

FlexDeploy for Oracle BI



The Opportunity

Oracle BI development and delivery has been challenged to meet the demands of fast-paced business requirements. Moving Oracle BI Web Catalog objects and repository (RPD) files across environments is a manual, tedious, and error-prone process which has a direct impact on the speed, quality, and cost of the end solution.

Business and IT leaders are demanding high-quality solutions faster, and are looking for more effective processes and tools to help realize the required improvements. Enter DevOps, Continuous Delivery, and Application Release Automation, which apply agile processes and automation to address the issues. FlexDeploy's support for Oracle BI helps BI professionals achieve the desired results via automation, controls, and visibility related to managing changes across environment.

Comparing Traditional BI Lifecycle Management with the FlexDeploy Solution

Challenge: Manually moving Web Catalog objects across environments can be time consuming and often leads to errors.

Solution: FlexDeploy fully automates the movement of Web Catalog changes across environments, saving time and reducing errors.

Challenge: Once the Web Catalog object or RPD is deployed, it can be difficult to revert to an older version if the new object has issues.

Solution: FlexDeploy stores all previously built artifacts in the FlexDeploy Artifact Repository. This allows easy deployment of a previous build version to back out any unplanned issues in a test or production environment.

Challenge: Migrating RPDs across environments is cumbersome and typically requires users to manually open the BI Administration client locally to make changes, save the RPD, and go to the server to upload the new RPD. This manual process often leads to user errors, and is time consuming and tedious for those who must perform the tasks.

Solution: FlexDeploy automates this entire process by exporting the RPD, performing property replacement, and deploying the RPD to the target environment. This automation eliminates user error and significantly reduces or eliminates the time spent performing these tasks.

Challenge: Managing changes across multiple environments leads to confusion about what versions of objects are deployed to each environment.

Solution: FlexDeploy provides a clear snapshot of what object versions are deployed to which environments and makes syncing environments a breeze. The improved visibility can be valuable both for troubleshooting issues, and aiding compliance and audit related requirements.

Challenge: Managing the policy store across environments is a tedious and repetitive process. It is easy to forget to create a role in a higher-level environment leading to deployment errors in the production environment. It is also challenging to see what roles are present in each environment.

Solution: FlexDeploy automates the role and membership process. A single property file can be applied to all environments. Automating this process eliminates manual steps, and ensures the different environments are in sync, reducing errors in the higher-level environments.

The Plugin Details

Overview

FlexDeploy's Oracle BI plugin provides operations that manage both Web Catalog objects and RPD files. The Web Catalog objects include, but are not limited to: Reports, Data models, Analysis, Dashboards, Style Templates and KPIs. Additionally, FlexDeploy's partial deployment model allows users to easily select objects from the BI Web Catalog to be grouped together into a single build.

Versions Supported

11g and 12c (running on-premises and in the cloud)

Operations

OBIBuild

Export one or more Oracle BI objects such as reports, data models, or RPDs. Web Catalog objects can be exported at the object or folder level. The folders in the system catalog can be migrated as well. Both full builds and partial builds are supported for this operation. This operation has multiple inputs: should object permissions be exported along with the object itself, should objects be exported recursively, and should folders be exported recursively. FlexDeploy supports sourcing directly from Oracle BI or source control management tools such as Subversion, Git, and TFS.

OBIDeploy

Import one or more objects into the target environment's Web Catalog or directly to the server (RPD). This operation has three inputs: one for importing with exported permissions, another for overwriting content if the content already exists in the target environment's Web Catalog, and an optional configuration file for property replacement on the RPD.

ManagePolicyStore

Create application roles and add members to them based on one or more property files. Each file describes the application roles and members of one application stripe. Missing roles and members will be created. This operation is part of the WebLogic plugin, but applies directly to the OBI space.

Bringing it Home

In today's fast-paced business environment, it is no longer sufficient to deliver Oracle BI solutions using traditional processes and tools. Business leaders and customers are expecting faster delivery, and market leaders are providing it via agile processes combined with extensive automation. With FlexDeploy, BI professionals can deliver higher quality software faster and with less cost and risk, answering the demands of business leaders and customers, and staying competitive in the market.