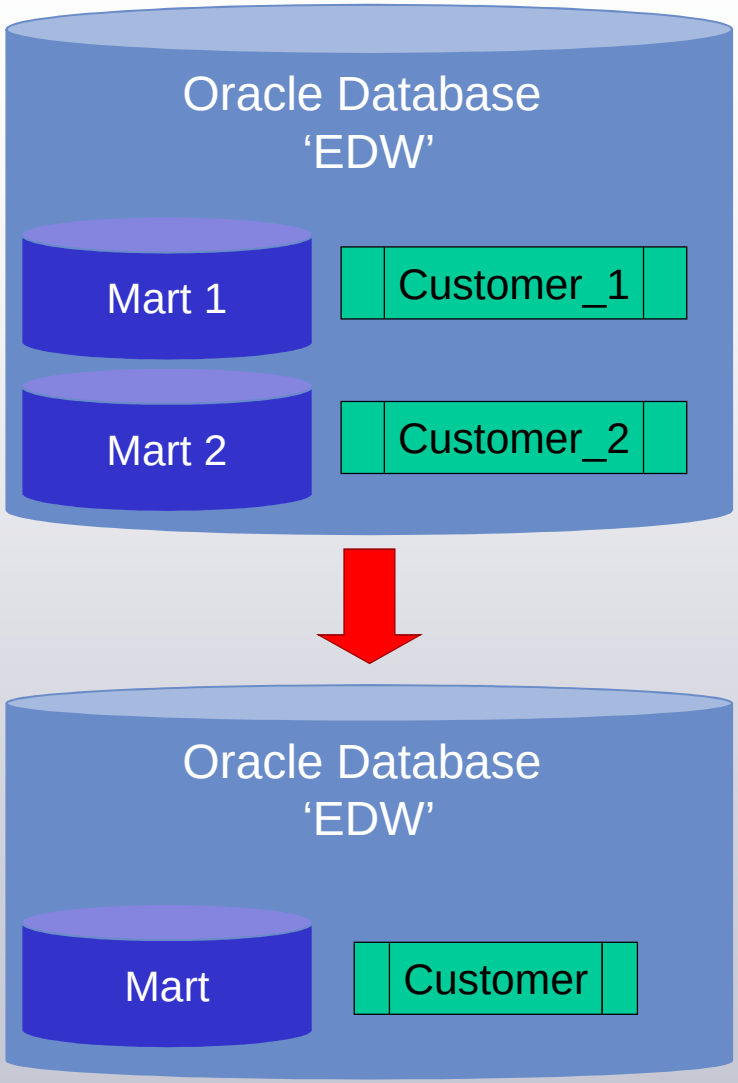
- Centralize data sources into a single database schema
- Let the ETL do the hard work of data movement
  - Do it ***once*** at night vs. do it ***every time*** for a query
- When data resides in one place:
  - A single query can be generated
  - Small result sets returned
  - Network joins eliminated
- This goes double when using transactional sources
  - Data Warehouses were invented to help large queries

Logical Data Architecture - Integrate

Step #2: Integrate

- Data may be physically in one schema but still in separate tables
  - Multiple OBI mappings ➔ multiple queries
  - More tables to link ➔ slower performance
- Integration merges and links data together
  - Complex integration rules are done by ETL not user queries
- Fewer database objects ➔ better object reuse

- Data Integration is the hard part of any DW or BI System
  - Complex rules are needed
  - Poor data quality
  - Differing definitions



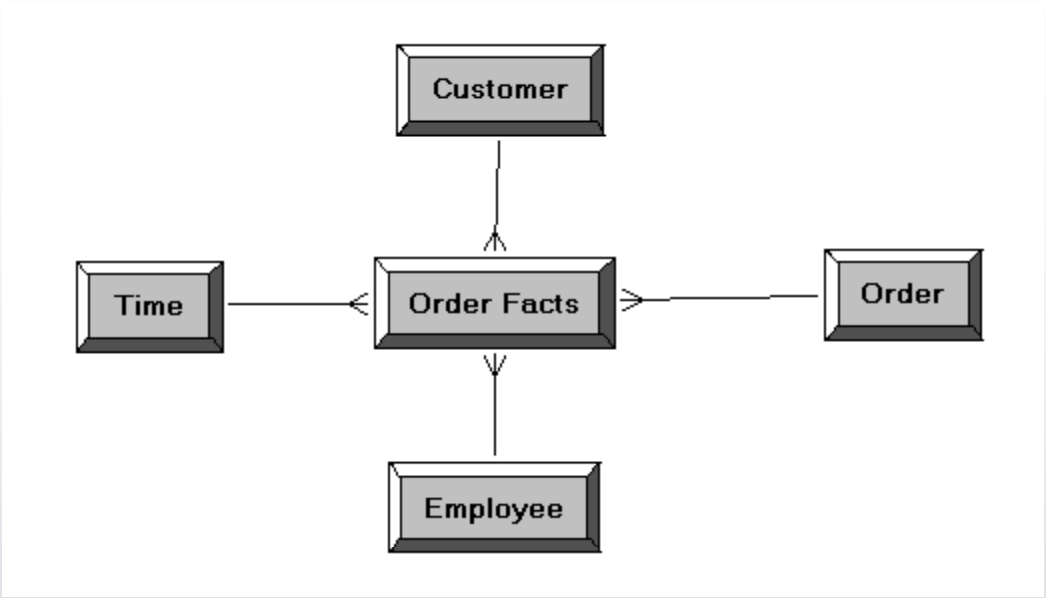
Physical Data Model

Physical Data Model Overview

- Your main performance weapon is a good Dimensional Model
  - Like a computing Algorithm – not all models are created equal
- Dimensional Modeling is:
  - A data modeling approach
  - Conceptually different to relational
  - Designed for large query performance
  - A skill set unto its own

- A proper ‘Star Schema’ Dimensional Model:
  - Makes mapping OBI Metadata very easy
  - Optimal database query performance
  - Uses database optimizations
- Poorly designed models are common
- Think Top-Down design

Dimensional Modeling Overview



- "Fact tables" hold measurements/metrics/facts
  - Counts, Cycle Times, $ Amts, Qtys, Prices, Estimates, Forecasts
- Link to several "Dimension tables", which contain descriptions
  - Geography, Customers, Products, Time, Employees, etc
- *The* Book on Dimensional Modeling
  - *The Data Warehouse Toolkit* by Ralph Kimball

