

ORAWORLD

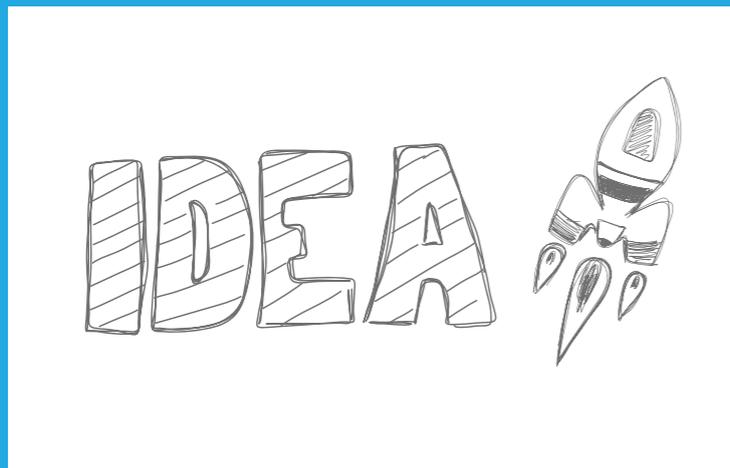
e-Magazine for Oracle Users published by the EOUC

Oracle's Cloud Strategy

Cloudy Perspectives: Ready to Embrace the Cloud?



December 2016, Edition #3



Work & Life: 5 Things We Can't Work Without

page 5



Techs & Nerds: Oracle Database 12.2: "Definitely a rock solid release!"

page 8



Past & Future: The Oracle OpenWorld – Partly Sunny, Mostly Cloudy

page 25

Editorial 3

I: Work & Life

Journey to the Cloud 4

Five Things We Can't Work Without 5

II. Techs & Nerds

Larry Ellison and the Cloud:
A Love at First Sight? 6

Number of the Quarter 7

Oracle Database 12.2:
"Definitely a rock solid release!" 8

How the Dolphin Jumped
into the MySQL Logo 10

Debugging APEX –
A Practical Approach 11

III. Users & Groups

EOUC Leader Forum:
Future Cooperation in Europe 15

HrOUG: „We want to be a
platform for business to be made.” 18

Hi, My Name Is...
Ami Aharonovich 20

User Group Overview:
Numbers and Connections 21

Ambassador's Corner 24

IV. Past & Future

Oracle OpenWorld 2016:
Partly Sunny, Mostly Cloudy 25

All User Groups United 28

OTN Nordic Tour 2016 29

Events 30

C is for Cookies! 31

Contact Us 32

Have a comment? Suggestion?
Want to submit an article proposal?
Here's how to do it.

Editorial

Dear Oracle User Group Community Members,

In the last few weeks, we've had quite a few successful user group conferences and events in our region. Especially our traditional "Oracle User Group Forum" program which was part of the Sunday agenda at the Oracle OpenWorld conference in San Francisco, was a big success. This year, we've had over 20 different sessions and speakers from all over EMEA, including our unique two-part session where EMEA Oracle ACEs presented their favorite Oracle database feature in our traditional six minute pitch. We are currently working on bringing this unique session to the entire community as a free online webinar that will be available for all EMEA Oracle user groups.

A few weeks ago, over 30 user group leaders from more than 25 different countries across EMEA have met during the DOAG conference in Nuremberg, Germany, for a "User Group Leaders Summit". This was the third time where EMEA user group leaders took the chance to meet and work together. It was thoroughly discussed how we can elaborate user group collaboration and share our best practices in order to empower each other and provide better experience and offerings for our EMEA Oracle user group members. I would like to take the opportunity and thank the wonderful team that has worked hard to make this happen and to arrange this meeting and the agenda. That team includes: Ralf Koelling from DOAG (Germany), Mirela Ardelean from RoOUG (Romania) and Heli Helskyaho from OUGF (Finland) – thank you very much for your great contribution to the success of this meeting. In addition, I would like to greatly thank the DOAG board and especially Fried Saacke, DOAG CEO, Dietmar Neugebauer, former DOAG President, and Stefan Kinnen, DOAG President, for their generous invitation and the wonderful accommodation that the DOAG team has provided to the user group leaders who participated in this unique summit.



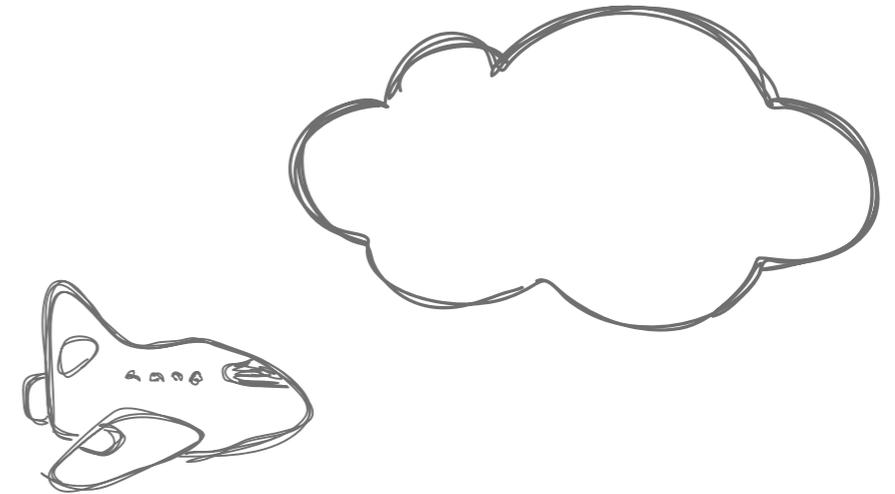
Ami Aharonovich
President, iOUG (Israel)
Ambassador, EOUC

I encourage you all to invite your friends and colleagues to login on our website and register to get our ORAWORLD online magazine directly to your inbox for free: www.ORAWORLD.org. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this edition and shared their articles, thoughts and ideas with the user group community. Please continue your contribution to the ORAWORLD magazine and submit new content on our website: www.ORAWORLD.org. I would also like to remind you that we are interested in your upcoming user group events, call for papers, successful conferences and any other content relevant and interesting to the Oracle user group community members. We are looking forward for your submissions and feedback.

I would like to take the opportunity and wish you all "Merry Christmas" and a "Happy and Successful New Year!". See you all again next year 😊

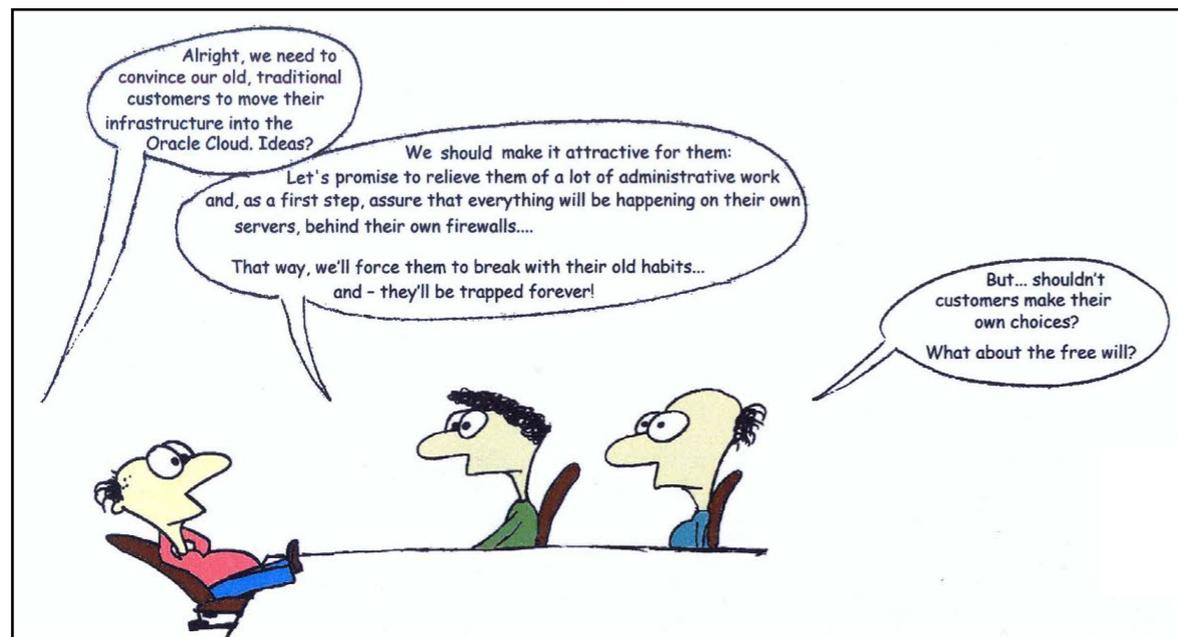
Yours,
Ami Aharonovich
President, iOUG (Israel)
Ambassador, EOUC





