Setting Up OBIEE on a Snowflake-Heavy Data Warehouse

An Overview

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Manager, Business Intelligence, Analysis, and Testing

Enterprise Data Warehouse

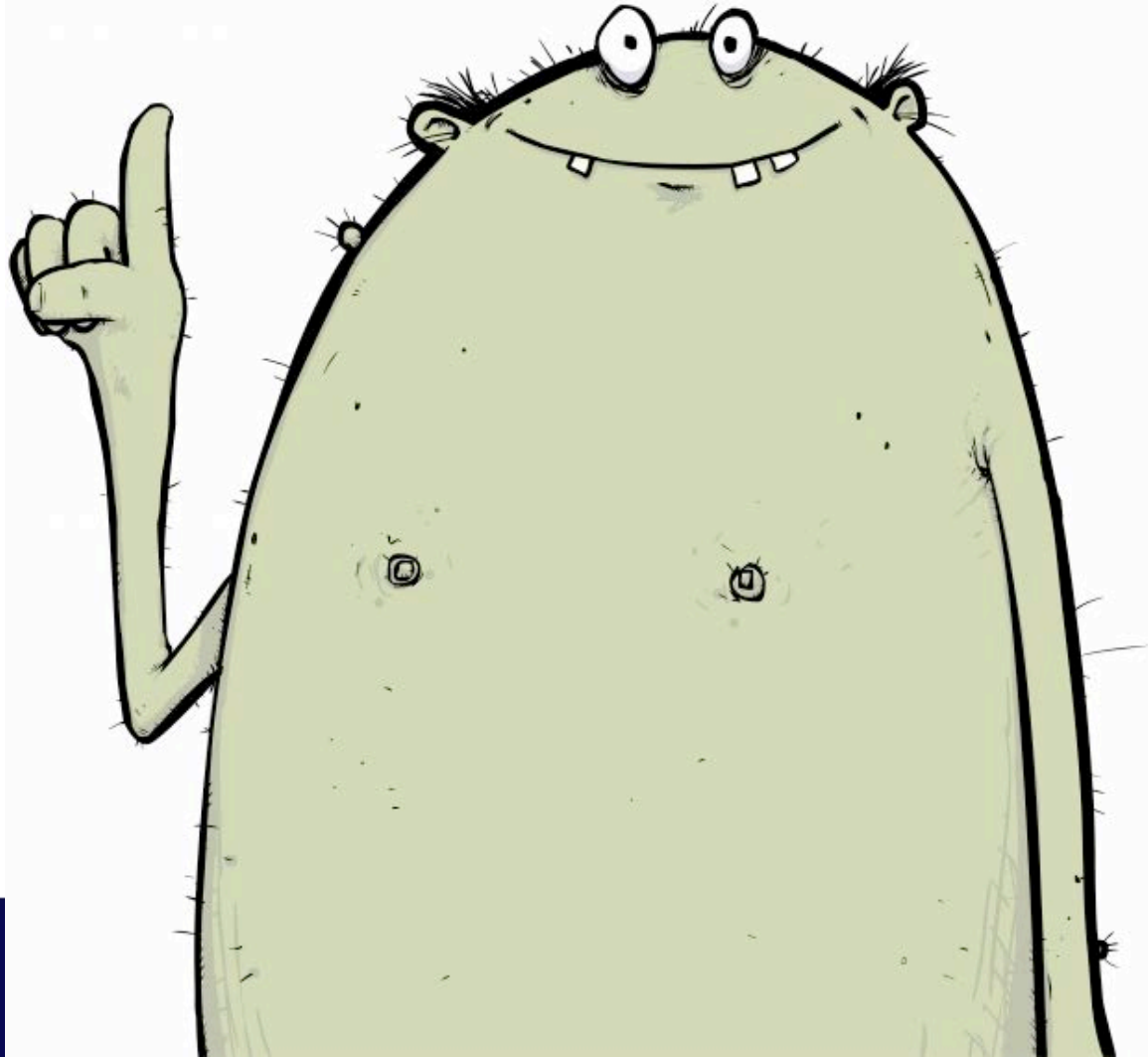NYC Human Resources Administration

NYOUG
March 12, 2014

Today's Workshop

- Introduction

- Best practices in OBIEE metadata repository design

- Our data and requirements, a.k.a. "You are a unique snowflake"

- Rules we follow

- Workarounds and rules we break

- Conclusion

Introduction

The Big Caveat

- Lessons from a single project.

- Workarounds by and for relative newbies trying to fit a snowflake legacy into a star-based product and address our particular requirements and data model.

- YMMV.

- Feedback, questions, additional conversation welcome!

