

THE TIME IS NOW TO CREATE YOUR E-BUSINESS SUITE ROADMAP

There is plenty of life left in the E-Business Suite, say Marc Caruso, Data Intensity's Chief Technology Officer, and 20-year Oracle DBA and Applications DBA Oleg Pyatnychko Caruso and Pyatnychko in a recent webinar. They point out that E-Business Suite's older 12.1 and 12.2 releases have been extended until 2021 and 2023, and the upcoming 12.3 release will ensure at least eight more years of support following its expected 2018 debut.

Because Oracle has extended support for the E-Business Suite, it's time to map out a fresh approach to your E-Business applications based on where they fit, what hardware they're running on, your cloud strategy, and new functionalities they provide.

Key to-dos for Release 12.1.3 E-Business Suite users

If you are on 12.1.3 and plan to stay there, implement these four steps:

- **Apply Recommended Patch Collection 5.** This release full of important fixes and improvements came out in September 2016. It will bring your 12.1 implementation up to date.
- **Use database version 11.20.4 or higher.** That's because it is the only supported release of 11i.
- **Make sure you have a browser and JRE compatibility roadmap.** Having a roadmap that accounts for Windows 10 and IE 11 is important for maintaining compatibility.
- **Keep current with Oracle CPUs.** Falling more than two CPU cycles can trigger compliance issues. Schedule testing cycles at least once a year for peace of mind.

New 12.2.6 features may make it an attractive upgrade

12.2.6 shipped in September 2016 with hundreds of functional improvements including subscription billing capabilities, outcome-driven procurement and information discovery. And it introduced WebLogic for all Java components. But online patching is probably the biggest news for the many true 24 x 7 customers who have long urged Oracle to take that step. But, be aware of tradeoffs.



They include a three-time increase in application tier storage capacity and large database growth ranging from 5% to 25%. Data Intensity offers guidance on how to prepare for the online patching feature.

Software Release Implications

The 12.2.6 release also introduces testing automation products that make it easier to go through change and release cycles. Mobile enhancements via 25 smartphone applications allow simplified workflow and both time and expense entry.

Users already on 12.2 and considering the 12.2.6 release should know that:

- A lot of user interface improvements were introduced with 12.2.6, including touchscreen capability.
- And there are important AD and TXK RUP patches (R12 AD.C.Delta 8 Patch 21841299 and R12.TXK.C.Delta.8 – Patch 21830810) that you don't want to get behind on.

With 12.2.6 comes news of modules that are no longer supported:

- Daily Business Intelligence
- Balanced Scorecard
- Embedded Data Warehouse

Also, these 10G product line technologies have been put out to pasture:

- SSO 10G
- OID 10G
- BPEL 10G
- Portal 10G

Infrastructure and technical management considerations should be part of planning

Factor in infrastructure and technical management issues when doing E-Business Suite lifecycle planning. For instance, when moving to 12.2, you will surely require additional storage capacity. But you can offset that need by leveraging snapshots, deduplication and thin provisioning. Plan to boost I/O, add CPU and memory resources to support online patches, and prioritize processes by working with OS administrators. These steps will all contribute to a smoother transition.

On the technical management side, your DBAs will need training on:

- Managing WebLogic
- Understanding E-Business Suite's topology architecture
- How online patching works and how to troubleshoot it

Finally, consider offering a virtual desktop for users of older versions. This will allow you to continue offering the interface that they're already familiar with, accelerating their acceptance of the new release.

Changes in Oracle database support may positively impact plans for 2017 and beyond

If you're hesitating about performing a database upgrade out of concern for extended 11.2.0.4 and 12.1.0.2 support fees, hesitate no longer! Oracle has waived those fees through December 2018 and July 2019, respectively. This takes away some pressure to rush that upgrade, but that doesn't mean you should put thoughts of upgrades out of mind. Start planning them soon to avoid being caught out later.

RELEASE	GA DATE	PREMIER ENDS	EXTENDED ENDS
12.1	May, 2008	December, 2021	N/A
12.2	September, 2013	September, 2023	N/A
12.3	TBD	TBD	TBD

Which upgrade is for you? 12.1 or 12.2?

While 12.1.3 is the path of least resistance – lower effort and cost especially if you have a lot of customization – there's still a good reason to plunge in to 12.2.6. That's because it gives you nearly two additional years of Premier Support, and possibly more if Oracle extends it. Of course, anyone who wants to take advantage of 12.2's online patching will want to make the move.

Roadmap recommendations

The following actions will give you a good head start toward meeting your upgrade goals:

- **Develop a plan that considers Oracle's support timeline extensions.** Involve the business to create the justifications you need, whether you've decided to upgrade, keep current with your release, or make technical changes – like CPU patches, TXK or AD updates – that sometimes fall by the wayside during planning.
- **Develop CEMLI's to comply with 12.2 standards.** Have a system integrator do a scan to identify all your CEMLI's. Be sure to search outside of Oracle E-Business applications to catch CEMLI's embedded in integrated third-party applications.
- **Ensure desktop compatibility with your browser:** Windows 10 and IE 11, JRE
- **Use an upgrade as an opportunity to modernize and update platform security.** Review and correct processor core sizing as well as older operating systems and compatibility limitations that can crop up when running an older OS with virtualization and cloud platforms. Seize the opportunity to add more up-to-date security components like privileged user access and role mapping.
- **Licensing.** Be safe rather than sorry regarding licensing! If you haven't been audited by Oracle in a couple of years, you are probably on the list. Stay ahead of this and avoid being hit with unbudgeted expenses. At the same time, why not purge unused licenses and apply the savings to help pay for the updates?

About Data Intensity

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