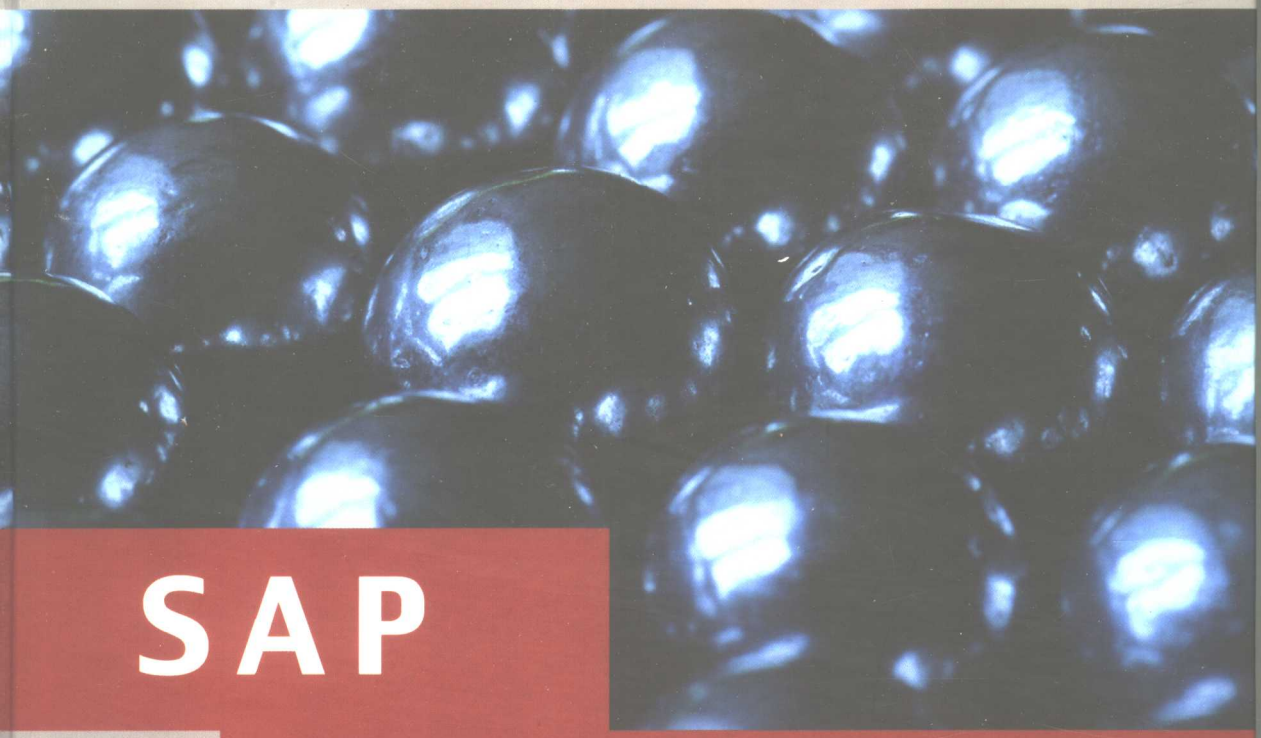
SAP NetWeaver 精要丛书

诺伯特·艾格(Norbert Egger) 著



SAP 业务信息仓库(专业版)(影印版)

SAP BW Professional

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Foreword

The commercial use of electronic data processing also marked the beginning of an attempt to use the increasingly comprehensive and detailed data in decision-making. Soon, one conceptual design followed another; little by little, IT tools that supported or claimed to support various concepts came into existence.

However, until the end of the last decade, the attempt to use these types of concepts and designs carried with it a high risk of failure. Even if the implementation of these concepts and designs itself did not collapse, the operation of such solutions often ultimately failed. This situation became even more dramatic as economic developments required the appropriate (that is, IT-supported) use of information for management activities.

The significance of the IT-supported availability of information for management soon reached a new level of quality: successful strategic management became a global, core competency with a geographic aspect, a cross-industry aspect, and an aspect independent of the size of the company involved. This development was concurrent with and had an effect on additional processes which, when viewed as a whole, meant new opportunities and risks. These processes included:

- Dramatic changes to the framework of business activity in general
- Continuing standardization of business processes
- Implementation of standard software that supported business processes in an integrated manner
- Development of IT (particularly the Internet and Web technology)
- Some consolidation of the concept of providing information (particularly the concepts of data warehousing and online analytical processing (OLAP))
- Appearance of a new supplier that fundamentally changed the market in the area of business intelligence software—SAP

While the competition and business analysts were skeptical about ERP-based data warehouse solutions, the SAP customers increasingly demanded it, and in 1997-98, SAP introduced its main business intelligence product—*SAP Business Information Warehouse (SAP BW)*—to the market. After its initial growing pains, SAP BW 1.2B was a serviceable and high-performance tool for analytical applications by mid-1998.

Then, after a period of initial reluctance among customers, SAP and most consulting firms were ultimately overwhelmed with an outright boom in demand by the time that SAP BW 2.0B and 2.1B appeared. In the business intelligence market, SAP moved from being a non-starter to a leading position; the success of SAP left its competitors' jeering far behind.

With SAP BW 3.0B, SAP succeeded in advancing development another step forward. The software now reached the level of "Best Practices" in its presentation of information. Although Web reporting in SAP BW had been strong since Release 2.0B, most consultants ignored this powerful tool completely, just as they had so many other new developments.

Given the often poor quality of implementations (due to inadequate design and resulting performance problems; reports viewed as inadequate by their intended audience; and the problems and high costs of operating such solutions), the need for a presentation of design knowledge in book form became ever more apparent. However, both the volume of work demanded by the scope of such a project and the short half-life of each version of SAP BW struck me as impossible to tackle in a reasonable period. Therefore, I must thank the tenaciousness of this book's editor for convincing me that this project could be undertaken.

Now that I've experienced and survived the production of this book, I'd like to thank all those who contributed for their cooperation and patience:

- The editor, Wiebke Hübner, for her assistance and patience during our collaboration
- The employees of *CubeServ AG (Switzerland)* and *CubeServ GmBH* (Germany) for their understanding of my drastically reduced management and consulting activity and for their numerous tips, which have become part of this work
- My management colleagues, Roland Merz and Jens Rohlf, for serving as editors and advisers when needed

Above all, I'd like to thank my family and especially my wife, Margot, for their understanding, enormous assistance, and handling of all the tasks that fell victim to this work. Without Margot, this work would have been impossible, and therefore, I dedicate this book to her with gratitude.

Norbert Egger
Jona (Switzerland), December 2003

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