Jan Peterskovsky

Journey to the Cloud



Five Things We Can't Work Without

Marina Fischer

Some things in life are just indispensable. What about our work life? We thought about five essentials that motivate us, keep us going through the day, or help us organizing our working day.



1. Coffee

No matter what the current status in the ongoing debate on whether coffee is actually good or bad for you – coffee is definitely on our top list of things that help us get going on a Monday morning. Or on any other day of the week. Once you've got that hot cuppa coffee in your hand, everything seems to be going to be alright, or at least way better.

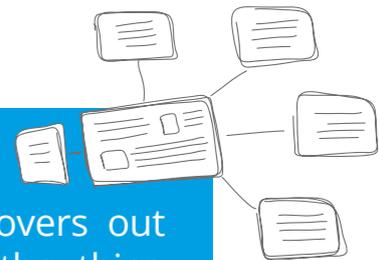
2. Headphones

Music is not only a good way to uplift our mood and motivate us, but it is also great to help us focus and concentrate on the tasks on our to-do list. All those distracting office noises? Pump up the music and create your own „work zone“ amidst the office chaos! Headphones easily eliminate all disturbing sounds around you and let you focus on getting things done.



3. Trello

For all the list lovers out there, Trello is the thing to go to if you want to get rid of the things swirling around in your head. The free cloud tool allows you to create multiple boards with several lists and items in them. You can drag the items from one list to another, add documents, pictures, or deadlines, and even share your boards with other people. Trello is like your typical to-do list on paper – only way better.



IDEA

5. Post-its

Although everyone is trying hard to reach for a paperless office, we are convinced that the good old Post-it will stick forever (literally!). Used as a reminder or for short messages, these little sticky papers are just too handy to have around. And last but not least, they can be fun as well when they are used to make pixel art!



4. Chocolate

Did you know that researchers at Northern Arizona University only recently found out that dark chocolate can actually boost your attention and alertness level, especially when you need a little afternoon pick-me-up? Not that we didn't know that already from firsthand experience, but now there is actual scientific proof! Isn't this the best excuse to stock up your chocolate supply at work?



You may have a completely different list of things you cannot work without. What are your top 5 essentials?





Lisa Damerow

Larry Ellison and the Cloud: A Love at First Sight?

For quite a while now, the cloud has been on top of Oracle's agenda. At Oracle OpenWorld 2016, the new Database 12c Release 2 has been announced to be available in the cloud first, thus affirming the company's cloud-first strategy. However, Oracle has not always been so fond of the topic. At the Churchill Club in 2009, founder and former CEO of Oracle, Larry Ellison,

passionately shared his opinion on the relatively new hype back then. He proclaimed cloud computing to be "nonsense" and not a new technology, but merely a known technology with a new label. "It is not water vapor, but a computer attached to a network," he exclaimed, "with the same processes we have all seen before!" See for yourself in this entertaining YouTube video.

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Number of the Quarter:

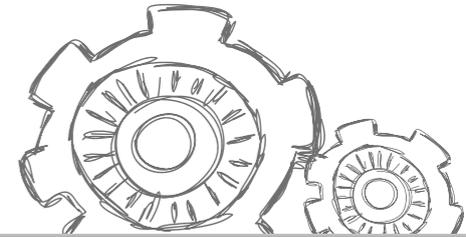
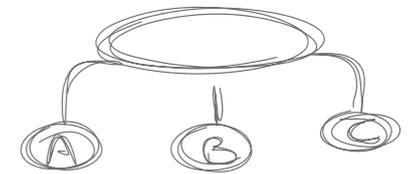
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Answers on the PL/SQL Challenge by Steven Feuerstein

When PL/SQL guru Steven Feuerstein published the quiz website "PL/SQL-Challenge" back in the year 2010, he probably did not expect it to be so successful and widely used. Over one million answered quizzes have been recorded until today. The original idea of a website on which PL/SQL professionals get to know other pros has soon be transformed into an online learning platform. The "PL/SQL Challenge" is all about actively learning rather than reading a book or watching a video. Here, you get the chance to engage with the technology directly by testing your knowledge through a quiz. An additional incentive is a weekly ranking, with which you can compare your own results with other players. Meanwhile there are over 1,000 quizzes that can be used to learn more about PL/SQL.



IDEA



The screenshot shows the Oracle PL/SQL Challenge website. At the top, it says "ORACLE PL/SQL CHALLENGE" with the tagline "Play...and Learn.". Navigation links include "Library", "Rankings", and "Players". A header bar shows "1,031,398 quizzes played | 1,639 active players". The main content area features a "Welcome to the PL/SQL Challenge!" message, a "Take a Quick Tour" video, and a "Play This Week's Quizzes" section. The "Play This Week's Quizzes" section includes a "Try a Quiz!" button and a list of quiz categories: Application Express, PL/SQL, SQL, Database Design, and Logic. Below this, there's a "Take a Quiz On" dropdown menu set to "Oracle PL/SQL". A question is displayed: "Which choices display 'Program completed' after execution?". Three choices are provided, each with a PL/SQL code block. Choice 1 uses NULL, Choice 2 uses RETURN, and Choice 3 uses RAISE. A "Start Playing!" button is at the bottom of the quiz area. The footer contains "About Oracle | Terms of Use | Your Privacy Rights | Copyright 2010-2016, Oracle Corporation".



Jan Peterskovsky

Oracle Database 12.2:

“Definitely a rock solid release!”

Oracle Database 12c Release 2 is finally available – and it comes with tons of new features and enhancements. Meet Anuj Mohan, Jim Czuprynski, and Kai Yu, members of the Independent Oracle Users Group (IOUG), who took part in the 12.2 Beta Program for their views on the latest release and future prospects.

What's your general impression regarding Oracle Database 12c Release 2?

It's definitely a rock solid release! 12.2 has undergone extremely intense beta testing by Oracle DBAs and application developers who are real-world folks not afraid to pipe up and say, "OK, this isn't working at all!" or "Frankly, this stinks." As a matter of fact, Oracle 12cR2 not only includes tons of new features and enhancements, it also makes the installation and upgrade process very easy and smooth. If you haven't started on 12c, then now is the time!

Which of these new features are most useful?

There are really hundreds of new useful features and enhancements! However, a few definitely stand out: Multitenancy has finally grown up and is truly ready for prime-time. One great enhancement is to increase the maximal pluggable databases (PDBs) per container database from 252 to more than 4,000 in the latest release. PDB Relocate is another game changer – with this we can relocate a PDB live. Beyond that, Database In-Memory has been rebuilt in a number of ways to make it an even more flexible and powerful set of tools to quickly perform complex analytic reporting.

Are there any downsides compared to the former release?

