With the increasing attention on legal compliance and the launch of SAP NetWeaver Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) in 2009 the question surfaced what the differences and specifics of SAP NetWeaver ILM vs. SAP DART are.

This white paper addresses this question and focuses on the most relevant product features that help distinguish the two solutions from each other. However, the intention is not to discuss the processes and functions provided by the two solutions in all detail. In case you are interested in a deep dive of the respective solution capabilities we ask you to contact the responsible SAP Solution or Product Management teams.

GENERAL PRODUCT OVERVIEW

**DART** is a tool offered as part of the SAP Business Suite. The main purpose is to retain the relevant finance and tax data from a productive system to make it available to auditors. The data being exported (so called DART extracts) is not deleted within the productive database which leads to a duplication of data. As soon as the data is needed to support an audit, the exported files are imported into the “DART Viewer” where views covering multiple tables can be created and finally the data is exported in the AIS format (Audit Information System, proprietary SAP file format widely used by auditors) to be handed over to the auditor. The initial scope was developed in cooperation with America’s SAP User Group (ASUG) to meet the requirements of the IRS Revenue Procedure 98-25. In 2002, in cooperation with the German-Speaking SAP User Group (DSAG), it was enhanced to meet German finance and tax requirements (GDPdU). Adjustments to meet other countries’ requirements followed (see also SAP note 1463497 for more details). Please note that since laws often do not explicitly determine the scope of the data that has to be retained, no general statement about whether the DART content covers the respective legal regulation can be made. In any case it has to be checked for each customer whether data from customer specific enhancements (Y/Z tables) or additional SAP core components (e.g. specific ledgers FI-SL) are relevant and therefore have to be added to the pre-delivered DART content.

**SAP NetWeaver ILM** is a solution that supports two main scenarios. The first one is called Retention Management and applies to productive systems and enhances archive files with their specific retention time, stores the files on a secure storage device (WORM-like storage) and enables automated destruction once the retention time expired. The second scenario is called System Decommissioning and it offers capabilities to decommission unproductive SAP and non-SAP systems by moving the relevant data out of the legacy system(s) into one single SAP NetWeaver ILM instance called the Retention Warehouse (RW). Once the data has been transferred, the RW also applies the retention time, stores the data on a secure storage device and enables destruction once the retention time expires. Since the main objective of this scenario is to shut down the legacy system once the data is safely stored in the new RW environment, the customer needs ways to access that data, e.g. for reporting purposes. Therefore two reporting options are also delivered with this second scenario. The technical foundation for both scenarios is the standard data archiving provided as part of the SAP Business Suite.
ADDITIONAL COMPARISONS

It is important to recognize that DART does not support the automated application of retention times to the DART extracts and that the destruction of the files has to be organized and performed completely manually. DART has been designed to allow access to one person at a time. This might be especially important when multiple users want to use the DART viewer to display data or create AIS extracts. DART is focused on transactional and master data only. Attachments related to the transactional data are not supported.

Apart from the functionality mentioned above SAP NetWeaver ILM also provides e-discovery and legal hold capabilities for both scenarios. Both features are very useful in case of any litigation. The e-discovery feature offers search capabilities to retrieve data that is related to such a lawsuit. The legal hold feature then prevents this selected data from being destroyed prematurely – in case the retention time has already expired or will soon reach its expiration.

SAP NetWeaver ILM Retention Management as well as System Decommissioning is designed to handle transactional data as well as attachments assigned to that data. In order to do so SAP NetWeaver ILM utilizes the ArchiveLink interface to ensure that retention times are also applied to these attachments and that these are destroyed together with the transactional data they are linked to, once the retention time has expired.

One important legal requirement that is also supported by SAP NetWeaver ILM Retention Management is Data Privacy – the handling of data related to individuals. SAP NetWeaver ILM allows our customers (for those archiving objects that are ILM-enabled) to maintain a maximum retention time (after which the data must be destroyed), detect data within the productive database or the archive where that maximum retention time has already expired and destroy that data immediately.

PRE-DELIVERED CONTENT

As mentioned above the DART focus is clearly on the tax and finance relevant data to support the IRS Revenue Procedure 98-25, the German GDPdU standard and others (please see SAP note 1463497 for more details) in productive environments.

From the SAP NetWeaver ILM release 7.02 (delivered as part of the SAP ECC 6 - EhP 5 SP11) on, the pre-delivered content matches the content provided by DART 2.6e, which is especially important in the system decommissioning scenario. In addition to this content, SAP NetWeaver ILM also provides basic content to support the industries Oil & Gas and Utilities as well as product liability requirements.

REPORTING

The reporting capabilities within DART are very much focused to support the data export in the AIS format. In order to do so the DART viewer offers a customizable feature to visualize the tables or views to be exported. The results can be printed and also exported (e.g. in the AIS format).

SAP NetWeaver ILM System Decommissioning offers two out-of-the-box reporting features. The first one is called local reporting and is very similar to the capabilities provided by the DART Viewer. The local reporting also allows the customer to define views and display the data in a tabular format and export the data in the AIS format.

Please note that customers that have decommissioned SAP legacy systems using SAP NetWeaver ILM do not have to keep their DART extracts anymore if the only purpose to keep them is to create AIS exports, since these exports can also be created using local reporting.

The second reporting feature is the Business Warehouse (BW) reporting. SAP NetWeaver ILM System Decommissioning provides pre-delivered queries that cover the data required for the German “Braunschweiger Modell”. Customers can enhance these standard queries or create their own according to their requirements. In addition to the standard BW queries provided, customers can add reporting frontends, like SAP Business Objects Crystal Reports or Business Explorer (please note that additional license fees may apply) to optimize the visualization of the data.
MAINTENANCE

DART is a very mature tool and is supported out of the SAP Installed Base Maintenance and Support (IMS) organization. The main maintenance focus lies on adjusting the content delivered with the tool.

SAP NetWeaver ILM is a relatively new solution with release 7.03 currently in ramp-up (GA as part of SAP ECC 6 – EhP6 planned for May 2012). Two development teams are working on the upcoming features based on a solution roadmap including strategic topics like HANA, Data Privacy or information lifecycle management for CRM.

SUMMARY

Both solutions SAP DART and SAP NetWeaver ILM have their own home turf and will remain in place for the foreseeable future. Both solutions address specific customer needs. In case of DART the main focus is on retaining data from productive systems to support audits and is seen to complement SAP NetWeaver ILM Retention Management which is used to enable retention management for archived data and documents from productive systems in order to tackle the big data issue. At the same time it supports legal compliance regulations and final destruction.

Whereas SAP NetWeaver ILM System Decommissioning can be used on its own to shut down unproductive SAP and non-SAP systems to harmonize the IT landscape and reduce overall TCO while at the same time providing for necessary audit requirement fulfillment.