



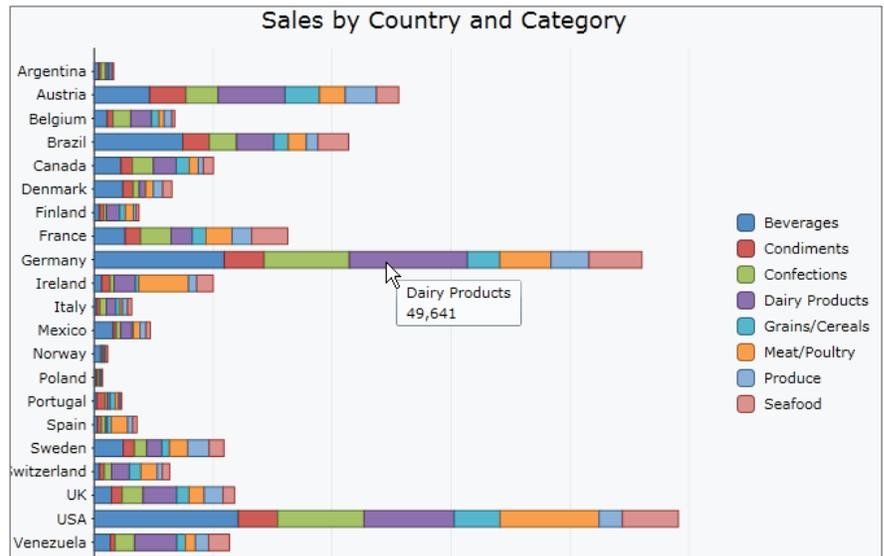
Reviewed By

Robert Stewart

Senior Database Administrator at
Situs Holdings, LLC (Situs.com)

Technologies used

ComponentOne Studio for Silverlight
OLAP for Silverlight



As a developer, you have choices when it comes to selecting a build platform. If you opt to work in Silverlight, like Robert Stewart, Senior Database Administrator at Situs Holdings, LLC (Situs.com), you have a powerful development platform for creating engaging and interactive experiences for web, desktop, and mobile applications.

When electing to further extend the Silverlight platform’s capabilities, Stewart turned to ComponentOne, a third-party control vendor. ComponentOne offers a suite of controls for Silverlight, including OLAP for Silverlight. The four unique controls, included in OLAP for Silverlight, allow developers to quickly embed OLAP functionality into their applications and deliver rapid ad-hoc analysis. With the purchase of OLAP for Silverlight, developers also have access to Studio for Silverlight, which includes over 60 additional user-interface (UI) controls for building business intelligent solutions.

Stewart set out to review multiple control vendor offerings for the Silverlight platform. He specifically wanted to share his experience with fellow developers on his love for Silverlight and the grids, charts, and other controls inside ComponentOne OLAP for Silverlight.

“ComponentOne has an excellent control suite for Silverlight,” said Stewart. “I think it is a much better and easier to program interface than ASP.NET and the kludge that it takes to make ASP.NET work.”

Stewart spoke about getting started, stating, “Like all control sets, including Microsoft’s, there is a learning curve. It will take you a while to learn their way of doing things. Here is a hint: if there is a wizard type setup for the control, use it. They have it there for a reason. The wizard setup adds a lot of markup that you will not otherwise know that the control needs.”