  - If it weren't, I wouldn't be here!
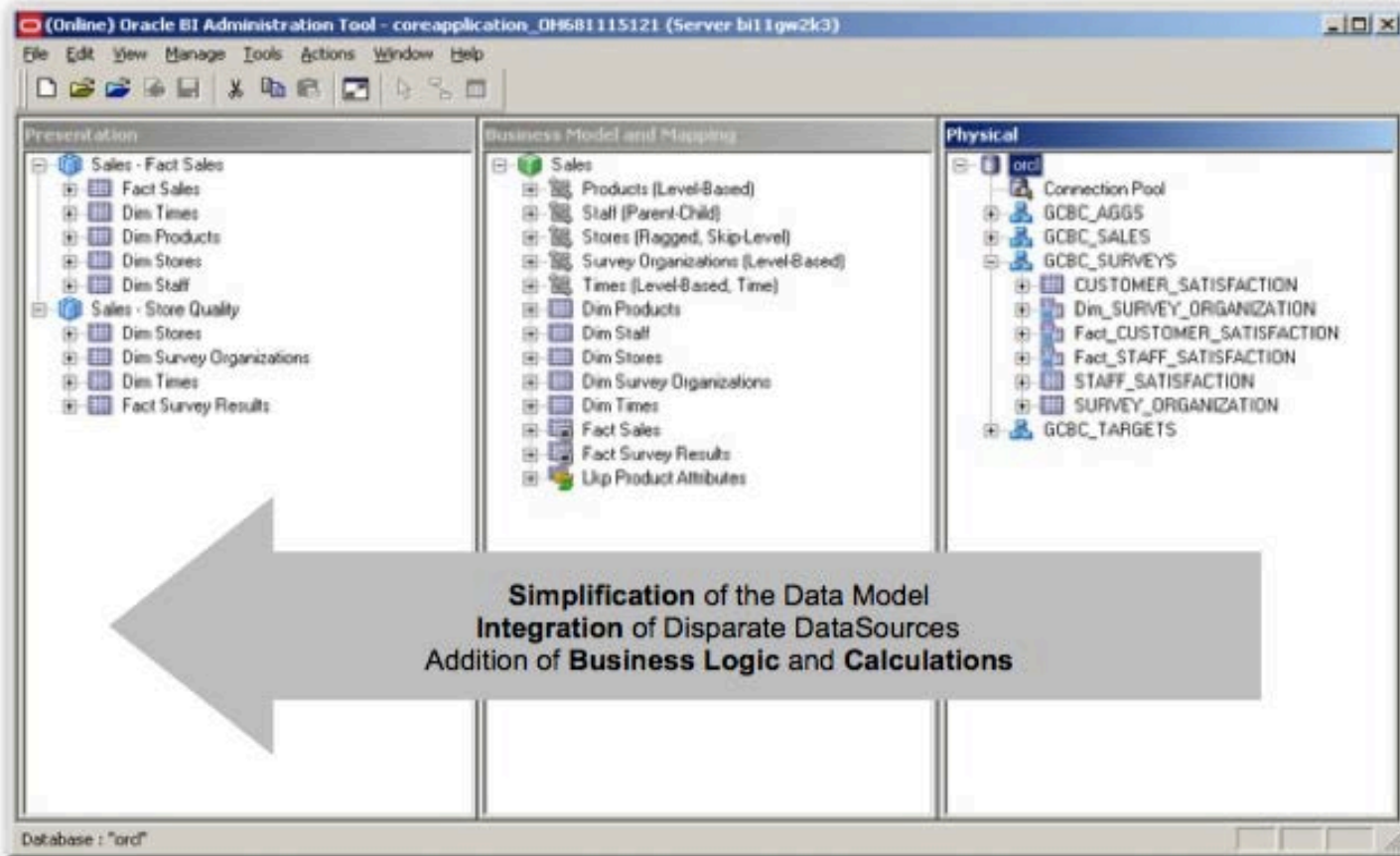
Big thanks to the EDW team!

- Alfredo Veliz
- Alvin Woods
- Anil Tripathi
- Anna Stern
- Dinesh Veera
- Jane Neimand
- Marina Nunez
- Mihaela Iancu
- Minkie English
- Nick Gagliotti
- Oleg Gorelik
- Pavel Syrov
- Rachael Bickhardt
- Ravi Teppla
- Rochelle Eisenstein
- Ron Berry
- Sandy Slaughter
- Sanjay Patel
- Stan Rostov
- Suresh Muddaveerappa
- Venu Kadiyala
- Yasemin Turgut

Big thanks to our user advisors!

- Akinkunmi Akintunde
- Alexander Mattera
- Ann Kelleher
- Badar Chaudhry
- Bedros Boodanian
- Brian Graham-Jones
- Elsa Stazesky
- Eva Lazar
- Gordon Kraus-Friedberg
- Joan Dworetzky
- John Noel

- Jorge Burgos
- Joseph Varghese
- Kevin Fellner
- Margaret Boateng
- Mary Ellen O'Connell
- Michael Scianna
- Premal Shroff
- Sally Ramirez
- Sarah Haas
- Sean Blake
- Wah-Yuen Leung

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Best Practices

Flow of Data Through the Three-Layer Semantic Model
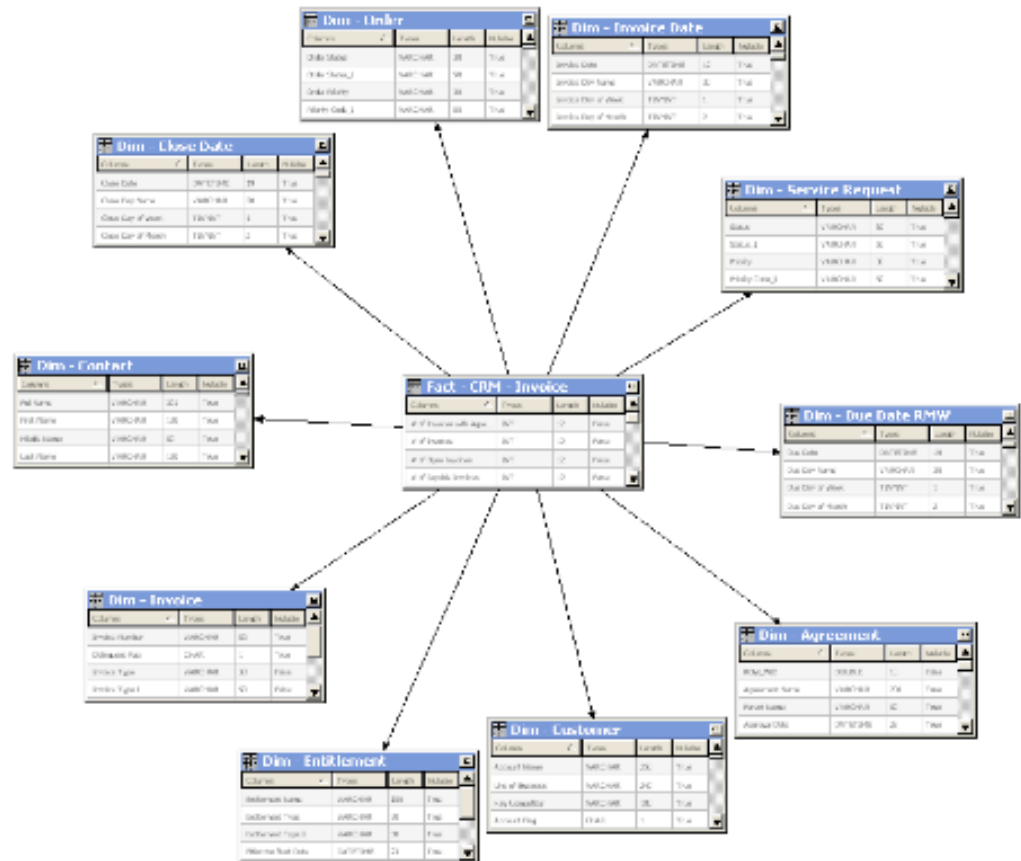
Best Practices: Physical Layer

