

Oracle Discoverer:

*Should I Stay
or Should I Go?*



Quiz Time

I MEANT TO DO THAT

Oracle Discoverer was first created in the eighties. As a tribute to the end of the Oracle Discoverer era, we've added eighties references throughout the content. Do your best to find them all! There is no prize for winning – just the sheer enjoyment of knowing your mind is the modern day equivalent of the Commodore 64.

The answers can be found at the end of this ebook.



Radical Technology!

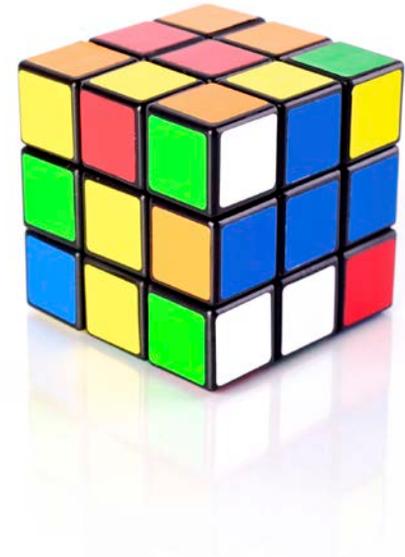
The end of the Oracle Discoverer era

Looking back on the previous century, it can be argued that no other decade can hold a candle to the 80's. Familiar favorites - like Super Mario Brothers, mix tapes, Cyndi Lauper, Billie Jean, perms - were all born during this time and have become staples of nostalgia.

If you own Oracle E-Business Suite, you may remember that the 80's also gave us Discoverer, Oracle's native reporting tool. But as we all moved on from banana clips and parachute pants, many of us are still using an ERP reporting tool that has evolved at a snail's pace over the last thirty years. But as of June 2014, Oracle has discontinued premium support for Discoverer and put an end to the unevolved era.

The long overdue move has put many in the hot seat for a new option instead of risking the odds by sticking with an unsupported ERP reporting tool.

We know change is hard and it's certainly no easy feat to research the right reporting tool replacement. So we've compiled this ebook to help you through the process. Read on to explore your options. Hopefully they help you make the best choice for your unique business needs.



"ROADS? WHERE WE ARE GOING, WE DONT NEED ROADS"

In fact, when it comes to Discoverer, there is no longer a road at all.

When you envision an ERP reporting solution, chances are, you expect to find a tool that will bring more cohesion and ease to the movement of information in your organization. Your ERP is your system of record, and all you need is a quick, easy way to get data out and into the hands of the end users. Seems simple right?

Well feed me nails and call me rusty – it isn't always so straightforward. And if you've been an active Discoverer reporting user, you know this better than anyone.





DISCOVERER IS NOTORIOUS FOR BEING:

Slow.

It takes a long time to run reports. And when you are trying to run an agile, dynamic business, this time you are losing is expensive. Thankfully, Discoverer has a built-in drilldown timer countdown to help you save time by telling you exactly how long you have until the report is finished. But it's a dirty trick – it will spontaneously start counting up again mid-report – infuriating users in the process.

Difficult to use.

In this modern day, intuitive software should be standard. Yet, an easy, enterprise software user interface is still hard to come by (this is starting to change, thank goodness). Regardless, Discoverer is not a tool created for the end user. It takes technical knowledge to create reports, dropping end users' needs to the back of a long IT queue. And when users receive reports, there's no easy way to drilldown into information to understand the data they are looking at. Often this results in more questions back to finance and more report requests to IT.



“SURELY YOU CAN’T BE SERIOUS...”

Frustrated business users aren't the only ones feeling the heat of Discoverer's downfalls. Add IT to the mix and the issues compound. Since Discoverer is an older tool, it's more than a challenge for IT to successfully write reports. Even finding the resources with the right technical knowledge is no easy feat.

More often than not, IT ends up delegating Discoverer responsibilities to a single soul who masters the skills. But when that person isn't in the office or goes on vacation – all bets are off.

And to be fair, an IT department that is spending hours building reports every day won't have the time and resources to spend on transformational projects like ERP upgrades or software integrations. It puts IT in a tough situation. And nobody puts baby in the corner.

Despite the hours, days, weeks even that IT spends writing reports for the business, users still can't interact with the reports the way they need to. They are then forced to do data dumps into Excel and create their own pivots. And we all know spreadsheets are the breeding ground for a host of problems – errors, data inconsistencies, user frustration, you name it.

"When you don't have anything,
you don't have anything to lose."



For years, the lifecycle plan for Discoverer has been very fickle. If you went online for clarity, you would have seen many different end dates that were consistently changing. But Oracle has finally placed a stake in the ground that users can no longer ignore.

As of June 2014, premium support for Discoverer completely ended. Since then, customers are being urged to move off of Discoverer by the end of 2015.



