BEYOND BUSINESSOBJECTS:
ADVANCED SCHEDULING & BROADCASTING OF ANALYSIS FOR OFFICE REPORTS

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INTRODUCTION

SAP introduced **SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office**, or 'Analysis for Office' (herein referenced as 'AfO') nearly 15 years ago as the successor to BEx Analyzer. Both applications use a Microsoft Excel interface to allow various users – including financial analysts, and many line-of-business users – to analyze data from SAP applications such as BW, BW/4HANA, S/4HANA and Datasphere.

The continuing popularity of AfO is partly a tribute to the importance of Microsoft Excel as the historical standard in financial analysis, but more importantly it demonstrates that AfO is a convenient and dependable means of providing timely analysis of real-time data. It supplements analytics applications such as SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP BusinessObjects by allowing users to slice and dice information with Excel's pivot table functionality.

SAP's "Cloud-first" strategy in its analytics roadmap means that the vast majority of new development for AfO-related capabilities will be applied to the **SAP Analytics Cloud add-in for Microsoft Office** version of the product. However, with the vast usage of the solution, SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office – both the Standard Edition and the Edition for SAP Analytics Cloud – will be supported until at least 2029, and it is expected they will remain in wide use until at least then.

The SAP world is moving to the cloud. In analytics, SAP Analytics Cloud is the path forward, and AfO functionality is also following that path.

COMMUNICATING YOUR AfO INSIGHTS

Analytical insights cannot function in isolation: they must be communicated to the people that need them at the executive, management, operational, and sales and marketing levels of the organization. That is why BEx Broadcaster existed as a companion technology to BEx Analyzer, and why SAP BusinessObjects has been so strongly aligned with AfO.

Organizations that have been using the **SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office Standard Edition** are accustomed to communicating their AfO insights to others using SAP BusinessObjects Publications as the report scheduling and distribution platform. When these organizations consider adopting SAP Analytics Cloud and the **SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office Edition for SAP Analytics Cloud**, they look for similar scheduling and broadcasting capabilities – but these capabilities do not exist within the SAP Analytics Cloud platform. As a result, when these organizations begin adoption of SAP Analytics Cloud, they must still maintain their SAP BusinessObjects deployment as a means of scheduling and distributing their AfO reports.

The lack of report scheduling and broadcasting capabilities for AfO in SAP Analytics Cloud is delaying or preventing many organizations from making a move to adopt SAP Analytics Cloud.

**Enter the
APOS Publisher for Cloud solution**

In fact, the lack of report scheduling and broadcasting capabilities for AfO in SAP Analytics Cloud is delaying or preventing many of these organizations from making a move to adopt SAP Analytics Cloud. Organizations wanting to move beyond the use of SAP BusinessObjects to address their AfO report broadcasting have had no way to do so – until recently. Enter the APOS Publisher for Cloud solution.

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AfO REPORT BROADCASTING WITH APOS PUBLISHER FOR CLOUD

APOS Systems Inc., a long-time and globally trusted SAP Analytics partner, provides the APOS Publisher for Cloud. The Publisher for Cloud solution has been providing critical report broadcasting capabilities for SAP Analytics Cloud for many years, and the solution functionalities have grown to include support for AfO. This expanded functionality is now filling the important need of AfO report scheduling and broadcasting, thereby removing a significant barrier to adoption of SAP Analytics Cloud.

In the pages that follow we will show how you can use APOS Publisher for Cloud to update and adapt your AfO report broadcasting workflows in SAP Analytics Cloud.

Read on to discover how APOS Publisher for Cloud handles the most common use cases to take your organization's AfO workflows beyond SAP BusinessObjects into SAP's Cloud-based environment.

ANALYSIS FOR OFFICE REPORT BROADCASTING USE CASES

There are two use cases that account for the majority of SAP AfO customer report broadcasting needs:

- **Moving Beyond SAP BusinessObjects –** customers planning their full move from SAP BusinessObjects to SAP Analytics Cloud and the SAP AfO Edition for SAP Analytics Cloud, but cannot achieve these objectives without AfO scheduling and broadcasting capabilities in SAP Analytics Cloud.

- **Moving Beyond BEx Broadcaster –** customers undergoing digital modernization by moving from BW to BW/4HANA seek to replace BEx Analyzer and BEx Broadcaster with AfO. Such customers do not want to begin a new deployment of a full SAP BusinessObjects system as the means of broadcasting AfO reports, but instead prefer the modernized benefits of SAP Analytics Cloud.

