Oracle® Retail Predictive Application Server
Release Notes
Release 13.0

April 2008

ORACLE®

Oracle® Retail Predictive Application Server Release Notes, Release 13.0

Value-Added Reseller (VAR) Language

(i) the software component known as **ACUMATE** developed and licensed by Lucent Technologies Inc. of Murray Hill, New Jersey, to Oracle and imbedded in the Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server – Enterprise Engine, Oracle Retail Category Management, Oracle Retail Item Planning, Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning, Oracle Retail Advanced Inventory Planning and Oracle Retail Demand Forecasting applications.

(ii) the **MicroStrategy** Components developed and licensed by MicroStrategy Services Corporation (MicroStrategy) of McLean, Virginia to Oracle and imbedded in the MicroStrategy for Oracle Retail Data Warehouse and MicroStrategy for Oracle Retail Planning & Optimization applications.

(iii) the **SeeBeyond** component developed and licensed by Sun MicroSystems, Inc. (Sun) of Santa Clara, California, to Oracle and imbedded in the Oracle Retail Integration Bus application.

(iv) the **Wavelink** component developed and licensed by Wavelink Corporation (Wavelink) of Kirkland, Washington, to Oracle and imbedded in Oracle Retail Store Inventory Management.

(v) the software component known as **Crystal Enterprise Professional and/or Crystal Reports Professional** licensed by Business Objects Software Limited ("Business Objects") and imbedded in Oracle Retail Store Inventory Management.

(vi) the software component known as **Access Via™** licensed by Access Via of Seattle, Washington, and imbedded in Oracle Retail Signs and Oracle Retail Labels and Tags.

(vii) the software component known as **Adobe Flex™** licensed by Adobe Systems Incorporated of San Jose, California, and imbedded in Oracle Retail Promotion Planning & Optimization application.

(viii) the software component known as **Style Report™** developed and licensed by InetSoft Technology Corp. of Piscataway, New Jersey, to Oracle and imbedded in the Oracle Retail Value Chain Collaboration application.

(ix) the software component known as **WebLogic™** developed and licensed by BEA Systems, Inc. of San Jose, California, to Oracle and imbedded in the Oracle Retail Value Chain Collaboration application.

(x) the software component known as **DataBeacon™** developed and licensed by Cognos Incorporated of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, to Oracle and imbedded in the Oracle Retail Value Chain Collaboration application.

Preface

A Release Notes document can include some or all of the following sections, depending upon the release:

- Overview of the release
- Functional, technical, integration, and/or performance enhancements
- Assumptions
- Fixed and/or known issues/defects

Because of their brevity, Release Notes do not include chapters, appendices, or a table of contents.

Audience

Release Notes are a critical communication link between Oracle Retail and its retailer clients. There are four audiences in general for whom a Release Notes document is written:

- Retail clients who wish to understand the contents of this release.
- Integrators and implementation staff who have the overall responsibility for implementing Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server into their enterprise.
- Business analysts who are looking for high-level functional information about this release.
- System analysts and system operation personnel who are looking for high-level functional and technical content related to this release.

Related Documents

For more information, see the following documents in the Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Release 13.0 documentation set:

- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Installation Guide*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Administration Guide*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Configuration Tools User Guide*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Configuration Tools Online Help*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server User Guide*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Online Help*
- *Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server Licensing Information*

Customer Support

https://metalink.oracle.com

When contacting Customer Support, please provide the following:

- Product version and program/module name
- Functional and technical description of the problem (include business impact)
- Detailed step-by-step instructions to re-create
- Exact error message received
- Screen shots of each step you take

Review Patch Documentation

For a base release (".0" release, such as 13.0), Oracle Retail strongly recommends that you read all patch documentation before you begin installation procedures. Patch documentation can contain critical information related to the base release, based on new information and code changes that have been made since the base release.

Oracle Retail Documentation on the Oracle Technology Network

In addition to being packaged with each product release (on the base or patch level), all Oracle Retail documentation is available on the following Web site:

http://www.oracle.com/technology/documentation/oracle_retail.html

Documentation should be available on this Web site within a month after a product release. Note that documentation is always available with the packaged code on the release date.

Conventions

Navigate: This is a navigate statement. It tells you how to get to the start of the procedure and ends with a screen shot of the starting point and the statement "the Window Name window opens."

> **Note:** This is a note. It is used to call out information that is important, but not necessarily part of the procedure.

```
This is a code sample
    It is used to display examples of code
```

A hyperlink appears like this.