The actual retail price of your ERP investment is... likely a lot of money. So you deserve to have a deep understanding of all your options, not just the options that Oracle thinks you should have. Let's take a deeper look at your choices.





"SCREWS FALL OUT ALL THE TIME.
THE WORLD IS AN IMPERFECT PLACE."

Move to OBIEE?

Oracle has stated that they would like all Discoverer users to transition to OBIEE, their Business Intelligence (BI) solution. And many customers are. But it's important to know that the move from Oracle Discoverer to Oracle OBIEE is not a one to one comparison. Not even close.

OBIEE is a good product, but it's not built to be a transactional reporting tool for day-to-day ad hoc analysis. It provides a web platform for data with attractive dashboards, which are great for C-level needs, but if you are an accountant that needs to see the details within the data, OBIEE won't stack up. Since OBIEE is a data warehouse, businesses typically have to plan a year ahead to develop the structure of the reports they think they will need. How can you foresee that? As a dynamic business, you know that reporting needs are never one and done. Sometimes they change as much as daily. If this is the case, OBIEE won't be able to keep up.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

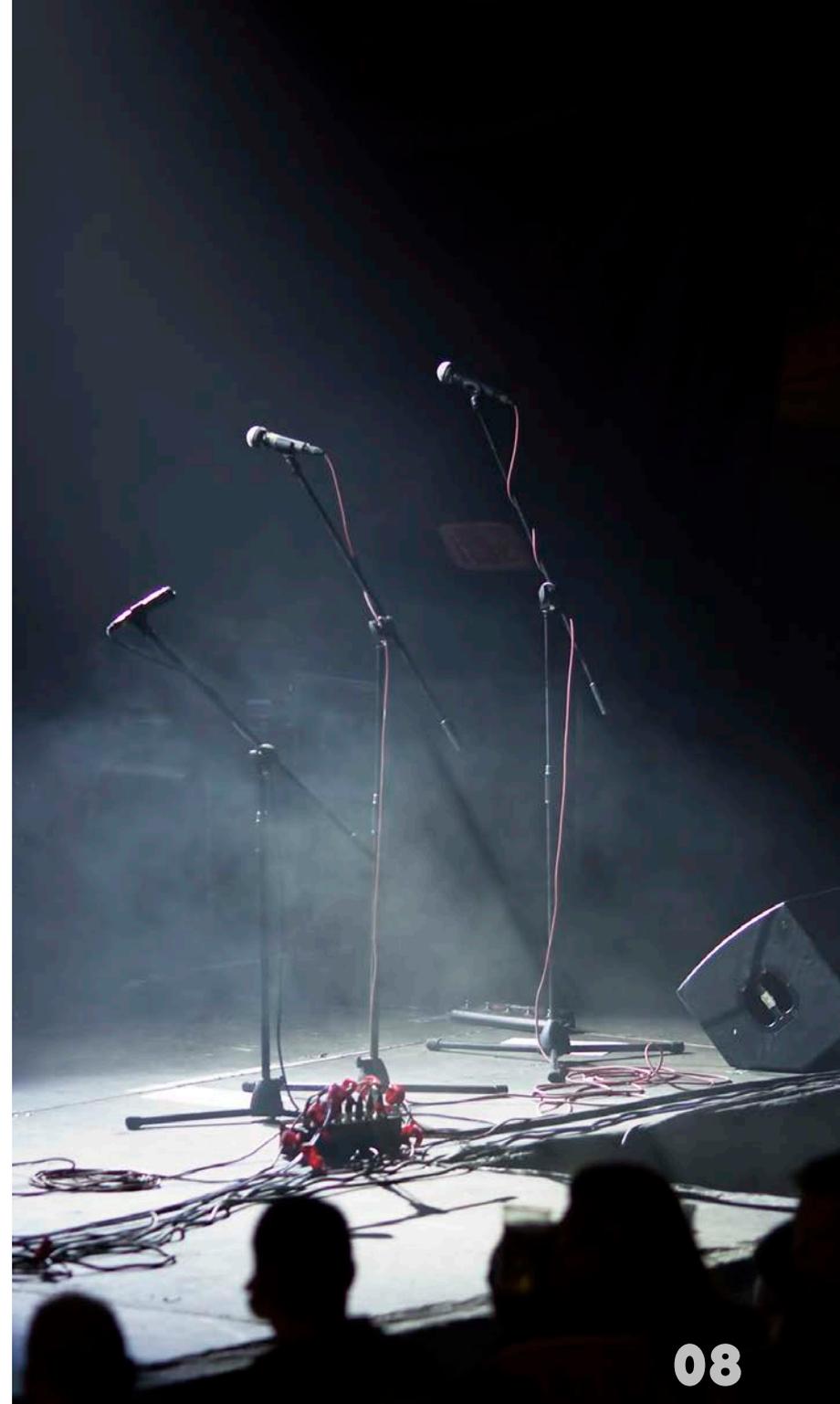
Stick with unsupported Discoverer?

