



Data Warehousing 101

BusinessObjects: A tool with a Graphical User Interface (GUI) that allows users to create reports from the data available in a data warehouse.

Data Dictionary: A database containing a collection of metadata about all the entities in a warehouse.

Data Mart: A subset of a data warehouse that tailors information to focus on the needs of a specific target group or groups.

Data Warehouse: A database built to support information access through an interface that uses simple commands to retrieve and analyze all available data.

Decision Support System (DSS): A set of programs and related data designed to provide the information needed by business decision makers and analysts. Often includes a database, a subject area knowledge base, a query language, and a modeling program to test alternative decisions.

Metadata (also meta data): Literally, "data about data." Used to describe what kind of information is stored, where it comes from, where it is stored, how it is encoded, how it relates to other information, and how it relates to your business.

Query: The set of instructions used to retrieve and display specific data from a database.

Schema: A standard technique for defining the aspects of a data warehouse. This includes the information in the tables, such as domains and parameters of attributes and attribute fields.

SQL (Structured Query Language): A database sublanguage used to query, update, and manage relational database information.



Comments about the *dw Query*?
Send an e-mail to VCITNEWS@vw.com.

Why Warehouse?

To succeed in the today's business world, we need access to better information and more of it. Throughout the years we have collected volumes of information. Yet, it often seems that the critical information that we need seems to be locked in a "data jail," hampering our decision-making processes.

What's a business to do? Theoretically, the solution involves a transformation of the "jail" into an accessible repository where key people have access to whatever information they need. Our Data Warehouse represents an enterprise-wide solution for managing and accessing our informational data.

Just like any other IT project, the development of a good data warehouse involves careful planning, requirements definition, designing, prototyping, and implementation. The system design is often based on abstract business concepts and is created from the 'outside in' rather than from 'top down.' Determining the needs of the users becomes the key and users become the key drivers of change. As VCI users become more experienced with our Data Warehouse and realize that the information is (or can be made) available, more sophisticated information and reports are and will continue to be requested.

Release I of the Data Warehouse set the standard for our future. The Data Warehouse opened its virtual doors in June 1999 with initial data from APPRO. The flexible architectural design of the Warehouse allows continuous growth and a sizable repository for consolidated and consistent data.

When Release II was deployed in October 2000, our capabilities expanded to include most of the data from LEASEPAK and kept the existing APPRO data available. Users could employ both the standard static and ad-hoc reporting capabilities.

What's Next?

Work on Release III is well under way and will expand the Warehouse to include the rest of the termination data from LEASEPAK (excluding EOL data) and a month-end snapshot. Learn more about Release III in the next edition of *dw Query*.

Why *dw Query*?

This newsletter represents a means to convey additional information about the Data Warehouse to our business areas as a supplement to the Project Notebook. We believe that you will enjoy the single-page format. Look to *dw Query* each month for exciting news and recurring features. Be sure to examine our next issue to learn what Data Warehouse Release III has in store.