Release Notes

Overview

The Oracle Retail Predictive Solutions are a set of products used for generating forecasts, developing trading plans, and analyzing customer behavior. These products use predictive technology to examine historical data and to predict future behavior.

The Oracle Retail Predictive Solutions run from a common platform called the Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server (RPAS) that includes features such as:

- Add a 1 point border around partial screen shots (see below).
- Multidimensional databases
- Hierarchical data (product, time, and business location hierarchies)
- Aggregation and spreading of data
- Workbooks and worksheets for displaying and manipulating data
- Wizards for creating and formatting workbooks and worksheets
- Menus, quick menus, and toolbars
- Exception management and user-friendly alerts

RPAS 13.0

The primary objective of the RPAS 13.0 release is to provide high-impact, non-invasive features that not only support the seamless upgrade of existing customers to this version, but also enable additional services provided by Oracle.

Release Information

The following table provides information about the current release.

Release Information	Details
Code Cut Off Date	January 31, 2008
Supported OS, Server and Compilers	Sun Solaris 9: gcc 4.1.1 AIX 5.3 (TL5 or greater): gcc 4.1.1 HP-UX 11.23 (Itanium): aCC 6.15 Oracle Enterprise Linux 5: gcc3.4.6
Supported OS, Client	Windows NT, XP, 2000
Required 3rd Party Software	JRE 1.5 (installed on client and server machines)

> **Note for HPUX, AIX and Solaris Customers:** The libz.sl/libz.so is required by RPAS. The PATH environment variable should also include the directory in which it is located on the server. The environment variable for shared libraries is LD_LIBRARY_PATH for Solaris, LIBPATH for AIX, and SHLIB_PATH for HPUX. This shared library typically comes pre-installed on AIX and Solaris operating systems; however, it does not come installed on HPUX servers and is not part of the standard C library. Libz.sl/libz.so may be obtained by contacting your Operating System customer representative.

Functional Enhancements

Image Display in the RPAS Client

The ability to view images associated with specific positions is critical for assortment planning and may also be useful for other activities such as store planning. As part of the system configuration process, a workbook and specific dimensions for any non-calendar hierarchy may be enabled for image display. When image display is enabled, the user may:

- View an image associated with a chosen position.
- Compare images associated with two or more positions.
- Scroll through images of positions visible on the grid without having to bring up image displays for each of those positions individually.
- If permitted by the template, save, replace or remove the image associated with a chosen position.

A configuration and backend process may also be used to support the load of image paths for one or more positions of a dimension at a time. The paths of the images should be stored in a measure called "r_images_<dimension name>" where "<dimension name>" should be replaced with the RPAS name of the image-enabled dimension (e.g., "r_images_sku" if loading image paths for the "sku" dimension). This measure is single-dimensional, defined on the image enabled dimension. An .ovr file is required with position names and the image paths for those positions formatted according to the RPAS measure load formats. The loadMeasure utility is then used to load this data into the domain.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Configuration Tools User Guide* and the "Position Images" section in the *RPAS User Guide* for more information on Image Display.

More Robust Elapsed Time Handling in Workbooks

Many RPAS models will cover a time horizon where some of the time periods are in the past, and other periods are in the future. There is special logic for handling such models; in particular, the manner in which time periods that are in the past (referred to as "elapsed periods") affect spreading and the measure modifications. The bottom level time period, which is the latest elapsed period, is set through a rule.

RPAS assumes that time periods that are elapsed contain actuals, and that these actuals should not be editable. Therefore, all measures cannot be edited during elapsed periods. For positions at aggregated levels in a time hierarchy, the position is only elapsed when the last bottom level time period descended from it has elapsed.

RPAS allows you to change the elapsed threshold after a workbook is built using the workbook refresh or calculation processes. Using the elapsed threshold measure r_elapsed from a refresh or calc rule group, users can modify the elapsed threshold and avoid rebuilding their workbooks. In order to take advantage of this feature, you need to modify the workbook configuration such that the corresponding refresh or calc rule group contains a rule for updating the r_elapsed measure. This scalar measure should be included in a workbook so that it can be edited directly, or so that it is calculated or refreshed as an effect of editing other measures. At the end of the calc or refresh cycle, the RPAS Server inspects the elapsed threshold for any change. Any changes to the elapsed threshold are passed to the RPAS Client, which then reloads the new set of position locks.