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USE CASE 1: MOVING BEYOND SAP BUSINESSOBJECTS

A common AfO report scheduling and broadcasting use case involves AfO-user organizations that have either partially adopted SAP Analytics Cloud, or are looking to begin their adoption of SAP Analytics Cloud and plan to retire their SAP BusinessObjects deployment once they have moved all BI and analytics workflows to SAC. One of these workflows involves the use of SAP BusinessObjects Publications to schedule and broadcast AfO reports.

Although they could move their AfO reports to the SAP Analytics Cloud Repository, SAC did not offer the functionality needed to schedule and broadcast the reports.

Using APOS Publisher for Cloud, these companies can schedule and broadcast their AfO reports from the SAC Repository.

USE CASE 2: MOVING FROM BEX TO SAP ANALYTICS CLOUD

While less frequent, another important use case involves organizations still using BEx Analyzer and its companion technology BEx Broadcaster. When such organizations modernize their data infrastructure, such as moving from BW to BW/4HANA, they must also move on from BEx Analyzer and BEx Broadcaster, as these technologies are no longer supported in the newer SAP Cloud platform.

The normal progression for organizations adopting SAP Cloud-based data infrastructure is to deploy SAP Analytics Cloud for reporting and visualizations. For organizations that want to keep the Excel-based analytics capabilities, it is not difficult to convert BEx Analyzer reports to Analysis for Office reports. These AfO reports can then be stored in the SAC Repository.

However, as in the previous use case, such organizations would not have AfO scheduling and broadcasting capabilities in SAC. Also, they typically would not have an SAP BusinessObjects deployment to fall back on for scheduling and broadcasting, and the idea of beginning a new SAP BusinessObjects deployment for the sole purpose of scheduling AfO reports is unlikely to be appealing.
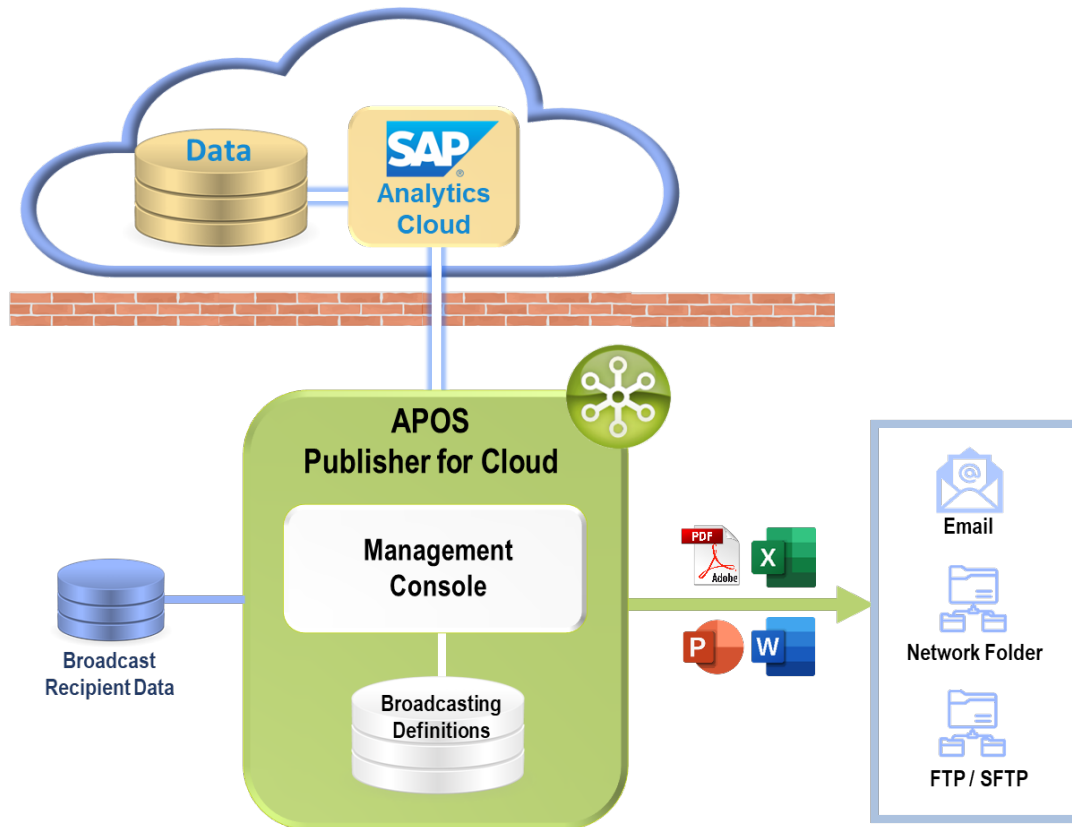
Using APOS Publisher for Cloud, these companies can schedule and broadcast their AfO reports from the SAC Repository just as in the previous use case.

