Oracle® Retail Merchandise Financial Planning

Release Notes

Release 13.1.2.3

April 2010

Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning (MFP) is part of the Oracle Retail Predictive Planning Suite. MFP provides strategic and financial product planning functions. These functions support industry planning standards for preseason and in-season processes. Functions and processes that are a part of the MFP solution include:

- Setting and passing targets
- Creating a financial plan in a structured method
- Plan reconciliation
- Plan approval
- Plan maintenance
- Re-planning
- Plan monitoring

MFP Planning Process

The MFP Planning Process can be separated into two sub processes: pre-season planning and in-season planning. Pre-season planning focuses on creating the original plan against which to benchmark in-season progress. In the pre-season process, the plan is initialized by being seeded from either last year or adjusted last year. This seeding provides the user a curve of demand against which to spread the new plan. The user then plans sales, markdowns, receipts inventory, turn, and gross margin measures. The targets are passed to subsequent roles; Top Down passes to Middle Out, and Middle Out passes to Bottom Up. As targets are approved by superior levels, they are published to the subsequent level.

Once the plan period has begun, the process of in-season planning begins. The objective of in-season planning is to identify opportunity and risk for the original plan. This is accomplished by comparing the current plan to the original plan.

Overview of the Fashion Planning Bundle

The Fashion Planning Bundle is the integration of Item Planning (IP), Clearance Optimization Engine (COE), Assortment Planning (AP), Merchandise Financial Planning (MFP), and Size Profile Optimization (SPO) as a full-suite planning solution for fashion retailers.

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Hardware and Software Requirements

See the *MFP Cost Installation Guide* and *MFP Retail Installation Guide* for information about the following:

- Hardware and software requirements

- Oracle Retail application software compatibility information

Functional Enhancements

MFP 13.1.2.3 includes the following functional enhancements.

Simplified Top Down Target Settings Workbook

The Top Down workbook, which is now called the Top Down Target Settings workbook, has been significantly redesigned to simplify the process of creating strategic targets for the top down user.

The number of measures required to create the top down targets has been reduced to five. Optionally, a set of reference measures is available for top down users who want to validate their targets. In addition, there are now predefined measure profiles that top down users can use to compare their targets to the middle out plans as well as to the current or original plan.

Improved Tab, Worksheet, and Measure Profile Names

All tabs for each MFP role have been improved to align with the recommended preseason and in-season workflows. The number of worksheets in several tabs have been reduced significantly to simplify the workflow.

Specifically, the Summary and Review worksheets for each MFP role is now streamlined and further enhanced with predefined measure profiles.

Predefined Measure Profiles

MFP now includes several predefined measure profiles for many worksheets. The newly defined measure profiles represent how each of these worksheets is typically used. Each measure profile organizes the relevant measures in the most logical sequence. In addition, measures within a measure profile are grouped logically with separators for easier analysis.

Streamlined Variance Measures

In addition to the streamlined tabs, worksheets, and measure profiles, each worksheet now has all of the commonly used variance measures. This enhances the user's ability to compare and reconcile different versions of the plan and targets.

Renamed Calendar Hierarchy Dimension: Half

The Season dimension in the Calendar hierarchy has been renamed Half because this is a better representation of the financial planning process.

Updated Measures for Gross Margin Calculation

The measures for calculating gross margin have been updated. Gross margin calculation is now based on a cumulative markup percentage. Additionally, gross margin is now calculated based on sales net value added tax (VAT).

These enhancements affect the gross margin calculation for the middle out and bottom up users as well as the reference calculations for top down users.

Open To Buy Calculators for Net On Order

The Open To Buy (OTB) calculations for the middle out and bottom up users have been enhanced to use the Net On Order measures instead of the On Order measures.

Enhanced Seeding Options

Multiple enhancements have been added to the Seed Plan custom menu option for all three user roles.

Users can now choose to seed their plans from Last Year (Ly) or Adjusted Last Year (Adj Ly). Based on the selection, either the Ly or the Adj Ly version of history is used to populate the working plan.

The source of the last seeding action, along with the date seeded, is now stored and displayed for future reference. In any time in the future, users can see the seed source and time they had last seeded their plans.

Forecasting at Planning Levels

The preseason and in-season forecasting in MFP is now generated at the level at which the user plans. Forecasts for the top down user are generated at the division level. Forecasts for the middle out user are generated at the department level. Previous versions of MFP provided the lowest level forecasts aggregated to the level of each user.

Actuals Loaded in Current and Working Plans

The load rules have been enhanced so that all actuals are loaded for both the working plan (Wp) and current plan (Cp) versions for all three roles in MFP Retail and MFP Cost. As a result, the Cp in elapsed weeks always represents actuals. In future weeks, the Cp represents the plan last submitted. This ensures that the Cp is automatically synchronized with actuals, so that the user can monitor performance in the Cp.

Value Added Tax (VAT) Percentage and Sales Net VAT

Top down, middle out, and bottom up users can now plan the Sales Net VAT based on a centrally maintained VAT percentage. This impacts all gross margin calculations.

Simplified Inventory Planning

Both the middle out and bottom up users can get their receipt data by entering the Sales to Stock Ratio at any level of the Calendar hierarchy.

The measure interactions have been enhanced so that when the Sales to Stock Ratio measure is edited, the beginning of period (BOP) of each week is considered locked and the necessary receipts to achieve the desired Stock to Sales ratio is computed in the worksheet. The user can then review and edit more if desired.