We can't see any downsides at all! Essentially, this release is what we'd hoped would be delivered in the very first release of 12c. But to be realistic, 12.1 was such a sea change that if Oracle had included all the 12.2 features in 12.1, most DBA's heads would have exploded! However, for coming versions, we would like to see more database features for Exadata available for the generic platforms such as commodity x86 servers.

Can you tell us more about the Beta Program?

The onsite beta test took place at Oracle Headquarters in Redwood City. We had a comprehensive test plan that covered many important features. The first round focused on the newest features of Database In-Memory. During the second round, we participated in extensive testing of the upgrade process to migrate an existing Oracle 11.2.0.4 database to Oracle 12.2.0.2. We also tested the Multitenant Database upgrade with different paths such as everything once or PDB unplug/plug.

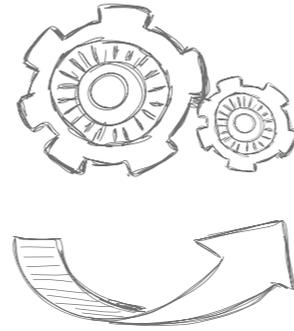
What was your personal experience in the test lab?

It was an extremely fulfilling experience. We've all been in IT for many years, and we were impressed by the 12.2 Database team's cohesion and willingness to acknowledge a bug or problem when it was discovered – even including issues with the corresponding documentation. Plus, the presentations and hands-on activities were very well prepared. We would definitely do it again!

Oracle announced the availability of 12.2 in the cloud first, which is frustrating for some on-premise customers. What's your opinion on this strategy?

Oracle's decision is understandably disappointing for technical evangelists. Nevertheless, we accept the strategy as a true business decision. On the other hand, everyone can take advantage of the opportunity to explore 12.2 within a cloud environment – at relatively inexpensive costs. And that's what most organizations are likely to pursue first – a DevOps strategy to see what 12.2 might break in their application workloads. That way you don't need terabytes of data to experience the many new features at the outset.





How the Dolphin Jumped into the MySQL Logo

Sebastian Höing

As the most common relational database system in the world, the name MySQL is well-known, even among non-IT folks. The eye-catching logo with the jumping dolphin is also known worldwide. But how did the trademark come about?



Database Named after Daughter

Early Internet users surely still remember the first MySQL logo. The design was typical of the nineties: a mix of a seemingly hand-written “My” and the “SQL” with serifs. In addition, large drop shadows. Name giver for the prefix “My” was the daughter of Michael “Monty” Widenius, Swedish developer and lead author of the original version of the database.

New Logo from the Year 2001

The creation of the current logo with the blue “My”, yellow “SQL”, and the jumping dolphin goes back to the year 2001 when the logo was updated in the course of a relaunch of the MySQL website and the release of a new version.

The idea of the dolphin was essentially from Widenius because, for him, this animal represented speed, strength, precision, and a

good nature. In a press release from 2001 he explained: “I am personally concerned about the survival of endangered species, and I liked the idea of the dolphin as soon as it came up. It combines great symbol value with a powerful, modern design.” Red-Dot-Award-Designer Renne Angelvuo from Finland designed the logo.

The Dolphin’s Name Is Sakila

A name for the dolphin was also essential. In a user competition with more than 7,000 suggestions from all over the world, it was not the most frequently suggested name that was chosen. The dolphin was named Sakila, based on a suggestion from the African open source developer Ambrose Twebaze from Swaziland. The female name from the Swazi language “represented the global scope and the friendly and open-minded nature of MySQL best”, said Widenius back then.





Peter Raganitsch, FOEX GmbH

Debugging APEX – A Practical Approach

Avoiding to make mistakes sounds like a good plan, however realistically speaking, small issues will almost certainly sneak into your APEX application. This article aims at providing an overview of the debug functionality in APEX and to serve as an entry point for debugging.

Oracle Application Express

3 Tier Architecture

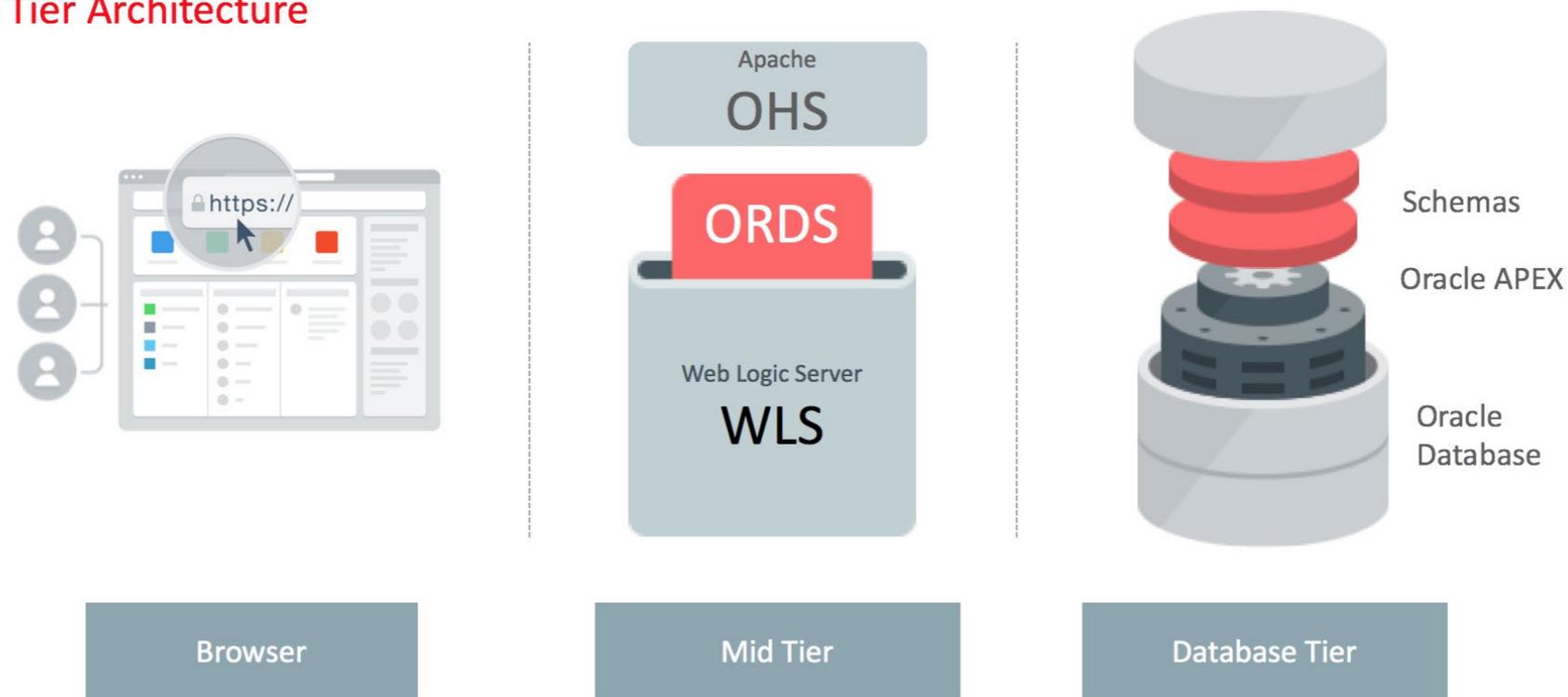


Figure 1: The APEX architecture, slide 15 from "Oracle Application Express 5"

Oh, this app behaves odd, there must be something wrong, or is it just me? What's going on and why doesn't my APEX application work the way I want it to? These are a few typical questions that almost every developer asks himself at some point in time. Fortunately, Oracle APEX provides a couple of great tools which can help you get the right answers – one particularly powerful tool being the so-called debug functionality.

In the strict sense of the word, "APEX Debug", once activated, records in a log table which individual processing steps APEX performs when a page is loaded or saved.

