

San José State University

Leveraging the Familiarity and Power of Microsoft® Excel® PivotTables for Ad Hoc Query, Analysis and Reporting on Oracle® OLAP Data

Product

MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Customer



Customer Environment

Database: Oracle Database 11g Enterprise Edition, Release 2 **Client PC:** Desktop and notebook PCs running various editions of Microsoft Windows – from XP Pro 32-bit to Windows 7 64-bit – with Microsoft Excel 2007

About MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is an easy to install driver for your PC that utilizes the MDX query language. It directly connects familiar applications like Microsoft Excel to your Oracle OLAP database for powerful ad hoc query and analysis. Learn more or download a free evaluation at www.simba.com/oracle.

About Simba

Simba Technologies Inc. is the recognized world leader in standards-based data access products and solutions. Simba works with leading companies globally to deliver first class data connectivity solutions. Simba is an industry pioneer in relational and multi-dimensional data connectivity, as well as MDX query language technology. For more information, visit www.simba.com.

“Many of my students are business students, without relational database and SQL skills, though they are typically average to advanced Excel users. Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP makes it incredibly easy for them to directly use Excel to explore multi-dimensional Oracle data, and perform deep ad hoc query, analysis and reporting with full PivotTables functionality and complete Microsoft Office integration.”

- Dr. Ashraf Shirani, Professor of MIS
San José State University

Lucas Graduate School of Business at San José State University (<http://www.sjsu.edu/lucasschool/>) offers a course in Business Intelligence (BI) within its MBA programs. The course objective is to introduce students to concepts, methods, technologies and applications of BI in enterprise performance management and decision support.

Professor Ashraf Shirani, the course architect and instructor, planned the course to introduce a number of BI tools and technologies. The objective is for students to learn to choose appropriate technologies and use them in making informed business decisions. Students also gain an understanding of the value that BI brings to business.

The course contains OLAP concepts and hands-on components to explore, analyze and present multi-dimensional data. Many of the students begin this course without an in-

depth understanding of the various database technologies that empower BI. However, they typically do have good Microsoft Excel skills. Hence, Professor Shirani chose Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP so his students could use Excel to explore and analyze Oracle OLAP data.

As a ubiquitous tool in business, Excel is most appropriate for answering business users' queries and slicing and dicing multi-dimensional data. Using relational, non-OLAP tools often requires more effort and time to formulate and answer the same queries. Excel is familiar, widely available and integrates well with the rest of the Microsoft Office suite and a number of third-party applications for advanced, dashboard-like reporting and presentation capabilities. Furthermore, Excel PivotTables provide robust cross-tab functionality to comprehensively present data, which would enable students to perform complex analytics. Professor Shirani

MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Benefits:

- ✓ Enables direct, live connectivity from Microsoft Excel to Oracle Database OLAP Option
- ✓ No mid-tier server needed
- ✓ Fully integrated with Microsoft Excel
- ✓ Entire solution consists of an easy-to-install, client-side driver
- ✓ Easy to deploy and maintain
- ✓ Fully secure, using Oracle-level security
- ✓ Low cost
- ✓ Requires no training
- ✓ Eliminates spreadmarts
- ✓ Enables easy, integrated reporting with entire Microsoft Office Suite
- ✓ Added support for other standards-based multi-dimensional BI tools in addition to Excel
- ✓ Leverages the tools you have without the need to purchase, learn and support new products

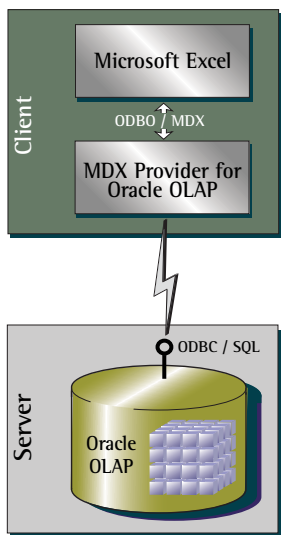


Figure 1: MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP Architecture

Oracle is the #1 Database in the World.

Excel is the #1 Business Intelligence / Analytics Tool in the World.

Simba brings Oracle and Excel together.

uses Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP to teach how to directly connect Microsoft Excel PivotTables to Oracle Database 11g cubes.

MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is a simple, client-side driver that enables direct and secure Excel to Oracle data connectivity. The solution utilizes Simba's standards-based MDX 2005 query language technology, providing users with an unprecedented level of functionality and access to their Oracle data cubes. Simba's solution differs from a typical Excel spreadsheet add-in in that it provides direct Excel to Oracle connectivity without the need to load data into a mid-tier. The result is a fast, secure and native Excel connection to a user's Oracle OLAP data that helps reduce 'spreadmarts' and provides a single version of the truth.

Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP provides the simple and direct Excel to Oracle connectivity solution that Professor Shirani sought for his BI course. Deploying the solution was easy and quick since the solution consists of a single driver installed on each student's machine.

Using the solution, students are able to directly connect to their Oracle data cube, query and analyze data, and prepare sophisticated reports using the familiar cross-tab functionality native

within Excel. No additional training is needed. Furthermore, no expensive mid-tier server connecting Excel to Oracle is required.

The solution's ease-of-use and simplicity enables the students to focus on learning about the concepts, tools and practical applications of BI within business, rather than focusing on the technicalities of how to gain access to their data.

Based upon the industry-standard MDX query language specification, Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP also supports other multi-dimensional BI tools in addition to Excel. As students progress through the course, they gain the option to use additional multi-dimensional BI tools to hone their skills at generating effective business intelligence.