For many people reading this today, the thought of having to switch ERP reporting tools is daunting. So, it comes as no surprise that some companies are actually considering staying with the outdated, unsupported tool instead of making any moves at all. ERP upgrading fears are endless and for some, seem far greater than the risk of remaining the same.

What if, during the transition, your business struggles to get the data they are used to? What if users can't get a hang of the new software and there is a steep learning curve? How much IT effort is it going to take? What about the implementation time?

This fear of the unknown has left a lot of companies stuck. But now, the risk of staying on Discoverer is becoming increasingly high. With premium support finished, it's clear that if you run into an issue with the product, Oracle will not be able to assist. This stalls you from upgrades or new software implementations for fright that it may break an unfixable system. Also, don't forget, if you are trying to use a 64-bit machine, and you only have a 34-bit install, then someone's in trouble.

Even though we know it can be painful to move on, you are doing your business a huge disservice by not replacing Discoverer. It's best to be proactive instead of reactive when things get extra dicey down the line.





“SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIEND”

Look for a third party tool?

Oracle has a way of convincing us into thinking that sticking with their stack of products is the only way to go. But it's like the equivalent of buying a vehicle and only ever getting it serviced at the dealership – there are businesses who specialize in repairing your line of car and can offer you faster, less expensive, and more efficient service.

There are a number of third party products out there that can help you report and analyze data. But many of them add an additional layer of software that needs to be managed – often creating more silos that are not attractive for IT to have to manage. Others can leave the business without the data they need to make fast business decisions. Hey, where's the beef?

But there are a few unique third-party tools that dedicate their business to your specific ERP frustrations, and instead of adding more problems, they create fast, end-user focused, easy-to-use software that is installed quickly and painlessly. But how do you weed out the so-so and find the gems? Keep reading for some tips.



“KNOWING IS HALF THE BATTLE”

What do people really want from a reporting tool? If Discoverer doesn't cut it for your business, then what is it that will? If you are in the market for a third-party reporting tool that can replace Discoverer, starting with these three things can help narrow down your search.

A Discoverer replacement reporting tool needs to be three things, it must be...

1. REAL-TIME.

This term is thrown around as loose as a talking mother goose these days. But when it comes to reporting, real-time is very important. Data warehouses can't keep up with the modern agility of the business. Needs and requests change so frequently, and the cube structure and load time of a data warehouse makes it impossible to react quickly to fluxes. If you are trying to close out the month-end, you don't have the time to wait for a four-hour load time to make decisions and move forward.