The term 'debugging', as defined by Wikipedia, means the process of finding and resolving bugs or defects that pre-

vent the correct operation of computer software or a system. Debugging tends to be harder when various subsystems are tightly coupled, as changes in one may cause bugs to emerge in another (Source: [Wikipedia](#))

The Oracle APEX Architecture

Considering the above definition of debugging, when taking a closer look at the APEX architecture you can easily see that the APEX environment consists of several subsystems.

Therefore, a bug in APEX may have its root cause in any of the subsystems in use: the database, the server, the network or the browser. While APEX Debug cannot log into all subsystems, it can help you to at least identify the part of the system which requires further investigation.



APEX Debug

The APEX Debug mode can be easily activated by using the developer toolbar.

After activation, the Debug reloads the current page and all processing steps are logged in the background. You can see now that the browser's address bar shows that debugging was activated by looking at the 5th position in the URL which states 'YES':
f?p=111:1:15642277866170::YES

Apart from simply activating the debug mode, as of APEX version 4.2 it is also possible to define a certain level of granularity. There are nine debug levels available in APEX:

Level	Description
1 – Error	Critical error
2 – Warning	Less critical error
4 – Info	Default Level (=YES), if debugging is enabled. Displays the usual debug information
5 – App Enter	Application: Messages when procedures/functions are entered
6 – App Trace	Application: Other messages within procedures/functions
8 – Engine Enter	APEX Engine: Messages when procedures/functions are entered
9 – Engine Trace	APEX Engine: Other messages within procedures/functions

You can also find the explanation by looking into the [APEX documentation](#), [API Reference](#), [APEX Debug](#)

You might have noticed that levels 3 and 7 are missing. If you're wondering why they are not showing up in the table above, it's simply because they are not used by Oracle.

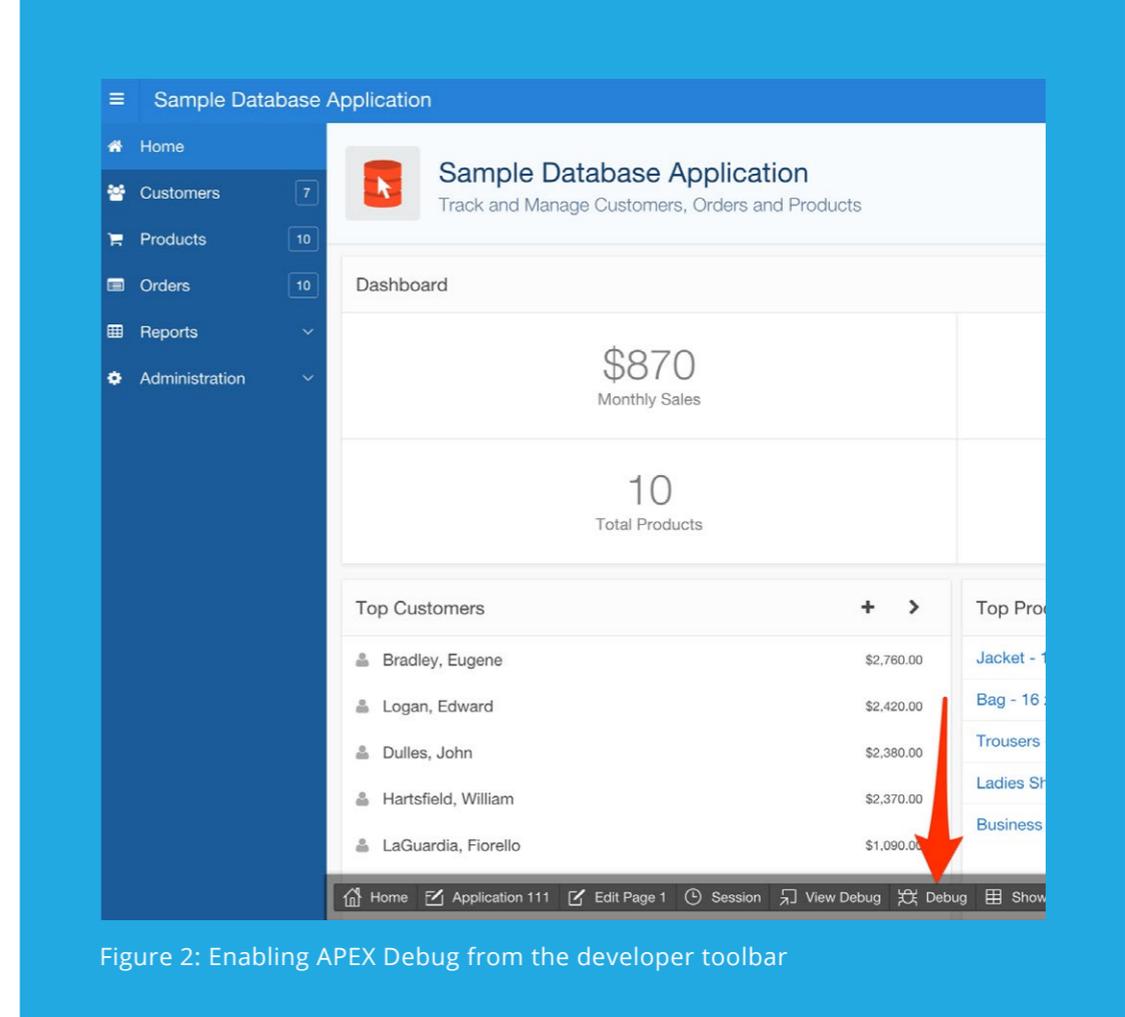


Figure 2: Enabling APEX Debug from the developer toolbar

It is worth mentioning here that as you move to a higher debugging level, extra processing time is required. It simply depends on the number of log entries that have to be written, which for a more complex page can go into thousands of individual records. You can see what exactly was logged in the developer toolbar by using the "View Debug" button.

In the overview on the next page, you can get a good glimpse of the so-called debug operations. In this example, the homepage of the "Sample Database Application" was used. You can immediately see that four events were logged. For guidance, in the column "Path info" you can see what this is all about: "show" stands for the actual page load and "ajax plugin" represents the AJAX callback of a plugin that is used on the page.

View Identifier	Session Id	User	Application	Page	Path Info	Entries	Timestamp	Seconds
4483574	15642277866170	PRAGANITSCH	111	1	ajax plugin	621	12 minutes ago	0.4260
4483571	15642277866170	PRAGANITSCH	111	1	ajax plugin	31	12 minutes ago	0.2645
4483569	15642277866170	PRAGANITSCH	111	1	ajax plugin	29	12 minutes ago	0.4194
4483566	15642277866170	PRAGANITSCH	111	1	show	748	12 minutes ago	0.6754

Figure 3: Debug overview

Using the example above, it can be seen that first the page itself is loaded (show) and then the three plugin regions with AJAX callbacks are processed. In case of saving data on the page through a page submit, you would see “accept” in the “Path Info”.

As you click on one of the debug events, its details will be displayed. By selecting “show”, we see in the overview above that 748 detailed entries await us.