- Create aliases for all tables.

- Create keys, foreign keys, and other joins on the aliases, not the original tables.

- Use Opaque Views *only* as a last resort. Instead…

  - Apply filters in joins and logical tables sources, so that only the necessary tables are included in any given query, OR

  - Create tables or materialized views in ETL, so that computation doesn't have to happen on the fly.

- Avoid circular joins.

- https://blogs.oracle.com/pa/resource/CEAL_BIDesignBestPracticesV1.4.pdf

Best Practices: Business Model (BMM)

- Rename logical columns to use presentation names

- Keep only required columns in the BMM

- Dims
  - Assign business columns as primary keys
  - No aggregate measures
  - Create associated logical dimension hierarchy

- Facts
  - Create an implicit fact column mapped to 1, with no aggregation rule
  - All other columns should be aggregate measures
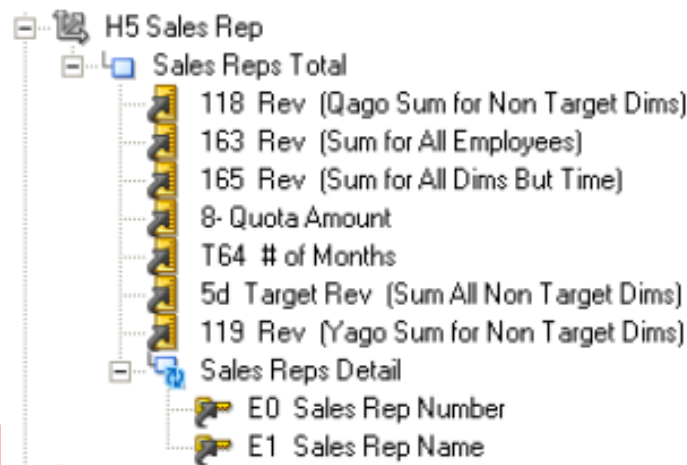 - No logical/BMM primary key

Business Model Design

- Logical star-schemas only:
  - ➤ No snow-flaking !
  - ➤ Only one exception: BM for Siebel Marketing list formats.

https://blogs.oracle.com/pa/resource/CEAL_BIDesignBestPracticesV1.4.pdf

Missing Dimensional Hierarchies

- Always create a dimension hierarchy for all dimensions, even if there is only one level in the dimension.
    - BI Server may need it to select the most optimized Logical Table Source.
    - It may be useful when BI Server performs a join between two results sets, when two fact tables are used in a report.
    - It is necessary for level-based measures.
    - It is needed to set content level of logical table sources

Also necessary to avoid dropped filters in physical SQL.

```
H5 Sales Rep
    Sales Reps Total
        118 Rev (Qago Sum for Non Target Dims)
        163 Rev (Sum for All Employees)
        165 Rev (Sum for All Dims But Time)
        8- Quota Amount
        T64 # of Months
        5d Target Rev (Sum All Non Target Dims)
        119 Rev (Yago Sum for Non Target Dims)
    Sales Reps Detail
        E0  Sales Rep Number
        E1  Sales Rep Name
```
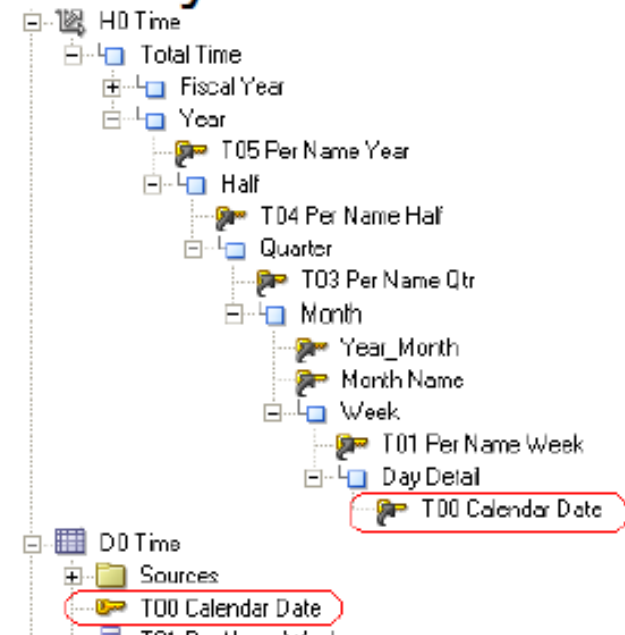
ORACLE

Level Keys

- The primary key of each level must always be unique

- The primary key of the lowest level of the hierarchy must always be the primary of the logical table

Content Level

Always specify the content level in all logical table sources, both in facts an dimensions.

