Making the Most of the Solution Documentation Assistant –More insight using RBE Plus©

Applies to:

Solution Manager 7.0 SPS15 – EhP1, Solution Documentation Assistant, Business Blueprint and Configuration, Business Process Monitoring and Business Process Management.

Summary

This whitepaper discusses how to optimally use the combination of Solution Manager's Solution Documentation Assistant and IBIS RBE Plus© to effectively document the business processes running in your SAP landscape. Leveraging the powerful combination of these two complimentary analysis tools provides you the insight you need into your business processes in today's competitive and rapidly changing market places.

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Author Bio

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Greater insight in combination with RBE Plus©

Could the Titanic's collision with the iceberg have been prevented had the captain known about the ship's vulnerabilities? Placed in modern-day context, it is obvious how dangerous it would be to cruise at top speed when visibility is poor and navigation slow and cumbersome. But this example clearly shows how destructive power can be when not controlled.

So much for ocean liners. What does this have to do with using SAP Solution Manager to make SAP systems more efficient? Several parallels can be drawn. The SAP space is full of powerful software solutions that support most business scenarios and processes.

Even the standard versions offer a host of functions and options. Add to these custom developments and satellite systems, and the possibilities are virtually endless. But what tool will give you an in-depth view of the active business processes in an SAP environment?

Most of us are not aware of the next iceberg looming in our path. But there are ways of avoiding the Titanic's fate. Read on to find out how SAP Solution Manager's Solution Documentation Assistant (SoDocA) achieves transparency and effectiveness by making the most of SAP solutions.Header 2

About SoDocA

SoDocA has been an integrated part of SAP Solution Manager since 2008. It can be accessed via its own Work Center and shares SAP Solution Manager's infrastructure. The Assistant focuses on your system from a business perspective and enables you to automatically evaluate business processes within a given SAP system environment.

It does so with the aid of SAP standard and custom transactions, and by checking whether these are assigned to the Business Blueprint's business process structure. It lets you use SAP Solution Manager projects and solutions as templates for your own projects (see figure 1 for an example of how the SoDocA analysis is linked to an SAP Solution Manager project).

The analysis is formatted to give you the big picture as well as high-granular information on objects, such as transactions and reports. SoDocA analyzes the process model quickly based on transaction usage. For this reason, you must have RFC access to all logical components in the system landscape.
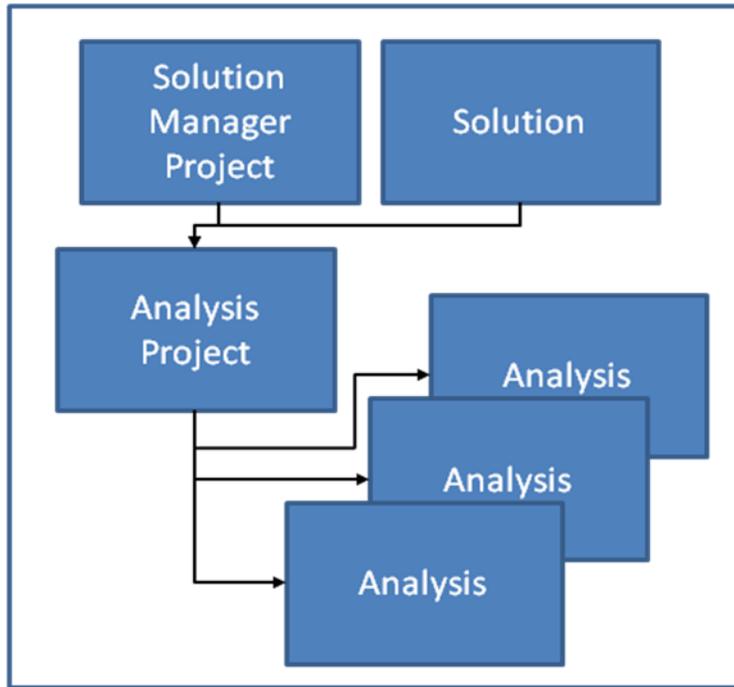
Figure 1: integration of a SoDocA analysis into an SAP Solution Manager project

Drawbacks

As powerful and efficient as SoDocA is, it does have its drawbacks. The standard SoDocA focuses on transaction-based check steps, resulting in some possibly misleading conclusions. Experience has shown that most cases require a more comprehensive view that includes master, process and customizing data in addition to transaction data.

Example:
If you examine merely the transactions when analyzing sales orders, this will reveal little about the efficiency of your processes. What can you learn by looking at the usage of Transaction VA01 (Create Sales Order)? The vast majority or information is concealed in the related data tables and fields.

Results based on transactions:		Results based on comprehensive data:	
VA01 Create Sales Order	used 150 times	VA01 Create Sales Order	used 150 times
VA02 Change Sales Order	used 100 times	VA02 Change Sales Order	used 100 times
		Ord. / Unverified delivery	30
		Standard Order	100
		Promotion Order	20
		No. of relevant items	2500
		Custom Ord. Types	25
		Standard Ord. Types, etc.	125

What's more, there is no clear picture of which transactions have been executed indirectly (transactions triggered by other transactions) or how the ones executed automatically compare with ones executed directly by a user. Since many transactions are merely dialog steps, it would be incorrect to assume that each transaction results in a business document. SoDocA lets you specify the task types used for an analysis, but it does not compare them. And so an analysis of just transactions is vague at best.

