

Introduction

InfoBurst 2009 is a state of the art Business Intelligence publishing system that can refresh, burst and deliver reports and dashboards to your users, customers and partners. InfoBurst 2009 has been created to represent the 'next generation' of the popular InfoBurst product that is used worldwide as the premier bursting tool for BusinessObjects and Crystal reports. InfoBurst 2009 is a robust and very flexible platform that has been built to handle the most complex Enterprise push model report delivery tasks and has a developer API and a command script interface as well as a cutting edge user interface using Adobe Flex technology to enable users and administrators to fluidly manage the report publishing environment.

InfoBurst 2009 supports the following report types:

- BusinessObjects Web Intelligence XIR2, XI 3.0 and XI 3.1
- BusinessObjects Desktop Intelligence XIR2, XI 3.0 and XI 3.1
- Crystal Reports XI 3.0 and XI 3.1
- Crystal Xcelsius 4.5 and 2008
- Adobe PDF (.pdf)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls)
- Microsoft Word (.doc)
- Microsoft Powerpoint (.ppt)
- Text (.txt)
- Flash (.swf)

Features

- Supports multiple connections to BusinessObjects XI systems at the same time
- Does not require any BusinessObjects client software to operate (to support DeskI single-pass bursting the client is required)
- Powerful platform queue to precisely control throughput based on document type (for example allow more WebI concurrent processing than DeskI)
- Burst concept to group multiple documents of any type together for processing
- Multi-pass and Single-pass report bursting for WebI and DeskI reports
- Multi-pass report bursting for Crystal reports
- Burst processing modes, InSequence or InParallel for greater throughput (InParallel will process documents in a Burst concurrently)
- Burst delivery modes to control when reports are delivered (immediate or attend)
- Powerful parameter and delivery macros to handle dates and bursting context
- Prompt resolution via macro, external file or database query
- Ability to create one or more alias values for report prompts (use during delivery with macros or help to resolve database column name mapping when using an external parameter source)
- Ability to use a database query or built-in MultiColumn List to supply multiple prompt or filter values
- Custom Excel based calendar (fiscal calendar) can be associated with any Burst and values can be used during delivery (to customize paths or names)
- Multi-column Excel files are supported for prompt values or email address lookup
- Network Share/FTP/WebDAV delivery with auto-creation of complex folder structures
- Report-tabs can be selected for DeskI and WebI and re-combined into a single .pdf delivery
- Rich content Email delivery of any report type with navigation and table of contents (for example it is possible to deliver either a complete WebI multi-tab report or selected tabs of multiple reports in a single email)
- Email consolidation options to delivery multiple attachments or in-line content
- Email CC and BCC support
- Email attachments can be compressed to save on message size
- Scheduler with support for once/daily/weekly/monthly plus every # mins/hours/days
- Schedule priority controlled by group membership allows higher priority jobs to run first when a queue exists waiting for a resource
- External event support to watch for files and database queries
- Actions such as SendEmail, RunCommand or SetTrigger can be assigned to start/end/abort of Burst or Schedule
- Detailed run-time log of every burst execution showing step by step each task with full details of parameters and exceptions
- Document history functions to track document processing and delivery
- Audit information showing who did what and when (if an object such as a Burst has been changed you can see who changed it)
- Burst alert via Email if abort detected (containing full log of Burst execution)

Delivery Destinations

The following destinations are supported by InfoBurst 2009. Depending on the combination of document type and format, other options may be available such as

- Split by individual report tab
- Zip Compression

Network Share

- Deliver to a previously registered network path.
- Full control over the directory and filename (using delivery macros to customize)
- Auto creation of missing Folders

Email

- Deliver attachments or in-line content
- Table of contents with navigation links
- Supports multiple WebI reports in a single email

Business Objects XI Platform

- Deliver to a Folder or user Inbox
- Full control over the directory and filename (using delivery macros to customize)
- Auto creation of missing Folders
- Support for category association (if deliver to a Folder)

FTP

- Full control over the directory and filename (using delivery macros to customize)
- Auto creation of missing Folders

WebDav

- Full control over the directory and filename (using delivery macros to customize)
- Auto creation of missing Folders

Custom

- Allows you to take control of the Delivery
- InfoBurst will call a script/program for each file generated

Delivery Formats

The following formats are supported

- Native
- Pdf
- Excel
- HTML
- Plain Text DeskI Only
- CSV/Tab delimited Text Data Cube (not Report)

How does InfoBurst compare to other solutions?

InfoBurst has been continually developed since late 2002 and has evolved to meet the needs of 100s of customers worldwide and therefore offers an unrivaled feature set in the publishing and bursting arena.

Bursting a Document

When you wish to *burst* a report and deliver to a set of recipients or destinations the most important feature of any solution is the ability to precisely control both the input (parameters, filters) and the output (names of files, paths, recipients). InfoBurst is very strong at giving you multiple options to control the input values for the bursting process.

