E-BOOK

The State of Oracle E-Business Suite

> Understand the Oracle E-Business Suite roadmap, the most meaningful impacts of Release 12.2.11, and how E-Business Suite is evolving to keep pace with the changing IT landscape.

- Oracle E-Business Suite Support Update
- Highlights of Release 12.2.11
- 2022 Call to Action for E-Business Suite
- How to Add Value to E-Business Suite

SYNTAX

The Future of E-Business Suite is Now

Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) is advancing in dramatic new ways to keep pace with the evolving IT landscape. Oracle continues to invest in EBS, enhancing functionality and modernizing the user experience, while making upgrades easier and less intrusive.

At the technology stack level, Oracle is taking steps to decouple EBS from the core database to facilitate the journey to cloud, to make Oracle Autonomous Database a reality for EBS customers, and to provide a way to attain true scalability in the cloud with new capabilities for burst capacity in Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI).

Oracle has also opened the larger Oracle ecosystem to EBS, enabling the use of Oracle Identity Cloud Service (IDCS)—to natively provide single sign-on, and Oracle Integration Cloud (OIC), which has many prebuilt integrations to other cloud services such as Salesforce and ServiceNow.

With businesses focused on shaping their cloud journey and making the most of their ERP investment, the future of EBS is **now**.

"Oracle E-Business Suite is alive and well, with ongoing investment and improvements to the user interface and the functionality. We expect to continue our regular pattern of new releases and to provide support beyond anyone's planning horizon."

Cliff Godwin
Senior Vice President
Oracle Application Development

About this Guide

Oracle is providing more value to customers than ever before and paving the way to increasingly leverage cloud computing. Keeping you informed and up to date, this 2022 Guide to Oracle EBS provides:

- An overview of Oracle Premier, Extended, and Sustaining Support options for EBS
- The latest advancements to modern user experience, functional innovation, and operational efficiency from Release 12.2.11
- Improvements to security, scalability, supportability, and manageability that organizations can implement now
- Concrete ways Oracle customers can enhance the value of their EBS solutions

Reading this guide will help prepare your business for what to expect from the transition to EBS Release 12.2.11 and the subsequent enhancements delivered as a result of the Continuous Innovation model.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1

Oracle EBS Support Update

Oracle Support Primer

Oracle's standard practice for EBS is to provide Premier Support of new releases for five years after general availability and Extended Support for three additional years. Once a product has reached its end-of-support date, Sustaining Support is available, which means that EBS customers still have access to My Oracle Support and can open service requests, but Oracle will no longer create on-going patches, fixes, certifications with third-party products, and the like. Customers typically choose to upgrade at this point, not only from a support perspective but also to take advantage of new functionality available.

Pay particular attention to Error Correction Support (ECS), which refers to all of the patches that you need to have applied to your system to stay supported. If you run into an issue and have not applied these patches, you will need to do so before seeking help from Oracle.

Market-Driven Support (MDS) is a fee-based service offered through Oracle Advanced Customer Support (ACS), for things like regulatory updates once a release reaches Sustaining Support. If you're not quite ready to upgrade and you need another year or two to prepare, consider MDS in the interim.

Finally, some of Oracle's terminology around support is changing. Oracle introduced the concept of Long Term vs. Innovation Releases with different support implications. You'll see this around database and some of the middleware, with "Innovation" referring to interim versions with new functionality that are released but haven't gone through the same testing cycle as the Long-Term releases. For Oracle customers on the cutting edge of database capabilities for example, these Innovation releases are available, though they're not always certified for EBS specifically.

Premier

- 5 years after GA
- Includes all patches, fixes, and new certifications

Extended

- 3 years after Premier ends (usually)
- Additional fee required (usually)

Sustaining

- Indefinite (usually)
- No access to regulatory or security updates

Market Driven

- Fee-based service **sometimes** offered by Oracle ACS
- Primary benefit is critical security patches

Pay attention to Error Correction Support (ECS), which covers the requirements to stay supported.

New Long Term and Innovation Releases for technology products have differing requirements.

Oracle Support Status and Ramifications

Premier Support for 12.1.3 ended as of December 2021. So if you want to get your 1099 patches for 2022—you're running Oracle HR for payroll and you need your payroll patch—you will need to engage Oracle ACS for MDS, which is priced out by customer. MDS is available for 2022 and 2023 and will give you access to regulatory patches and critical fixes, as well as some severity 1 or 2 service requests as necessary. EBS customers who are on 12.1.3 or even 11i should start planning now for an upgrade, even if you decide to keep functionality changes to a minimum and do what's called a "technical upgrade".

From an Oracle Database perspective, if you're running 11gR2 or 12.1, start planning your upgrade to 19c, the current Long Term Release, which is certified for both EBS 12.1 and 12.2. The terminal release of 11gR2 was 11.2.0.4 and support ended in 2020, while support for 12.1 ends July 2022.

