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Oracle Forms Modernization with Oracle Application Express

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- Oracle Application Express Overview
- Similarities and differences between Oracle Forms and Oracle APEX
- Oracle APEX Forms Converter
- Demonstration Forms to APEX Conversion
- Post-Generation Conversion Tasks







Oracle Application Express

Overview



Oracle Application Express Overview



- Unique Rapid Application Development (RAD) tool for the Oracle Database
- Browser based for Development, Deployment and Use
- Allows to declaratively build professional Web 2.0 applications that are fast and secure
- Leverages full Oracle database capabilities and existing SQL & PL/SQL skills
- Standard component of the database
- Fully supported, "no-cost" option with all editions of the Oracle Database

Easy to develop • Easy to deploy • Easy to manage

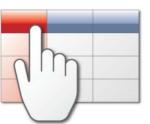


Oracle Application Express Overview



Data-driven Applications

Develop opportunistic and departmental productivity applications



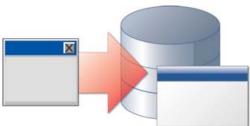
Online Reporting

Build SQL-based reporting applications on existing database schemas



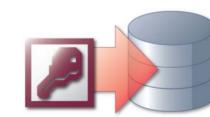
Spreadsheet Web-ification

Convert spreadsheets to Web applications where they can be concurrently viewed and edited



Oracle Forms Modernization

Leverage SQL & PL/SQL declarative programming skills to move Forms applications to HTML / Web 2.0

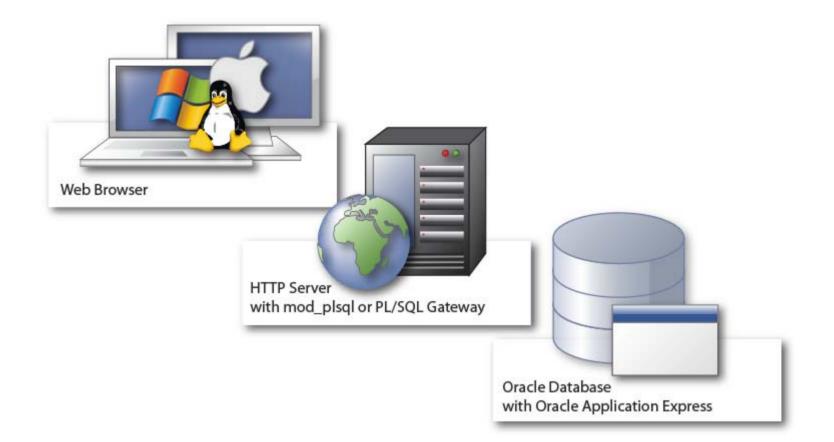


Access Replacement

Consolidate outgrown Access applications to the Oracle database with an APEX Web front end



Oracle Application Express Overview







Oracle Forms vs.

Oracle APEX



Feature	Oracle Forms	Oracle APEX	Description
4GL Declarative	Yes	Yes	Oracle Forms renders applications using metadata stored in an .fmx file. Oracle APEX renders applications using metadata stored in an Oracle database.
4GL Languages	SQL and PL/SQL	SQL and PL/SQL	Oracle Forms runs server-side and client-side PL/SQL. Oracle APEX uses server-side PL/SQL.
User Interface	Java	HTML	Oracle Forms can be accessed using a web browser and its user interface is rendered using a JVM. Oracle APEX is also invoked from a Web browser but its user interface is HTML and JavaScript.

Feature	Oracle Forms	Oracle APEX	Description
Page Layout	Windows / Canvases	Page / Regions	Oracle Forms uses exact positioning and Oracle APEX uses relative positioning.
Web Service Support	Yes	Yes	Both Oracle Forms and Application Express support the calling of Web Services, for example BPEL.
Client-side Field Control	Form triggers	JavaScript and AJAX	Oracle Forms provides field-level validation and event processing. Oracle APEX supports declarative page-level validation and event processing. Programmatic field- level validation and event processing requires JavaScript and AJAX.