- It will allow BI Server to select the most optimized LTS in queries.

- It will help consistency checker finding the issues in RPD configuration, preventing runtime errors.
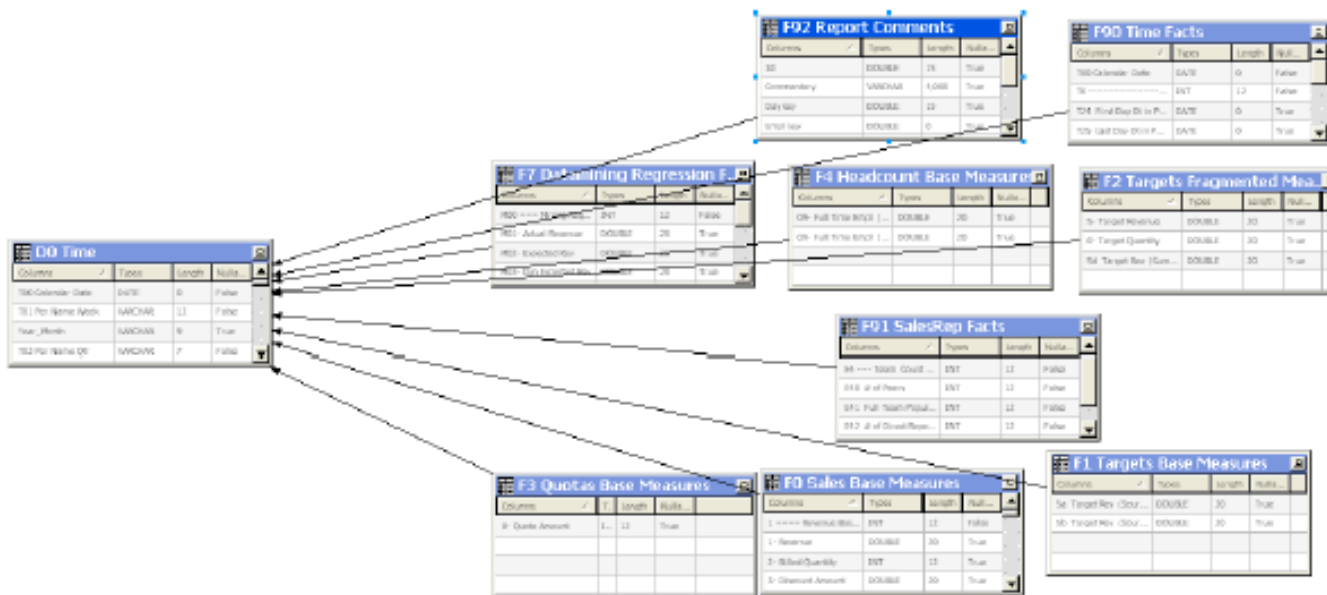

ORACLE

Canonical Time Dimension

Each Business Model should include a main time dimension connected to almost all fact tables. This is necessary for reports that includes multiple facts. It is also much easier for end-users than having a time dimension per fact table.

Best Practices: Presentation Layer

- Simple subject areas with a few facts as possible, and ones that share dimensions.

- Configure presentation folders to each type of user.

- Add descriptions for subject areas, folders, and columns.

More Best Practices…

- s3.amazonaws.com/rmc_docs/OOW2010_OBIEE_11gR1_Data_Modeling_Best_Practices_&_New_Features.pdf

- blogs.oracle.com/pa/resource/CEAL_BIDesignBestPracticesV1.4.pdf

- obieepedia.wordpress.com/category/obiee-best-practices/

- debaatobiee.wordpress.com/category/obiee/best-practices/

- allaboutobiee.blogspot.com/2012/03/obiee-best-practices-in-bmm-layer.html

- www.varanasisaichand.com/2011/08/dimensional-hierarchies-best-practices.html

you
are unique

just like
everyone
else

Data Sources: WMS (and SSI)

- Welfare Management System and SSI State Data Exchange

- Budgeting, demographics, GIS for all programs

- SCD2 for lawsuits and audits
  - Millions of clients and families, 15 years of history
  - 450+ data elements

- **Monster dims plus code definitions**

- Aggregate measures: count distinct

Select Subject Area

DataSmart
Frequently-used data elements from all data sources for cases that were active (AC, SI, AS, or IC) in the past 3 or 4 years.

NYCWAY
Employment and engagement-related events for teen and adult CA/PA and SNAP/FS recipients from New York City Work, Accountability and You (NYCWAY).

SSI
Eligibility, budget and demographic data related to SSI claimants and recipients from the New York State Data Exchange (SDX).

WMS
Client eligibility and budgeting data used in determining CA/PA, SNAP/FS and MA benefits. Includes GIS data for case addresses.

WMS Issuance Data
CA/PA and SNAP/FS benefit history.

eMedNY
Adjudicated claims and provider information for MA-eligible recipients from the NYS Department of Health's MA claims processing system. Includes GIS data for provider addresses.

Data Sources: NYCWAY

- New York City Work Accountability & You

- Employment services & case management

- This happened, then this happened, then…

- Factless Facts plus code definitions

- Aggregate measures are all count distinct

Select Subject Area

DataSmart
Frequently-used data elements from all data sources for cases that were active (AC, SI, AS, or IC) in the past 3 or 4 years.

