

Eclipse Brings Open Source to Business Intelligence Market

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Eclipse BIRT 1.0 Leverages Leadership with Java Developers to Integrate Application Development and Business Intelligence

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA – June 6th, 2005 – The Eclipse Foundation, an open source community committed to the implementation of a universal development platform, today announced that the Business Intelligence and Reporting Tools (BIRT) project version 1.0 is now generally available. BIRT 1.0 marks the culmination of Eclipse community participation during which hundreds of members of the community provided their feedback to shape the future of the project. BIRT has been downloaded 9,000 times since a preview version was made available in late February.

The goal of BIRT is to allow Java developers to easily integrate business intelligence and reporting capability into enterprise Java applications and commercial products. BIRT was created as a top level Eclipse project in September 2004. The project is part of the Eclipse strategy to provide open source tools and frameworks that span the software development lifecycle.

“Eclipse’s BIRT project exploits the convergence of analytics and operations in application development, with its trend toward embedding BI functionality within Java applications. It’s safe to say that a portion of Java developers and their organisations will prefer a free, standards-based development tool to commercial-based options.” Wayne Eckerson, director of research, TDWI

“There’s no doubt in my mind that as far as the majority of enterprise developers are concerned, Eclipse has won - at least, outside of Microsoft’s sphere of influence. With major tools vendors such as Actuate, Borland, BEA and Sybase lining up to join IBM/Rational in porting their tools to Eclipse, a vibrant ecology of plug-ins, and an architecture designed explicitly to support extensibility and integration, Eclipse is more than just a development platform, it is a full life-cycle platform.”

Carl Zetie’s Blog, Forrester Research, Inc., April 2005

BIRT benefits Java developers by minimizing the time and effort associated with hand coding core application functions such as reporting and analysis. BIRT enables HTML and PDF reports to be created in a matter of hours, a great alternative to coding the same functionality from scratch, using JavaServer Pages (JSP) and Java. Using BIRT, developers are able to quickly respond to changes in user requirements, while delivering and maintaining functionally rich, perfectly formatted reports to their end users in either PDF or HTML format.

Furthermore, BIRT 1.0 provides excellent support for internationalisation and localisation to save the developer time in customising reports for particular languages and locales. For instance, a single report can be created that displays strings in the end user’s language. BIRT also provides locale-aware data formatting, meaning that a date, currency or numeric format can be applied to a report based on the end user’s locale with dynamic formatting compensating for the typical lengths of language descriptors by automatically adjusting the size of report items to fit their content. This avoids the need to test a report with every possible translation. The Report designer is available in Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean and Spanish interfaces.

“BIRT 1.0 extends the Eclipse platform to provide infrastructure and tools that allow application

developers to easily design, generate and integrate reports within their applications,” said Mike Milinkovich, executive director of the Eclipse Foundation. “BIRT is a natural extension for Eclipse and it supports key themes within the overall Eclipse community which include designing extensible functionality for broad community appeal and providing a tool that is enterprise ready, while remaining simple to use.”

BIRT 1.0 includes:

- Eclipse Report Designer: an Eclipse-based desktop authoring environment that generates reports based on a comprehensive XML-based report design. In addition, it provides a rich business chart generation capability.

- Eclipse Report Engine: enables reports to be generated within any Java application using report designs created by the Designer

- Complete set of APIs: provide the ability to integrate and extend BIRT.

More feature detail can be found by visiting <http://eclipse.org/birt/intro/>.

“BIRT 1.0 delivers all of the functionality required for the developer to rapidly design, test and deploy reports and charts that satisfy complex end user requirements,” said Mark Coggins, member of Eclipse Foundation Board. “While the BIRT Project Management Committee has lead the effort to deliver BIRT 1.0, the Eclipse community has refined and shaped the feature set to be more comprehensive and more extensible.”

Companies are already supporting BIRT:

“BIRT will demonstrate the value of embedding Business Intelligence and reporting functionality into custom applications and commercial tools to the Open Source community,” said Pete Cittadini, president and CEO of Actuate Corporation. “Actuate is launching Actuate BIRT simultaneously with Eclipse’s release of BIRT 1.0 to provide support, maintenance and indemnification services, which we hope will spur the adoption of BIRT by addressing the common concerns related to adopting Open Source technology.”

“BIRT 1.0 is functionally equivalent to other BI and reporting technology that is available today, and will be incorporated into the forthcoming release of Scapa Test and Performance Platform 3.2,” said Mike Norman, chief executive and president of Scapa Technologies. “BIRT reports will enhance the power of our testing, diagnosis and monitoring capabilities across multiple points in the application lifecycle by giving users increased visibility into application performance.”

“BIRT will be leveraged in our DoorKeeper product to merge data from Telelogic DOORS® and the Rational Software Development Platform in order to provide integrated reports which enable teams to ensure designs meet requirements,” said Cory Bialowas, director of Product Development at EmbeddedPlus. “End users will be presented with richly formatted HTML reports that seamlessly present information from both sources. The process of investigation of BIRT to a working prototype in DoorKeeper took just six weeks.”

“We have already incorporated a preview build of BIRT into Innoopract's Yoxos Eclipse Distribution, and are already planning to include BIRT 1.0 now that it is available”, said Eric von der Heyden, managing director of Innoopract. “BIRT will be even more widely adopted once distributed in Yoxos, enabling Business Intelligence and reporting functionality to be rapidly developed to add value to many types of applications and their end users.”

To Find Out More

Those who wish to download BIRT 1.0, become involved in the future development of BIRT or wish to provide feedback via the BIRT newsgroup can do so by visiting www.eclipse.org/birt.

About Eclipse

Eclipse is an open source community whose projects are focused on providing an extensible development platform and application frameworks for building software. Eclipse provides extensible tools and frameworks that span the software development lifecycle, including support for modeling, language development environments for Java, C/C++ and others, testing and performance, business intelligence, rich client applications and embedded development. A large, vibrant ecosystem of major technology vendors, innovative start-ups, universities and research institutions and individuals extend, complement and support the Eclipse Platform.

The Eclipse Foundation is a not-for-profit, member supported corporation that hosts the Eclipse projects. Full details of Eclipse and the Eclipse Foundation are available at www.eclipse.org.

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