Oracle EBS clearly has a lot of shelf life left, with projected support through 2033+. Through the Continuous Innovation Release model, you can easily apply the point release patches to keep current and make sure that you have the latest functionality and back-end tooling.

> Customers on Oracle or third-party support who have access to 12.2.4 versions or later should plan on upgrading to the previous stable release.

See EBS ECS Doc ID **1195034.1** for details surrounding minimum patch levels for R12.

12.1.3	Premier Support through December 2021 – Consider market-driven support and get planning!
12.2.10	Continuous Innovation Release launched in September 2020
12.2.11	November 2021

Technical Upgrade

An Oracle EBS technical upgrade is the fastest, least disruptive, and most cost-effective strategy for upgrading to the latest version of Oracle EBS. This type of upgrade focuses on behind-the-scenes changes needed to get on 12.2, which include upgrading the database and middleware software. However, this upgrade approach significantly minimizes any functional changes to business flows or adoption of new functionality. Users will still get the benefit of the new 12.2 user experience, including better ways of working with the user interface, but will not have to go through significant retraining.

Functional Upgrade

An Oracle EBS functional upgrade will expand the steps in the technical upgrade to add new functionality, change existing functionality, or update data structures such as the chart of accounts. This type of upgrade is commonly used by customers who may be on an older release of E-Business Suite, such as 11i (11.5.10.2) or R12 (12.0.6). One of the primary reasons we see customers undertake major functional upgrades is when an organization's chart of accounts design no longer meets its needs.

Oracle Continuous Innovation Release Model

The Oracle Continuous Innovation Release Model promises customers the chance to maintain support without ever having to undergo an upgrade again. Instead of major upgrades every 2-4 years, Oracle now releases both fixes and new functionality in an annual batch that is both easier and less disruptive for customers to apply. Applying these releases as scheduled will help customers stay current, stay secure, and prepare for the more frequent updates that an eventual migration to Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications will bring.

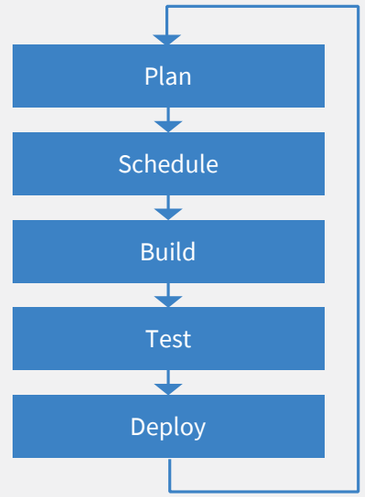
Release Management Best Practice

A typical EBS ecosystem has a lot of moving parts, which requires a comprehensive approach to Enterprise Release Management (ERM).

As a recommended best practice, create an Application Strategic Roadmap that shows all of your applications, where they are in terms of their versions, their end-of-support dates, and when you need to start thinking about upgrading. Look at a 3-to-5-year time horizon, prioritize the pain points involved, and understand return on investment (ROI) and total cost of ownership (TCO) impact so that you're prepared to make a business case as warranted.

Plan Early and Regularly

- All organizations should have a position responsible for ERM
- Ensure all stakeholders have a seat at the table
- Develop a **high-level schedule** during your budget cycle and as vendors set release dates
- **Meet regularly** (at least monthly) to review updates and changes
- Remember to include the virtual infrastructure maintenance windows for your hyperscalers



CHAPTER 2

Highlights of Release 12.2.11

With the release of EBS 12.2.11 in November 2021, Oracle introduced advancements in modern user experience, functional innovation, and operational efficiency. Here's a quick look at the key enhancements and new features.

Key Functional Enhancements

- **Order Management** – Usage-based billing and milestone billing allow customers to improve both project-based and subscription billing. This extends to Lease and Finance Management, in which you can now use multi-factor metrics for billing.
- **Inventory & Warehouse Management** – The Warehouse Management Rules Engine now gives you the ability to guide pick and put-away operations by using a classification code. This is a significant feature that will allow you to be more efficient in your processes.
- **Process Manufacturing** – For manufacturers that use recipes (food and beverage, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, etc.), a new Distributed Sampling feature allows you to define subsets of quality specifications and distribute samples across sites, while retaining the ability to aggregate them to determine quality specifications.
- **Enterprise Asset Management** – Extending functionality released in 12.2.10, the latest release allows managers to match unassigned work orders to qualified technicians.
- **OTL/Discrete Manufacturing** – Oracle Time and Labor (OTL) now supports time entry against work order operations, which is helpful for organizations in which resources perform both manufacturing and maintenance tasks.
- **UX** – Oracle has released a new theme that matches with Oracle Cloud Applications, providing a level of consistency for those customers who are deployed in a co-existence model with both EBS and Cloud Apps.

