



# Dodeca<sup>®</sup> Spreadsheet Management System

## Twelve Questions Financial Systems Managers Ask About Dodeca

### What are the primary benefits of Dodeca?

Dodeca has many benefits for customers. A few of the most commonly reported benefits include:

1. Reduced risk associated with spreadsheet errors, which leads to more accurate and dependable spreadsheet calculations and interpretation
2. Increased user and operational productivity, which allows users to focus on analyzing the numbers instead of gathering information
3. Increased return on investment in Essbase due to broader usage of client Essbase resources
4. Reduced support and maintenance costs

Additionally, Dodeca clients experience increased flexibility and faster performance.

### What are the risks associated with the use of spreadsheets?

Spreadsheets have been taking quite a beating in the recent press and for good reason. Research conducted at the University of Hawaii over the past 10 years has found that 88% of spreadsheets contain at least one error and that approximately 5% of these errors are considered serious in nature. Yet, spreadsheets continue to be ubiquitous. In fact, 95% of U.S. companies use spreadsheets in their financial reporting process and 85% use spreadsheets in their budgeting process. In other words, the risk of spreadsheet errors having an impact exists in nearly every company. The problem isn't with the spreadsheet format itself, but rather with issues caused, ultimately, by human error. There are at least three major categories of spreadsheet errors:

1. Data entry errors
2. Formula and/or logic errors
3. Interpretation errors

To compound these problems, standalone spreadsheets do not have a system that controls access or tracks changes. When errors are detected, this makes it difficult, if not impossible, to trace who made the error and when the error was introduced.

## How does Dodeca reduce the risk of using spreadsheets?

Dodeca reduces the risk of human error associated with spreadsheets in a number of ways. The Dodeca Spreadsheet Management System is not just a single, unified front end for analysis, planning, and reporting. It is a complete enterprise system that uses a secure, centralized database to manage spreadsheet templates accessed by end users. Access to the spreadsheet templates is controlled, so changes can only be made by authorized users. These authorized users are typically the more experienced spreadsheet professionals in your company, who are responsible for creating and maintaining the spreadsheets and are less apt to introduce errors.

Dodeca helps your organization adhere to regulatory and compliance requirements, such as Sarbanes-Oxley. For instance, changes to the spreadsheets, including the user's name and the time, along with the pre-update and post-update spreadsheets, are logged in a centralized server. This allows you to see who changed a spreadsheet template as well as when the change occurred.

To ensure the relevance and accuracy of the data, Dodeca builds spreadsheets dynamically by filling Excel templates stored in the centralized database with data pulled directly from your ERP or EPM systems, including Essbase and relational data sources.

Dodeca also provides control of the user environment and allows you to expose only the amount of spreadsheet functionality your users need.

## Do I have to be a spreadsheet expert to use Dodeca?

No. Dodeca is so easy and intuitive to use that users at all levels of your organization, from clerks to executives, can use Dodeca even if they have little or no prior experience with spreadsheets.

## My company already has Smart View, so do I need Dodeca?

Smart View is a solution that provides Microsoft Office integration to a number of Oracle products, including Essbase. In many companies, Smart View is first put into the hands of the spreadsheet gurus, who figure out how to use it and then train the less spreadsheet-savvy users. The value an individual realizes from Smart View is directly proportional to the skills they have as a spreadsheet user.

Smart View has no central spreadsheet repository, which means you have no managed control over the spreadsheets. You are unable to easily leverage the skills of the more experienced spreadsheet users to ensure spreadsheets are properly constructed and, more importantly, contain accurate information. But, Dodeca goes further. Dodeca's central spreadsheet repository ensures that your users get the most up-to-date spreadsheet template, populated with the current Essbase data, and retrieved from the correct Essbase database. Dodeca users get the answers they need fast and dependably.

Unlike Smart View, Dodeca requires little to no training to use. In other words, Dodeca makes Essbase easy.

Dodeca connects to relational databases from the Dodeca server using JDBC technology and supports nearly every database that is JDBC compliant. The most common relational databases used with Dodeca include Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server, IBM DB2, and MySQL.