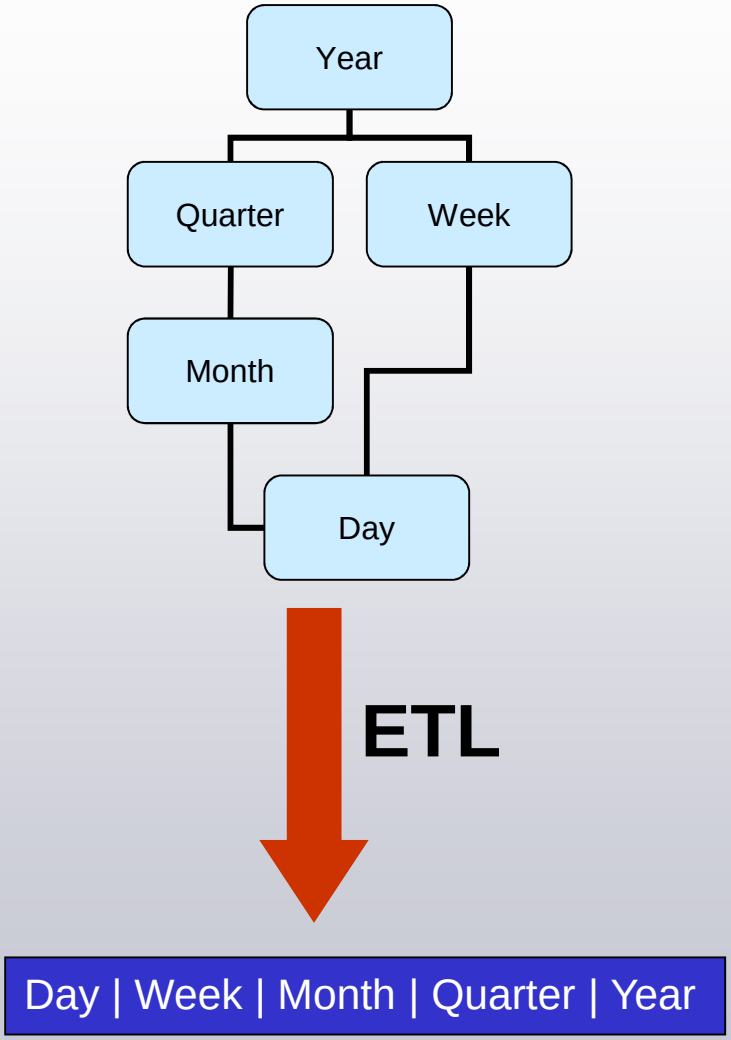
Dimensional Modeling Overview

- Dimensional Modeling is a topic beyond the scope of this session
  - Discuss 5 general purpose techniques/tips
- Tips will work great for mainstream databases
  - Oracle
  - DB2
  - Sybase/SQL Server
- Different recommendations for MPP databases
  - Teradata
  - DW Appliances (e.g., Netezza)

Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

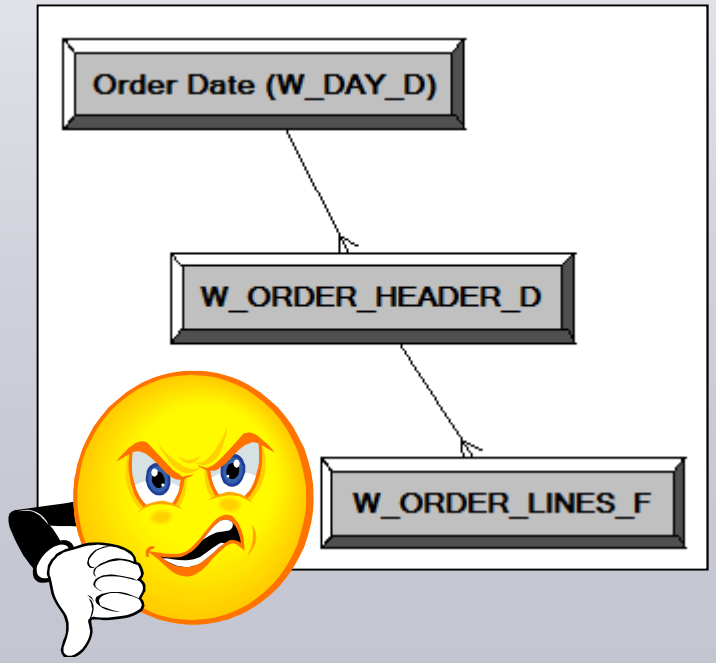
Technique #1: De-normalize

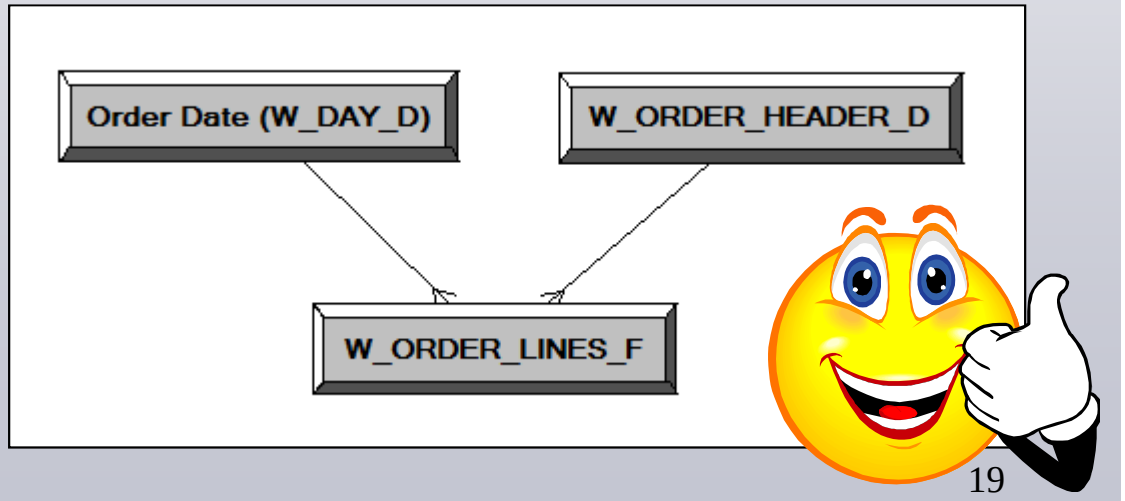
- Refers to dimensional objects, not facts
- Merge several tables into one flat table
  - Opposite of relational modeling
  - Do in an OBI Logical table anyway
- Nightly ETL does the de-normalization
- **Goal: Reduce Joins for a query**
  - Joins slow execution
- Additional Benefit: Simple Model
  - ➔ Less OBI Mapping effort
- Caution: Facts must remain normalized
  - Inaccuracies will arise



Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

- De-normalize dimensions to link to a fact
- A fact table links ***directly*** to its dimension tables
  - There are no intermediate tables (there are exceptions)
- Use the ETL to directly link each load



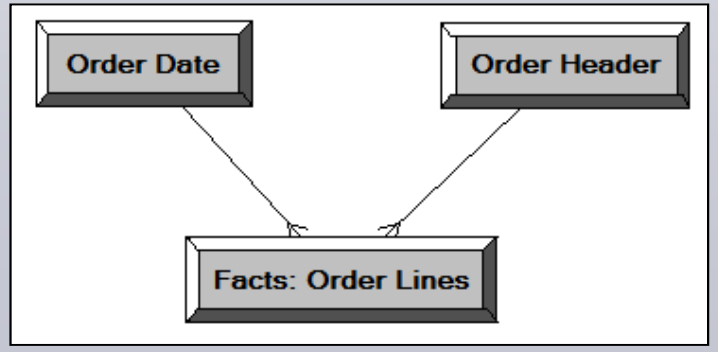


Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

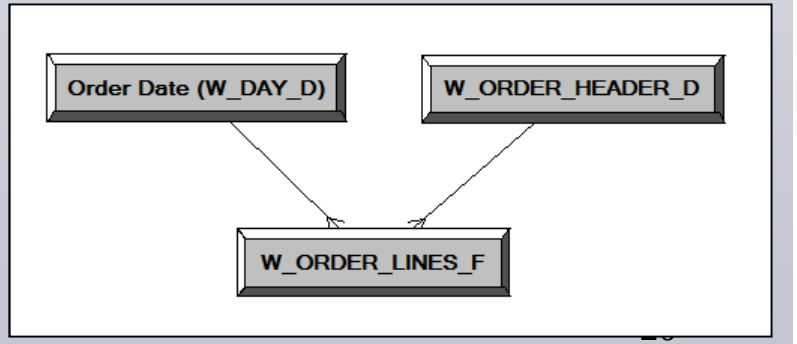
- The OBI Business Model (BM) defines your business view of your information
  - Defines ‘what you want’ out of your system

