

CDM for Narrative Performance Reporting

Collaborative report production management—
combining numbers with narrative

OVERVIEW

Many companies have experienced growing pains in recent years with internal reporting and disclosure processes because of increasing data volumes and heavier demands from management teams and stakeholders. To produce any number of these required reports in different departments across the organization, contributors commonly work in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Hours are spent manually copying and pasting data from source systems or disparate spreadsheets, and then passing these files back and forth over insecure channels, such as email, until the reports are complete.

Certent CDM is a secure, collaborative, enterprise-scalable reporting and process automation platform for recurring, multi-author reports and presentations—helping companies meet a growing list of internal reporting demands with speed and confidence. It enables users to collect enterprise data

Highlights

- Merges enterprise data with narrative analysis in a controlled, auditable environment
- Creates dynamic reports that update automatically when numbers change in underlying data sources
- Automates manual “copy and paste” processes
- Enhances security, control, and governance for recurring, multi-author reports and presentations
- Generates high-value documents in various output formats, including management books, KPI reports and regulatory reports with XBRL tags
- Supports both cloud and on-premises deployment options

from different sources and merge it with narrative analysis in a controlled, auditable environment—and it enables finance teams to create dynamic reports that update automatically when the numbers change in underlying data sources.

A “single version of the truth” for departmental and enterprise operations

Business leaders and managers need real-time data along with focused narrative analysis to communicate effectively with their stakeholders and to make better strategic decisions. Yet, because of an overreliance on general-purpose tools and manual processes, many companies struggle with creating timely, accurate reports that marry quantitative data with qualitative analysis. In addition, most companies don’t have an efficient, effective way to ensure data consistency throughout their business intelligence, budgeting and planning applications as well as management and performance reports. This leads to a lack of confidence in the data, which can have a direct impact on an organization’s ability to respond quickly to risks or take advantage of market opportunities.

Certent CDM automates the assembly of business intelligence and performance management data with a single reporting solution, ensuring that there is a single version of the truth at all levels of the organization. For example, in the finance organization, corporate and entitylevel professionals can combine business intelligence with valuable performance management data and insights from throughout the company to produce a holistic picture of business performance and greatly improve the strategic decision-making process.

“The more time we can give back to our analysts to do real analysis, rather than just crunching numbers, the more value we can add to the business.”

Head of Group Reporting,
easyJet

Intelligent process design and automation

Poorly designed performance management processes present obstacles to achieving consensus in business decision making, often leading to less than optimal outcomes. Many daily processes suffer from multiple bottlenecks related to data access—preventing highly paid professionals from working efficiently and effectively. An overreliance on uncontrolled spreadsheets and email can lead to material errors in reports, offer no audit trail, and force the finance team to rely on complex manual processes to ensure that reports are up to date and correct.

With Certent CDM, users can create and enforce intelligent processes with integrated controls, compliance checklists and full visibility into each step of the process. Workflow and process dashboards help managers identify bottlenecks and



refocus resources quickly. Standardizing processes throughout the organization—and using a single version of the data—minimizes debate over whose numbers are correct and speeds the process of reaching consensus, which means being able to react quickly to risks or take advantage of new opportunities.

Enhanced controls and reduced risk across operations

There are material risks associated with many of the traditional processes performed daily by teams responsible for legal reporting, tax, treasury, financial planning analysis (FP&A), budgeting, and external reporting. Certent CDM reduces these risks with controls, security, data validation, and robust audit trail reporting for documents in **Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word** and **Microsoft PowerPoint**. The ability to quickly identify audit trail reports and control mechanisms can save auditors from having to perform costly tests and inspections of these processes to ensure that the proper checks and validations have been completed at the end of each reporting period.

Integrated research for compliance and peer analysis

Data has moved beyond the point of manual tracking, and disclosures are only getting longer and more complicated. Be it a public or private company, the need to leverage publicly-available information for compliance and peer analysis has never been greater. Certent CDM is the only solution that offers a research function integrated into the reporting solution that provides quick access to over 35 million pieces of searchable content including regulatory filings (EDGAR/SEDAR), 11 newswire providers, and accounting standards to help companies manage their disclosure compliance, benchmarking, and technical compliance needs.

“CDM has reduced the time taken to create annual reports by 40 percent on average. The time savings and quality improvements that we have achieved are directly contributing to a reduction in operating expenses.”

Business Specialist
– Finance, Folksam

Deploy on the cloud to lower cost and risk—and speed time to value

Companies can reduce their time to value and lower adoption costs with the subscription-based cloud offering for Certent CDM. The availability of cloud deployment enables you to choose the best delivery mechanism for your corporate environment—without sacrificing capabilities or limiting future deployment options. When you deploy on cloud, you can add users as needed while minimizing the costs related to capital equipment, software licenses and IT infrastructure. You also gain benefits in cost accounting by shifting costs from capital to operating expenses.

CERTENT CDM FEATURES

Certent CDM enables teams throughout an organization to:

- **Marry qualitative narrative analysis with enterprise data.** Combine financial and operational data from a variety of sources with in-depth analysis for narrative performance reporting.
- **Link report data directly to enterprise data sources.** Create dynamic reports that update automatically when the numbers change in underlying data sources—ensuring a single, consistent version of the truth.
- **Configure and enforce intelligent processes.** Drive process consistency and automate many manual processes in reporting and in the financial close.
- **Enable controlled collaboration.** Rely on a single, secure, enterprise-scalable solution for recurring, multi-author reports and presentations. Let multiple users view and edit reports simultaneously without causing versioning problems.
- **Employ workflow and task management capabilities.** Gain insight into critical performance management and reporting processes through dashboards and alerts.
- **Optimize controls and auditability.** Standardize review and validation procedures and ensure they are performed at each level of the organization—from department to business entity to corporate headquarters.
- **Enhance security over sensitive data and reports.** Power a comprehensive set of internal security features with secure, user-based logins to prevent data leaks and insider trading.
- **Leverage the intuitive user interface of Microsoft Office.** Take advantage of staff expertise with the calculation capabilities of Microsoft Excel and formatting in Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint, while utilizing the additional functionality and capabilities of an enterprise solution.
- **Integrate with CPM solutions such as Certent CDM TM1 and Planning Analytics.** Update your financial statements automatically and manage last minute changes quickly.
- **Deploy on cloud.** Speed time to value and lower adoption costs with cloud-based hosting and consulting services.
- **Integrate research and peer analysis.** Leverage over 35 million pieces of searchable content for disclosure effectiveness and accounting standards compliance. Simplify benchmarking against peers, competitors, or acquisition targets.

CONCLUSION

Certent CDM enables companies to create the reports they need while reducing the risks, costs and data inaccuracies that often plague the entire organization. By integrating financial and business intelligence operations, Certent CDM can transform report production, making processes more efficient and effective, while ensuring data accuracy.

Help your team gain the insights they need to deliver better decision support, and drive better performance in today's fast moving marketplace.



Get in touch

Visit us online at www.certent.com

Write us at hello@certent.com

About Certent

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