

## Context

Shurgard uses for its monthly internal reporting pack a wide range of Smartview reports. Preparing those reports takes an analyst quite some time, as for all reports following manual actions need to be executed:

- the data needs to be retrieved from the consolidation system,
- an Excel output then needs to be stored (containing only copy-pasted cells),
- and finally a PDF file is saved on the network.

## Project Scope

In order to speed up the process Shurgard consulted [Hyperionconsultant.be](http://Hyperionconsultant.be) to automate this task in both **Excel** and the **Hyperion Smartview** add-in. The aim was to free up the time (and pc) of the analyst and deliver a solution that was robust, fast and intuitive. Also the process should be transparent for any other team member.

## Solution

A **single, central Excel file** ("switchboard") was developed from where any combination of actions (refresh/Save As/PDF) could be triggered in one batch against a selection of reports. The solution was stored on a well performing (**virtual**) pc, allowing the analyst to kick off the task remotely and consult the results afterwards. This freed up the analyst's time, also allowing him to use his computer for other actions during the busy monthly closing period.

All actions steps are **logged** in a text file thus allowing the checking of timings for any report and allowing the troubleshooting of any potential bottlenecks encountered during the run. Whereas the consulting of this "general" log is optional, the "error log" will pop-up to grasp the attention of the user. Any errors will be flagged in this log, as those reports were skipped during the processing.

The screenshot shows a software interface for automating Hyperion Smartview reports. It features a dashboard with statistics, a macro control panel, and a file list table.

**Dashboard Statistics:**

- N° of reports in list: 18
- Last run batch end time: 4/21/2016 15:08
- Last run batch start time: 4/21/2016 15:03
- Last run batch - Duration: 00:05:01
- Last run batch by: erik
- Number of errors encountered: 6

**Macro Control Panel:**

- Buttons: Check Paths, Start Process, Add report, Open Log File
- Indicator: 1

**File List Table:**

Filename	FilePath	Refresh	Paste	Pdf	
Payroll Stores Ewado v15.xlsx	C:\Users\erik\Documents\0_clients\22_Shurgard\5_projects\2_project2 - Smartview\0_dev\ewadofiles		y	y	Open
HO Inte Blurred out v1.xlsx	C:\Users\erik\Documents\0_clients\22_Shurgard\5_projects\2_project2 - Smartview\0_dev\ewadofiles		y	y	Open
Payroll Stores Ewado v15.xlsx	C:\Users\erik\Documents\0_clients\22_Shurgard\5_projects\2_project2 - Smartview\0_dev\ewadofiles		y	y	Open
Payroll Stores Ewado v15.xlsx	C:\Users\erik\Documents\0_clients\22_Shurgard\5_projects\2_project2 - Smartview\0_dev\ewadofiles		y	y	Open

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## User interface

### FOUR BUTTONS

**Start Process** Kicks off the process

**Add report** Brings up a "File Open" type of dialog where the user can browse for and select a report. After confirming his selection, the name of the file and the path will be added as a new row in the list of reports

**Check paths** Quick check to run before kicking off the process. This mechanism will check any file/path report combination for validity and list any unfound files

**Open log file** This allows the opening of the log file after a run

1

### REPORT LIST

The list of files contains following elements:

- filename
- path where the file is stored
- a (Yes/No) switch by line to indicate if the reports will be processed during the next run
- a column to indicate which report / macro combination to run (Y/N) for this report
- clicking on the word "Open" (auto added) in the last column opens the report in Excel (Quick-open)

2

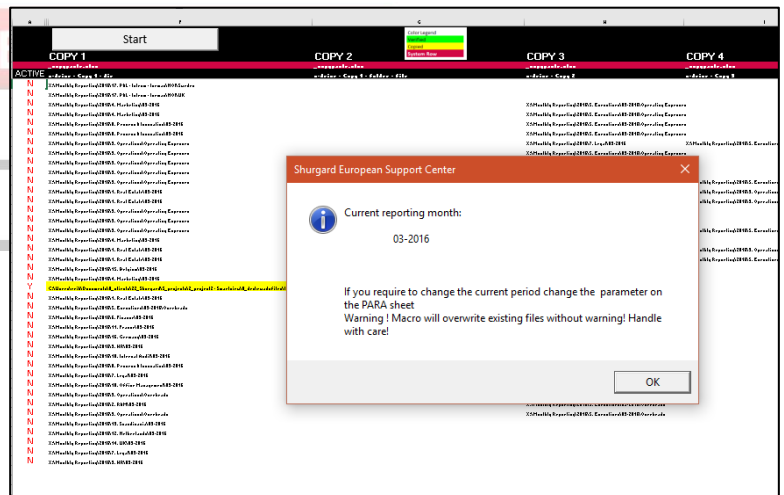
During the run we keep **track** of the total timing, the individual timings per report/macro, the name of the user that kicked off the process and an overall error count.

Each report is opened and processed one-by-one. We use two simple sheet tab colour conventions inside the report to determine which sheets need to be copied as pasted values to a new empty workbook and which sheets should appear in the PDF file. All naming of new files is automated (xls and pdf) and based on the original filename. All files including the log file per report are stored in the same directory as the report.

## Extra functionality

As the reporting exercise also included a rather complicated matrix of Excels and Pdf's to be distributed across several network drives, a separate "FileCopier"-tool was created. This tool allowed to list up to 10 different targets per report for copying either the Excel or the Pdf. A similar check as above was added to check correctness of files/paths and to log errors.

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## Project days

The solution was developed (Excel Visual Basic), discussed, finalized and rolled-out in less than 10 working days.

## Client

**Name:** Shurgard European Support Center, Belgium

**Department:** Finance

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