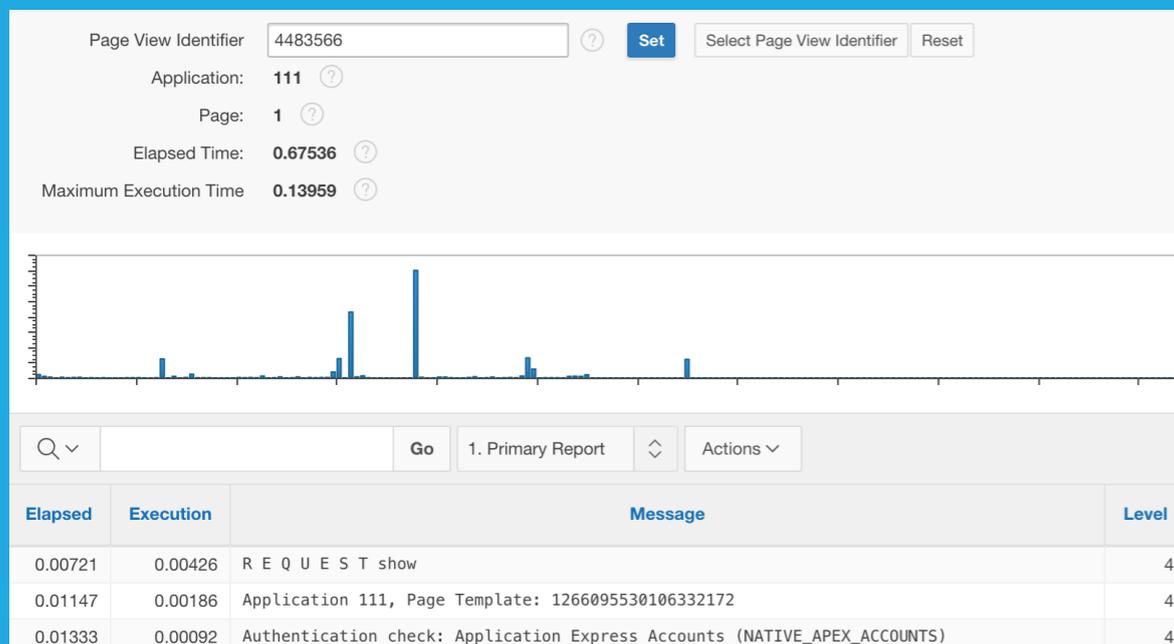


Figure 4: Debug detail

Some interesting pieces of information can be observed in the detailed view. In the area at the top, we see the “Elapsed time”, which is the processing duration that APEX spends in the database (in this case, loading the page). This is the net time of the database, without any network, web server and browser of the end user.

The “Maximum Execution Time” represents the longest duration of a single item in the current process. If it is a large number, then you’ll find this item further down in the list and can focus on optimizing it specifically.

The bar graph beneath gives an overview of the individual steps’ duration, highlighting if the processing time is divided equally or whether there are any resource hogs. This is followed by an interactive report containing a sorted list with all the individual steps. By utilizing this report you can follow step by step what APEX does before it displays the final result.

An important note here: All entries in the report are being filled in the exact same order as they have been processed. This can help explain some of the issues that may appear. For example, through the Debug you can see that one element was processed earlier than it was supposed to.

What information is displayed in the record’s details? Here are some examples:

- Computations and processes executed
- The non-performing operations, if a condition or authorization is prevented
- Unlocked Session State by URL parameters, computations/processes etc.
- Executed statements (processes, computations, regions)
- NLS settings of the database session
- Errors that have occurred
- Preserved regions and items



EOUC Leader Forum: Future Cooperation in Europe

In November, 31 participants met for the EOUC Leader Forum in the course of the DOAG 2016 Conference + Exhibition in Nuremberg. Representatives of 23 user groups and three Oracle employees discussed the appearance of the user groups at the last Oracle OpenWorld (OOW) and the future cooperation in Europe.





First item of the organizing committee around Heli Helskyaho, Mirela Ardelean, Ami Aharonovich, and Ralf Kölling was the User Group Sunday at the OOW. More than 500 interested persons visited the 17 sessions organized by the European user groups. The 12c Database Session was a highlight: over 20 Oracle ACEs from the EMEA region presented their top feature of the database in five minute presentations. However, there was also criticism besides the praise for the successful sessions. The number of visitors was not as high as expected. That is why a more suitable stand area should be found again for the OOW in 2017.

Better Networking within the EMEA

Another topic of the Leader Forum was the intensified networking of the user groups for event planning. Particularly in case of neighboring user groups, events should be coordinated more efficiently in the future. In conjunction with the dates of the big conferences, this should also lead to more attractive scheduling for the speakers. Better networking was also the key item of Ami Aharonovich who, in conclusion, suggested the option of a virtual conference. As a first step, an agreement was reached to offer webinars on EMEA-level based on the presentations of the OOW.





From User Groups – for User Groups

At the EOUC Leader Forum during DOAG 2016 Conference + Exhibition in November, the new topics of the ORAWORLD magazine were discussed. The attending participants from 23 user groups also enjoyed the lively participation in the creation of the magazine and agreed to exchange their ideas in the future via an e-mail distribution list. The goal is to push the distribution further with the motto “from user groups – for user groups”.

Join us, sign up and contribute an article. On www.ORAWORLD.org you can send us your file.

Criticism against Oracle’s Cloud-First Strategy

Oracle also paid attention to the user groups: the Cloud Focus Group that was present for the Oracle Cloud Day invited the user group leaders to an information exchange to forward the global user feedback directly to CEO Mark Hurd. Besides reports on initial activities regarding the topic “cloud” in the user groups, there was also criticism against the current Oracle strategy “Cloud first”. It was agreed that this strategy would lead to a loss of trust regarding future business relations to Oracle.



Jan Peterskovsky
“We want to be a platform for business to be made”

With a history of more than 20 years, HrOUG (Croatian Oracle User Group) is one of the older user groups in the Oracle ecosystem. Besides Oracle topics, the group seeks to generally shape the IT landscape in the region. Read the interview with Davor Rankovic, HrOUG's president, to learn more about their history, specific characteristics, and future plans.

hrOUG
hrvatska udruga oracle korisnika



Davor Rankovic
President HrOUG (Croatia)



What were your reasons to found a Croatian Oracle user group in 1995?

At the time, the whole world was talking about Dolly, the first mammal cloned from an adult cell, while Larry Ellison introduced the network computer concept at an IDC conference in Paris. In addition, Oracle 7.2 was released as one of the most innovative products of all time. The technological shift along with a growing economy was the ideal background for us to found an Oracle user group (OUG) and promote technology in the region. Today, we are proud to be one of the most tradition-rich Oracle user groups in the world.

Can you tell us about the major steps in this long development?

The region was traditionally strong in technology and life sciences. After several influential individuals together with experts in education had decided to found an OUG, it did not take the community long to engage in our activities. From the beginning, our initiative had support from Oracle partners and larger companies, which were the main driving force throughout the first ten years.

Speaking of today: What are the main goals of your user group?

Our main aim is to promote technological achievements, solutions and applications among our community members. By working with both education experts and partner companies, we appreciate both research and appliance approaches. In addition, we value individual knowledge and seek to highlight all kinds of success stories, also beyond Oracle technology. That is why our community is now rather interdisciplinary and aligned with all facets of modern economy.

Are there any special plans for the upcoming years?

We just confirmed three media sponsors: Two of the most popular newspapers as well as the most famous urban radio station in Croatia. Moreover, we started with an education sponsor, who will provide us with special certification programs for conference attendees – this will definitely keep us busy for the coming years. Another plan is to host all future conferences in English. We not only want to be a platform for exchange and education but also a place where business can be made.

Many countries nowadays suffer from a shortage of skilled IT staff. What are you doing to counteract this phenomenon?

First of all, we are working hard to make IT topics more understandable to a wider audience through our conferences and media partners. However, we are facing the fact that most revenue streams from the US market reach Croatia only with a delay of several years. This delay gap is closing more and more, but it is still present. To come up against it, we are trying to attract more investment into current trends and technology, which as a side effect will make the whole sector more appealing to prospective IT staff, especially to young people.

A demand for young people is only one aspect: How far is your process regarding women in IT?

Our conference statistics from the past 20 years show that only about 15 percent of our attendees are women – IT is still mostly recognized as a men's industry in Croatia. However, many women can already be found in important positions. We will continue to honour women's expertise and are looking forward to see more of them.





Hi, my name is...
Ami Aharonovich



What do you do?

