

Missing Functionality in Oracle EBS? Consider Building an Extension

If the functionality in Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) does not meet your business process and that process cannot be changed then you may consider an application extension. An application extension is additional functionality that is built to meet a specific business need. Although extensions use custom code they are not considered a customization as they designed and built using methods permitted by Oracle.

Companies That Can Benefit From an Extension

Any company can benefit from an extension if the business need exists. Extensions have been designed and build for small and large companies in various industries and with a variety of Oracle applications.

Considerations

The first question to ask is, why is an extension required? One reason to build an extension is to support the organization's competitive advantage or customer driven requirement. An example of a customer driven requirement was a Call Center whose end client required a unique invoicing format that was not available in Oracle. This unique invoicing format added value to the end client and therefore differentiated the Call Center from its competitors. Another example was an organization that responded to major accidents and acts of nature. The company needed extensions in place to streamline the

creating of projects and issuing purchase orders which improved their disaster response time significantly.

Other examples can include extensions that streamline processes such as allocations or month-end activities to save internal labor or provide more timely financial reporting.

How to Approach an Application Extension

There are two main steps when developing extensions (all five steps are below). The first is clearly identifying the problem and define the intended end result. The only proper way to solve a problem is to have all relevant information shared with the resources that are tasked with designing a solution. This creates a clear picture for the resources to understand the end result.

The second important step is the design stage. This step requires resources with expertise of the application, tools and methods to properly design the extension. This step must have resources that are focused on the goal and can remain creative. They have to take an approach knowing there is a solution to the problem but it just needs to be found and developed. This can be the most challenging yet rewarding step for those involved.

Steps to Designing an Application Extension

Here are the high-level steps we use to design extensions.

1. Identify the Problem and Desired End Result
2. Learn and Document the Current Business Processes
3. Develop Options including High-Level Extensions or other Solutions to Meet the Requirement
4. Review the Options and the High-Level Extension Designs with Organization Constraints and Goals
5. Present the Findings, Options and Recommendation

If your organization has key business processes that are not met with standard Oracle functionality then take a look at possible application extensions that may meet that requirement.

What business processes do you have that could be improved or streamlined with an application extension?