- Design rule of thumb: Make the Physical Data Model resemble the Business Model
  - The BM can map to a variety of physical models
  - Clean & simple mapping is best

Business Model



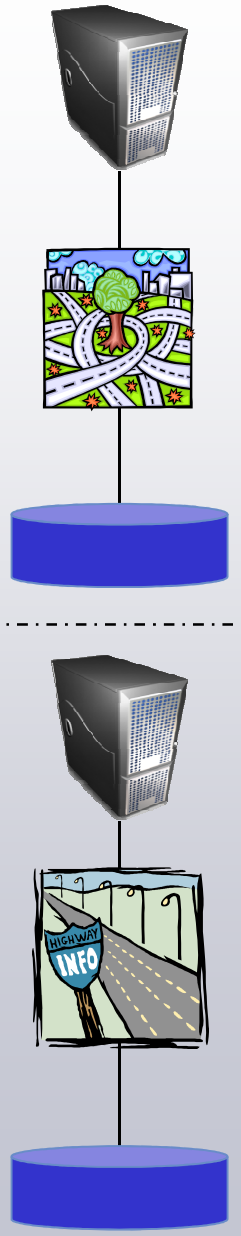
Physical Model



Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

Technique #2: Put Logic in Data Model

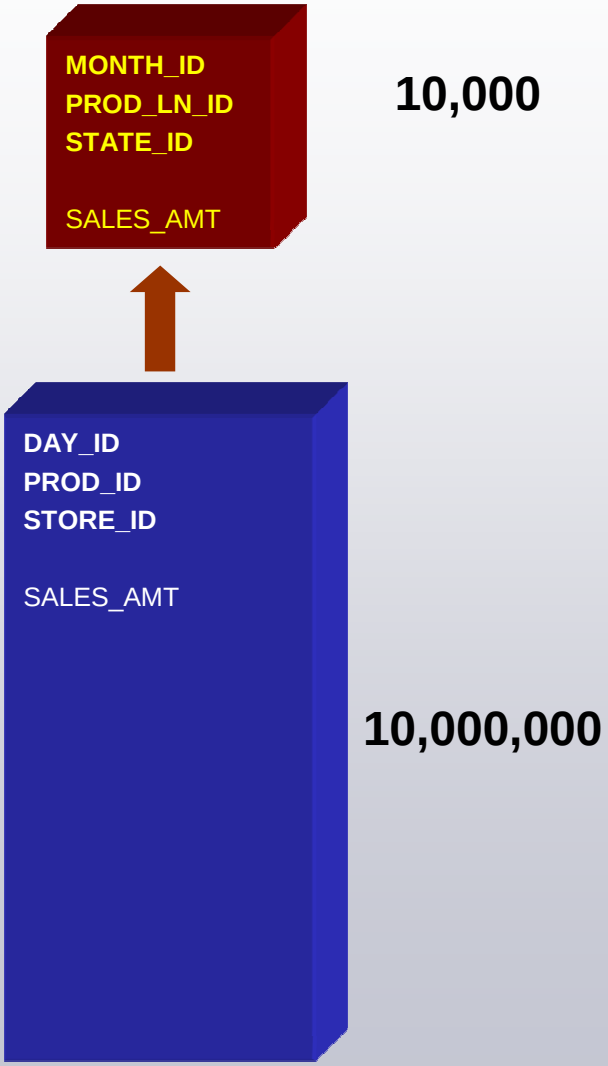
- Move complex calculations to the ETL and store the results as a new field/table
  - Some calculations may require many steps and differing input data sets
- *Do once* & use often vs. *do often*
- **Goal: Simple Query SQL**
- One of main differences between DW & DM
  - DM tailors to a specific use (Top-Down)
  - DW is generic in nature (Bottom-Up)
- Benefits:
  - Can use other database performance tricks
    - Can index the column
  - Simple SQL performs better



Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

Technique #3: Aggregate Tables

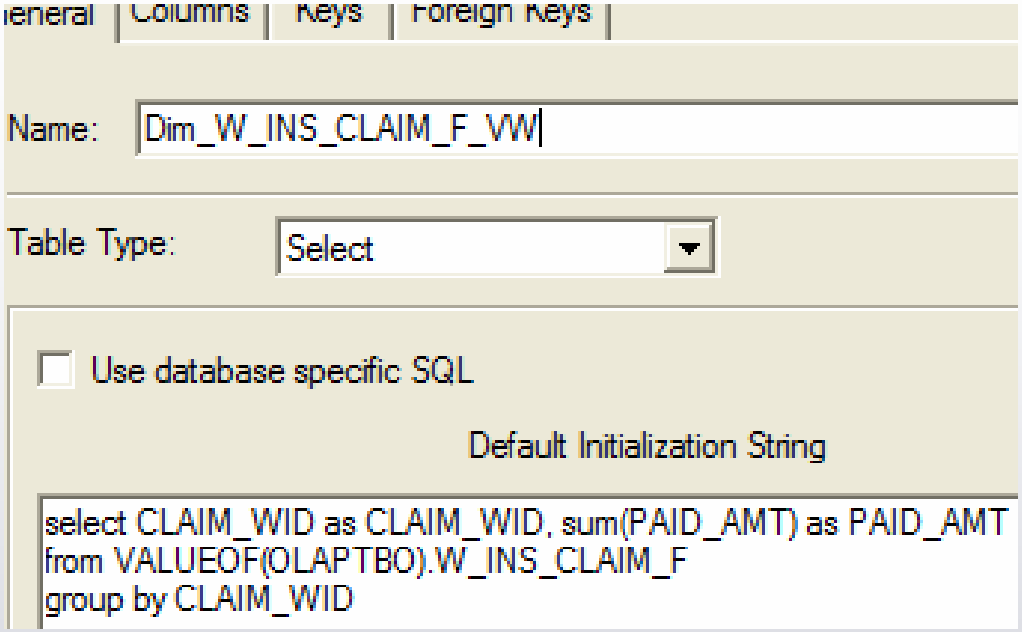
- Summarize detail records to useful levels
- Use ETL or Materialized Views to create 'higher' tables
  - Higher grain tables have fewer combinations & are smaller
- Consider when at least 10:1 compression
  - Be careful with Day → Week aggregates
- Map into OBI to have it pick the right table
  - Remember to set the Content Tab
- **Goal: Database processes fewer rows per query**
- Caution: Consider the costs of each new aggregate table:
  - ETL Batch window, storage, complex mapping, more code, more QA
  - Will other, easier techniques suffice?



Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

Technique #4: Views

- Views ***do not help or hurt*** performance
- *Opaque Views* and Database Views are ***identical*** to the database
  - A view is a logic encapsulation device
- Exception: Materialized views
  - Physical tables computed in the ETL process
- Try to eliminate views in your system



Identical to the database

```
CREATE VIEW Dim_W_INS_CLAIM_F_VW AS
select CLAIM_WID as CLAIM_WID,
sum(PAID_AMT) as PAID_AMT
from VALUEOF(OLAPTBO).W_INS_CLAIM_F
group by CLAIM_WID;
```

Dimensional Modeling Toolkit

Technique #5: Creativity

- Dimensional Modeling is 25% Science, 75% Art
- Create solutions to problems as needed, keeping in mind the basic rules of Dimensional Modeling
  - Example: Mini Dimensions & Junk Dimensions
- Keep in mind the following goals:
  - Want to use simple SQL queries
  - Reduce the amount of data the database has to read
  - Use the ETL engine to offload logic from user queries
- Be sure to weigh costs  of every design decision

Physical Database (for Oracle)

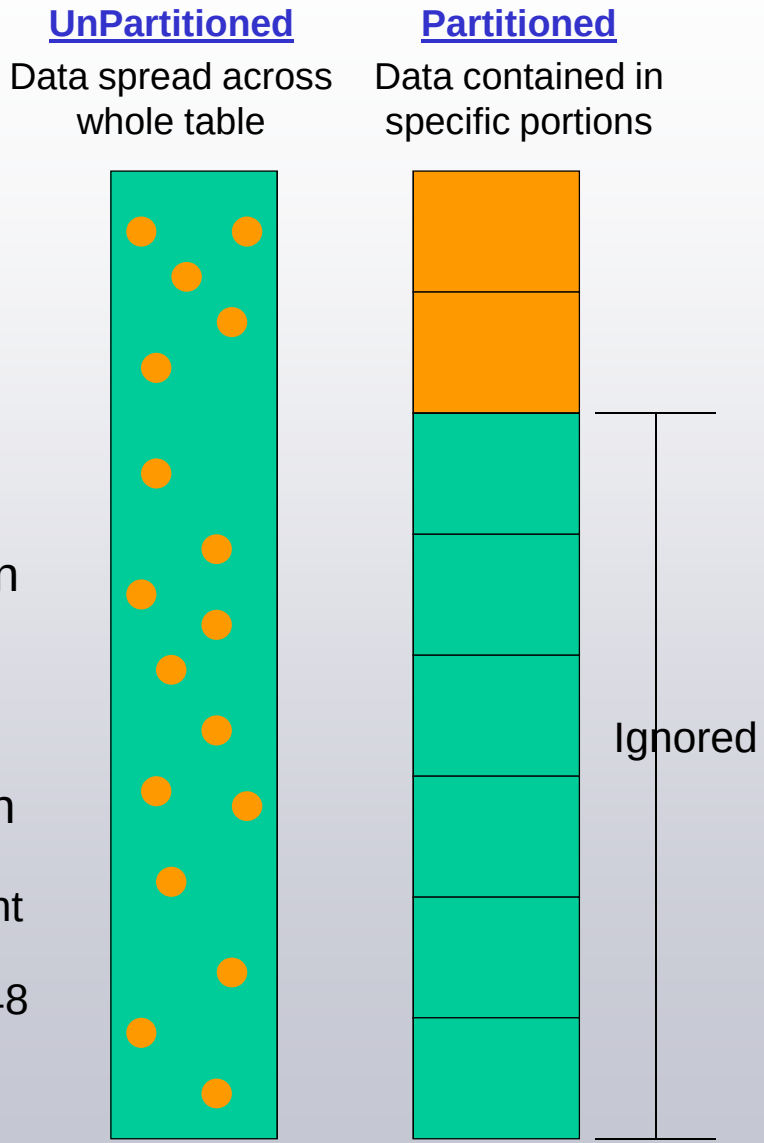
Physical Database Features

- Sometimes there is simply a lot of data
- Highlight 2 key Oracle database features
  - Partitioning
  - Star Transformations
- Can be designed into the physical data model by the application team
- Commonly used features for data warehousing
  - Have been in Oracle database for years
- Are very efficient tools to improve many queries

Physical Database Features

Partitioning

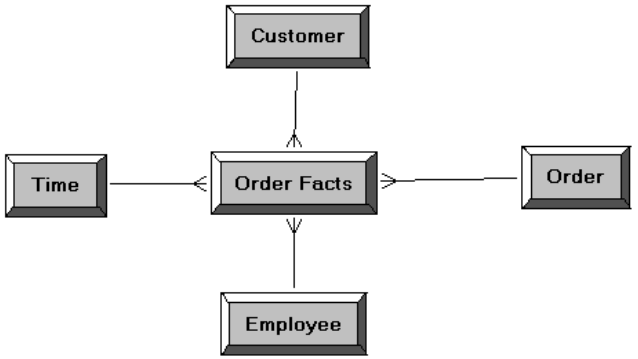
- Breaks up large tables into several smaller pieces (partitions)
- Database reads only a subset of the whole table
- The database has metadata about each piece
  - Defines what range of data each partition contains
- **Goal**: eliminate non-needed data reads
  - Ex: Monthly partitions on a fact table with 4 years of daily data
    - Many queries are interested only in recent data
    - Ex: 2 months of data read instead of all 48 months
- Dramatic performance benefits are possible



Physical Database Features

Star Transformations

- Alternative execution plan for a Star Schema
- Uses additional information to recognize the Star pattern
- Requires bitmap indexes and FK constraints
- Optimizer rewrites the query
- **Goal:** Use *all* of the dimensions to go after a smaller set of fact rows
- Useful for highly selective queries



Normal:

Use ***only 1*** dimension to filter the Fact table

e.g., Filter on Customer only

Star Transformation:

Use ***all*** dimensions to filter the Fact table

e.g., Filter on Customer & Date & Employee

Other Tuning Items

- Ensure Indexes are heavily used
  - Review the Explain Plan and eliminate Full table scans
- Oracle Parallel Query may help
  - Best for large table or index scans
  - Consider other techniques first
- Star Transformations don't always help
- Narrow down large tables to reduce bytes
  - Remove unused fields & metadata columns

OBI Server

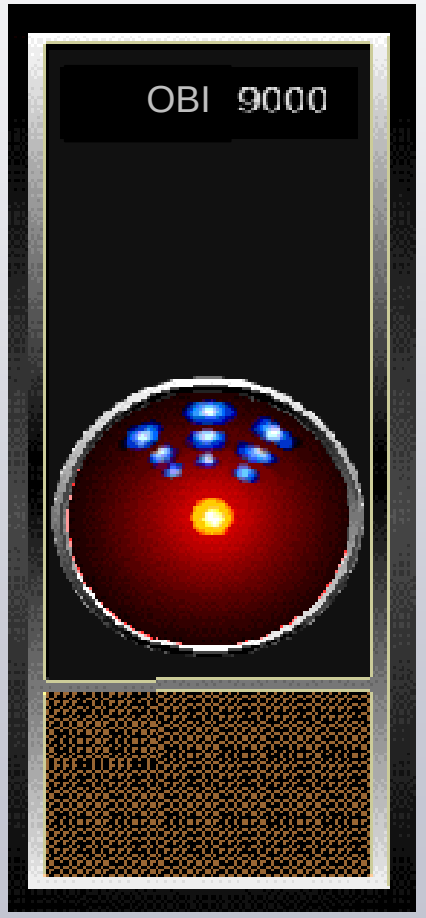
OBI Server Tuning

- A good dimensional model is worthless if questions to it are poorly constructed
- **OBI Repository Goal**: Configure it to generate ***good SQL***

If it's not perfect, it's wrong

- Get to know the NQQuery.log file!
- ***Design Key***: Know what the proper SQL should be beforehand
  - correct # of queries being generated?
  - correct tables being used?
  - correct joins being used?
  - How does the design of a report change the SQL?

OBI 9000 says: "It can only be attributable to human error."