I'm the CEO of Brillix-DBAces. We are a group of over 20 data experts who strive to plan, develop and deploy best-of-breed innovative technologies and solutions for database platforms, data security and big data environments. I'm also an Oracle Certified Professional DBA and an Oracle ACE, and I provide consulting, professional services and professional database trainings focused on Oracle database technology.

Are you an Oracle user group member?

Yes, I am a board member of ilOUG, the Israeli Oracle User Group, since 2008, and I've been elected to serve as ilOUG's President since 2010.

What made you become a member?

I'm a strong believer in sharing and collaboration, and I find the user group as the best possible platform for connecting between people who are willing to share their best and worst practices, collaborate and learn from each other.

When was your first contact with Oracle technology?

I've first used Oracle database technology about 16 years ago, when I was learning about development in general, and database development in specific.

Which Oracle user group would you like to meet, and why?

I love going to user group events and meet with other user groups in general, as I strongly believe that this is the best way to learn from each other and eventually become better. If I would need to choose a specific one, then I would go to meet two different types of user groups:

- 1) The smallest/newest one, so I can see and learn from them how they deal with their challenges in starting a new and fresh user group.
- 2) The largest/oldest one, where I can see and learn how they manage to keep growing and managing a very large and well-known user group community.

What was your favorite subject in school?

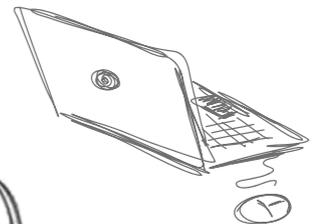
I've always preferred learning mathematics and computers over any other subjects...

What did you want to be when you were little?

I was playing the keyboards (Organ and Piano) since I was six years old, for about twelve years in a row, until I've stopped when I joined the army and had no time to continue with it. Through all those years, I've always wanted to become a famous keyboard player, to play at concerts and be on the stage in general. Today, I get to be on stages quite a lot, just not playing on keyboards, but instead, using a different type of keyboard...

Your Twitter url

@aaharon <https://twitter.com/aaharon>



Would you like to introduce yourself to the community as well? Then answer the questions and send us a photo to redaktion@doag.org

TEAM





Sebastian Höing

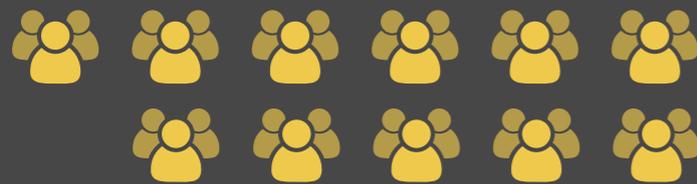
User Group Overview: Numbers and Connections

There are many Oracle user groups in Europe. Some are older than the others, some have more than 1,000 members and some are quite small. Eleven OUGs participated in our survey. The following pages illustrate the results.

The Oracle User Groups: Fun Facts



How many members does your user group have?



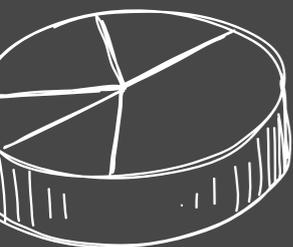
40%
have more than 1,000 members



60%
have less than 1,000 members

Average Number
of Members:
1,151

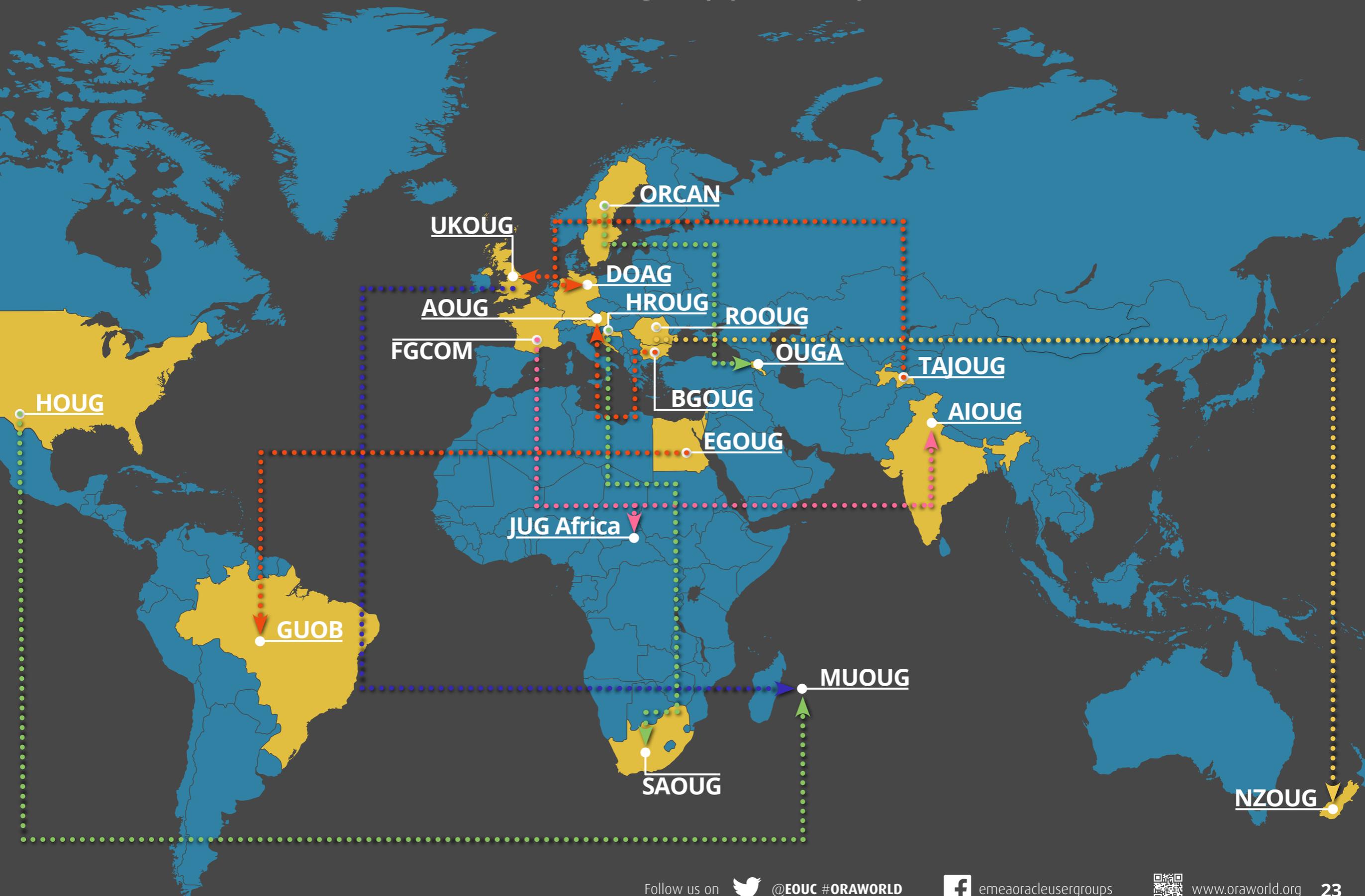
Since when does your user group exist?



Average User Group Age:
19.2 years



What is the most exotic user group you always wanted to know?





Heli Helskyaho Ambassador's Corner

Dear user group leaders,
I hope you and your user group are doing well!

The Ambassador's Election

Ami Aharonovich, the president of iIOUG (Israel) and an Oracle ACE, was elected as a new Ambassador for EOUC. Congratulations, Ami! I would like to take the opportunity to thank Janny Ekelson for his years of commitment to serve the EOUC as a Spokesperson and an Ambassador. This community would not be the active and friendly community that it is without the important work of Ambassadors!

I want to wish you a wonderful end of year with your family and friends, happy holidays and a very happy year 2017!