Clap Grid	Olap Chart	Raw Data									
Country	Beverages	Condiments	Confections	Dairy Product	Grains/Cereal	Meat/Poultry	Produce	Seafood	Total		
Argentina	\$1,798	\$907	\$2,135	\$1,144	\$390	\$0	\$1,139	\$607	\$8,119		
Austria	\$23,317	\$15,237	\$13,534	\$28,107	\$14,528	\$10,822	\$13,121	\$9,338	\$128,004		
Belgium	\$5,429	\$2,455	\$7,480	\$9,660	\$3,226	\$2,139	\$3,223	\$1,214	\$33,825		
Brazil	\$37,193	\$11,181	\$11,436	\$15,680	\$6,122	\$7,563	\$4,863	\$12,887	\$106,926		
Canada	\$11,276	\$4,760	\$8,842	\$9,557	\$5,558	\$3,767	\$2,112	\$4,224	\$50,096		
Denmark	\$12,026	\$4,325	\$2,591	\$2,644	\$100	\$3,163	\$3,985	\$3,857	\$32,661		
Finland	\$2,182	\$1,873	\$1,025	\$5,558	\$2,477	\$3,341	\$1,106	\$1,247	\$18,810		
France	\$12,997	\$6,487	\$12,816	\$8,860	\$5,873	\$10,911	\$8,248	\$15,165	\$81,358		
Germany	\$84,634	\$16,737	\$38,879	\$49,641	\$13,640	\$21,456	\$18,013	\$22,286	\$230,285		
Ireland	\$3,145	\$3,478	\$1,676	\$9,010	\$1,442	\$20,914	\$3,415	\$6,899	\$49,980		
Italy	\$999	\$1,394	\$2,674	\$3,995	\$1,744	\$1,057	\$2,187	\$1,721	\$15,770		
Mexico	\$7,994	\$1,235	\$1,898	\$4,722	\$550	\$2,829	\$2,518	\$1,837	\$23,582		
Norway	\$2,756	\$234	\$280	\$786	\$0	\$164	\$578	\$937	\$5,735		
Poland	\$829	\$627	\$779	\$810	\$0	\$22	\$306	\$159	\$3,532		
Portugal	\$1,046	\$3,688	\$956	\$998	\$2,164	\$1,338	\$649	\$632	\$11,472		
Spain	\$1,363	\$1,688	\$1,739	\$646	\$1,762	\$6,867	\$2,120	\$1,798	\$17,983		
Sweden	\$12,164	\$4,718	\$8,170	\$8,379	\$3,196	\$7,657	\$8,979	\$6,233	\$54,495		
Switzerland	\$2,150	\$2,054	\$3,067	\$7,488	\$4,863	\$6,866	\$2,133	\$3,072	\$31,693		

C1OlapGrid Control

He added that for developers who have users that need to do Microsoft Excel pivot tables on the fly from data on the website, they can find the answer in OLAP for Silverlight.

"The C1OlapGrid control is really cool," said Stewart. "It can take the users out of Excel and give them the capability of doing it all on the browser. The best thing is that it puts the control into the user's hands without you, the developer, having to produce all kinds of different views into the data for them. They can just do it for themselves."

What's Inside OLAP for Silverlight?

OLAP for Silverlight includes four unique controls.

C1OlapPanel

The C1OlapPanel provides the raw data for the analysis using a DataSource property as well as a drag-and-drop interface for defining custom views of the data. The panel is visually similar to the Microsoft Excel Pivot Table UI.

"The design of this interface makes it easy for an Excel user to pick up and use," said Stewart. "We found during the evaluation that the OLAP panel, which is the heart of OLAP for Silverlight, allowed a non-programmer that was familiar with creating pivot tables in Excel a near zero learning curve before being productive."

C1OlapGrid

The C1OlapGrid provides pivot tables with automatic data binding to C1OlapPanel objects, grouped row and column headers, as well as custom behaviors for resizing columns, copying data to the clipboard, and showing details for any given cell.

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"Once the OLAP panel is defined, this is essentially the equivalent of the Excel pivot table itself. Again, the Excel user will be familiar and comfortable with the results presented in the OLAP grid," said Stewart.

C1OlapChart

The C1OlapChart provides automatic data binding to C1OlapPanel objects, automatic tooltips, five chart types, and palette selection.

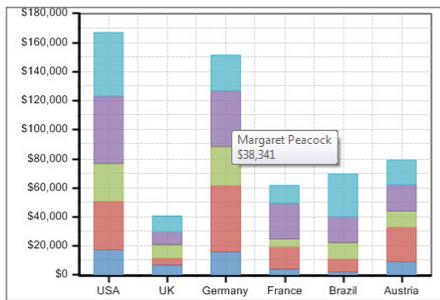
"While Excel will also allow you to define charts against a pivot table, the C1OlapChart control binds to the OLAP panel and gets its data from there," said Stewart. "The user can be given an interface to change the chart types and the palette of colors for the data items so they can customize the chart. This makes it easier than Excel for novice users to be able to create charts their own way."

C1OlapPage

The C1OlapPage control groups the panel, chart, and grid in one easy-to-use tabbed interface with a complete menu. Just drop the page control on the form and set the data source. Alternatively, you can develop your own custom interface using only the basic controls, C1OlapPanel, C1OlapGrid, and C1OlapChart, instead of the C1OlapPage.

Stewart provided positive feedback for the C1OlapPage control. He stated, "Don't want to create a specialized page to do all of the work? Well, ComponentOne thought of that for you in this control. They gave you a page you could put all of your OLAP components into and use a menu system to do everything they need to. Way to go ComponentOne! This is the biggest help they have with this control set. It saves a lot of specialized programming; something IT departments just do not have the extra time and resources for these days."



