

Hyperion Focus 17

The benefits of using MerlinXL

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DS Smith

- DS Smith is a leading provider of corrugated packaging in Europe and of specialist plastic packaging worldwide, supported by paper and recycling operations.



Packaging



Recycling



Paper



Plastics



- 27,000 employees in 37 countries



- Recently gained regulatory approval for acquisition of Interstate Resources in the Eastern United States
- Rapidly growing business which has doubled in size since 2012.
- <http://www.dssmith.com/company/sustainability/our-business/box-to-box-in-14-days>

Why DS Smith started using MerlinXL

- DS Smith recognised MerlinXL could assist in its reporting processes. Financial reports run using Smartview were slow to refresh and difficult to maintain in a HFM application that changed frequently.
- Intercompany reporting, as in many multinational organisations, was slow to complete and an impediment to the conclusion of the month end reporting process. HFM intercompany reports were memory intensive on the application.
- We wanted a tool that was easy for users to understand how to use.
- HFM Administration was under-resourced and we did not want a tool that would need a lot of support in terms of areas like security provisioning and metadata changes.

Benefits of using MerlinXL Report Wizard

- Metadata in our HFM application (version 11.1.2.4) is changed every month to meet changing business requirements, MerlinXL is well designed to accommodate metadata changes.
- MerlinXL reports can be drilled into and expanded as a user requires. Metadata changes to HFM are always reflected in MerlinXL when a user logs on, there is no requirement to rebuild metadata or update reports of changes in dimension structures. Report maintenance is therefore reduced.
- There is no requirement to provision a user who has HFM access with MerlinXL access. Security rights are inherited from HFM Shared Services so there is little, if any, administration work to do once the MerlinXL software is installed. There is therefore no need to keep audit records of MerlinXL usage.
- Deployment to the HFM user group with a URL link to download the software was straightforward.
- Report Wizard can be used to generate a variety of reports quickly in Excel. Time taken to retrieve information is superior to Smartview.
- Smartview formulas and Ad Hoc grids can still be used, they are not affected by the MerlinXL add in.
- With some training, users are able to design their own MerlinXL reports to suit their own needs. Less support is required from administrators to support them. Pre-build standard templates are also available for users to choose.
- Sending a file to a non Merlin user causes figures in the file to automatically copy as values (compared to Smartview which would have unusable formulas)

By right clicking and selecting MerlinXL – Choose Member on a blank cell, then selecting Keyword, a list can be presented of all available Merlin report commands.

Categories are:

Layout – controls report presentation, for example to freeze panes

Descriptions – Metadata member descriptions

Labels - Metadata member names

Data Type – Used to show process control level, calculation status and validation pass

Member Expansion – Used to control how rows or columns are expanded when a user expands a report

Process Control – Further process control detail, such as phase of submission and time of promotion.

MerlinXL reports are arranged by the Ribbon, Row / Column Headers and Point of View

POV settings can be listed by right clicking on a cell and selecting MerlinXL – Cell - POV

A dimension can be locked in POV so users cannot alter them by disabling it in the ribbon –this is done by ticking the scenario to be locked in Design Mode

Entering a dimension reference in the first input cell under the title means the dimension will be locked when in Report Mode

Right click on an input to drill down by children of entity or by other options such as drill to all base members

The number format of reports can be altered for example by changing the decimal places or scaling

Data Type button can be used to view Process Level or Calculation Status of an entity structure instead of values

Blank rows and columns can be hidden to make a report look better

Reports created in MerlinXL can be saved within a Report Library

HFM can be consolidated or calculated using MerlinXL

Advanced Report Wizard options - examples

Clicking on the dimension on the POV bar and ticking the dimension makes it non selectable when the report is run



E Featherstone S ACTUAL
V <Entity Currency> P October

← The entity cannot be changed

Entering the dimension on cell A2 also has the same effect, it cannot not be changed when a user is in Report Mode