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WMS Issuance Data
CA/PA and SNAP/FS benefit history.

eMedNY
Adjudicated claims and provider information for MA-eligible recipients from the NYS Department of Health's MA claims processing system. Includes GIS data for provider addresses.

Data Sources: Issuances & eMedNY

- Payments made to or on behalf of clients and client households.

- Finally, dollars to sum and nice star models!

Select Subject Area

DataSmart
Frequently-used data elements from all data sources for cases that were active (AC, SI, AS, or IC) in the past 3 or 4 years.

NYCWAY
Employment and engagement-related events for teen and adult CA/PA and SNAP/FS recipients from New York City Work, Accountability and You (NYCWAY).

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Adjudicated claims and provider information for MA-eligible recipients from the NYS Department of Health's MA claims processing system. Includes GIS data for provider addresses.
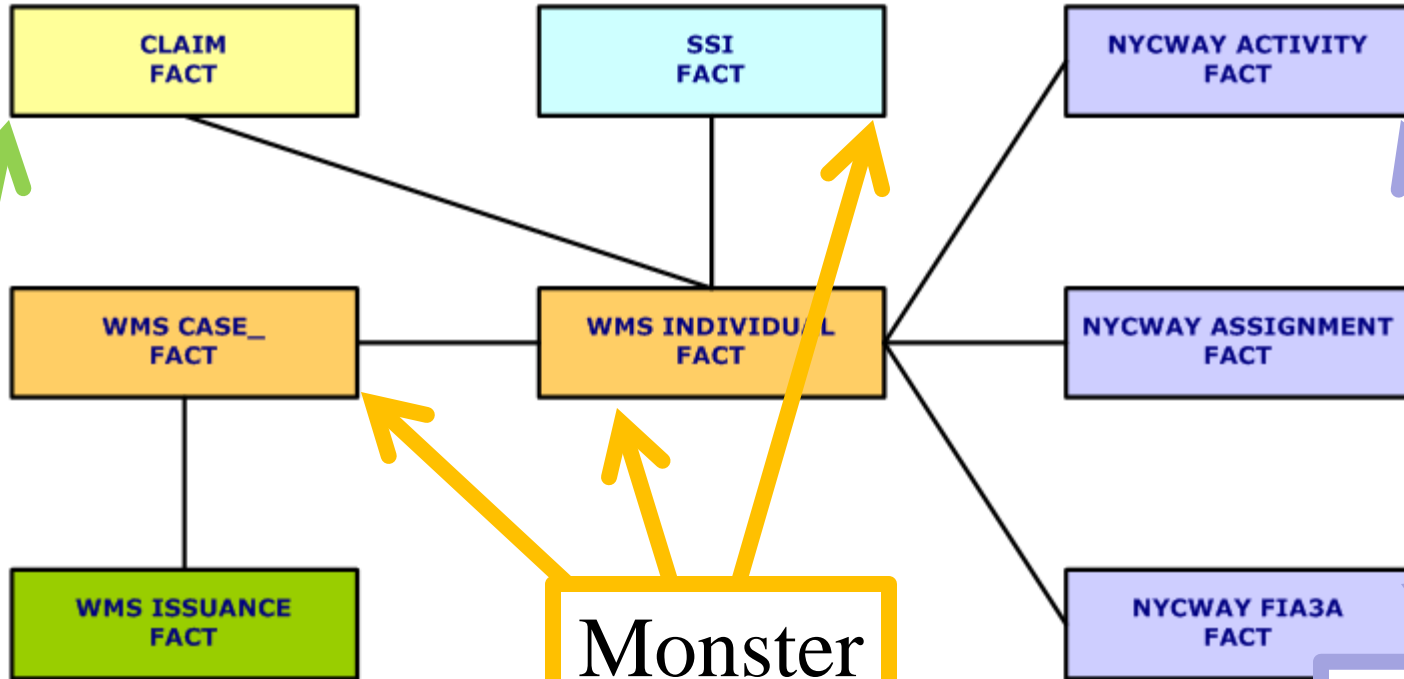
Data Mart overview from Discoverer

More on SCD2s

- Change dates let you know when the record was in effect

- Most recent data has an end date of 12/31/9999

- If *any* column changes in the table we add a new row and update effective dates.

- With the requirement of hundreds of fields and full SCD2 history, we have had to denormalize.

SCD2: Sample

Case Status

	▸ Case Number	▸ Case Status	▸ Program Type	▸ Case Status Change Date	▸ Case Status End Date
1		CL	PA	04/23/2009	09/30/2009
2		SI	PA	10/01/2009	10/25/2009
3		AC	PA	10/26/2009	03/15/2010
4		CL	PA	03/16/2010	12/31/9999

Responsible Center (Case Suffix Dim)

	▸ Case Number	▸ Resp Center	▸ Change Eff Date	▸ End Eff Date
1		099	04/23/2009	09/30/2009
2		099	10/01/2009	10/01/2009
3		099	10/02/2009	10/25/2009
4		099	10/26/2009	10/26/2009
5		099	10/27/2009	11/01/2009
6		099	11/02/2009	11/26/2009
7		039	11/27/2009	11/30/2009
8		039	12/01/2009	01/08/2010
9		039	01/09/2010	01/15/2010
10		039	01/16/2010	02/22/2010
11		039	02/23/2010	03/15/2010
12		039	03/16/2010	12/31/9999

SCD2: Single date conditions

- Today or some other day

  - Who is currently active for Food Stamps/SNAP?

  - Who was active for Food Stamps/SNAP on July 1, 2013?

  - What was the status on the service date of this claim?

