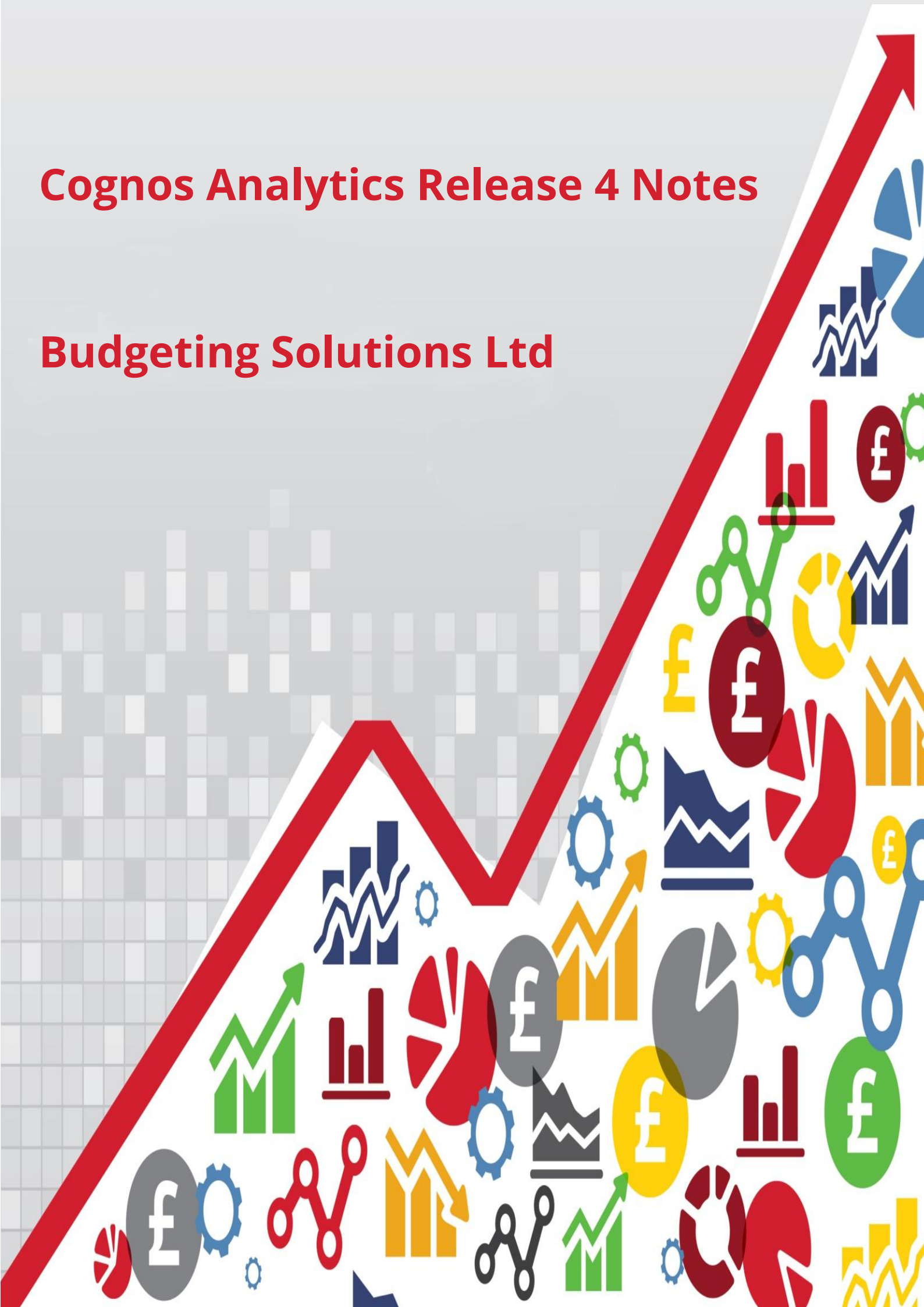
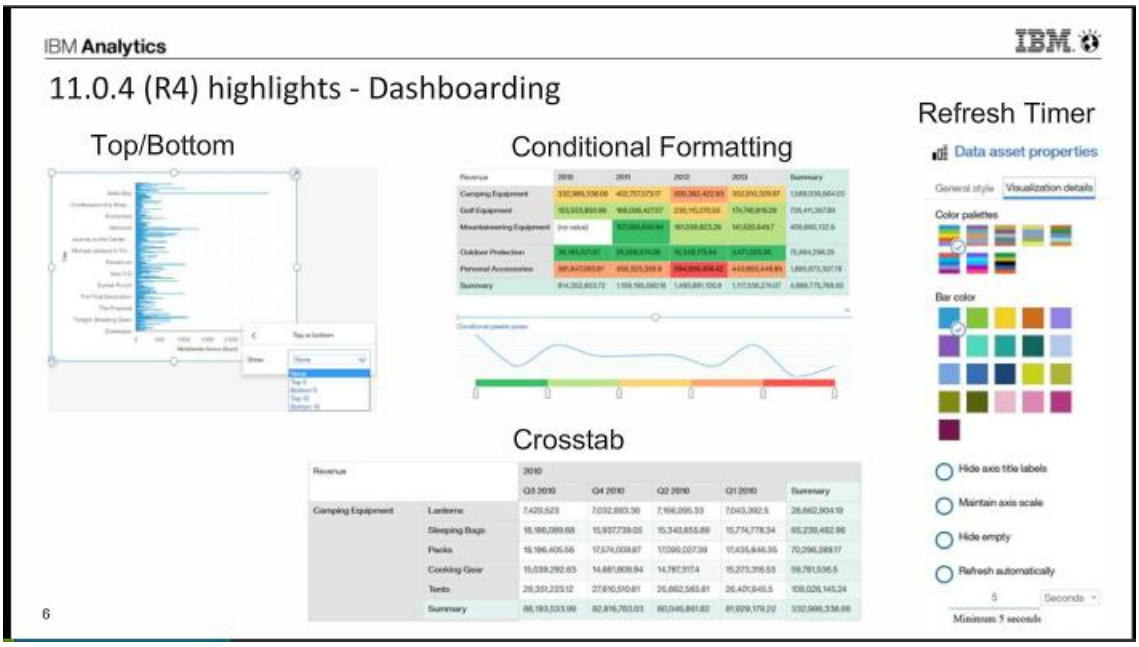
Cognos Analytics Release 4 Notes

