Financial Automated Management Environment

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In every organization it is critical to provide all levels of management with financial information that is accurate and timely to ensure that project and business decisions can be made within funding constraints. The Financial Automated Management Environment, a prototype financial delivery system implemented at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, was developed with the goal of using the latest technologies to deliver precise, meaningful financial information to the manager's desktop. The end-user of this system need not be concerned with the arcane details of database manipulation and reporting to view this information. Instead, the Financial Automated Management Environment automatically extracts financial data from legacy systems and generates a hierarchical set of integrated reports that span individual projects and entire organizational units. Reports consist of hypertext and graphical information and are linked in a natural way to simplify navigation and retrieval using a World Wide Web browser such as NCSA Mosaic or Netscape. To protect potentially sensitive information, system access controls allow individuals to retrieve only information that is required to carry out financial duties. In addition to reports, the system features interactive budget building tools that assist in financial planning.

The significance of the Financial Automated Management System is that it

- Saves management time for tracking budgets and cost detail,
- Frees finance officers for planning and analysis,
- Delivers information to the desktop,
- Provides an interface for communication throughout management, and
- Is a step toward the paperless office.

Future work includes the development of

- Intelligent interface tools at each site that will provide a standard interface into the legacy systems, will communicate with each site via a meta-descriptor that defines the structure of information, and will act as the first line of security,

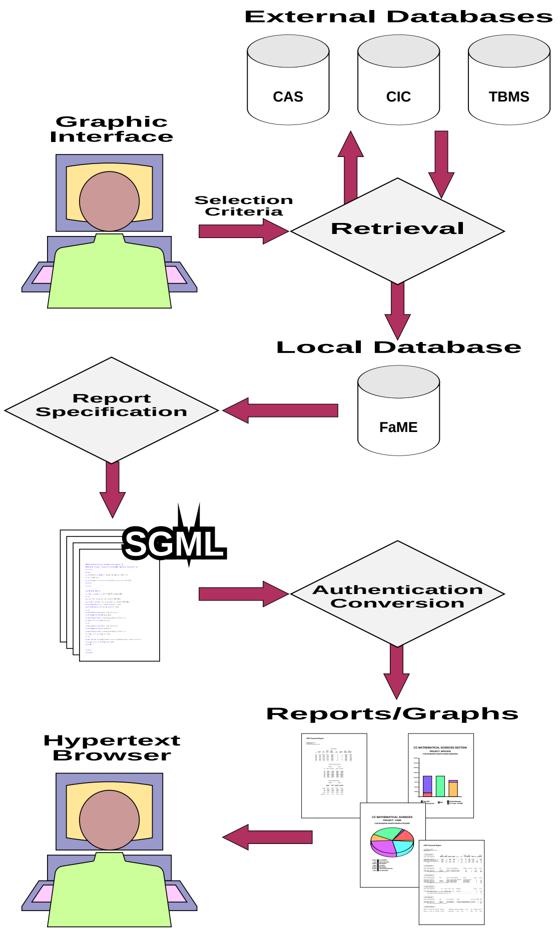

Fig. 1. The Financial Automated Management Environment

- Report specification languages and mark-up language compilers that will provide an abstract layer to specify reports generically,
- Financial analysis tools that will provide the capability to perform "what-if" analyses on the data, and
- Anomaly detection tools that will flag errors in the data and will identify changes in the legacy system.

The Financial Automated Management Environment development team can be reached by electronic mail at `fame@msr.epm.ornl.gov` or on the World Wide Web via the URL `http://www.epm.ornl.gov/fame`.