- One record per case, case suffix, case line, or ssn, whichever is the rest of the table key

- No risk of multiplied sums if the rest of the join is correct

Joins: Monster Dim to Monster Dim

- Different SCD2s for the same client get new records on different days.

- So, Change Eff Date A does not necessarily equal Change Eff Date B.

- Instead, identify pairs of records that were in effect on overlapping dates.

- Many to many join, even for a single client

	Individual Status			Recipient Dim		
	Ind Status	Change Eff Date	End Eff Date	SSN Validation	Change Eff Date	End Eff Date
✓	Active	01/01/2007	01/14/2008	1	01/01/2007	01/10/2007
✓	Active	01/01/2007	01/14/2008	8	01/11/2007	12/31/9999
✗	Sanction	01/15/2008	12/31/9999	1	01/01/2007	01/10/2007
✓	Sanction	01/15/2008	12/31/9999	8	01/11/2007	12/31/9999

Implications for Joins: Traditional Fact → SCD2

CLAIM_FACT

PK	**CLAIM_TRANS_ID**
PK	**SEGMENT_SEQUENCE_NUMBER**

CASE_NUMBER
CASE_SUFFIX_ID
LINE_NUMBER
SERVICE_DATE
etc

WMS_INDIVIDUAL_FACT

PK	**CASE_NUMBER**
PK	**LINE_NUMBER**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**

END_EFF_DATE
CASE_SUFFIX_ID
RECIP_SSN
FS_IND_STATUS_CODE
etc

WMS_CASE_FACT

PK	**CASE_NUMBER**
PK	**CASE_SUFFIX_ID**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**

END_EFF_DATE
CASE_TYPE
FS_CASE_STATUS_CODE
etc

SSI_FACT

PK	**RECIP_SSN**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**

END_EFF_DATE
APPEAL_DATE
APPEAL_REASON
etc

- Select a single day, no risk of multiplication
  - Fact date field BETWEEN change_eff_date AND end_eff_date
  - OR
  - end_eff_date = 12/31/9999

Implications for Joins: SCD2 → SCD2

CLAIM_FACT

PK	CLAIM_TRANS_ID
PK	SEGMENT_SEQUENCE_NUMBER
	CASE_NUMBER
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	LINE_NUMBER
	SERVICE_DATE
	etc

WMS_INDIVIDUAL_FACT

PK	CASE_NUMBER
PK	LINE_NUMBER
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	RECIP_SSN
	FS_IND_STATUS_CODE
	etc

WMS_CASE_FACT

PK	CASE_NUMBER
PK	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_TYPE
	FS_CASE_STATUS_CODE
	etc

SSI_FACT

PK	RECIP_SSN
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	APPEAL_DATE
	APPEAL_REASON
	etc

- Monster Dim to Monster Dim
  - dim1.change_eff_date <= dim2.end_eff_date
  - AND
  - dim1.end_eff_date >= dim2.change_eff_date

- May get multiple records in the time frame

- Count distinct is fine

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Implications for Joins: Fact → SCD2 → SCD2

CLAIM_FACT

PK	CLAIM_TRANS_ID
PK	SEGMENT_SEQUENCE_NUMBER
	CASE_NUMBER
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	LINE_NUMBER
	SERVICE_DATE
	etc

WMS_INDIVIDUAL_FACT

PK	CASE_NUMBER
PK	LINE_NUMBER
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	RECIP_SSN
	FS_IND_STATUS_CODE
	etc

WMS_CASE_FACT

PK	CASE_NUMBER
PK	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_TYPE
	FS_CASE_STATUS_CODE
	etc

SSI_FACT

PK	RECIP_SSN
PK	CHANGE_EFF_DATE
	END_EFF_DATE
	APPEAL_DATE
	APPEAL_REASON
	etc

- Select a single day *from each & every monster dim*: Most recent or fact date

- Any dim in the query without a single date condition could multiply sums.

- Here, we need SSN from dim1 and date from the fact.

Implications for Joins SCD2 → SCD2 → SCD2

CLAIM_FACT

PK	**CLAIM_TRANS_ID**
PK	**SEGMENT_SEQUENCE_NUMBER**
	CASE_NUMBER
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	LINE_NUMBER
	SERVICE_DATE
	etc

WMS_INDIVIDUAL_FACT

PK	**CASE_NUMBER**
PK	**LINE_NUMBER**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_SUFFIX_ID
	RECIP_SSN
	FS_IND_STATUS_CODE
	etc

WMS_CASE_FACT

PK	**CASE_NUMBER**
PK	**CASE_SUFFIX_ID**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**
	END_EFF_DATE
	CASE_TYPE
	FS_CASE_STATUS_CODE
	etc