Best regards,
Heli

Your Ambassadors:

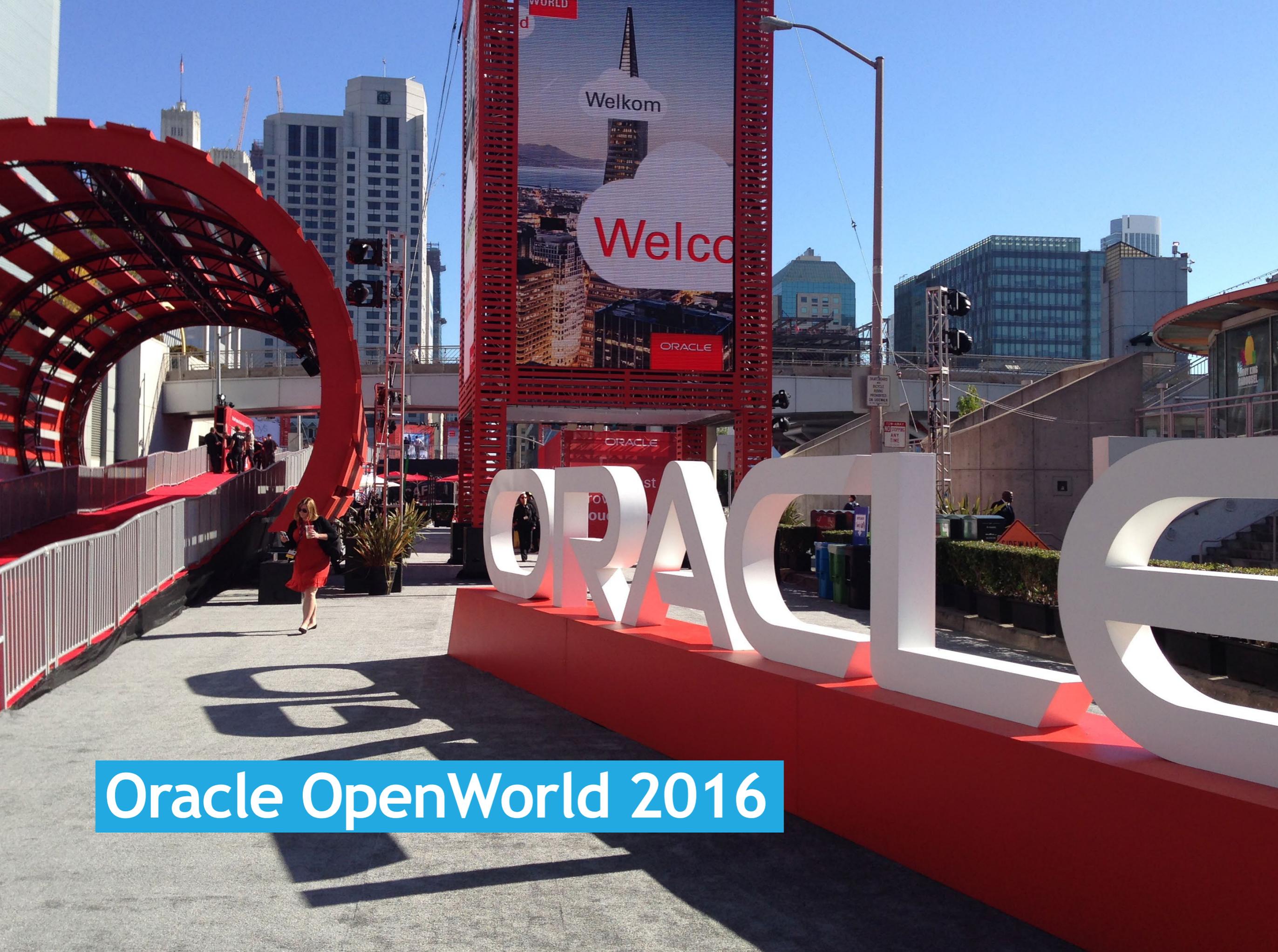


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Oracle OpenWorld 2016



Partly Sunny, Mostly Cloudy

Marina Fischer

In the midst of September, it was again time for Oracle to roll out the red carpet for about 60,000 attendees from 141 countries at the Oracle OpenWorld in San Francisco. For the 20th anniversary edition, all in all three city blocks of Howard Street had been turned into Oracle Cloud Plaza.

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The cloud was, without a doubt, the leading theme of this year's conference. This not only showed in the 2016 keynote lineup and the many sessions which made the cloud their topic, but also in Larry Ellison's two keynotes in particular. Oracle's CTO, who had mocked the cloud computing hype only a few years ago ([see page 6 for the video](#)), seemed to have turned around by 180 degrees and promoted Oracle as the cloud company to go to. The audience, who as always lined up in long queues in front of Hall D to listen to Larry Ellison's keynotes at Moscone North, was in for good entertainment, because especially on Tuesday, he was on a roll. He not only put the cloud in the center of both of his talks, but also attacked Amazon Web Services (AWS) for being too slow, too closed, less secure, and – to sum it all up – inferior to Oracle Cloud. "Amazon's lead is over," he claimed confidently, after literally pulling the new competitor to pieces.

Cloud, Cloud, Cloud

One of this year's major new product announcements was Oracle Database 12c Release 2 ([see page 8 for first impressions](#)). Underlining Oracle's "cloud first" strategy, Release 2 is first coming to the Oracle Cloud. In addition, Ellison announced the Exadata Express Cloud Service, which gives customers access to Oracle's flagship enterprise database starting at 175 US-Dollar per month ([see page 7, "Number of the Quarter"](#)).

No matter which way the attendees turned to – the cloud was always omnipresent, be it Applications, Analytics, Customer Experience, or Internet of Things. Only the California sky did not seem too impressed by Oracle's leading conference theme: A blue and cloudless sky awaited this year's attendees in San Francisco on almost all of the conference days.

Once a Sailor, Always a Sailor

One topic that also seemed to pervade the entire conference was, of course, sailing. After Ellison did not show up to his own keynote at OpenWorld 2013 in favor of taking part in the Ameri-



ca's Cup at the same time, this should be no news to anyone. So this year, the Oracle Team USA was not only present on stage to talk about Oracle technology that is supposed to help them win the America's Cup in 2017, but also offered a virtual reality sailing experience on Howard Street, which was a big hit with the audience.

Five Days of Networking

As always, Oracle OpenWorld 2016 was a great place for networking and to meet peers from all over the world. One highlight of many was without a doubt the Oracle Appreciation Event where Sting and Gwen Stefani rocked the stage at AT&T Park on Wednesday. And of course, on all five conference days, there were many more opportunities at luncheons and the exhibition booths for discussions and exchanging experiences with others, for meeting old friends and making new connections.





All User Groups United

Ralf Kölling

The Oracle OpenWorld 2016 is always a great place to meet and get to know other user groups as well as their members from around the world. On the traditional "User Group Sunday", all of them joined forces to share their knowledge and experiences.

The preceding Sunday of the Oracle OpenWorld is traditionally dedicated to the user groups from all around the world. Several US-based groups take this as an occasion to hold SIG-meetings or general gatherings. As always, the EOUC used this day to show the broad expertise and variety of topics covered by the

specialists located in the area. This year, 22 EMEA user groups participated in the poll to select the best 15 sessions (out of 165 submissions) to be presented during the EOUC stream in the Moscone South Conference Center. More than 500 attendees complimented the EOUC committee on the quality of the sessions and the competence of the speakers.

As one highlight of the 2016 EOUC stream, many attendees appreciated the "EOUC Short Track Session", which was conducted the third time in a row since 2014. In this special format the speakers get five minutes each to present their view on a given topic. This year the hosts Debra Lilley from UKOUG (United Kingdom) and Ralf Koelling from DOAG (Germany) gathered 21 Oracle ACEs from all parts of the EMEA region (including speakers from Finland to Israel, Turkey to UK) to share their favorite Oracle database feature with the audience. The two hour session was well received and the attendees got many interesting impulses, thoughts, and ideas for their future work out of it.