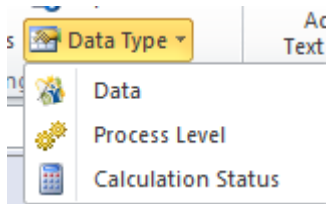
	A	B
1	{{TITLE}}	
2	DSFLAT_G.PUKFEA_E	

🔒 Featherstone S ACTUAL
V <Entity Currency> P October

← The entity cannot be changed

Advanced Report Wizard options - examples

The Data Type button can be used to view data, process control level or calculation status



Income statement

		+
		Net profit
000s		Actual
<Entity Currency> 000s		October
Featherstone		25,508

Income statement

		+
		Revenues
000s		Actual
<Entity Currency> 000s		August
Featherstone		OK

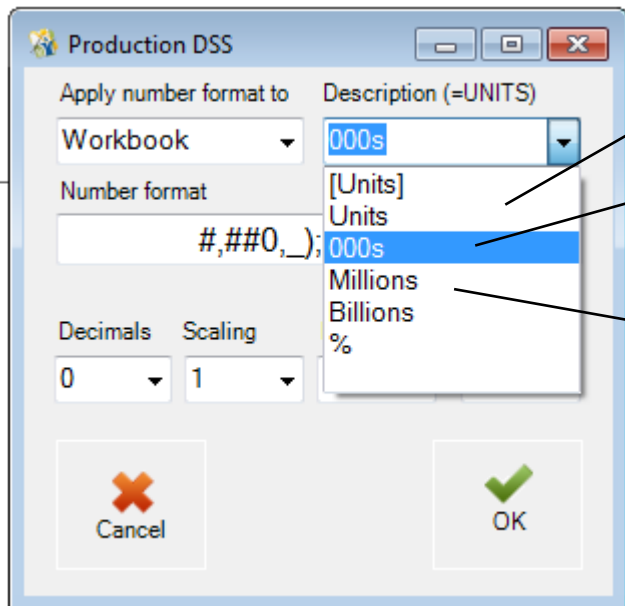
Income statement

		+
		Revenues
000s		Actual
<Entity Currency> 000s		August
Featherstone		Published

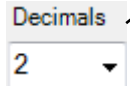
Advanced Report Wizard options - examples

