JACKIE's Forum

DB2 Web Query: ONE REPORT MANY USERS

In our last column we talked about the new "run time user enablement" or group user feature that IBM announced in response to your requests. This feature allows multiple users to have run time access to a common group of reports while requiring only one user license.

A recent email I received from a System i customer said that they had 300 sales reps who all needed to see the same reports but each sales rep should only see the data pertinent to them. Could this be done and still use the new pricing model? The answer is: absolutely yes.

There are a couple of different techniques that will allow this. One technique involves creating SQL views on the System i and referencing them in your report. This technique takes advantage of DB2's SQL UDF capabilities to give even greater control and flexibility over report behavior. For more details see the white paper on SQL Views and security at www.ibm.com/servers/enable/site/education/wp/13aae/13aae.pdf.

Here is an overview of the process to allow various users to view different data while running the same report. For simplicity let's use the sample CENTURY database used with all the tutorials in the "Getting Started with DB2 Web Query" redbook. Let's assume that security is implemented at a country level. All sales reps will be able to run the same report but each individual rep should only see the numbers that apply to the customers in the country or countries that he or she is authorized to. The first item you will need is a table that contains the sales reps' System i user ID and the names of the countries that they are authorized to view. If a sales rep, or maybe a sales manager, is authorized to multiple countries then you would have multiple records, each one containing the user ID and the authorized region as shown in the table.

User ID	Country
JJANSEN	Canada
TTHOMPSON	United States
JJANSEN	United States
VDRAGLAND	France

Let's assume that you have already created the report that you now want filtered differently for each sales rep. You will need to join your authority table and your customer master file based on the values in the COUNTRY column.
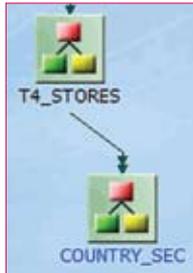
This may be a many-to-many join. Users may be authorized to multiple countries while each country may be viewed by multiple users. This is achieved by selecting "Join All" and is shown as a double arrow in the icon view.

There is a GETUSER system function in DB2 Web Query. This function retrieves the System i user ID of the person running the report. On the selection screen in Report Assistant you will want to select only those records in the authority table where the current user id matches the user id in the authority table.

This will eliminate all of the records from the joined STORES table that the user is not authorized to see. If a sales rep has two records in the table authorizing him or her to Canada and the United States then data pertaining to France will not appear in the report.

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Although this can all be done at the report level in Report Assistant a much easier way to do this globally is using Developer Workbench.

In Developer Workbench you can predefine the join between your authority table and your customer master file. You can also create a global filter called "CountryAut". This filter will compare the current user id to the user id in the authority table. In Report Assistant you need to open the selection tab and then drag and drop the "CountryAut" filter into the selection panel. This will automatically take the report and apply the filtering based on user id and the records they are authorized to see. At any time you can update the authority table to contain the user ids of your current reps and their authorizations.

In a recent press release, IBM and Information Builders announced their plans to bring a batch report distribution feature to IBM DB2 Web Query which would allow you to run this type of report once in batch and have each of the sales reps authorized sections emailed directly to them. Keep your eyes open for more information on the exciting futures that just keep coming to DB2 Web Query.

A more detailed write-up on this technique will be available on the IBM DB2 Web Query website in the future. If you need additional details before it is available, please email me at jackie_jansen@ibi.com and I will send you an early copy. TUG

Jackie Jansen currently works with Information Builders specializing in DB2 Web Query. Jackie is a frequent speaker at iSeries Technical Conferences and User Group meetings. Contact her at jackie_jansen@ibi.com.