SSI_FACT

PK	**RECIP_SSN**
PK	**CHANGE_EFF_DATE**
	END_EFF_DATE
	APPEAL_DATE
	APPEAL_REASON
	etc

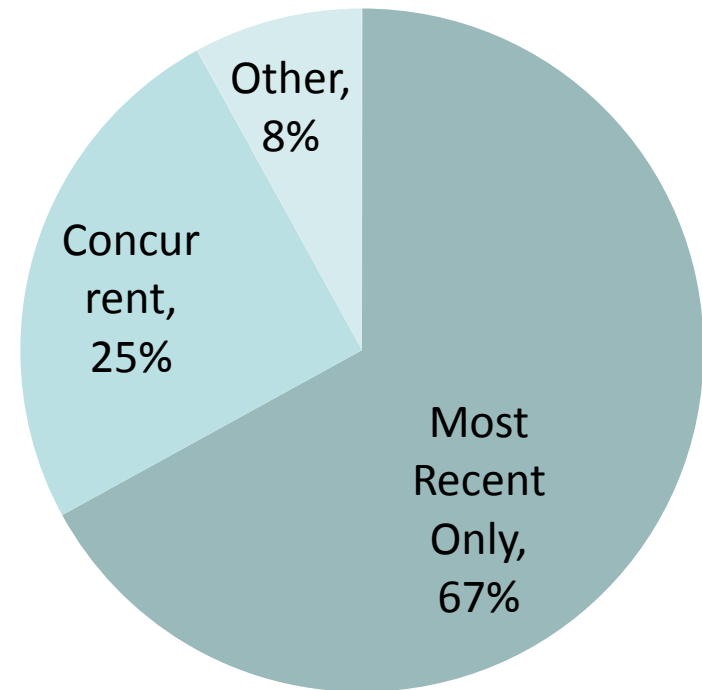- Overlapping time periods
  - ssi.change_eff_date <= ind.end_eff_date AND ssi.end_eff_date >= ind.change_eff_date AND
  - ssi.change_eff_date <= cas.end_eff_date AND ssi.end_eff_date >= cas.change_eff_date AND
  - cas.change_eff_date <= ind.end_eff_date AND cas.end_eff_date >= ind.change_eff_date
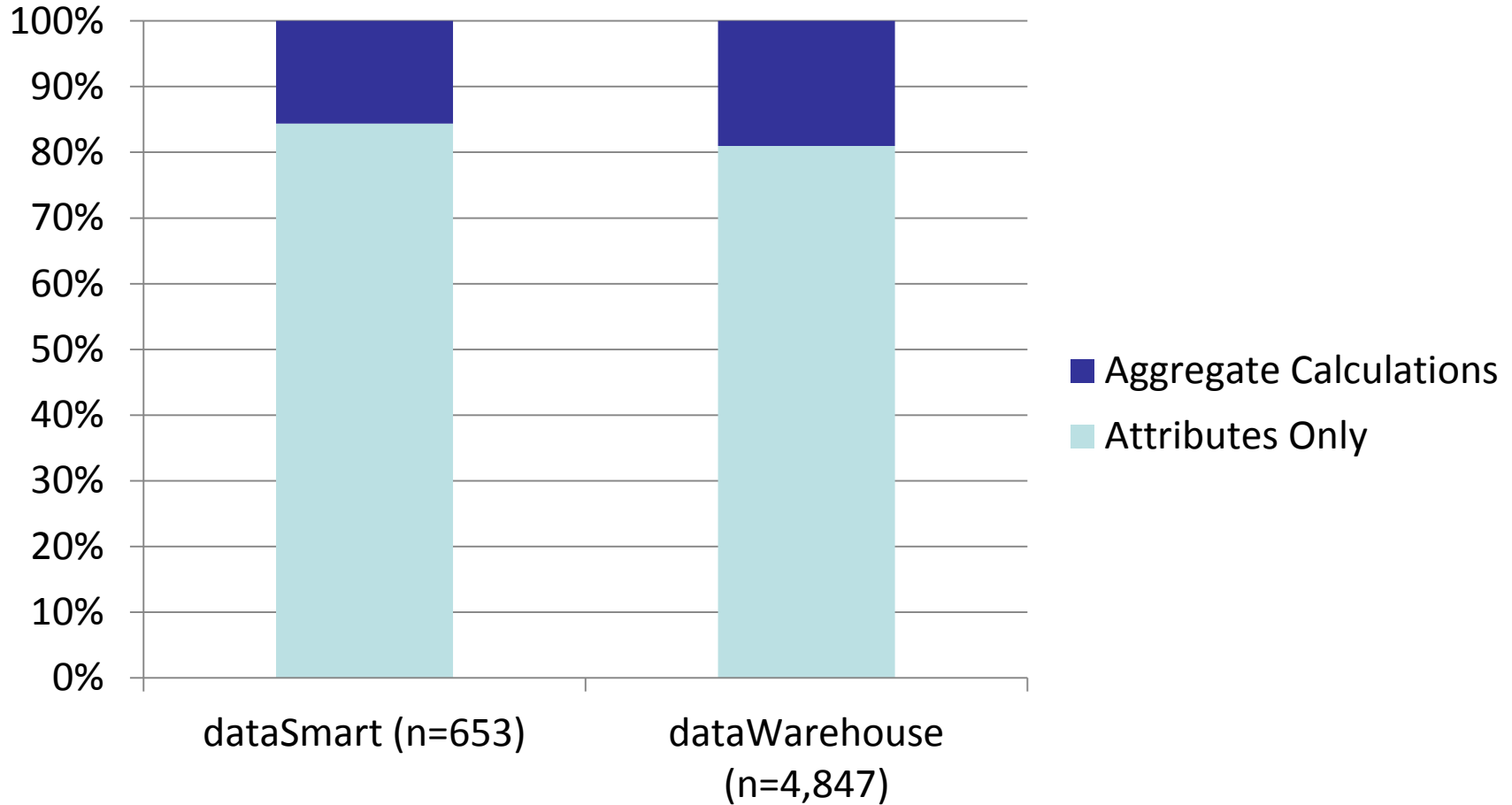
- >1 row per case line

- Circular join

- Count Distinct is OK

Date Logic Usage in Discoverer (Approximate)

- Discoverer has optional "Most recent" filter for each SCD2

- Historical analysis training allows users to do a variety of queries

- Sometimes users make mistakes

Pie chart:
- Most Recent Only, 67%
- Concurrent, 25%
- Other, 8%

Project Requirements

- Create access to the data available in Discoverer.

- Give users capabilities from Discoverer, with usability improvements from OBIEE.

- Maintain existing flexibility in date logic, while improving usability.