APIs and Integrations

Oracle has expanded Application Programing Interface (API) support for a number of functions, including Inventory, Product Hub, Discrete and Process Manufacturing, and Warehouse Management. Most importantly, EBS now supports outbound REST (REpresentational State Transfer) integrations, allowing customers to invoke REST calls with Business Events.

Enterprise Command Centers

The November 2021 EBS Enterprise Command Center (ECC) release includes new Command Centers for Payroll and Project Manufacturing, as well as new dashboards for existing ECCs in Discrete Manufacturing, Quality, Project Billing, Service Charges, and Assets. Oracle made several enhancements to the ECC Framework, including export to PDF, new chart types, in-dashboard pop-ups, and APEX integration. These enhancements increase usability of existing dashboards.

Oracle Cloud Infrastructure

New features for EBS Cloud Manager include support for Flex shapes and support for WebLogic subscription licensing models, which means new capabilities for burst capacity and a way to attain true scalability in the cloud. Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) now offers subscription licensing options at both the database and application tiers.

Technology Changes and Enhancements

EBS database certifications have historically taken a long time. That's why EBS Development is hard at work to make architectural changes that will allow EBS customers to ultimately migrate to Oracle Autonomous Database. Moving to this new model will cut certification time down significantly, allowing customers to adopt new features faster.

Oracle is always looking for ways to make EBS more cloud friendly and facilitate the use of cloud database services. Oracle E-Business Suite 12.2.11 (AD-TXK Delta 13 specifically), introduces a new EBS_SYSTEM schema that effectively decouples EBS from the core database, thus separating application management from database management. This could conceivably lead to Amazon RDS and other cloud-native database services becoming viable options for EBS.

And sure to please your executive management and compliance teams, updating grants of user rights to data access becomes a two-step process with the new release: an Oracle DBA (Database Administrator) executes the first step and an Oracle Apps DBA executes the second step. This segmentation of responsibility provides an important check and balance for granting administrative super-user rights to the data — one requests, another approves - which meets Sarbanes-Oxley Act controls and compliance requirements.

CHAPTER 3

2022 Call to Action for EBS

The 2022 Call to Action really revolves around modernization of EBS in four key areas: Security, Scalability, Supportability, and Manageability.

- Consider modernizing with a PaaS solution for integration, analytics, security, and compliance. If you have an on-premises solution such as Oracle SOA (Service-Oriented Architecture) or OBIEE (Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition). Review the new capabilities in EBS for outbound REST services.
- Understand new capabilities for burst capacity for EBS in Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) with new subscription licensing models.
- Apply security patches at all tiers, including desktop. Create a policy document and establish CVSS criteria for patch application. Review and understand supporting documentation – don't apply blindly. Consider mitigation efforts if patching isn't feasible. Develop a comprehensive ERP security program, Oracle's policies can be found at **Software Security Assurance | Oracle**.
- Upgrade your database to 19c and EBS to 12.2.11.
- Roadmap OS (Operating System) and browser compatibility with IT.
- Plan and execute a Disaster Recovery (DR) test. If you're not testing DR, you're not alone. But it's still a risky problem to have. A **Spiceworks study** of organizations across North America and Europe found that while 95% of companies have a DR plan in place, roughly one in four companies (23%) have never tested their DR plan. At the same time, nearly 30% of companies in the same study reported losing business revenue due to an outage in the last 12 months.
- Engage with Desktop Support, as it is critical to keep end-user devices up to date. Plan for Java Runtime Environment (JRE) upgrades and Browser upgrades (see MOS 2510500.1 and 389422.1). JRE 7 is still supported, but through back channels. Oracle recommends that you upgrade to JRE 8 with Java Web Start ASAP for both 12.1 and 12.2. If you can't keep browsers and EBS in sync due to patch availability, deploy a secure user access solution like Citrix, Azure VD, or AWS Workspaces.
- Implement Enterprise Command Center functionality to give your user community a powerful new tool they can use in their everyday work.