In summary, this feature:

- Provides a configurable and automatic mechanism to update elapsed time data locks in workbooks.
- Removes the need for the user to rebuild workbooks due to stale data locks.
- Allows for elapsed time data locks to be updated through the execution of refresh and calc rules.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Configuration Tools User Guide* for more information on Elapsed Period Locking.

Oracle User Interface Standards

The "Swan" user interface is a set of user interface definitions designed by Oracle. These interface definitions create a consistent interface for Oracle products and an improved user interface for application users. The Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server client has been updated to use the "Swan" color palette and fonts. In Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server, the following changes were made:

- The default read-only grid background color has changed from gray to white.
- The default writable grid background color changed from white to light blue.

This is a visible change to default read/write field colors for retailers upgrading from versions of RPAS prior to 13.0.

Technical Enhancements

Single Sign-On Enablement

RPAS can be enabled to use Oracle Application Server Single Sign-On (SSO). SSO is a component of Oracle Identity Management. In an SSO environment, a user signs on once with user name and password during a Web browser session. The SSO server authenticates the user, and this SSO identity is propagated to each SSO-enabled application used within the same browser session.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Installation Guide* and the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

> **Note:** Please refer to the Known Issues section at the end of these Release Notes for information on a defect related to SSO.

Integration with Oracle Retail Workspace (ORW)

Oracle Retail [application] can be integrated with Oracle Retail Workspace (ORW). The integration between these applications is discretionary, and no data flows between the applications. ORW provides a single point of access to the Oracle Retail applications used by your business. It also provides an integrated platform that can display operational and analytical information from multiple sources. ORW functionality provides single sign-on, central launch, role-based security, user management and retailer-specific customization capabilities. ORW also provides a kit and instructions for dashboard development. For more information, see the Oracle Retail Workspace documentation.

Oracle Configuration Manager

Oracle Configuration Manager is an optional configuration data collector that provides continuous tracking of key Oracle and system configuration settings for machines on which it is installed. This tool collects configuration details for customer environments and uploads them to a repository that is viewable through the Software Configuration Manager Metalink Web site. The OCM collector is optionally installed as part of your application installation.

Using Oracle Configuration Manager can reduce a retailer's support costs by providing extra configuration information that otherwise requires a phone call or e-mail correspondence.

> **Note:** Sensitive configuration information (such as passwords) is not included in Oracle Configuration Manager collection.

The first OCM collector distribution that will be aware of the Oracle Retail applications is in Oracle development. For more information, see your application's Installation Guide.

Java 1.5 (5) Support

RPAS 13.0 requires Java 1.5. The 11.0, 11.1, 12.0 and 12.1 versions of RPAS currently support Java 1.4. A new environment variable value is required in the PATH variable:

- Variable Value: path to the root of the Java client directory (e.g., /Java/jre1.5.0_14/bin/client;)

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Installation Guide* for more information.

Operating System Certifications

The following Operating System Certifications have been completed for this release:

- AIX 5.3
- SUN Solaris 9
- HP 11.23 Itanium
- Oracle Enterprise Linux 5
- Windows NT, XP, Vista
  - Client-only certification
  - RPAS server support provided solely for prototyping purposes

> **Note:** Certification on SUN Solaris 10 is planned for the RPAS 13.0.1 patch.

New RPAS Procedures

RPAS has added several new procedures that may be configured in any RPAS solution.

- **RankSort**

  Returns the rank of intersections given the rank order (ascending or descending), the measure to rank upon and the dimensions to rank over.

- **transformSum**

  Converts data across hierarchies using sum aggregation.

- **transformMax**

  Converts data across hierarchies using max aggregation.

- **transformOr**

  Converts data across hierarchies using or aggregation.

- **transformProp**

  Converts data across hierarchies using proportional spreading.

- **transformEven**

  Converts data across hierarchies using even spreading.

- **transformRepl**

  Converts data across hierarchies using replicate spreading.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Configuration Tools User Guide* for more information on the usage of these procedures.

Buffer Size Enhancements

RPAS now allows the specification of an absolute minimum size for the buffer of a dimension. If both the minimum buffer size and buffer minimum percentage are defined, the dimension is re-buffered to generate the appropriate buffer positions based on the higher value.

For example, on a dimension with 100 currently in-use positions, if the minimum and maximum percentages were 10% and 20%, then about 15 available buffer positions would be created. If a minimum buffer size of 25 is defined, then the dimension would get re-buffered to have 25 positions since that is the larger value. However, if the dimension then grew to 200 current in-use positions, the percentage target would grow to 30 buffer positions, and the 25 position minimum would no longer be relevant. The primary advantage to the new minimum buffer size is that it works well for dimensions which have very few current positions (or even none).