A powerful function of the SoDocA is that it lets you define SQL queries to directly access system tables for your own system checks. These can be used to verify the transaction results. A word of caution though: defining your own queries requires an expert knowledgeable in the application area in question *and* familiar with the technical details of the corresponding system. To import custom transactions to your Business Process Structure, they must be assigned within SAP Solution Manager. This is both time-consuming and

difficult, as your process model needs to reflect your company-specific processes and terminology. Since the analysis is based on an existing blueprint structure, a new BPM will also need to be created.

The right approach

In light of SoDocA's shortcomings, what is the best way to create an analysis and documentation environment within SAP Solution Manager? SoDocA delivers solid support; and its weaknesses can be strengthened by combining it with an extremely powerful analysis tool – RBE Plus©.

RBE Plus© offers an extended analysis that includes master and document data. Practical experience of a dozen business analysts contributed to its design. Thousands of pre-defined SQL queries bundled in a set of dedicated ABAPs are executed in the target systems to extract relevant data. This offers you an in-depth view of your SAP system and gives you concrete information on your system status, as well as system potential, problems and process variants.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Example:
RBE Plus© process variants not only show the transactions and documents active within the system; they also shed light on data from a business standpoint.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Document category**</td><td>C</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Document type**</td><td>Z_SOR</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Sales organization**</td><td>Europe</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Value**</td><td>100</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Short text**</td><td>Order / unverified delivery</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Description**</td><td>Standard order</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Name**</td><td>Sample SD order</td></tr>
</table>

When the analysis is finished, custom transactions can be assigned and the business process structure changed in line with your organization's needs. Next, the results can be imported into SAP Solution Manager – where you can create your own process structure. This approach offers you an intelligent evaluation based on enhanced IBIS analysis content – giving you a higher quality analysis of your business process structure, making it a reliable business process model. What's more, because the RBE Plus© analysis is a tool-based service, you save valuable time and resources.

RBE Plus© is best used for the first solution, particularly for importing the original blueprint structure. Once your initial model is complete, you can assign additional documentation, implement change management to ensure continued consistency and then employ SoDocA periodically to monitor usage of transactions in the connected systems at analysis intervals you define. But beware of an analysis based purely on transactions.
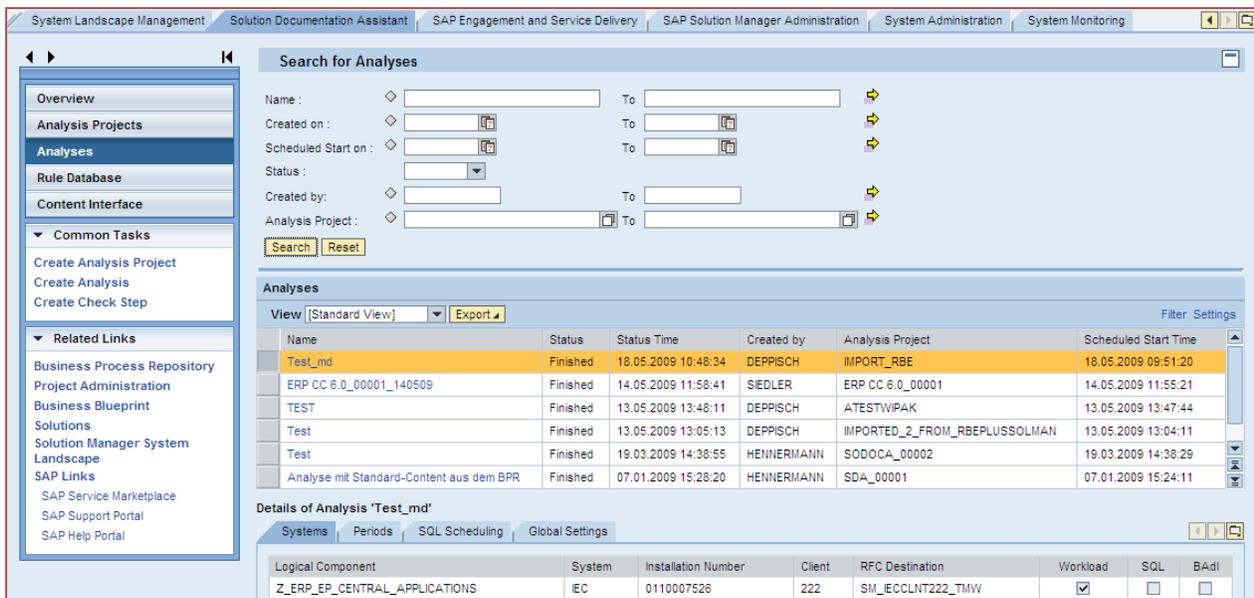

Figure 2: Sample overview of a SoDocA analysis

Business Process Monitoring

One of the quickest additional gains after modeling your SAP business processes is the availability of Business Process Monitoring in Solution Manager. The model of the business process structure you created can be used to actively monitor the business processes in your SAP landscape. Monitoring templates can be used to implement a system that pro-actively alerts responsible parties about errors early on in a business process. This mechanism allows for clear visibility of bottlenecks and navigation that is quick and manageable.

Smooth sailing

The smart combination of SoDocA and RBE Plus© gives you the best of both worlds –and the key to keeping SAP Solution Manager and your business processes on their proper course. Leveraging the tools available offers you reliable support from all sides – and leaves you to drive your business at top speed, proactively avoiding looming icebergs on your path and without having to worry about what's happening below deck.

Related Content

[Solution Documentation Assistant Overview](#)

[Solution Manager Wiki on SDN](#)

[SAP Solution Manager and ALM](#)

[Functional Scope of Business Process Monitoring with Solution Manager](#)

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