

New Features in Actuate Version 6

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New Features in Version 6

This document provides a quick overview of some of the new features announced for Actuate e.Reporting Suite 6 at the 2001 Actuate International User Conference. Please note that Actuate e.Reporting Suite 6 has not been officially released yet, and therefore, these features may be subject to change. Also, this list includes the new features that I thought would be of the most interest to my clients, but may not include every new feature that was announced. For definitive, up-to-date information on Actuate e.Reporting Suite 6, please contact Actuate Corporation.

New features:

- ❑ Each report server will be able to manage multiple volumes. This means each application can have a separate volume (report encyclopedia) on the same server, making it easier to manage each application's reporting resources by keeping them separate.
- ❑ Support for clustering, load balancing and failover. Multiple Report Servers will be able to access the same Report Encyclopedia (usually on a shared disk array). This will make Actuate a real enterprise level environment and make it possible to run it as a 24x7 system. New nodes can be added without taking the system offline. Existing nodes can be removed for maintenance also without taking the system offline.
- ❑ A new SOAP/XML based API called the Actuate API. This will make all of the features of an Actuate server cluster available to any platform/language combination which supports SOAP and XML. The existing Requester API and Report Server APIs will be maintained, but may not support all of the new features introduced in version 6.0 and future versions.
- ❑ System configuration options will no longer be stored in the Windows registry, but instead in XML based configuration files. This standardizes handling on NT and UNIX and also steers further in the direction of supporting open standards.
- ❑ Customizable logging feature. Should make system troubleshooting easier.
- ❑ The system has been modified to add optimizations for the generation of short reports. This should make Actuate generated structured content suitable for use on high volume web sites which may be accessed by 100's of thousands to millions of users.
- ❑ Improved object store which will make the system more efficient when dealing with large numbers of users and objects.
- ❑ Enhanced algorithms for managing the report encyclopedia means that AcDefrag will no longer have to be run to reduce encyclopedia fragmentation.
- ❑ New graphics component that will provide uniform graphing capabilities on UNIX and Windows platforms.
- ❑ Actuate is increasing internationalization support by adding support for the unicode character set. It will now be possible to include all supported languages in one report design.
- ❑ A new Java Server Pages based version of ReportCast. This will eliminate the need to use Actuate's proprietary report template syntax and should make it easier to customize the look of ReportCast and to integrate it with existing web sites.
- ❑ A new feature called Reportlets which will allow portions of a .roi document to be embedded in another web page. This makes it easier to use Actuate as an application server for structured content.
- ❑ A new feature called transient reports. For applications where the user looks at a report document once, and the .roi can then be discarded, this feature eliminates the overhead of storing and later deleting the documents.
- ❑ The e.Spreadsheet server technology (Formula One) acquired with Actuate's acquisition of Tidestone Technologies. This allows the design of reports in a familiar spreadsheet metaphor and makes it easy to distribute structured content as Excel compatible spreadsheets. The downside is this feature makes use of another design tool which is separate from e.Report Designer Pro.
- ❑ Error catalog to make it easier to troubleshoot system error codes.
- ❑ Usage tracking and analysis features.

- ❑ A well-documented open converter module which should make it possible to create custom converters to get .roi content into formats other than the currently supported DHTML, XML and PDF.
- ❑ A new progressive viewing feature which will allow content to be displayed while the report is still generating.
- ❑ A new web browser based system administration tool.