



Business Intelligence Tool Helps DCMA Deliver on its Mission

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Business intelligence, or BI, is an important concept for everyone in DCMA to know and understand. BI refers to the collection, sharing and analysis of data across an organization — or, more distinctly, making sense of patterns within the data. Doing this helps individuals and organizations within DCMA monitor achievements against goals and, ultimately, make more informed business decisions.

In May 2009, DCMA's Information Technology Customer Service Organization began upgrading its primary BI tool from Cognos 7 to IBM Cognos 8. When completed, the upgrade will provide DCMA personnel and organizations with the most current version, allowing the agency to receive timely bug fixes, security patches and other software support. The IBM Cognos

8 BI suite includes four modules:

1. Scorecarding (formerly Metric Studio) for monitoring and analyzing key performance indicators
2. Reporting (formerly Report Studio and Query Studio) for creating standardized and ad hoc reports
3. Planning (formerly Enterprise Planner) for planning and budgeting
4. Analysis (formerly Analysis Studio) for analyzing large sets of data online.

ITCSO's phased rollout of IBM Cognos 8 to DCMA users started with Scorecarding. Reporting will ensue, followed by Planning and Analysis, which replaces PowerPlay.

The most noticeable change for users is an updated interface that features enhanced viewing options intended to help increase

data visibility and legibility. Administrators and users will also benefit from more user roles.

In Cognos 7, only two roles were available: consumer or administrator. With IBM Cognos 8, user roles are better defined. For example, there will be four user roles available in the Scorecarding module that rolled out in May: Metrics User, Metrics Power User, Metrics Author and Administrator.

These more descriptive and detailed user roles will help everyone avoid the accidental deletions of data sets and other problems experienced with Cognos 7 caused by limited user role definitions. Due to these limited definitions, some users were granted full administrative privileges even though they only needed some privileges.

To learn more about the upgraded software, DCMA personnel are invited to participate in interactive, computer-based training on IBM Cognos 8 using Adobe Captivate. For details, visit <https://home.dcma.mil/dcma-it/ITCSO/Training/index.htm>. 

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