Year-End Planning Process

- Regarding upgrade considerations, there are a lot of benefits in upgrading to EBS 12.2 in terms of day-to-day usability, even if you just do the technical upgrade and don't implement any business process changes. The user experience (UX) is going to be much better. Many of the HTML pages have combined forms, so that instead of having to go through three different forms to accomplish a task, it's a single HTML page. There's a much better integration repository. You can use Enterprise Command Centers (ECCs) which are no-cost portal-like tools that are very useful for users. And online patching on the backend can help to minimize downtime.
- Considerations at the Database tier include running the EBS Database 19c Upgrade Analyzer, so that you can understand exactly what's going to be changing. You can run the analyzer by applying a patch and executing the script; it will then deliver a report. Also consider, the new Autonomous Health Framework Tool. Recognize that customizations using UTIL_FILE_DIR must be redeveloped, and that the Database will be converted to a pluggable database.
- Formalize the year-end planning process:
  - Establish a formal process for planning out the release calendar
  - Begin with setting blackout dates in terms of financial close and any key operational dates
  - Identify maintenance and enhancements actions
  - Prioritize maintenance and enhancements actions
  - Identify achievable actions and "hold for later" actions
  - Identify all activity related costs
  - Apply all activities to the business calendar and develop test plans

- ✓ Articulate risks and costs of inaction
- ✓ Identify hard and soft benefits of action
- ✓ Be thorough and communicate well

CHAPTER 4

How to Add Value to EBS

There are a number of steps you can take to add value and efficiency to Oracle E-Business Suite in the near term.

- **Implement Enterprise Command Centers (ECC)** – ECCs work well out-of-the-box and you can customize them easily. ECC business intelligence (BI) dashboards are included with EBS licensing as of 12.2.4. There are 30+ Enterprise Command Centers with 100+ dashboards across all modules with drill-down capability to transaction detail.
- **Leverage Mobile Applications** for key functionality, including approvals, self-service HR, Timecards, Inventory, and Field Service.
- **Improve Integration Capabilities** – Most organizations do not have a mature, agile development process or related tooling for managing integrations. As enterprise business capabilities continue to trend back towards a best-of-breed model, this capability is essential. One of the biggest improvements with 12.2 in general is the Integration Repository—there are thundreds of SOAP. REST, PL/SQL and other types of integration points you can leverage to enhance your business processes. Many tools exist to facilitate the development process, as well as provide integration hub capabilities. Common options include Informatica, AWS, Dell Boomi, Mulesoft, webMethods, and Oracle SOA/Integration Cloud Service. The Integration Repository is available in EBS 12.1 and 12.2 and exposes APIs to facilitate integration using the Integrated SOA Gateway (MOS 556540.1 and 1311068.1).
- **Adopt New Single Sign-On (SSO) Capabilities** – Oracle's Identity Cloud Service (IDCS) is supported for use with EBS. It can be linked to Microsoft Active Directory or Azure-based identity services and now supports end-to-end provisioning capabilities. In addition, it allows the assignment of EBS Roles and Responsibilities. Note that if you're also using Oracle Identity Manager, that functionality isn't available in IDCS.
- **Move to Oracle Integration Cloud (OIC) for Integrations** – For both Software as a Service (SaaS) and on-premises solutions (with some caveats).
- **Migrate OBIEE to OAC**—Consider migrating OBIEE to Oracle Analytics Cloud (OAC), instead of performing both an OBIEE and EBS upgrade.

> Speaking of cloud readiness, many of the advancements we've highlighted in this guide help companies as they're looking to explore or execute on a cloud strategy. To understand how EBS can integrate into various cloud strategies, including hybrid cloud, refer to **"Taking a Hybrid Cloud Approach to Optimize your Oracle E-Business Suite Environment"** whitepaper.

Join the Future of Oracle EBS with Syntax

You originally invested in Oracle EBS because it was the right decision for your organization. Looking at 2033 and beyond, EBS continues to advance, embrace cloud strategies, and align with the evolving IT landscape to support your business for many years to come.

Staying on top of everything that EBS has to offer takes time, effort, and expertise—all while you're trying to define and execute on a larger cloud strategy. Syntax understands these competing demands and can help facilitate, not only the modernization and on-going maintenance of your environment, but also shaping EBS and cloud strategies going forward.

Discover how Syntax provides prescriptive solutions to keep your Oracle EBS system running at peak operating efficiency:

syntax.com/solutions/oracle-ebs/

SYNTAX

Why Syntax

Syntax provides comprehensive technology solutions and trusted professional, advisory, and application management services to power businesses' mission-critical applications in the cloud. With 50 years of experience and 800+ customers around the world, Syntax has deep expertise in implementing and managing multi-ERP deployments in secure private, public, hybrid, or multi-cloud environments. Syntax partners with SAP, Oracle, JD Edwards, AWS, Microsoft, and other global technology leaders to ensure customers' applications are seamless, secure, and at the forefront of enterprise technology innovation.

ORACLE | Sell Partner

Expertise in
Oracle E-Business Suite
in North America

ORACLE | Sell Partner

Expertise in
Oracle Cloud Platform
in North America

ORACLE | Service Partner

Expertise in
CSPE: Oracle Cloud Platform - Oracle E-Business Suite Applications to Oracle Cloud
in North America

Contact Us

syntax.com
marketing@syntax.com