The new minimum buffer size can be set in one of following ways:

- A new optional field is supported in the hierarchy.xml file at domain creation time as shown below:

  <buffer_size_min>20</buffer_size_min>

- Using the –minBufferSize command with the dimensionMgr utility

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

dimensionMgr Utility Enhancements

dimensionMgr utility enhancements have been implemented to provide improved support for dimension buffering, Dynamic Position Maintenance (DPM), translation, and new image-viewing capabilities:

- The output of the -specs command now indicates whether DPM is enabled.
- The -enableDPM command allows the updating of a domain to enable DPM on a particular dimension.
- The -enableTranslation <width> command allows dimensions in a multi-lingual domain to be updated to allow the loading of translated labels.
- The -minBufferSize command can impose an absolute minimum for the buffer of a dimension.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

Java Special Expression API

The Java Special Expression API is a work in progress, and the interfaces are not yet stable and will not be supported in the future. All code written against this interface may have to be re-factored in the future

Integration Enhancements

Comma Separated Value (CSV) Flat File Format for Data Load and Export

RPAS now provides the ability to load and export data using the CSV format in addition to the existing support for flat files in fixed formats. This ability:

- Reduces the size of the data files by eliminating the unnecessary blank characters needed in the fixed format.
- Allows for the faster loading of input files since it reduces the required amount of I/O.
- Includes support for reducing the size of the data files by providing a compressed representation for repeated measure values.
- Includes enhancements to the loadMeasure and loadHier utilities.
- Includes new utilities (exportHier and exportMeasure) that provide support for the export of hierarchy and measure data in CSV flat file format.
- Includes support for exporting data at an aggregated level or the level lower than the base intersection of the measure.

exportHier Utility

exportHier is a command-line utility that may be used to export all the positions in a hierarchy, including rollup relationships, from RPAS. By default, the utility assumes that the file will have a CSV flat file format with fixed width format as an optional argument. The utility will export all hierarchy positions, but the file may be specified to include only formal or informal positions. The resulting file will have a .dat extension.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

exportMeasure Utility

exportMeasure is a command-line utility that may be used to export domain or workbook measure data from RPAS in either CSV or fixed width file format. A single measure, or multiple measures, may be exported based a specified intersection. If the measure's base intersection is not the same as the export intersection, the measure's default aggregation method will be used to aggregate data to an intersection higher than base, or replication will be used for spreading measure data if the data is required at an intersection lower than base. exportMeasure also allows a simple compression method that can skip duplicated values line by line. This utility:

- Supports export data in a user specified range, which can be a single mask measure, or a range specified on Calendar dimension, or a combination of the two.
- Supports multiple processes for better performance in a global domain environment.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

loadHier Utility Enhancements

loadHier has been enhanced to support the load of hierarchy data into RPAS using a CSV or fixed width flat file format. The utility has also been enhanced to allow a simple compression method that can skip duplicated values line by line. Due to the compression algorithms used in the CSV format, the -nosort option will automatically be activated when CSV is detected. To use a CVS (Comma Separated Value) formatted file to load hierarchy data, place ".csv" before the file extension (e.g., "calendar.csv.dat").

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

loadMeasure Utility Enhancements

loadMeasure has been enhanced to support the load of measure data into RPAS using a CSV or fixed width flat file format. The utility has also been enhanced to allow a simple compression method that can skip duplicated values line by line. To use a CVS (Comma Separated Value) formatted file to load measure data, place ".csv" before the file extension (e.g., "rsal.csv.ovr").

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

Re-using Aggregate RPAS Reporter Tool Queries

Aggregated results from previous RPAS Reporter Tool (ODBC driver) queries against a global domain or workbook are stored and are available for reuse. Aggregation results are stored by the user in the master domain in a folder called AggregateDatastore. Database and array names are constructed from measure names and the corresponding intersection at which data is stored. Aggregations are maintained throughout the life of a connection. At its termination, each connection cleans up all the aggregate data generated during its life time.

> **Note:** See the *RPAS Administration Guide* for more information.

Known Issues/Defects

The following table contains issues or defects for the current release.

Known Issue/Defect	Defect Number
For SSO support with the Web Launch application, you must download the required package via Metalink, reference patch number 6963869.	6963869