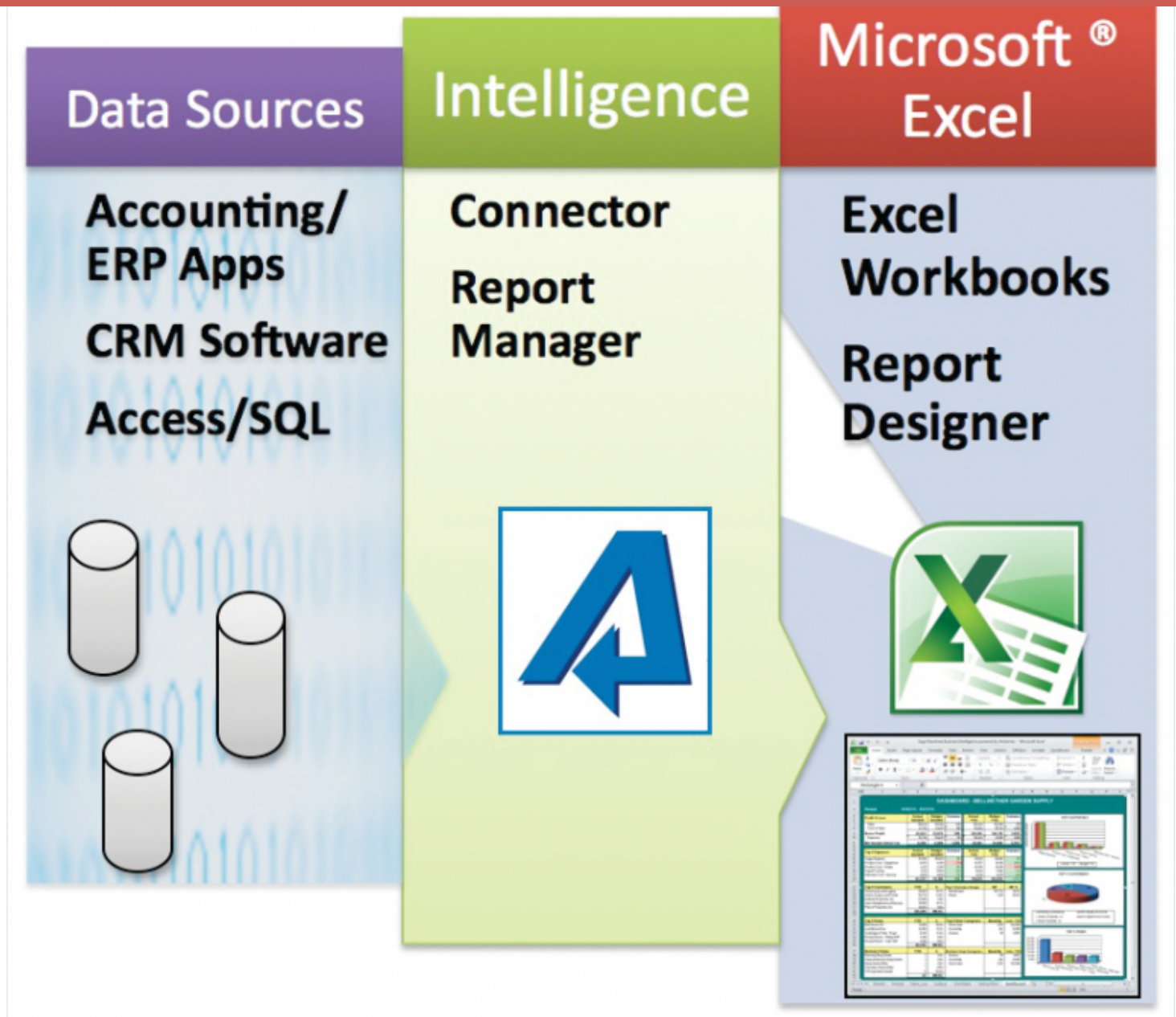


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Sage Business Intelligence, powered by Alchemex, is a solution that provides drag-and-drop reporting for Sage Peachtree, Sage Simply Accounting, Sage ERP MAS 90, Sage ERP MAS 200, Sage ERP MAS 500, and Sage ERP ACCPAC (This tool was first discussed in the April/May 2011 issue). In the months since its launch, Sage's strategy for supporting business intelligence initiatives in small businesses has become

clearer, and some resources and marketplaces have launched, making it easier for end

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- Sage University training courses
- Training webinars
- Training videos
- Customer forums
- E-mail newsletters

The site also has examples of sample reports in a single Microsoft Excel workbook for those who would like to see examples of the analyses included with the product.

While Sage North America has a strategic alliance with Alchemex, it is not the only application that utilizes this reporting tool with business management software. Alchemex business intelligence tools offer integration with many other applications, including Sage Line 50 (UK), Sage Pastel (South Africa), SAP Business One, SYSPRO, and MYOB (Australia). These alliances give the product an extremely broad base of potential users worldwide, and provide accountants and consultants with additional opportunities to earn a return on their investment of time and money required to master this platform.

Alchemex provides forums for consultants and end users to exchange best practices for using the various business intelligence applications on the Business Intelligence Community message boards at <http://community.alchemex.com>. The site includes over 25 forums with discussions for each supported accounting/ERP application, a group for sharing report templates with other users, links to archives of weekly topical webinars, as well as specialized forums for Alchemex Certified Professional Consultants, Certified Business Partners, Certified Training Centers, Certified Professional Trainers, and those interested in reselling reports to third parties.

The Alchemex Connector is a tool that extends the capabilities of Sage Business Intelligence and extracts data from most other tools supporting open database standards. This connectivity permits users to create real-time reporting based on

almost any available system or database. Information from multiple data sources can

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reports. One such website, The Intelligence Store (www.TheIntelligenceStore.com), has created a number of free and low-cost reporting templates that work with applications such as Sage Peachtree, Sage Simply Accounting, Sage ERP Accpac, Sage ERP MAS 500, Sage ERP MAS 90/200, and Sage Pastel. This company also maintains a blog on business intelligence-related topics at <http://bxintelligence.wordpress.com>.

Early feedback indicates that some Sage partners see the Business Intelligence tools as a way to leverage their existing reporting skills into interactive, real-time analysis. Although some IT purists are threatened by the move toward self-service business intelligence, many analysts, including [The Gartner Group](#), have acknowledged that Excel is the preferred tool of most business users for analyzing and consuming business intelligence information. Tools like Microsoft Excel PivotTables and Pivot Charts, the Alchemex Connector, and the Microsoft PowerPivot self-service business intelligence tool for Office 2010 (www.PowerPivot.com) make it possible for accountants to create sophisticated analyses, which were previously only available to the largest companies.

The ways companies buy and implement software will continue to evolve, and both end users and consultants must continue to look for ways to provide value in a competitive marketplace. Tools like Sage Business Intelligence create competitive advantage for the organizations who use them as well as the accountants and consultants who learn how to successfully work with them. These leaders will be positioned to take advantage of many new opportunities not available to those who ignore this self-service business intelligence revolution.

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