## My company already has Hyperion Financial Reporting, so do I need Dodeca?

Many of our clients also have Hyperion Financial Reporting. Hyperion Financial Reporting, or HFR, is used by Oracle Essbase customers who need to publish standardized reports in HTML or PDF format. HFR also features batch/burst capability that can be scheduled to create and distribute reports automatically.

Like Dodeca, HFR has a managed repository of reports and easy-to-use, point-of-view selectors, but the HFR report format lacks the layout and formatting flexibility and robust calculation capabilities of spreadsheets. Clients in the accounting and finance disciplines use Excel day-in and day-out and prefer data in Excel format. Dodeca presents the data in the format these users expect. Creating reports is easy for report developers, because they can leverage their existing spreadsheet experience without extensive training. In addition to reporting, Dodeca supports analysis and planning applications.

## Why does Dodeca work better with Essbase than any other product?

Dodeca is architecturally designed from a user's perspective with a focus on Essbase. As such, Dodeca reflects our broad Essbase experience along with valuable feedback gathered from years of one-on-one client interactions. Dodeca supports extensive drill-through and write-back capabilities. With the fastest Essbase retrieval times of any product on the market and the ability to perform jumbo-sized operations on Essbase datasets, Dodeca is also the leader in Essbase performance.

## Can Dodeca generate spreadsheet reports from my general ledger?

Yes. Dodeca can generate spreadsheet reports directly from Oracle E-Business Suite, PeopleSoft, JD Edwards, and most other general ledger systems. In fact, it can create reports from any relational data source. Dodeca has a built-in, spreadsheet-oriented report writer designed to provide formatted and summarized reports that can utilize any Excel function. This unique spreadsheet management capability makes it easy for users to get more than just data; they get the information they want in the format they seek.

## Who is using Dodeca?

Dodeca clients include both large and small deployments in many industries. Our Financial Services clients include Wells Fargo, Manulife Financial, Principal Financial and Cantor Fitzgerald. In Retail, our clients include Kroger, Supervalu, Big Lots, and HEB. Other well-known Dodeca clients include Nestlé, Verizon Wireless, Mars, HBO, Schneider Electric, and the Ontario Ministry of Finance.

## What types of applications does Dodeca handle?

Dodeca is extremely flexible, highly customizable, and uniquely well-suited for many different types of applications. Clients use Dodeca for:

- Reporting, either instead of or along with Hyperion Financial Reporting for corporate, divisional, and retail store reporting.
- Planning, where Hyperion Planning does not meet their business requirements or where they wish to use Essbase as their budgeting, planning, or forecasting engine.

- Analysis, where clients need the ability to easily investigate the details supporting the numbers and where they need to annotate and summarize their findings.
- Management, for operational tasks as varied as merchandise planning, store location planning, and weekly forecasting.

Our clients use Dodeca for a wide variety of applications, both large and small. Dodeca scales to handle applications with thousands of users, yet it is simple enough to be quickly, easily, and inexpensively deployed for small applications.

### How does the Dodeca Spreadsheet Management System provide a strategic advantage within an organization?

Dodeca powers many mission critical applications in companies around the world. These range from production planning systems for a company with 250,000 SKUs and extremely complex user requirements to operational systems that serve as the primary information source used to run the day-to-day operations of retail companies with thousands of retail store locations. Companies using Dodeca in this manner are companies that have developed the standards and best practices for their industry. They chose Dodeca for the flexibility they needed to implement their vision and to hit their corporate objectives.

### We have already made significant investments in our ERP and EPM implementations. How can I justify another software purchase?

The cost of any software implementation includes not only the initial licensing fees, implementation costs, and the recurring maintenance fees, but it also includes the on-going return on investment. Dodeca is often used by companies to complement the functionality of their current systems in order to satisfy demanding user requirements and to increase their overall return on investments in Oracle technologies. Dodeca projects often exceed their stated goals and result in a happy and highly productive user base.

If you have questions about Dodeca that are not addressed here, please contact us today.