Specialized Messages for Planning Actions

Every option in the Planning Actions custom menu now provides specific messages to assist the user in workflow.

When a Planning Action option is successfully executed, a specific confirmation message is displayed. When a Planning Action option is not executed, the user receives notification message.

Sales by Type

MFP users can now plan sales based on three classifications: regular, promotional, and clearance sales. There are contribution measures to analyze each sales type as a percentage of total sales and the relationship of the sales types to the planning key performance indicators.

The load process that interfaces with other Fashion Planning Bundle applications, such as Assortment Planning and Item Planning, has been enhanced so that the MFP targets from the bottom up user are published by sales type, and the submitted plans from other applications also align with the three sales types.

In a similar manner, markdowns are classified into promotional, clearance, and permanent markdowns. The necessary measures, interactions, and interfaces to other applications has been incorporated.

Internal Measures Removed from Workbooks

All available measures have been reviewed with respect to relevance to the specific step in the workflow. All internally used measures that are not relevant have been removed.

Approval to Original Plan Locking

A new administration workbook called Enable OP Approval has been provided to control when users are allowed to approve and update the original plan.

When middle out users try to approve bottom up plan to the current plan (Cp) and original plan (Op), the Op updates only if the Op lock is disabled. When the lock is enabled, only the Cp can be updated. This prevents users from inadvertently overriding their Op while in-season or without the appropriate authorization.

Data Interface Loaded to Only EOP

As it relates to weekly loading of actuals into MFP, the data interface and related scripts have been updated to ensure that only the end of period (EOP) data for each week is updated based on the load. The beginning of period (BOP) data for each week is computed based on the EOP of the last week.

Technical Enhancements

MFP 13.1.2.3 includes the following technical enhancements.

ODI Enabled Integration

Oracle Retail ODI Enabled Integration for the Fashion Planning Bundle is a set of packages that allows users to easily execute data transfers between Fashion Planning Bundle applications.

Oracle Retail ODI Enabled Integration leverages Oracle Data Integrator (ODI) to store information about data interfaces among Fashion Planning Bundle applications. ODI presents a user-friendly graphical interface for user-initiated data transfers and runtime monitoring. It also provides the ability to host application domains on different machines on a network, an ability not available with prior non-ODI integration strategies.

The Fashion Planning Bundle applications supported by this integration include Merchandise Financial Planning Retail (MFP Retail), Merchandise Financial Planning Cost (MFP Cost), Item Planning (IP), Item Planning Configured for COE (IP COE), Assortment Planning (AP), and Size Profile Optimization (SPO).

For more information on the version of ODI compatible with the Oracle Retail ODI Enabled Integration, see the *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial PlanningRetail Installation Guide* and the *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Cost Installation Guide*.

Commit ASAP for Planning Actions

RPAS 13.1.2 supports the ability to commit a workbook with the Commit ASAP option immediately following a Planning Action custom menu option. MFP leverages this capability in several Planning Actions custom menu options. For example, when targets are published or plans are submitted, the workbook is committed automatically and measures are copied to the relevant versions.

As a result, users do not have to explicitly perform a Commit ASAP operation after performing these planning actions.

Noteworthy Defect Fixes

The following defect fixes and enhancements are included in MFP 13.1.2.

Fixed Issue/Defect	Defect Number
The elapsed time lock now functions properly when working with multiple groups.	8557618

Known Issues

The following table contains issues that have been identified for the current release. Note that some known issues/defects do not yet have a defect number.

Known Issue/Defect	Defect Number
The integration scripts provided in previous releases of the Fashion Planning Bundle applications (MFP, AP, IP, IP COE, and SPO) are neither certified nor documented in this release. Please note, however, that the reinclusion of these scripts is in development for the Fashion Planning Bundle applications.	NA
In the Top Down Target Setting workbook, the Sales Contribution Analysis measure profile does not contain the Sales Contribution by Time and Sales Contribution by Product measures. This is due to an RPAS Configuration Tools defect. To view these measures, users must add them manually with the Show/Hide feature.	9404203
The last year measures are missing in the Top Down Target to Last Year measure profile in the Review Plan worksheet of the Top Down Target Setting workbook.	9496318
Due to a bug in RPAS 13.1.2.3, images are not visible in AP. A subsequent RPAS hot fix will be released with the fix. At that time, upgrade AP to that hot fix in order to view the images.	9198129

Related Documentation

For more information, see the following documents in the Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning 13.1.2.3 documentation set:

- *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Retail Installation Guide*

- *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Cost Installation Guide*

- *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Retail User Guide*

- *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Cost User Guide*

- *Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Operations Guide*

For more information about the Fashion Planning Bundle applications see the following documentation sets:

- Oracle Retail Item Planning documentation

- Oracle Retail Item Planning Configured for COE documentation

- Oracle Retail Clearance Optimization Engine documentation

- Oracle Retail Assortment Planning documentation

- Oracle Retail Size Profile Optimization documentation

For more information about RPAS and the ODI Enabled Integration, see the following documentation sets:

- Oracle Retail ODI Enabled Integration documentation

- Oracle Data Integrator documentation

- Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server documentation

Previous Releases

For additional information on previous Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning release enhancements and additional information, refer to the release notes and documentation that accompany the previous releases.

Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning Release Notes, Release 13.1.2.3

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