International Booth at the Exhibition Hall

Another opportunity for conference attendees to get to know the many different user groups was the international user group booth. During the exhibition hours, many attendees came by to have a chat and inform themselves about the work of the user groups. Grouped together with the kiosks of the International Oracle User Group (IOUC) and the Oracle Development Tools User Group (ODTUG), the booth was located in the database showcase at the Moscone South exhibition hall.

Networking Across Borders

During a user group luncheon on Monday, the global relationship manager Jeremy Whyte and his team thanked all attending user group board members for their valuable contribution to the community. Besides this special occasion, the user group representatives found many opportunities for discussions with their local relationship manager, other Oracle executives and their peers from user groups from around the world.



OTN Nordic Tour 2016

Sten Vesterli

For the fourth year running, the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish user groups got together to arrange the OTN Nordic Tour. As usual, a group of ACE directors were up to the tough challenge of speaking in four countries in four days.

Each fall after Oracle OpenWorld, the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish user groups invite four ACE Directors for the OTN Nordic Tour, previously known as the Nordic ACE Director Tour. This year, Oracle ACE Directors Ludovico Caldara, Roel Hartman, John King, and Martin Widlake stepped up to the challenge of speaking in a new country every day.

The tour started in Denmark on the evening of October 10 with a speakers' dinner. Because of a very large cancer research conference, hotel rooms were as scarce in Copenhagen as they

are in San Francisco during OpenWorld. The Danish Oracle User Group quickly moved to plan B with board members cleaning out their spare bedrooms to give to the speakers.

On Tuesday, the Danish event was held in the local Oracle office with the four ACE Directors each giving two presentations, supplemented with some sessions by local speakers. After their last presentation, the speakers were bundled into a taxi and sent to the airport for their flight to Oslo while the attendees gathered for the event dinner.

Wednesday found the four speakers at Aker Brygge in Oslo, where the Norwegian user group had set up a grueling schedule of three 45-minute presentations per speaker. Again, the speakers were quickly off to the airport after their last sessions for the flight to Helsinki.

Our speakers got to sleep in on Thursday morning before heading to the Accenture office in Helsinki for a more relaxed schedule of one presentation per speaker. Then it was off to the airport again – Roel heading home to run a Marathon, Martin heading home for a quick change of clothes before the next user group conference, and Ludovico and John continuing on to Stockholm for the Sweden Oracle User Group event on Friday.

Top-notch technical experts do not often visit four small Nordic countries, so the ACE Directors who made time in their busy schedules for a short, intense tour were very much appreciated. We are also grateful to the Oracle Technology Network who sponsored the travel and hotels, and are already thinking about next year's tour.

Want to join the OTN Nordic Tour?

If you are an ACE director and up to the challenge of four countries in four days, feel free to contact Sten Vesterli (sten@vesterli.com) to inquire about a spot on one of the next tours. We select speakers, not individual presentations, so please be prepared to send us a list of all your current talks. Each country then chooses which sessions they want to hear.



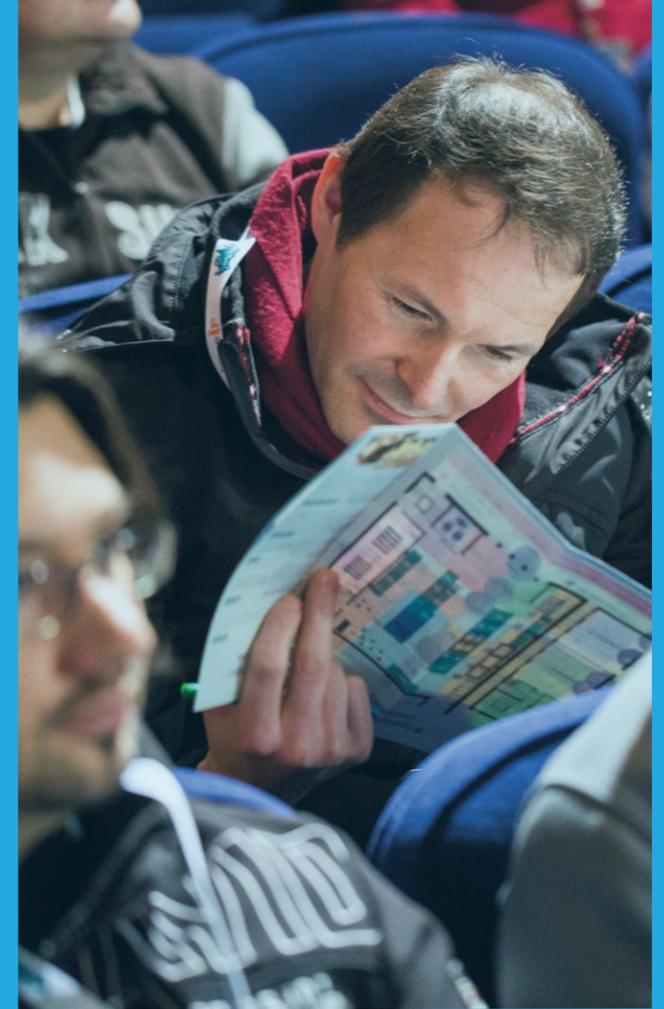
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Events

Vårseminaret/Spring Seminar

March 9-11, 2017
 Color Line (Oslo-Kiel)
www.ougn.no
styret@ougn.no

JavaLand 2017

March 28-30, 2017
 Cologne, Germany
www.javaland.eu

APEX World 2017

March 30-31, 2017
 Rotterdam, the Netherlands
www.ogh.nl/page.aspx?event=346

Collaborate17

April 2-6, 2017
 Las Vegas (Nevada), USA
www.attendcollaborate.com

APEX CONNECT

May 9-11, 2017
 Berlin, Germany
apex.doag.org

Kscope17 Conference

June 25-29, 2017
 San Antonio (Texas), USA
www.kscope17.com

Call for Papers

Harmony 2017

May 17-18, 2017
 Helsinki, Finland
 CFP: January 31, 2017
www.ougf.fi/index.php/en/uutisia-mainmenu-3/212-cfp-harmony-2017

Marina Fischer

C is for Cookies!

It's time to get into the festive spirit of christmas! Not there yet? Maybe we can help! Let's bake some 01100011 01101111 01101111 01101011 01101001 01100101 01110011 (cookies that is, of course!).

Start Your Very Own Geeky Christmas Bakery

First of all, let's find ourselves some really great cookie cutters. For all those retrogamers out there, these [Pac-Man](#), [Star Wars](#), or [Tetris](#) Cookie Cutters might just be the thing to get into the right Christmas mood. But don't act too surprised if you suddenly find yourself whistling to those famous retro tunes instead of Jingle Bells...

Do It Yourself

You are more the DIY type? No problem: To make your own cookie cutters, all you need is an empty soda can, scissors, utility knife, scotch tape, stapler, and your creativity. This way, you can design your very own cookie cutter with any possible shape! For a detailed description of how to do it, you can watch this example [YouTube video](#).

Get Creative!

Now it's time to get into the spirit: For those of you who want to keep it real, maybe these [8-Bit Cookies](#) are a perfect way to start your geeky baking adventure. But next time, don't just bake some gingerbread men or women – bake some [super hero cookies](#) instead! And while you're at it, watch this video of a [Millennium Falcon](#) or [AT-AT Walker](#) from Star Wars made from scratch – in gingerbread! Impress your friends with a [pixelled version of Zelda's Link](#), or stock yourself up with some [Pokémon cookies](#) for your next attempt to catch 'em all.

We wish you a very geeky Christmas and a nerdy New Year!



- > [25 Geeky Cookies](#)
- > [Cookie Cutter Shop](#)
- > [How to make Pacman Cookies](#)

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