Know Your SQL

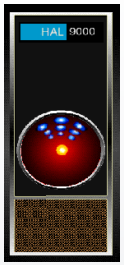
- It all starts by knowing the correct SQL for each query & report

- Brush up on your SQL!
  - Become knowledgeable of:
    - The WITH clause
    - What the ROW_NUMBER() does to SQL
    - How Time Series SQL works
    - Aggregate window functions (e.g., MAVG())
    - Subtotals (PARTITION BY)
    - Set Math (Union)
  - Newer OBI versions generate more complex SQL

- When tuning:
  - Start simple (not totals/subtotals & single fact tables)
  - Then add report logic to see when a problem arises
  - Always start with the Table view
    - Confirm your base record set and underlying query

Common Tuning: Wrong # of Queries

- Know the # of queries expected
  - Some requests should generate 2 queries
  - If 3 are generated, then OBI has been set up incorrectly



- OBI in some cases will generate one large query with 2 queries merged together

  (Select A,Sum(B) from Fact B, Dim A)

  FULL OUTER JOIN

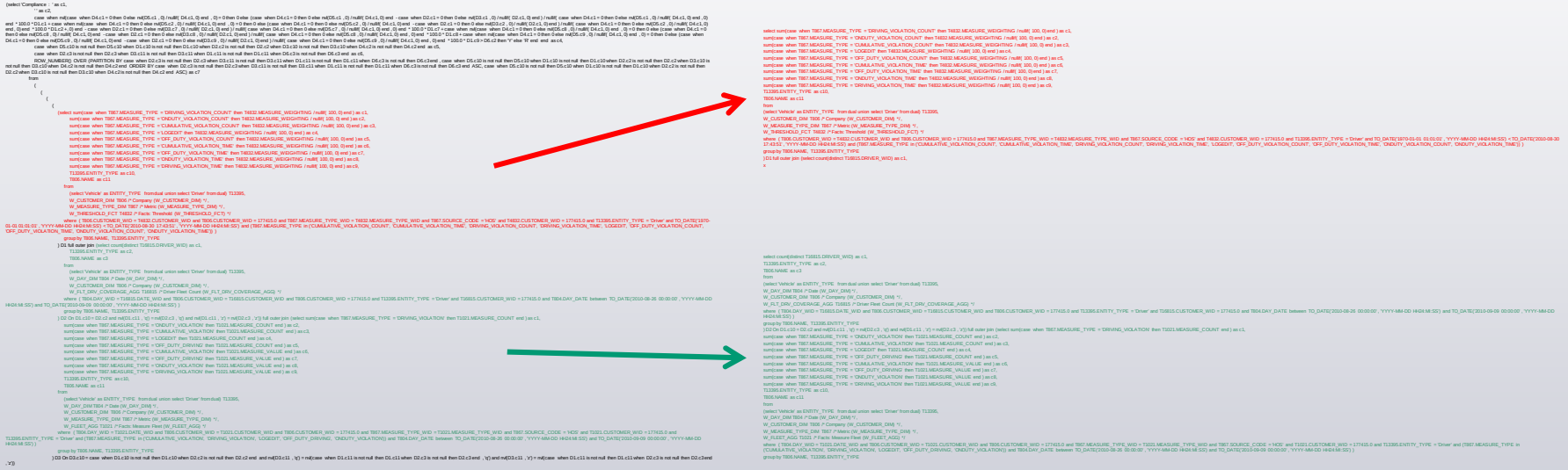
  (Select A, Sum(X) from Fact X, Dim A)

  - Check the Perf_Prefer_Internal_Stitch_Join and ROWNUM_SUPPORTED parameters to control

- Subtotals and report totals may generate sub-queries

Database Features Tab

- The default settings are not always optimal!
- Plan on running performance tests with different options
  - Deselecting ROWNUM_SUPPORTED
  - 1 massive query → many smaller queries

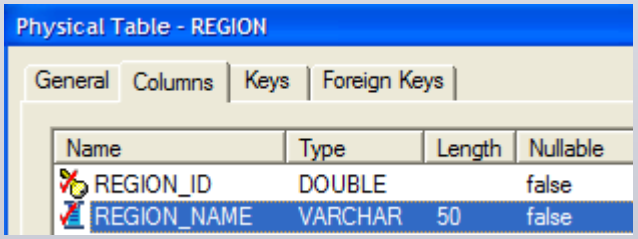


- Database CPU had to parse and merge recordsets
- Take advantage of OBI CPU power if database is overloaded
- Recent test yielded 9x improvement *at load!*

Common Tuning: Incorrect Nullability

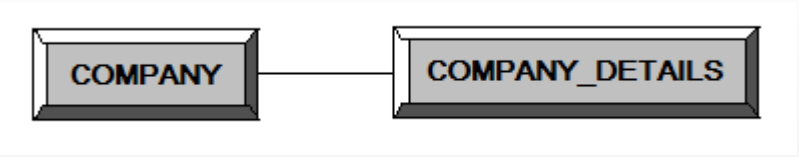
- A simple thing like the Nullable flag in the physical layer can have negative effects
- Sample query requires 2 Fact tables
- If REGION_NAME is set to allow NULLS:
  - Join between the two is inefficient
  - **On nvl(D1.c2 , 'q') = nvl(D2.c2 , 'q') and nvl(D1.c2 , 'z') = nvl(D2.c2 , 'z')**
- If REGION_NAME is set to NOT NULL
  - **On D1.c2 = D2.c2**
- Make sure the physical database is set correctly ***before*** import of tables

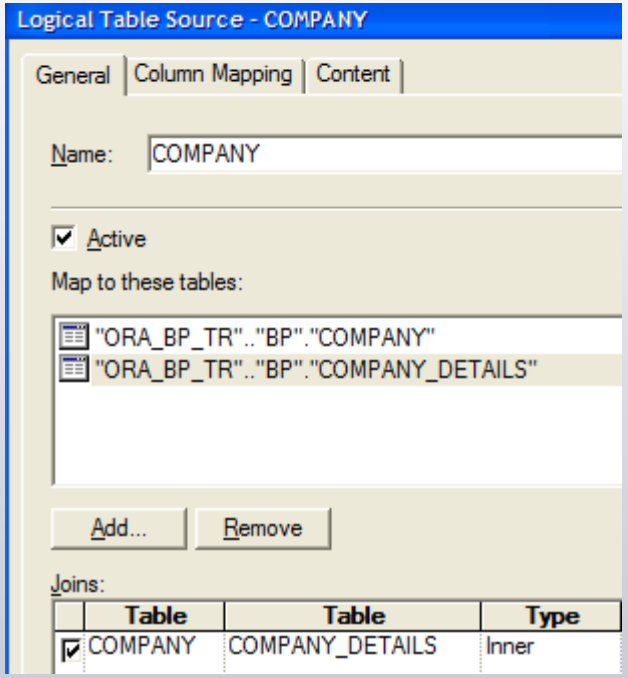
Region	# Completed Orders	# Orders In Progress
Africa	21	18
Americas	1099	977
Asia	149	128
Europe	943	781
Middle East	3	3



Common Tuning: Extra Tables

- If an additional table is added to a query that is not needed, performance will suffer
  - Worse: Result could be wrong!
- This example has a 1:1 extension table with Company using a complex join
  - There are no 1:1 joins in the Physical Layer
- A query of COMPANY and ORDERS table will also include COMPANY_DETAILS
- This happens when there is a **complex** join between 2 tables in a Logical Table Source

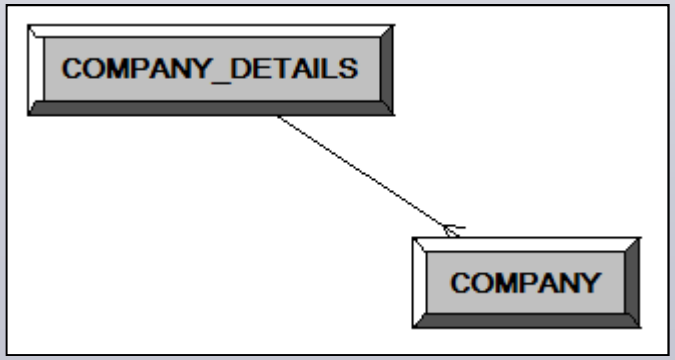





```
select T188.COMPANY_NAME as c1,
        count(T174.ORDER_ID) as c2,
        T188.COMPANY_ID as c3
    from
        COMPANY T188,
        COMPANY_DETAILS T1960,
        ORDERS T174
    where  ( ….
```