Budgeting Solutions Ltd



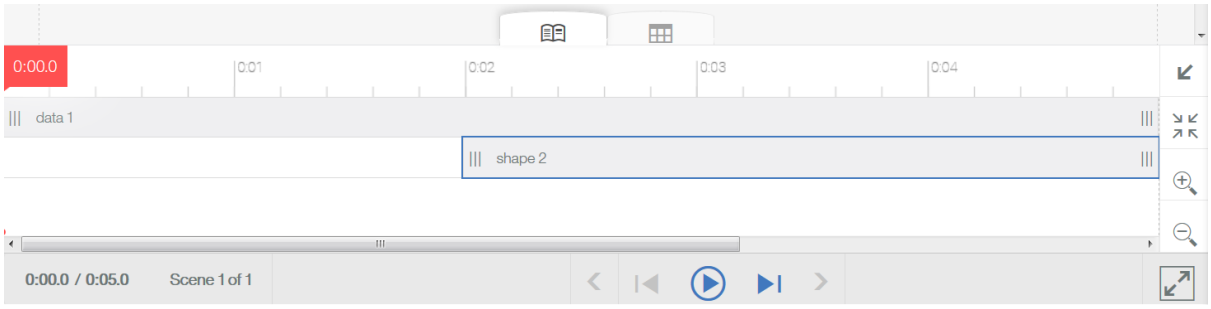
With the three previous releases of Cognos Analytics containing mainly bug fixes and small enhancements, release 4 (R4) made some big changes that should prove to be universally popular.

Dashboard



Additional functionality in the Dashboard allows for conditional formatting, crosstabs and now refresh timer for automatic updates.

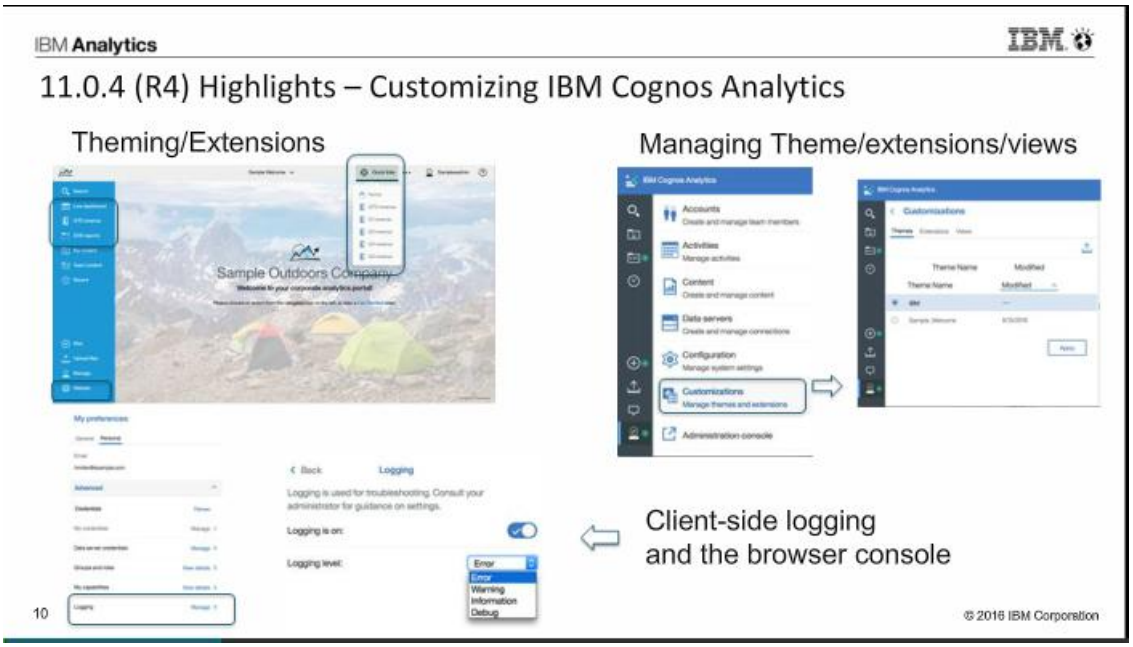
The new ‘Story Telling’ feature allows selected screen to be made into a slide show



