

ELITE REPORTING  
AND ANALYTICS  
FOUNDATION  
FREQUENTLY  
ASKED QUESTIONS





**Q: How can a professional services firm benefit from Elite Reporting and Analytics Foundation?**

**A:** In today's challenging business environment, there is a constant need for more accurate, more comprehensive and faster access to actionable data. Reporting and Analytics Foundation (RAF) is a complete enterprise solution for reporting and analysis that provides deeper visibility into operations and speed to information to make better business decisions faster and, ultimately, increase profits.

**Q: How does Reporting and Analytics Foundation deliver these benefits?**

**A:** From management reporting, dashboards and scorecards to OLAP analysis of operating data and a powerful data warehouse, RAF provides benefits across the organization from a single integrated business intelligence platform. Elite® has partnered with Business Objects, the leading business intelligence solutions provider, to provide a stable, scalable system. The result is a business intelligence solution like none other available in the professional services industry that delivers measurable operational improvement and fast ROI.

**Q: What is Visibility?**

**A:** Visibility happens as a result of capturing data and accurately predicting future performance, as well as analyzing the impact of changes in business drivers. Firms with enhanced operational visibility navigate around unexpected changes with maximum effectiveness. For example, if the organization signed up a new client that would return a below-average level of profit, then the organization would either need to find alternative ways of completing the project more profitably or decide not to undertake the project. Without this type of visibility, taking on that same client would have very different results. The firm would suffer in other ways due to this lack of profitability and make very reactive, rather than proactive, business decisions. RAF provides this level of visibility.

**Q: How does Reporting and Analytics Foundation provide Visibility?**

**A:** By collecting, cleaning and aggregating transactional data from numerous data sources across the organization (e.g., financial management system, payroll, CRM, etc.), RAF provides accurate point-in-time and trend reporting that is not possible by reporting from live or replicated reporting databases. From there, using reports, dashboards, interactive graphs and charts, analytics and industry specific applications (using current and budget forecasted data), performance can be monitored and predicted. Using and applying these business intelligence tools and applications, the firm experiences visibility into its operational performance at any number of levels – from firm to timekeeper or matter/project/engagement, and all segments in between.

**Q: How does enhanced Visibility translate into a positive ROI?**

**A:** Professional services firms are seeing margins reduced as their staffing costs have increased without an equal increase in rates. Many industries, outside of professional services, have successfully used business intelligence solutions to add operational visibility and have been rewarded with significant reductions in operating costs and improvements in profitability. By understanding the value of how RAF helps control costs, reduce fee write-downs and/or write-offs, and increase the speed of conversion of work to cash, a return-on-investment scenario can be developed. If a firm of \$500 million in revenues can reduce WIP write-downs or A/R write-offs by one percent, this equates to a \$5 million annual improvement to the operation. A one-percent improvement in operational efficiency via increased operational visibility is well within RAF's capabilities.

**Q: How does Reporting and Analytics Foundation interface with other Elite solutions?**

**A:** Utilizing the Business Objects® Data Integrator, Elite specific data extraction, transformation and loading routines are provided and can be scheduled to run at any time to refresh the data in the data warehouse. Currently, the data that is being loaded comes from numerous Elite tables but are centered on time, cost, ledger, records and conflicts. Interfaces with other data sources, outside of Elite, are being planned for future releases of RAF.

**Q: How does Reporting and Analytics Foundation provide superior reporting capabilities for professional services firms?**

A: It should be the goal of any organization to provide current, relevant, timely and easy-to-read information to their decision-makers within a very short period of time after the data is available.

Traditionally, reporting in professional services firms has been a monthly, static and highly paper-driven exercise where standard operational reports have been authored, created, printed and distributed to end users. These reports have been described as “dated,” “non-relevant” and “ugly.” It is not unheard of that information accessed by business decision-makers arrives 30-60 days after the work is completed.

RAF offers right-time information access via online query, executive report subscription, and online analytical processing to vastly improve the speed of information throughout the organization and place it in the hands of decision-makers.

Exception-based or event-driven reporting is also a common business requirement that provides sharp focus on specific metrics or key performance indicators. In these cases, reports are published or emailed when specific criteria have been met or operational performance metrics thresholds have been broken. For example, “Alert me with a client A/R summary and detail report when a specific client’s A/R balance exceeds five percent of all firm A/R or is dated older than the average of all clients in my specific practice group.” In this scenario, this important operational metric will be alerted rather than the decision-maker having to look through reports or ask finance to alert them of this condition.

Contact Elite to put the power of Elite Reporting and Analytics Foundation to work in your organization today. Visit [www.elite.com](http://www.elite.com) for more information or call us at (323) 642-5200.