Common Tuning: Extra Tables

- To resolve, change the join to be a FK join
  - Keep the main table on the *many* side of the 1:M
- OBI will not include a ‘higher’ grain table unless needed
- Trick OBI to use the optional table only when needed and not all of the time



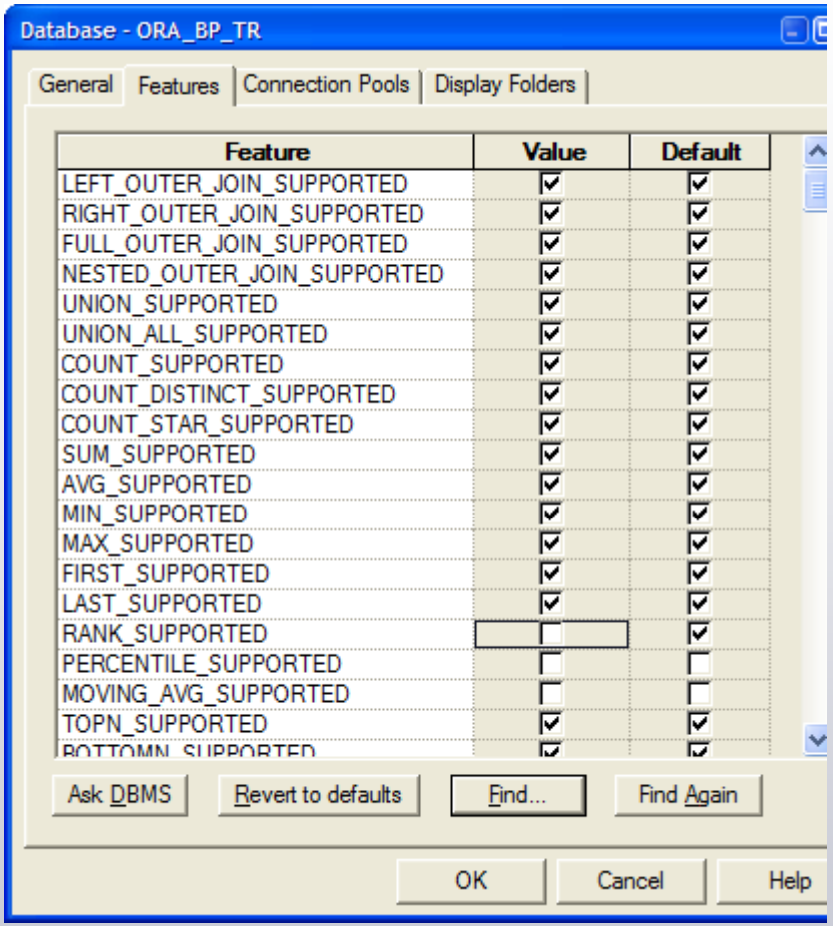

```
select T188.COMPANY_NAME as c1,
       count(T174.ORDER_ID) as c2,
       T188.COMPANY_ID as c3
from
       COMPANY T188,
       ORDERS T174
where  ( ….
```

Common Tuning: No Group Bys

- One of the biggest performance problems is missing Group Bys
- Detailed data is returned to the OBI Server which does the Group By
  - Usually returns a much larger dataset than ideal
  - Can be as bad as Gigabytes vs. 1 Kbyte
- Variety of reasons this can occur
  - Using a function not supported by the database
    - E.g., Count(Distinct) does not exist in MS Access
    - All detailed records are returned to OBI Server for aggregation
  - Using a function not enabled in the Database Features tab
  - Configuration error, usually with the Content tab
- Start with the Features tab to see if support is enabled

Database Features Tab

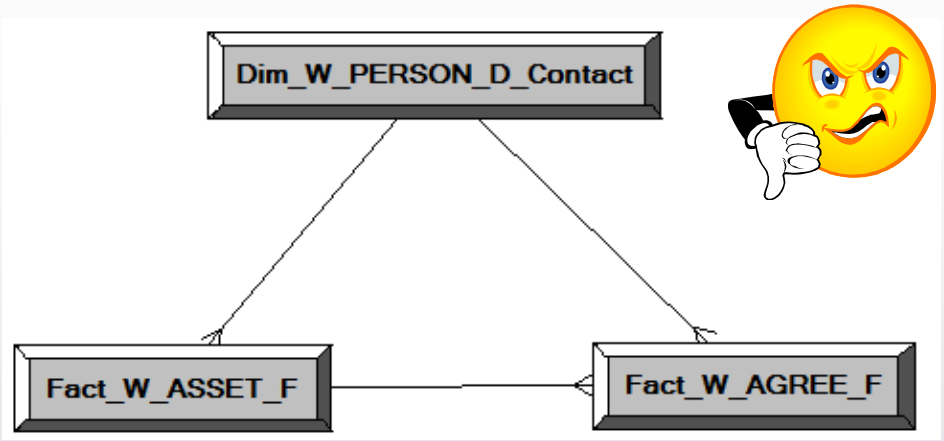
- The Features tab controls what SQL is generated
- It is uncommon to alter the defaults
- Here, the RANK() function is not supported
  - Any Rank Metrics will require all detail records to be sent to the OBI Server
  - OBI server then does the Rank()
- A simple check box may have benefits of orders of magnitude
- These are global settings – Regression test!



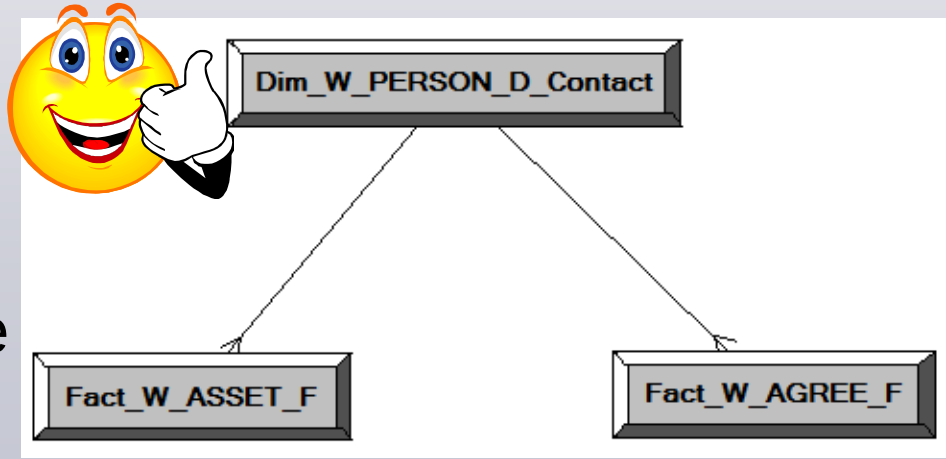
Know the proper SQL beforehand!