Customisation

The CA environment can now be customised, from the initial Welcome Page through to adding or removing buttons and menus.

Various samples are included that demonstrate how to modify existing themes and create your own.



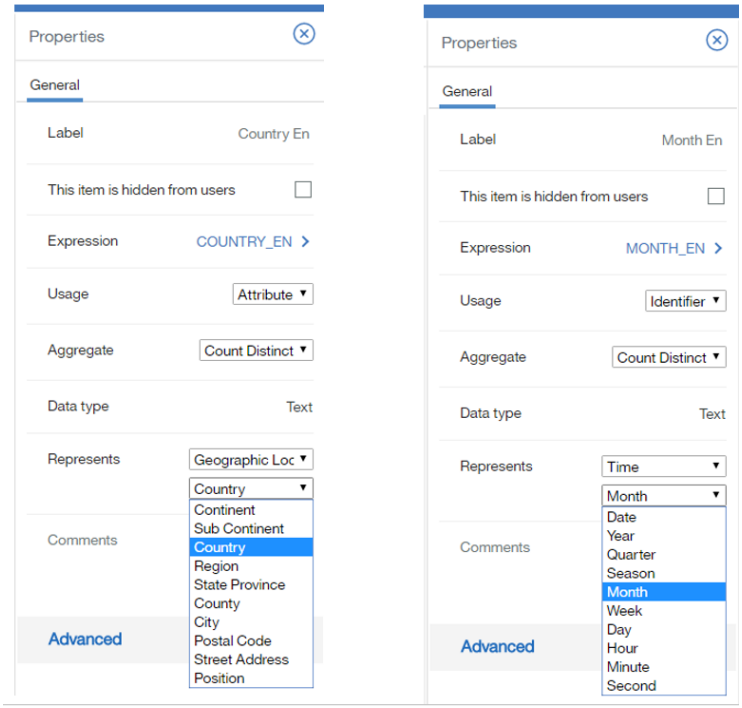
Data Sets

Until now there was no way of adding data from an OLAP data source (Transformer-built, TM1 etc) or Framework Manager package onto a dashboard, although reporting against them was not an issue. This restriction has now been removed by the addition of the new Data Sets capability (do not confuse this with the Data Set functionality in v10, which has been removed). This allows a cached version of a subset of the data to be maintained and used in the dashboard and data modules – this makes report performance quicker as it reduces the workload on the database server.

A nice feature of Data Sets is the summarize detailed values, suppress duplicates option. This functionality helps tremendously if you are pulling records from a large fact table that contains millions of transaction level details, but you only need a summarized month level, for example. The final data set output would reduce millions of rows from a fact into just a few hundred and deliver much faster reporting performance.

Data Modules

As a designer of the Data Module, you now have the capability of hiding columns from the user and also the module will now automatically look for columns of data that potentially contain geographic or time data.



With the new mapping tools being available from R5 onwards, this could have a significant impact and making map production very much easier. Using the geographic item on a dashboard will now default the visualisation to a map and date to a calendar.

The product is available at no charge for existing Cognos users with a valid maintenance agreement and for those wishing to try the new capabilities, there is a cloud based version available to try at https://ca-trial.mybluemix.net/ by using your IBM id.

We were asked in June at a User Day whether customers should consider moving to CA – our answer at that time, which was running R2, was a definite '**no'.** With the enhancements described above in R4 and the added functionality of the new mapping technology and RAVE2 visualisations to be delivered in R5 in mid-November, the answer to that same question now is **'yes'.**

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We work closely with IBM and recommend IBM Cognos performance management and analytic solutions, which we believe to be the most advanced, powerful and reliable applications available, having consistently delivered outstanding results for us, over the last ten years.

Each assignment is unique, requiring a blend of technical knowledge; management processes and accounting issues that combined deliver a solution which transforms the planning and reporting functions of an organisation.

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