- Hard code one or more values (such as *Arizona* or *Florida;Texas*)
- For date prompts a number of special macros can be used to generate a date in the format desired (the date could be today or today plus a number of days etc)
- Read values that do not change often from a text or excel file
- Dynamically query a database table for values that change often or for a large number of values
- Use a multiple column database query to map multiple prompt or filter values (one query can be used to fill all required prompts and filters for the document)
- Use values from the report itself (for example Refresh a report and split on each Product)

The bursting process is controlled using prompts and filters and therefore the bursting is *data* driven (not *user* driven). The resulting output file(s) can be delivered to an unlimited number of destinations or recipients and again InfoBurst gives you a lot of control of whom and where the files are delivered

- Deliver to a Network Path
- Deliver to an FTP Site
- Deliver to a web folder using WebDav (Sharepoint)
- Send via Email as an attachment (such as pdf or excel)
- Send via email as a rich-content HTML message (one or multiple reports or tabs)
- Send via email a combination of attachments and rich-content messages

When delivering a file (or set of files) to a Network Path, FTP Site or WebDav location you have full control over the generated filename and the path. All prompt and filter values (plus any additional values you might have) can be used to customize the name, for example if you were bursting a report by ProductCode and wish to generate a series of PDF documents that contained both the product code and a date suffix this is possible using delivery macros. It is also possible to generate a dynamic folder path and InfoBurst will create any missing folders automatically (this even applies to FTP and WebDav). For the ultimate in file and path naming flexibility you can also retrieve additional columns from a database table and use them as placeholders in your output files (if the value you need is not part of the current bursting context). When delivering to Email, InfoBurst can utilize a database query (or Excel file) to lookup the email address (or multiple addresses) for each bursting cycle so that you can deliver each output to the right recipient. It is also possible to generate a number of different outputs for each document, for example you could generate a PDF and store on a Network Path (using macros to customize the name) and also Email a copy of the report in Excel to a dynamic recipient list.

Grouping Documents & consolidating output

The *Burst* concept was first used in the original InfoBurst product (back in 2002) and continues to this day to be the most flexible way to burst and deliver reports. Unlike other solutions where bursting is typically restricted to a single document or document type, InfoBurst allows you to group together any documents (even from different platforms) that are related and process them together as a single package. The ability to group documents together simplifies the scheduling also as a Schedule can contain one or more bursts and therefore the number of individual schedules is greatly reduced and becomes easier to manage. If you are delivering reports via email the grouping of documents is even more significant as InfoBurst will intelligently combine content for each recipient resulting in a single email message with multiple related content pieces (can be a mixture of attachments and rich-content). For example if a Burst contained two WebI documents and a DeskI document and a recipient was the target for all three documents, only one email would be sent that would contain content from all three documents.

Operation Control

After the bursts and schedules are setup it is important for an Enterprise publishing system to be able to notify support staff in the event of a problem (such as a report refresh failure or a delivery path is not available) and also provide a system-wide view of the daily scheduling. InfoBurst has a comprehensive set of features that are designed to help in the day to day operational support and can alert you if things go wrong. First, each and every Schedule that is executed is recorded in a system log and the user interface provides a quick and easy way to see what is running on the system, what is waiting to run or waiting for an event to be set and also those schedules and bursts that have either completed without error or have aborted. Each Burst that is executed (from a Schedule or run manually outside of the scheduler) will create a detailed step by step log of every task that was performed, everything from connecting to the XI system, logging on as a specific user, opening a document, supplying prompt or filter values, refreshing the report and finally generating and delivering the output. The Burst log can be viewed a number of different ways; either when viewing a burst from the user interface or via the schedule display or more importantly it can be emailed as a rich-content message to a list of support staff (controlled using a Group) if an abort is detected. The system can be configured to

- Not send any burst alerts
- Send to a named group if ANY burst aborts
- Send to a named group if a SELCTED burst aborts

In the case where you only want to be alerted if a very high priority (or high visibility) burst fails you can configure one or more bursts on a special list and InfoBurst will only send email alerts for these selected Bursts.

Why should I choose InfoBurst ?

If you are considering investing in a tool to manage your report bursting and publishing needs it is very important to find a tool or solution that

- Meets your needs
- Is well known
- Is well supported
- Is still being actively developed and improved
- Embraces the latest technology to provide for a better solution
- Can be changed to meet your specific needs
- Is robust and reliable
- Has a comprehensive feature set to allow you to produce the results you want
- Is good value for money
- Offers support for emerging technologies such as Xcelsius dashboards

InfoBurst adds significant value to any existing BusinessObjects installation and can fulfill the role as a Enterprise quality report bursting and distribution solution that you can rely on to deliver information on time.