Common Tuning: Fact-to-Fact Joins

- Fact to Fact joins are a no-no
  - Joining 2 very large tables together



- Instead, use conformed dimensions
  - Two queries will be issued instead
  - Each query will have a small result set
  - The small result sets are then joined



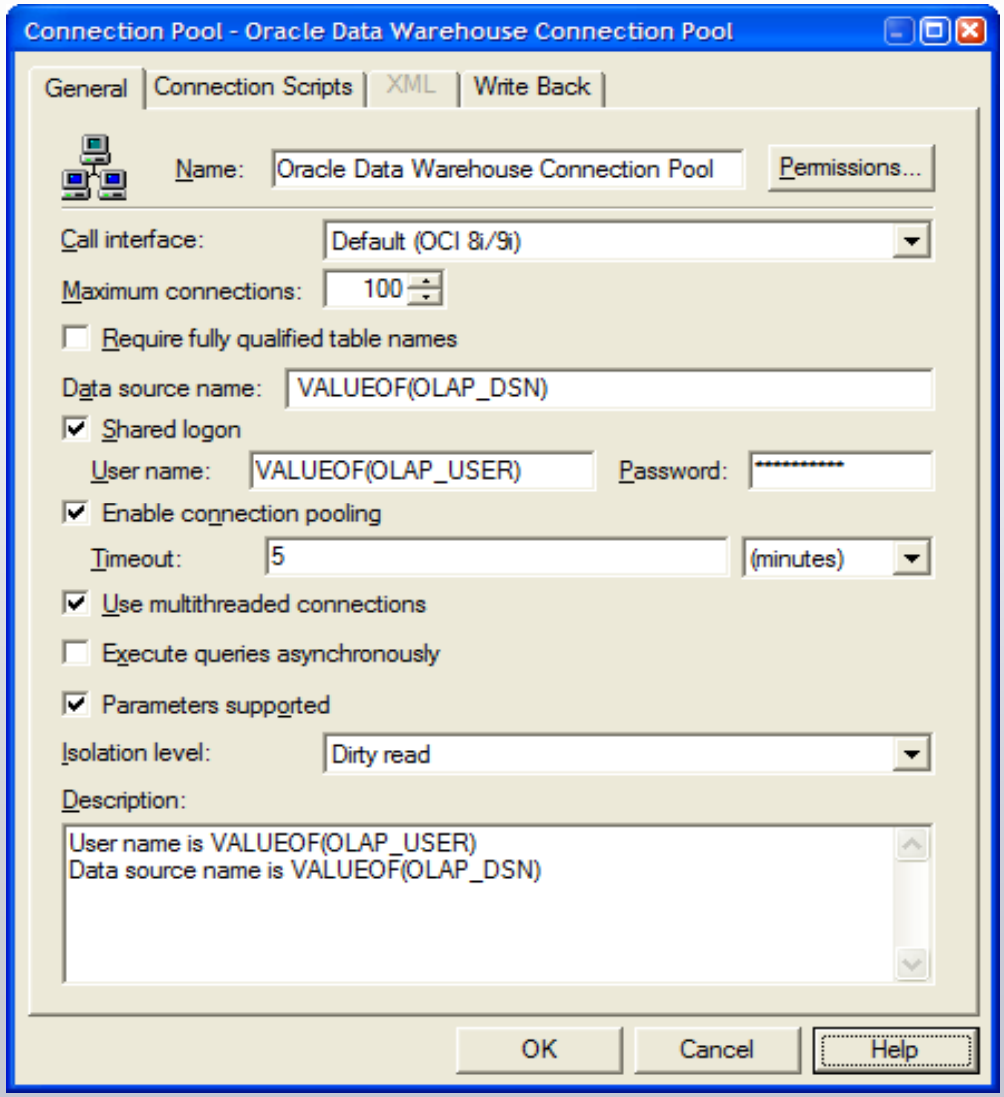
Connection Pools

- Most of the default settings are rarely changed

✔ Make sure to use ***native*** Call Interface and not ODBC!

✔ Set to support 10-20% of concurrent users X # logical queries per page

✔ Connection Pooling should be enabled



Caching

- OBI has a sophisticated caching engine
- It caches the results of SQL queries
  - Siebel Analytics caches the whole Logical query or not at all
  - OBI 10.x caches portions of a multi-part logical query
- Caches can be reused across queries
  - Across users depending on security
  - Currently cannot share cache across clustered servers (except iBots)
- Cache repopulation
  - Manual table by table cache durations
  - Using an Event Polling Table is a flexible approach
    - Integration with ETL via a table that is periodically polled
- Caching can be pre-loaded for users via iBots to pre-execute dashboards and reports
  - First users in the morning will cache hit and experience good performance

Caching – Poor Man's Performance

- Caching can help provide excellent performance in many scenarios

- It is not a replacement for any of the topics covered

  - Caching Ad-hoc is impossible
  - Caching real-time systems is impossible
  - Caching when using tight security becomes very difficult
  - Caching highly interactive dashboards becomes difficult to impossible

- Cherry on top of a great sundae

Follow OBI RPD Best Practices

If you :

- Follow good Dimensional Modeling design
- Follow OBI configuration best practices
- Set up database performance features properly

You will generally have a sound, good performing model

- Keep in mind these best practices
  - Always fill out the content tab
    - The Content tab controls which table OBI uses and how it writes much of its SQL
  - Verify your Physical Layer Null Flags
  - Use conformed dimensions
  - Replace large or complex Views with tables
  - Make your Physical Model look like your Business Model
  - Design your Dimensional Models based on your reports
    - Keep ad-hoc flexibility in mind

User Interface

General UI Recommendations

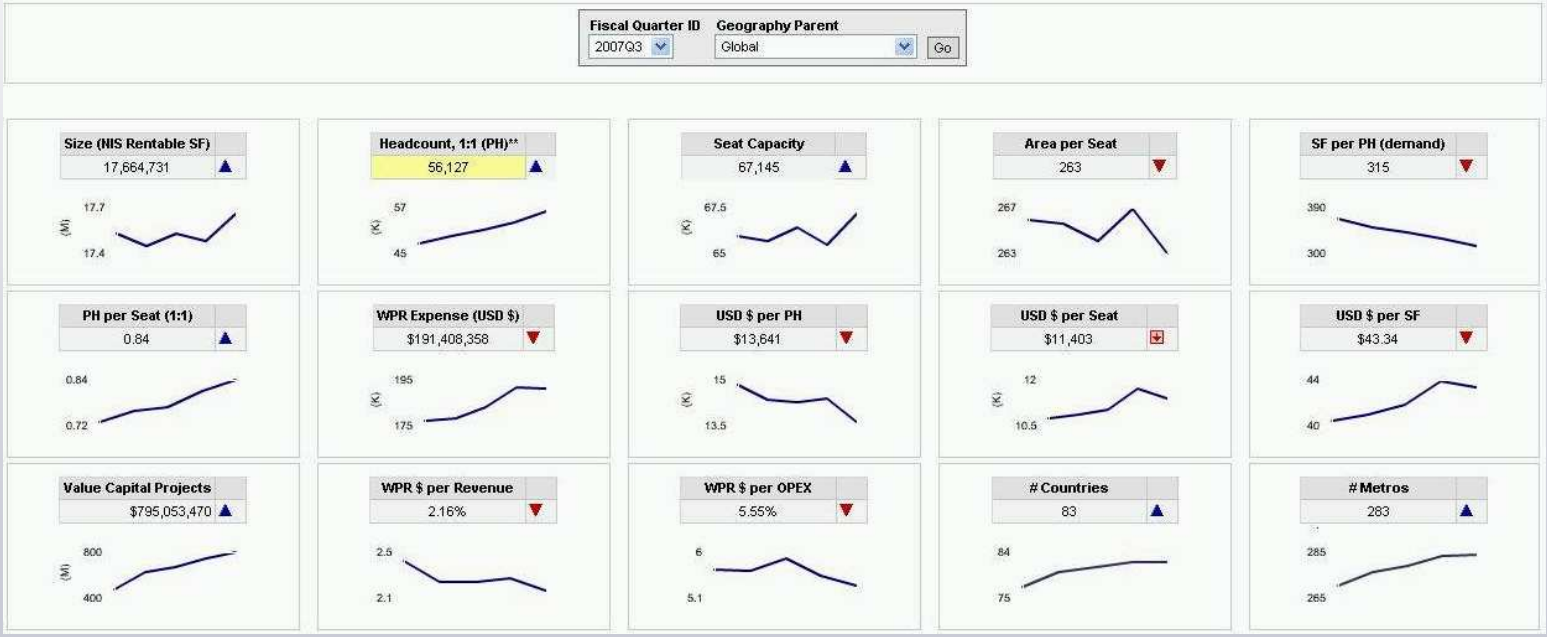
From a UI design and build perspective, a dashboard page's performance depends on:

