

ORACLE POLICY AUTOMATION Newsletter Winter 2014

ORACLE CONSULTING SERVICES TEAM (EUROPE) – WINTER 2014

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Two Worlds Collide - Version 12 Approaches!

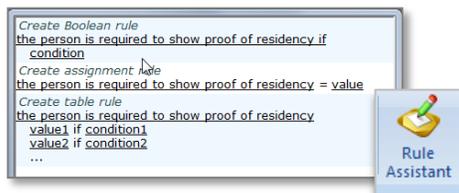
by Matthew Bickham

Whilst the prospect of winter in the northern hemisphere is not always welcomed by some, the OPA Products team have been hard at work on OPA version 12 and its release is eagerly expected during the dark winter months. There is a lot of excitement about v12 which we are anticipating to be as important as the time we first introduced Word and Excel to the product back in 2005.

So why is v12 so eagerly anticipated? Firstly, it will see our Cloud and On-premise products under-pinned by the same technology. The products will align in terms of usability so you only need to be trained in one product to become confident with both.

For us, a significant advancement in v12 is the integrated source control. This means that all rulebase files will always be securely and safely stored within the hub without the need to find and install separate software.

Numerous rule author productivity improvements are being introduced into v12 with the Rules Assistant making its debut.



This will mostly be of benefit to new rule authors but could also be useful for those with more experience. The feature provides an instant smart look-up of suggested rules during rule modelling activities.

v12 will also provide rule authors with much more control of the way in which interview screens are displayed. Screen elements are now built within containers which can be easily constructed by rule authors without any velocity template changes.

Data mapping will be much easier in v12 and rule authors will also no longer need to declare variable attributes as rules are modelled, end of an era but a very welcome and time saving improvement.

Finally, the OPA regression suite now uses spreadsheets to more easily replicate test data and expected outcomes. Those familiar with the What-If analysis report, will see a similar approach to the way in which the regression tester will perform.

For further information about v12 please contact us (details on page 2).

Prince's Trust

Oracle has just started work on a new Cloud based project to support the development of a new web site and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system. Find out more on ... page 2.

OPA Training Update

Our training team has been hard at work preparing new training materials for the upcoming v12 release. Learn about our preparations on ... page 2.

OPA Top Tips & Modelling

Sean Reardon, our longest standing OPA specialist has two sections in this months issue. Some tips on how to optimise modelling performance and how to use OPA advanced features. Details on ... page 2.

OPA X-Gov Update

The OPA UK X-Gov Group is growing with new OPA CoEs announced and events being held in February. Find out more on ... page 2.

Upgrading OPA

We have started to use the new product (internal preview release) to migrate and upgrade projects from v10 to v12. Max Hill from our team describes the steps taken so that we are ready for the big day... page 2.



Prince's Trust

by Jonathan Watson



We have just started a new project with youth charity

The Prince's Trust where OPA will be utilised as part of a programme to refresh their web site in conjunction with the Service Cloud (previously known as RightNow). OPA rules will be modelled directly by Prince's Trust rule authors with our help. OPA is initially being targeted for a new online exploratory tool that allows young people to be able to check their entitlement to a range of programmes The Trust provides.

It is also expected that OPA will be used to digitise a range of forms that are issued by The Trust for training programme applicants to complete and for all data to be stored through the Service Cloud.

Go-live date is expected to be around May 2015.

OPA Training Update

by Mark Attenborough

The team are very busy preparing new training materials for v12 prior to its release. In addition, we also have new training machines in readiness and will be happy to host training events if our customers prefer to be trained at Oracle. Normally training is delivered in our London City Office but we can also run courses in other Oracle offices throughout the country including: Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and Bristol.

We are also going to be running some v12 taster days, further news to follow on that soon!

Top 5 most popular OPA courses:

1. OPA Foundation Rule Modelling (5d)
2. OPA Advanced Rule Modelling (5d)
3. OPA BI Publisher (3d)
4. OPA Project Delivery Methods (2d)
5. OPA Foundation Tester (3d)

OPA Modelling Section

by Sean Reardon

Modelling similar rules for different circumstances (entities, items in a list, points in time) can be a challenge when it comes to balancing readability, maintainability and time to implement. But as always OPA has a variety of options to help you.

A common technique ever since we started to use Microsoft Word has been to use 'copy

and paste' and then 'search and replace' which has the advantage of being quick and intuitive to implement. But it can be problematic for maintainability.

But OPA gives you many other options as well: Time-Based Reasoning can help with forecasting; with some initial setup you can use Excel to generate your rules from an updated list; or, using a technique that we have been trialling to good effect on several projects recently, you can use inferred entities to do the heavy lifting of handling repeated rules.

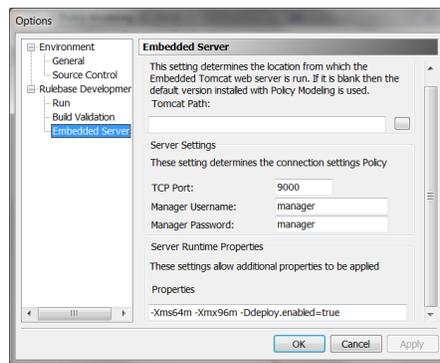
Each technique has its own pros and cons so talk to us and we can discuss through the options to help you improve initial rule modelling architecture and make your rules more maintainable in the long run.

OPA Top Tip

by Sean Reardon

While OPA performs amazingly well out of the box, when you start getting larger projects, you may want to tweak some settings to make it work even better.

One easy change to make is to provide OPA with more memory. From **Tools | Options** you can allocate more memory to OPA when using screens.



Just change the numbers in the properties area (a good starting point is to change both to 512).

If you need more assistance in configuring your rulebase, we are glad to help.

Upgrading OPA to v12

by Max Hill

As you will have read on the previous page, v12 is rapidly approaching. The new version will contain a migration wizard to automate much of the upgrade process and we have been working with preview versions to try it out.

Undoubtedly there will always be some final minor adjustments to tailor old policy models to fit the shiny new features of the latest modelling suite, such as checking for mathematic operators in attributes before upgrading and taking a moment to consider the slightly modified manner in which screen visibility is controlled. But when compared to previous policy model upgrades, this is a dream come true!

The first trial external policy model to be upgraded was HMRCs Employment Status Indicator (ESI); this is now successfully running on an OPA Mobile app.

Second through the gate was a large policy model from the Legal Aid Agency, demos soon to come. Both upgrades have been performed with the intention of allowing mobile access to OPA. For further information on the basic steps involved in upgrading to OPM V.12, including hints and tips to pre-empt some more specific issues then please contact us.

OPA X-Gov Group

by Matthew Bickham

The OPA X-Gov Group is meeting again in October (see the diary dates section). HMRC is hosting both events onsite in Southend. The events are packed with activities to showcase how HMRC utilize OPA, the methods it uses to design and build rulebase components and more!

The timing is good; HMRC have recently been awarded their OPA Centre of Excellence recognition and now join four other organizations as early adopters. The Legal Aid Agency has also been recently recognized. To learn more about the Centre of Excellence programme:

https://blogs.oracle.com/OPA/entry/building_an_oracle_policy_automation

Provisional Diary Dates

10th Feb '15 – OPA X-Gov Rule Author Forum
11th Feb '15 – OPA X-Gov Exec Group Forum

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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