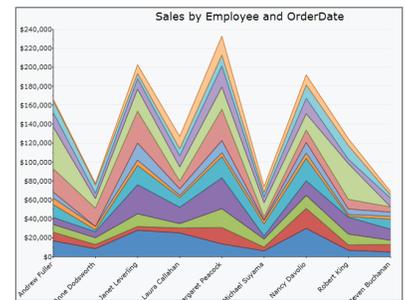


Tooltips showing details on C1OlapChart

A screenshot of a data grid control displaying a table of sales data. The table has columns for Country, Factories, Dairy Product, Grains, Cereals, Meats, Poultry, Produce, Seafood, and Total. The data is sorted by Total sales, with Canada at the top and Venezuela at the bottom. A control panel on the left allows for filtering and column management.

Country	Factories	Dairy Product	Grains	Cereals	Meats	Poultry	Produce	Seafood	Total
Canada	48,842	19,557	85,558	53,787	42,111	14,224			\$50,096
Denmark	12,991	12,644	1100	53,163	13,955	13,857			\$32,661
Finland	41,025	15,558	42,477	13,341	41,106	11,247			\$18,810
France	112,816	98,860	55,873	103,911	88,248	115,165			\$81,258
Germany	153,879	499,841	113,690	621,496	118,013	122,285			\$230,285
Sweden	16,376	16,075	11,442	103,154	10,451	10,899			\$49,980
Italy	42,474	13,965	41,744	11,257	42,187	14,721			\$15,770
Mexico	11,898	14,712	950	10,829	10,518	11,837			\$23,582
Norway	3280	1788	0	1164	573	937			\$5,735
Ireland	8773	8810	0	822	306	1519			\$3,532
Portugal	1956	1993	42,164	11,338	1619	1631			\$11,472
Spain	11,731	1641	11,762	16,187	11,120	11,798			\$17,983
Sweden	16,173	16,379	11,186	11,857	18,979	14,212			\$14,995
Netherlands	11,067	17,468	14,613	16,166	11,131	13,072			\$11,493
UK	18,833	141,158	15,173	14,342	17,981	14,712			\$58,971
USA	116,315	137,902	119,291	143,135	118,816	123,507			\$245,585
Venezuela	18,231	117,761	13,648	14,171	15,521	14,718			\$16,811
Total	1167,357	9234,507	995,745	1163,822	999,985	1131,162			\$1,265,693

C1OlapPage Control



C1Olap Chart Control

Silverlight Controls

One of the most widely used controls in application development is a data grid. With that comes the need for speed in a data grid which can be satisfied with the ComponentOne Silverlight DataGrid control (C1DataGrid). "In the testing we used the RIA data control on a data set of 36,000 names, and we were able to get data back extremely quickly, less than a second," said Stewart. He added, "Paging of data in the grid was good and fluid. I loved the filter capability that you can define for each column, and the grouping that you can allow. In the case of a very long list of names, the ability to group by last name and then filtering by the first few letters was great. The drag and drop for grouping made it simple for the end user," said Stewart.

Today's business demands require a fair amount of scheduling, whether it be of a room, a group of people, or other resources. When building scheduling into an application, the ComponentOne Scheduler puts all of the power in the developers' hands so they may customize just about everything they wish. Stewart detailed how a user can add custom fields and dialogs for filling in the appointments and creating custom views showing how resources are being used by a time line.

"Let's say you have a service person scheduled now, how do you get him to his next place of service?" asked Stewart. "The answer is the map controls," he replied. "You can include the ESRI-based map control in your application and allow the service person to see the route from his current service location to the next one. No need to enter the from and to address information into other programs, you have it all in one spot inside of your application," said Stewart.

Summary

Stewart's overall rating for the ComponentOne OLAP for Silverlight controls is excellent. "You will not go wrong putting in the time and effort to learn their way of doing things and using these controls for your Silverlight development," he said. "ComponentOne has the highest rated controls in the evaluation we did over the last year (11/2011 – 11/2012). Remember, there is one limit to what the controls can do for you... that limit is your imagination."

Resources

To learn more about ComponentOne OLAP for Silverlight visit: www.componentone.com/SuperProducts/OLAPSilverlight. The company offers complimentary trials and a live interactive demo of the product on its website.

Interested in being spotlighted?

Email press@componentone.com or look for us at any of the upcoming community events.



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