APOS PUBLISHER FOR CLOUD

APOS Publisher for Cloud is a report broadcasting solution for SAP Analytics Cloud. It provides greater flexibility, availability, scalability, and higher volume than the native SAP Analytics Cloud Publications function.

Its automation provides personalized reports to the right people, at the right time, in the right format, and lowers the burden on IT teams. It supports SAC story, SAC application, and Analysis for Office report broadcasting.
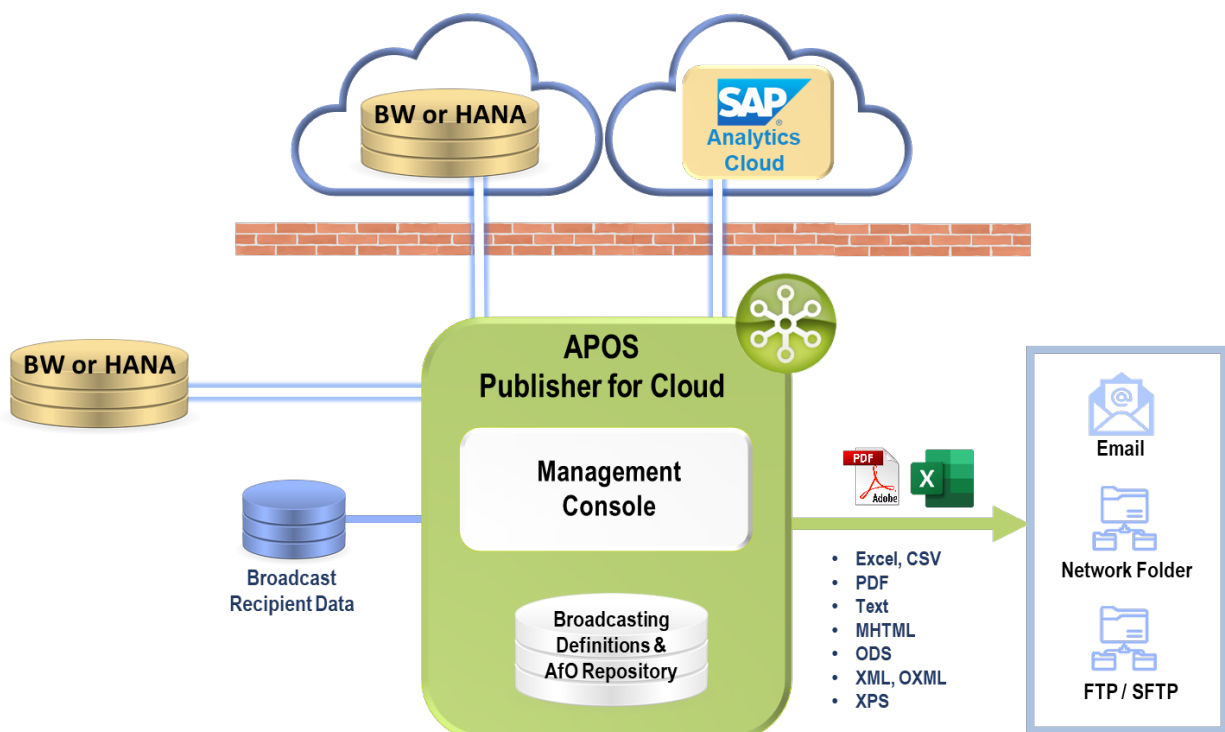
APOS Publisher for Cloud is installed behind your firewall. You set up schedules and broadcasts from the Management Console:

In a standard report broadcasting scenario, APOS Publisher for Cloud:

1. Accesses report information from SAP Analytics Cloud;
2. Applies a broadcasting definition detailing formats, destinations, templates and other defined characteristics for the broadcast, and creates reports formatted as PDF, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, or Word documents;
3. Reads and applies broadcast recipient data; and
4. Broadcasts the finished report formats to recipient-specific destinations, such as email, network folder, or FTP/SFTP server.

AfO REPORT BROADCASTING

APOS Publisher for Cloud includes Analysis for Office report broadcasting support. The process for broadcasting AfO reports is similar to SAP Analytics Cloud report broadcasting.