The number format can be used to alter the appearance of data on a report

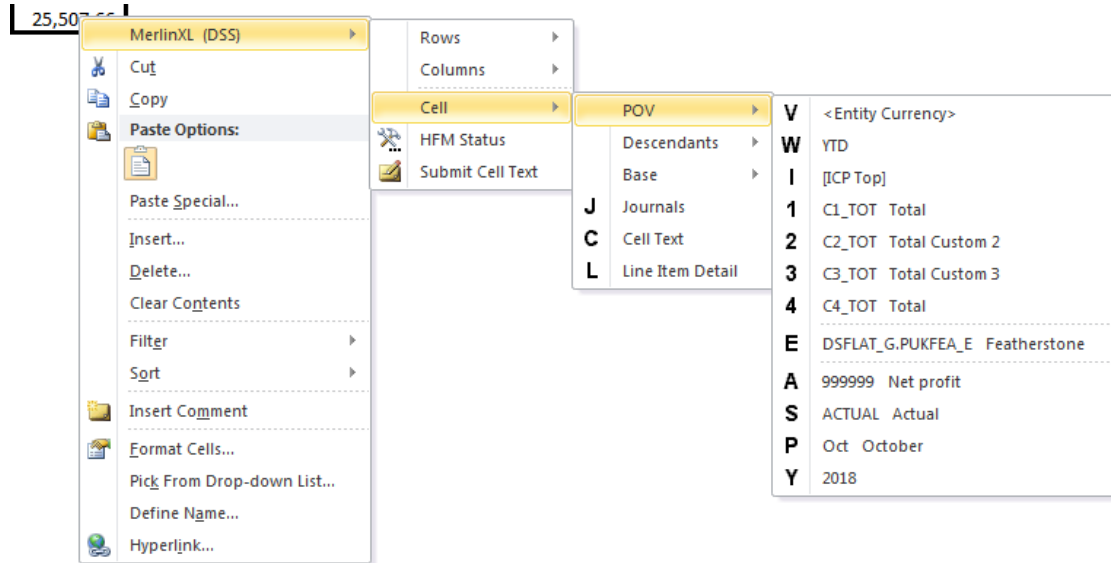
Merlin4
Number Format



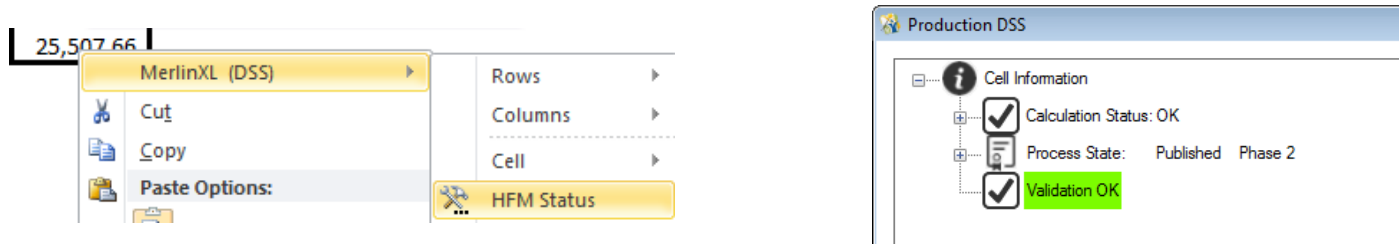
		2018
Featherstone	25,507,662	
		2018
Featherstone	25,508	
		2018
Featherstone	26	
		2018
Featherstone	25,507.66	



Metadata members used to show a figure in a report can be viewed by right clicking the option MerlinXL – Cell – POV

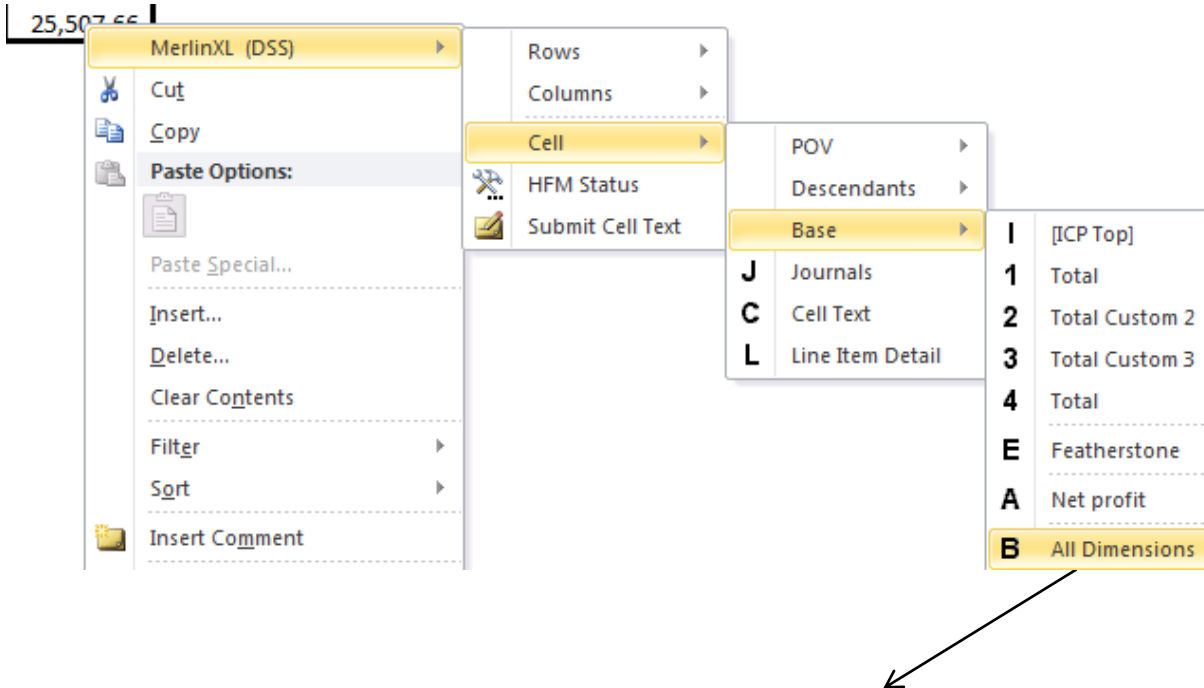


HFM status also shows the process control and calculation status



Advanced Report Wizard options - examples

A new report can be created to show how a figure is derived by all base members within it by right clicking on a cell and using MerlinXL – Cell - Base – All Dimensions