Feature	Oracle Forms	Oracle APEX	Description
Charting	BI Beans	Flash Charts	Oracle Forms uses BI Beans. Oracle APEX uses Flash Charts as its integrated charting engine.
Database Connections	Synchronous	Asynchronous	Oracle Forms uses synchronous connections to allow transactions to span multiple screen interactions. Oracle APEX does not transparently allow this but programmatically supports transactions spanning page views using collections.
Locking	Pessimistic, Optimistic, Custom	Optimistic, Custom	Oracle Forms supports a range of locking models with pessimistic as the default. Due to its asynchronous architecture, Oracle APEX uses an optimistic locking model.

Feature	Oracle Forms	Oracle APEX	Description
Concurrent User Support	DB connectivity maintained by user session	DB connectivity only maintained for processing of requests	Each connected user in Oracle Forms maintains a synchronous connection to the Oracle database. Oracle APEX users are asynchronously connected to the Oracle database.
Architecture	3 Tier	2 Tier	With Oracle Forms, Application logic is processed in the Oracle database, a mid-tier Forms Server, or in the rich client. With Oracle APEX, PL/SQL application logic is processed within the Oracle database. Client-side logic is implemented using JavaScript. HTTP communications are facilitated using Apache and Mod/PLSQL.



Oracle APEX Forms Converter



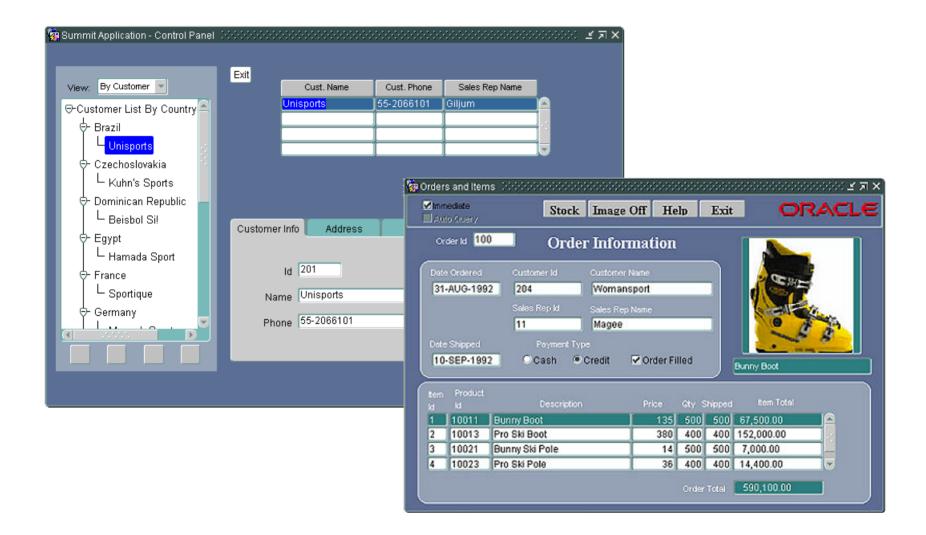
Oracle APEX Forms Converter

- Manage conversion throughout life-cycle of project
- Automatically translate main components
- Generate forms, reports, master-detail, tabular forms
- But no automatic reproduction with a new technology
- 100% generation not possible due to:
 - The complexity and variety of logic incorporated into Oracle Forms applications specifically within triggers, program units, libraries, etc.
 - The difference in inherent user interactivity between Oracle Forms and APEX.

- Define scope of project
 - Identify the Forms application(s) and modules
 - Specify which Oracle Forms are to be migrated
 - Analyze data model used by Forms application(s)
 - Collect any related documentation on the Form modules and database design