In the AfO report broadcasting scenario, APOS Publisher for Cloud:

1. Downloads AfO report information from the SAP Analytics Cloud Repository;
2. Retrieves report data from the SAP data source (e.g., BW or HANA);
3. Applies a broadcasting definition detailing formats, destinations, and other defined characteristics for the broadcast, and creates the reports formatted as PDF, Excel or CSV spreadsheets, text, MHTML, ODS, XML, OXML, or XPS;
4. Reads and applies broadcast recipient data; and
5. Broadcasts the finished report formats to recipient-specific destinations, such as email, network folder, or FTP/SFTP server.

ADVANCED SCHEDULING & BROADCASTING

APOS Publisher for Cloud support for AfO report broadcasting lets you replace AfO report scheduling in SAP BusinessObjects, as well as BEx Broadcaster workflows, providing:

Automated broadcasting:
Data-driven report filtering and distribution processes

Expanded formats:
Excel, CSV, PDF, Text, MHTML, ODS (open document for office), XML, OXML (office open XML), XPS (print format)

Expanded destinations:
Email (attachment or body), network file location, FTP/FTPS

Expanded features:
Multi-format support, encryption and password protection

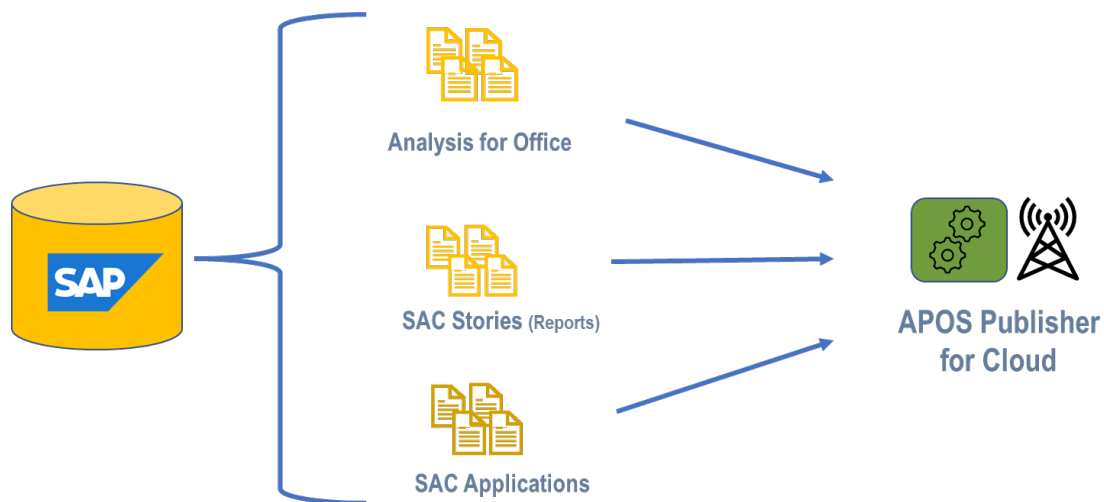## USING THE SAP ANALYTICS CLOUD REPOSITORY FOR AfO WORKBOOKS

The SAP Analytics Cloud Repository allows you to store your AfO workbooks for use with the SAP Analytics Cloud platform. The Repository itself has no scheduling capabilities in SAP Analytics Cloud, but APOS Publisher for Cloud can schedule reports from it.

For scenarios where SAP Analytics Cloud is not yet available as part of the solution architecture, APOS Publisher for Cloud also has a stand-alone repository that can be used to store the AfO reports for scheduling and broadcasting processes.

BROADCASTING FOR THE SAP LANDSCAPE

For many years APOS Publisher has been the go-to solution for organizations needing enhanced SAP BusinessObjects broadcasting capabilities. Now APOS Publisher for Cloud is fulfilling that role for organizations adopting SAP's Cloud-based analytics, providing a strong core of broadcasting capabilities for SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP Analytics Cloud Applications.

APOS Publisher for Cloud also supports SAP Analysis for Office, because so many organizations continue to prioritize the Excel interface in their analytics portfolios and are carrying it forward into the new Cloud-based analytics. APOS has answered the call for report broadcasting for AfO reports in the go-forward Cloud-based analytics environment.