BASEDATA 000s

ICP[[ICP Top].[base]].W#YTD.C1[C1_TOT.[base]].C2[C2_TOT.[base]].C3[C3_TOT.[base]].C4[C4_TOT.[base]].E#PUKFEA_E_A(999999.[base]).S#ACTUAL.P#Oct.Y#2018.V#<Entity Currency>.GBP

ACTUAL	23.8	Oct	PUKFEA_E	'999999	[ICP Top]	C1_TOT	C2_TOT	C3_TOT	C4_TOT						
Scenario	Year	Period	View	Entity	Value	Account	ICP	Custom1	Custom2	Custom3	Custom4	<Entity Currency>	ExRate	GBP	Account Description
ACTUAL	2018	Oct	YTD	PUKFEA_E	GBP	721000	[ICP None]	[None]	[None]	[None]	C4_EXC	37.70	1.0000	37.70	721000 - External transport costs
ACTUAL	2018	Oct	YTD	PUKFEA_E	GBP	824500	[ICP None]	[None]	[None]	[None]	C4_EXC	8.19	1.0000	8.19	824500 - IT operating lease
ACTUAL	2018	Oct	YTD	PUKFEA_E	GBP	822500	[ICP None]	[None]	[None]	[None]	C4_EXC	8.75	1.0000	8.75	822500 - Charitable donations
ACTUAL	2018	Oct	YTD	PUKFEA_E	GBP	643000	[ICP None]	[None]	[None]	[None]	C4_EXC	13.32	1.0000	13.32	643000 - Intercompany credits and claims
ACTUAL	2018	Oct	YTD	PUKFEA_E	GBP	712830	[ICP None]	[None]	[None]	[None]	C4_EXC	180.99	1.0000	180.99	712830 - Standard revision

Benefits of using MerlinXL Intercompany Wizard

The Intercompany Wizard of MerlinXL allows more efficient intercompany matching than that provided by HFM. Intercompany reports and much faster to run using MerlinXL and do not require users to run slow and complicated Intercompany Matching Reports in HFM.

Intercompany reports are well presented and mismatches can be clearly identified.

The ability to add comments to intercompany balances was put to good use by Group Finance and improved our month end close process.

MerlinXL offers the option to translate intercompany balances in Excel rather than running translations in HFM. This reduced the rate of growth of our HFM database as it no longer calculates and stores translated data. As HFM is not using processing capacity to do this, this also speeds up other processes like consolidation times

Intercompany Matching Report			ACTUAL OCTOBER 2018				
			Last Refreshed: 11:45 on 05 October 2017 Elapsed: 00:00:11				
Grouping	Entity	Partner Scope	Currency	Translation	Total Mismatch	Filter Limit	
NONE	ALL DIVISIONS	ALL DIVISIONS	GBP	TRANSLATED ON THE FLY	4,697,308	1	
Report	Source	Match	Scope	Source Amount	Match Amount	Mismatch	Follow Up
Dump plug account	G00ADJ_A. Group Adjustment	PUSCGS_E. DS Smith Packag	Intra		4,026,662	4,026,662	INVESTIGATE
Dump plug account	G00ADJ_A. Group Adjustment	PUKFEA_E. Featherstone	Intra		321,263	321,263	INVESTIGATE
Dump plug account	AUKKEM_E. Kemsley	G00ADJ_A. Group Adjustme	Intra	200,935		200,935	INVESTIGATE
Dump plug account	G00ADJ A. Group Adjustment	LUKFOA E. Foam Products N	Intra		148,447	148,447	INVESTIGATE

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Thank you