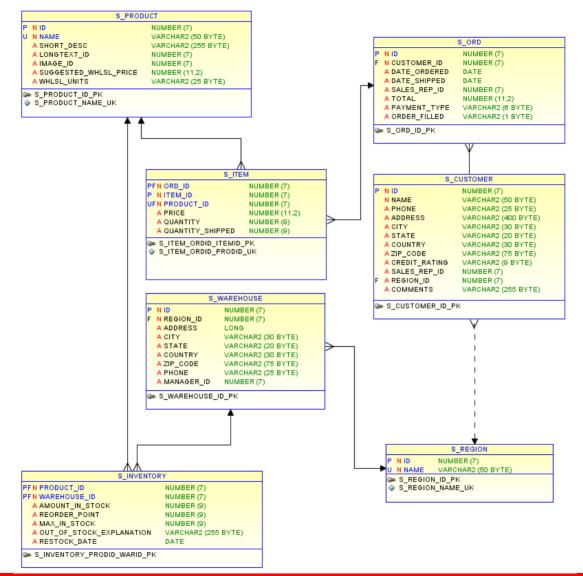


"Summit" Demo Application





"Summit" Data Model





Converting Forms Modules to XML

- Forms to XML conversion tool: Forms2XML
- Invoked from the command line or Java program
- Can be used with:
 - FormsModule (.fmb)
 - ObjectLibrary (.olb)
 - MenuModule (.mmb) files
- Convenience Scripts
 - frmf2xml.bat/sh Converts Forms Modules to XML format
 - frmxml2f.bat/sh Converts XML to Forms Modules
 - frmxmlsg.bat/sh Generates the Forms XML Schema (forms.xsd)
 - frmxmlv.bat/sh Validates the structure of a Forms XML file



Demonstration

Forms to APEX Conversion



Demo			The Conversion process starts with exporting the					
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(Note: changes do not</pre> become final until you Save them.)" Button2Label="No" DirtyInfo="true" AlertStyle="Caution" Button1Label="Yes" /> <Alert Name="CONFIRM_REVERT" AlertMessage="Are you sure you want to cancel the changes you have made?"</p> Title="Payment Type" Button2Label="No" DirtyInfo="true" AlertStyle="Caution" Button1Label="Yes" /> - <Block Name="CONTROL" ScrollbarLength="135" DirtyInfo="true" ScrollbarWidth="9"> <Item Name="CURSOR" FontName="MS Sans Serif" ItemType="User Area" Justification="Start" Bevel="None" FontSpacing="Normal" Height="10" XPosition="151" FontWeight="Demilight" Width="33" BackColor="NewCanvas" YPosition="2" FontStyle="Plain" FontSize="800" DirtyInfo="true" CanvasName="MAIN" ForegroundColor="black" /> - <Item Name="PROMPT_CUSTNAME" FontName="MS Sans Serif" ItemType="Push Button" TabPageName="" Label="Cust. Name"</p> FontSpacing="Normal" Height="17" XPosition="20" FontWeight="Demilight" Width="89" BackColor="gray" YPosition="19" FontStyle="Plain" FontSize="800" MouseNavigate="false" ImplementationClass="oracle.forms.demos.RoundedButton" DirtvInfo="true" CanvasName="CUST_SUMMARY" ForegroundColor="black"> <Trigger Name="WHEN-BUTTON-PRESSED" TriggerText="set_block_property('s_customer1', ORDER_BY, 'name'):
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Post-Generation

Conversion Tasks



- Examine triggers and program units within the conversion project
 - Record tracking details against these components
 - Manually enter equivalent code as Oracle APEX validations, computations and / or processes



- Enhance the generated Oracle APEX application
 - Review generated application pages, regions and items
 - Add conditional processing logic to regions and items based on UI behavior implemented within Forms triggers and program units
 - Review validations, computations and processes you specified within the Oracle APEX project – post-generation and update as necessary.
 - Review buttons and update URL redirection details, etc.
 - Update tracking details as appropriate

- Develop Oracle Database components
 - Identify code, which should be processed directly in the database rather than in the application.
 - Code, test, and implement Oracle Database packages, procedures and functions to replace Oracle Forms logic.
 - Update tracking details as appropriate



- Add additional Oracle APEX components
 - Add additional pages, regions, buttons, items, etc as required
 - Review and update navigational components
 - Implement specific client-side functionality using JavaScript, AJAX, DHTML, etc.
 - Update tracking details as appropriate



- System Test Oracle APEX application(s)
- Train users on Oracle APEX application(s)
- Implement Oracle APEX application(s)