APOS Publisher for Cloud's core report broadcasting functionality includes:

Dynamic rules – drive bursting definitions dynamically from a data source

Filters and variables – create multiple versions of a story with ease

Destinations – select from a variety of destinations to meet recipient needs

Formats – generate and send in PDF, PowerPoint, Excel, Word, CSV, RTF or image formats; use Excel and PowerPoint templates for professional look and feel

Consolidation of multiple reports – consolidate stories or pages into a single email or document

Multiple export options – multiple formats created from a single bursting definition; high-volume; support for large data set export to Excel or CSV

Widget-level broadcasting – selective bursting of report components to focus on most critical information

Integrated enterprise scheduling – built into the bursting definition creation process

Conditional broadcasting – monitor KPI thresholds to trigger the bursting process and email alerts; SAP Datasphere integration

Analysis for Office Scheduling and Broadcasting – allowing customers to schedule and broadcast AfO reports from the SAP Analytics Cloud Repository

BW/4HANA / Datasphere User-Based Broadcasting – replicating processes formerly available in BEx Broadcaster

Enterprise Scalability – distributed and targeted processing for high availability, high performance, and failover capabilities

Enterprise Security and Administration – secure team collaboration and enhanced administrative capabilities

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CONCLUSION

SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office continues to be one of SAP's most popular analytics applications, following the SAP roadmap into the Cloud.

While AfO is thriving in the new Cloud environment, AfO report scheduling and broadcasting is not. As organizations move beyond SAP BusinessObjects, they are not seeing its Publications functionality replicated in the new environment.

Insights from analytics need to be communicated and shared with other stakeholders to be truly effective.

BEx Analyzer had BEx Broadcaster.

AfO in the pre-Cloud period had SAP BusinessObjects Publications.

AfO in the new Cloud environment has APOS Publisher for Cloud.

APOS Publisher for Cloud provides enhanced report broadcasting for SAP Analytics Cloud, SAP Analytics Cloud Applications, and SAP Analysis for Microsoft Office, extending the reach of your analytics to all stakeholders.

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RESOURCES

APOS Publisher for Cloud

Broadcasting SAP Analysis for Office Content

Whitepaper: SAP Analytics Cloud Report Broadcasting: APOS Publisher for Cloud

Customer Success with APOS Publisher for Cloud:

NLMK Europe:
"Push" Publishing with APOS Publisher for Cloud

Hunt Oil Company:
Data-Driven Distribution & Reduced IT Burden

Bristol – Euro Shoe Group:
Critically Timed, Personalized Report Broadcasting

APPENDIX: APOS SOLUTIONS FOR SAP ANALYTICS CLOUD

APOS Publisher for Cloud

- Automated broadcasting and distribution of personalized SAC reports to target user groups
- Distribute reports to the right people, at the right time, to the right location, in the right format

APOS Data Gateway

- Live connectivity from SAC to wide range of data sources
- Import data from wide range of sources into SAC
- Extract and Export data from SAC

Available on SAP Store

APPENDIX: APOS SOLUTIONS FOR SAP BUSINESSOBJECTS

APOS Insight

- BI System Auditing
- BI System Monitoring
- BI Query Surveillance
- BI Report Testing

APOS Administrator

- Object Management
- Schedule Management
- Instance Management
- Web Intelligence Migration

APOS Storage Center

- System Backup
- Content Archiving
- Content Versioning
- Automated System Clean Up

APOS Publisher

- Systematic Content Delivery
- Advanced Document Bursting
- Enhanced Content Distribution
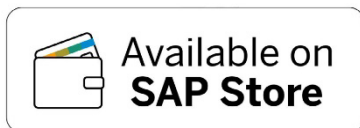- Security and Encryption

APOS Web Intelligence Migrator

- Bulk Convert from UNV to UNX
- High-Volume Web Intelligence Repointing
- Success Validation
- Controlled Workflow

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ABOUT APOS SYSTEMS

Since its beginning in 1992, APOS Systems has evolved from a custom business application development shop to a global provider of solutions promoting Well Managed Business Intelligence and Analytics.

APOS provides software products which deliver enhanced capabilities and strong agility in the management and administration of SAP BusinessObjects and SAP Analytics Cloud platforms, across the SAP solution landscape, and beyond. APOS well managed BI and well managed Analytics products improve return on investment and time to value for our global base of customers. APOS solutions simplify, automate, complement, enhance and extend BI practices, and focus BI and Analytics processes for greater agility in your organization's decision-making capabilities.

APOS is a long-time SAP Partner with over 20 years of success in providing software solutions to enhance and extend SAP Analytics and Business Intelligence capabilities. APOS Data Connectivity solutions provide live, virtualized data connectivity for SAP Analytics Cloud to non-SAP data sources, including a wide range of relational and OLAP sources, and the vital cloud data platforms. APOS enables simplified analytics data processes for SAP Applications, such as SAP Ariba, SuccessFactors, Fieldglass and Concur. APOS Publishing solutions enable broadcasting and delivery of SAP Analytics Cloud and S/4HANA Analytics reports to targeted recipients. APOS BI Management solutions automate administration, testing, auditing, monitoring, and archiving for SAP BusinessObjects and SAP Analytics Cloud.

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