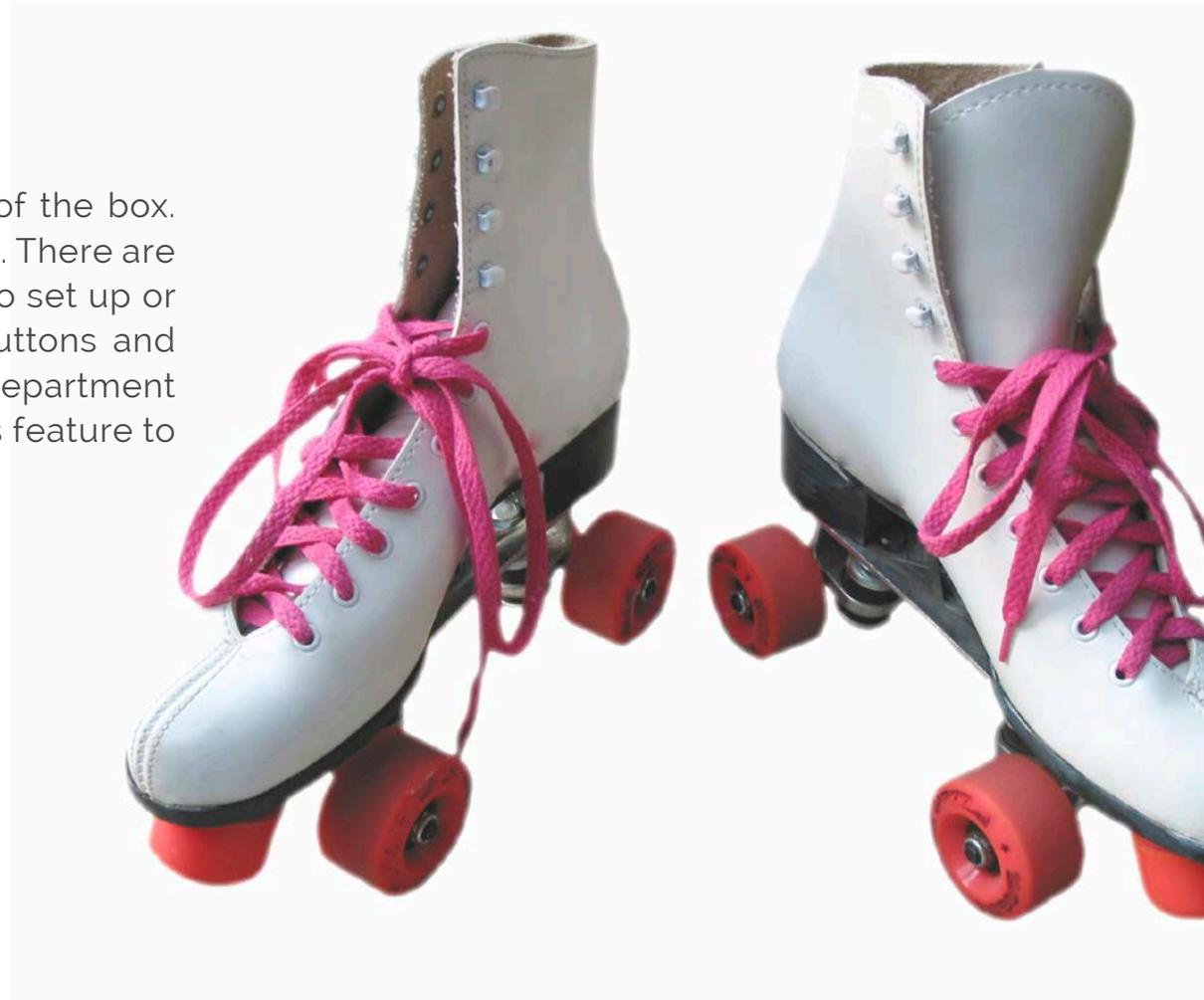


2 . FLEXIBLE

Organizations are only becoming more dynamic. A business user can request a query one day, and then the next day want to see something completely different. With IT developed reports, like Discoverer, it's impossible to alter reports easily unless you do a data dump. Instead, opt for a solution that isn't driven by technical know-how – so the business user can drill down, across, and sideways to understand their own data and change their views.

3 . SECURE

Most tools won't give you security out of the box. Having to build it yourself is complicated. There are third party reporting tools that require no set up or configuration – you just press a few buttons and off you go. If you want to save your IT department some time, looking for solutions with this feature to replace Discoverer is a must.



Autobots, roll out!

If you own Oracle Discoverer, the time to make a decision about your reporting roadmap is now. If after you read through this ebook, you are interested in pursuing a third party product, check Hubble out. Hubble was built to integrate with your ERP seamlessly. So this means you are up and running on the product very quickly, you can pull reports in real-time, and native security is brought over seamlessly. If you feel the need... the need for speed, Hubble has you covered. As an end user tool, you no longer have to worry

about your reporting tool being difficult to use or inflexible. We have over 900 customers, many of which migrated off Discoverer, and were amazed at how quickly they were able to switch over all their old reports and get users up and running.

Want to see how easy is it? Go ahead, make my day. [Request a demo now.](#)



Hubble® is an integrated suite of performance management apps from insightsoftware.com. It offers reporting, analytics and planning in a single real-time solution that fully understands your ERP. Hubble integrates your critical business systems so users at all levels have access to live data—extraordinarily fast. With this type of visibility, everyone can easily understand, manage and predict the business.

Quiz Answers

"Should I stay or should I go?" - Song by The Clash (Page 1)

"I meant to do that" - Eureka's Castle (Page 1)

"Roads? Where we're going, we don't need – roads" - Back to the Future (Page 3)

"Well feed me nails and call me rusty" - Perfect Strangers (Page 3)

"Surely you can't be serious" - Airplane (Page 5)

"Nobody puts baby in the corner" - Dirty Dancing (Page 5)

"When you don't have anything, you don't have anything to lose" - Sixteen Candles (Page 6)

"The actual retail price of" - The Price is Right (Page 6)

"Screws fall out all the time. The world is an imperfect place" - The Breakfast Club (Page 7)

"The final countdown" - Song by Europe (Page 8)

"Someone's in trouble" - Facts of Life (Page 8)

"Say hello to my little friend" - Scarface (Page 9)

"Where's the beef?" - Wendy's commercials (Page 9)

"Knowing is half the battle" - G.I. Joe (Page 10)

"Loose as a talking mother goose" - A famous toy (Page 11)

"Autobots, roll out!" - Transformers (Page 11)

"If you feel the need... the need for speed" - Top Gun (Page 11)

"Go ahead, make my day" - Sudden Impact (Page 11)

