Chapter 22

Informationbase – A New Information System Layer

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In the paper, the concept of informationbase (IB) is described. The IB is a top layer of the information system (IS). The IB layer uses information systems database and existing application programs to provide a structured set of reports and graphs, directly and permanently available to the user. The informationbase described in the article acts as an intelligent and very agile information manager. At appropriate times, it activates predefined options for report generation, supplies the reports with parameters, stores generated information into a well-organized database and manages the authorization of information retrieval.

INTRODUCTION

Formally, information is a collection of symbols. Within an IS, information can be presented by a collection of various data purposefully and meaningfully organized into a report or graph. In the database of an IS, one has the data, that is only the raw material for the information. Thus, the meta-base aimed to store the information collections, which is described in this article, is referred as informationbase (IB).

One of the IS myths is Just enter a command and you will get the information you need. In reality, to get an information, the user needs:
• to browse through the menus in order to find the option one needs,
• to understand the capabilities of the option and to enter the parameters required by that option, which requires some skill and effort,
• to execute the option and …
• … to wait to get the required information.

The IB concept, described in this article, changes that completely, i.e. makes the myth true - the user gets the information directly and instantly.

The concept is based on the following thinking: all relevant information concerning the scope covered by the IS should be automatically generated and must always be readily available to the users, instead of being *ad hoc* produced by individuals.

Thus the information as the final product of an IS should really (rather than potentially) be available to the users of the information system.

THE CONCEPT OF THE INFORMATIONBASE

The informationbase is a set of reports and graphs generated in advance and ready to be used. It can be built for the customer’s organization and one calendar year. For each year, a new IB is to be formed and several informationbases can be kept in the system.

The model of the informationbase

The information contents (*Information*) are classified in two hierarchical levels (*Chapter* and *ChapterEntry*), as presented by the simplified logical model in Figure 1: The simplified IB model.
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