1. The quantity and amount of data loaded into the prompts
   - Try to limit the number of rows returned
     - Use Multi-selects & constraining
   - Be mindful of users with slow network connections
   - Constraining across dimensions will be relatively slow

2. Use fewer reports but more views
   - Each report dragged to a page makes a new request
     ➔ New Logical SQL & new Physical SQL
   - Use Compound Layouts as much as possible instead of multiple report objects
     - Combines multiple views into one request

General UI Recommendations

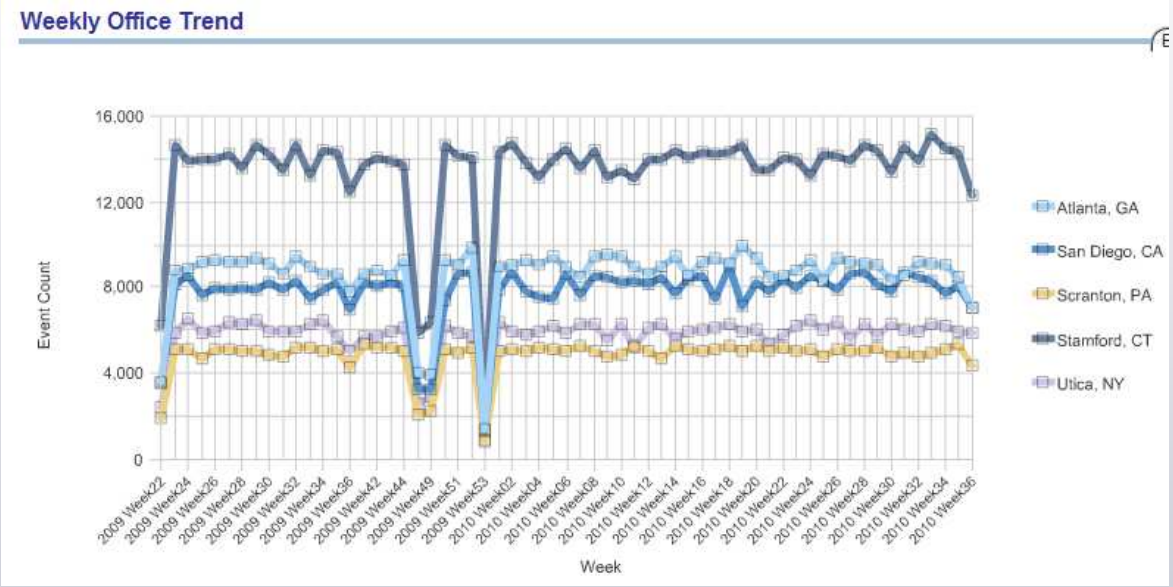
3. The number of reports & report views on a page
   - More reports are more UI objects to manage and draw
     - Not to mention more queries!
   - This sample page will generate 32 Logical queries!



Secret: Hidden Sections / Conditional Sections are always executed!

General UI Recommendations

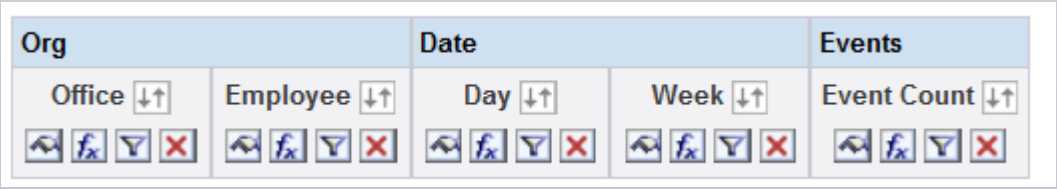
4. Sync up report criteria columns with view grain
   - Remove extra columns from the criteria tab
   - Lower dimensionality increases the record set



Report Grain:

Week X Office

e.g, 26 X 5 = 130 rows



Query Grain:

Day X Employee

e.g., 182 X 400 = 72,800 rows!

General UI Recommendations

5. Reduce the quantity of data each report shows
   - Use paging controls or place large data dumps on separate pages
   - Pivot Tables do not have the ability to limit the # of rows displayed at once
   - Pre-filter before user prompt selection
     - Use default values in the report

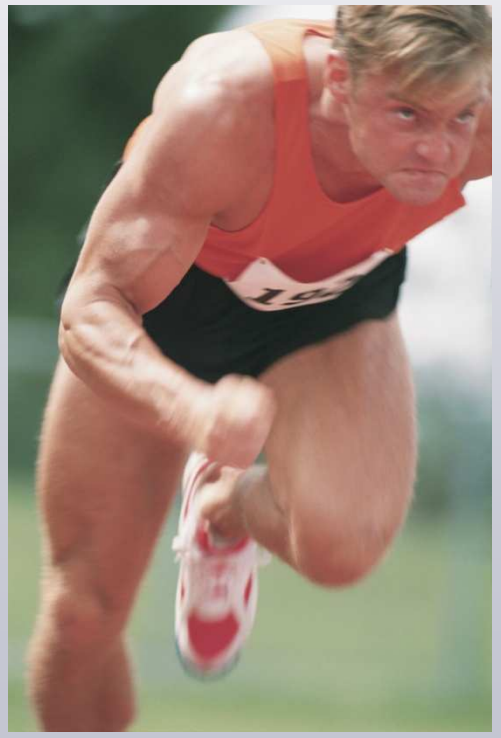
6. Seek out and destroy UNION queries
   - Use the other techniques to eliminate them
   - UNIONs have other report & UI limitations anyway
   - Worst case, use UNION ALL instead – databases prefer

7. Avoid fully flexible date ranges
   - Fix time selections (e.g., ‘last 2 weeks’)
   - Allows aggregates to be built

Summary

- OBI is a SQL generation engine

- The database does the heavy lifting
  - Make it easy on the poor database!



  - Put everything it needs together in one place
  - Organize data in an easy to access way
  - Tune the database to be fast
  - Ask good questions to it via good SQL

CONTACT INFORMATION

KPI Partners Sales Team

Visit Booth # 2235

Kusal Swarnakar
Managing Partner
email: kusal.swarnakar@kpipartners.com
phone: (925) 984-1371

Norman Dy
Director – US West
email:
norman.dy@kpipartners.com
phone: (619) 245-5090

Jimmy Dahlan
Director – US West
email:
jimmy.dahlan@kpipartners.com
phone: (408) 981-4284

Jaime Seagraves
Director – US North East
email:
jaime.seagraves@kpipartners.com
phone: (630) 854-0450

Mark Joslin
Director – South East
email: mark.joslin@kpipartners.com
phone: (336) 882-8185

Keith Weisz
Director – US Central
email: keith.weisz@kpipartners.com
phone: (816) 304-1005

Think ORACLE BI
Think KPI...

WWW.KPIPARTNERS.COM

ORACLE CERTIFIED PARTNER