- Add commonly used aggregate measures, while supporting many users' attribute-only focus.

  - Don't worry about aggregate fact tables.

- Design one business model across sources to serve *all* ad hoc authors across the enterprise.

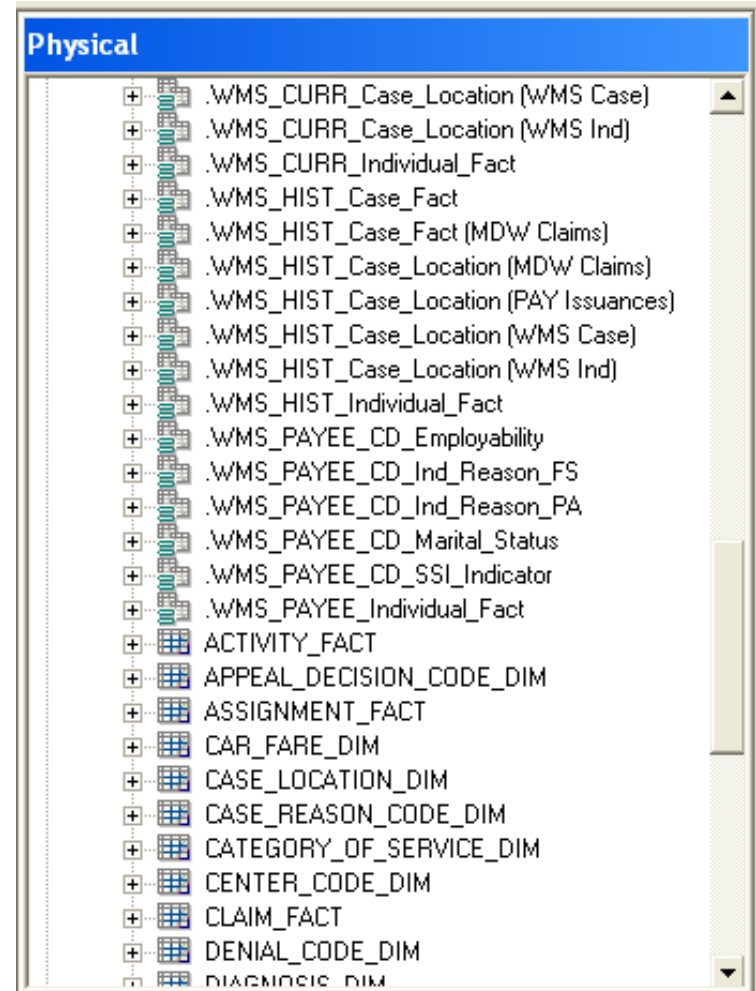- Minimize changes and additions to the database and ETL.

System/Platform Info

System Component	Most of Project	Very Recent Upgrade
OBIEE Product Version	11.1.1.6.2	11.1.1.7.1
Operating System/Version	Oracle Solaris on SPARC (64-bit) – 10	Oracle Solaris on SPARC (64-bit) – 11
Database/Version	Oracle Database - Enterprise Edition 11.2.0.3	Oracle Database - Enterprise Edition 11.2.0.3

KEEP CALM

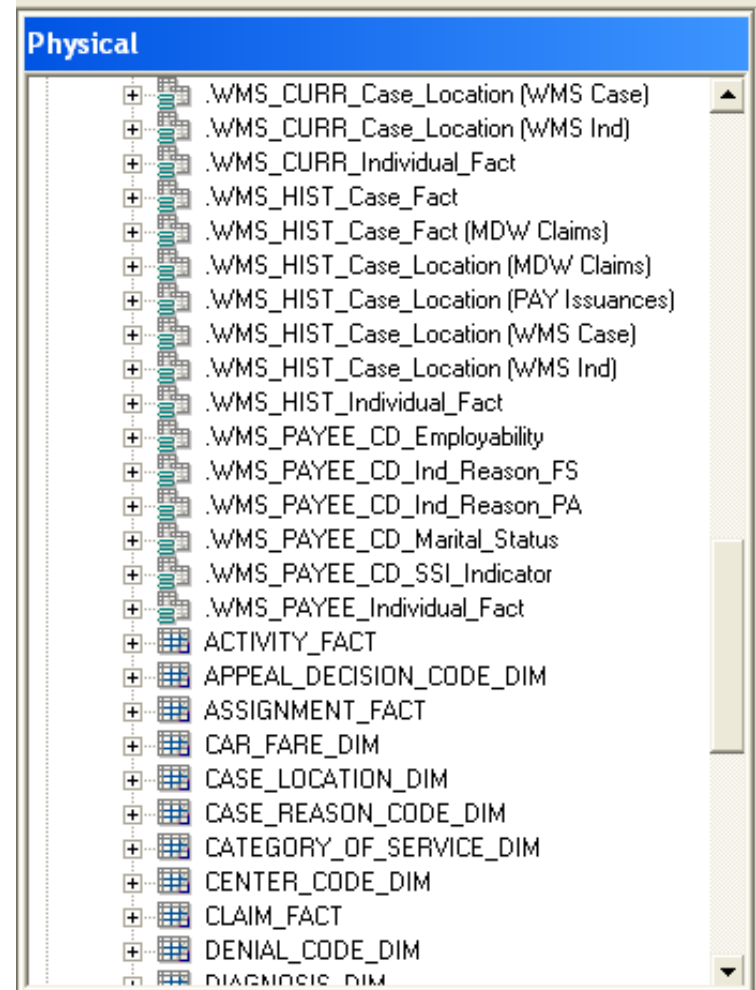## AND

FOLLOW THE RULES

Physical Layer: Always Use Aliases

- More on this later, but it's important.

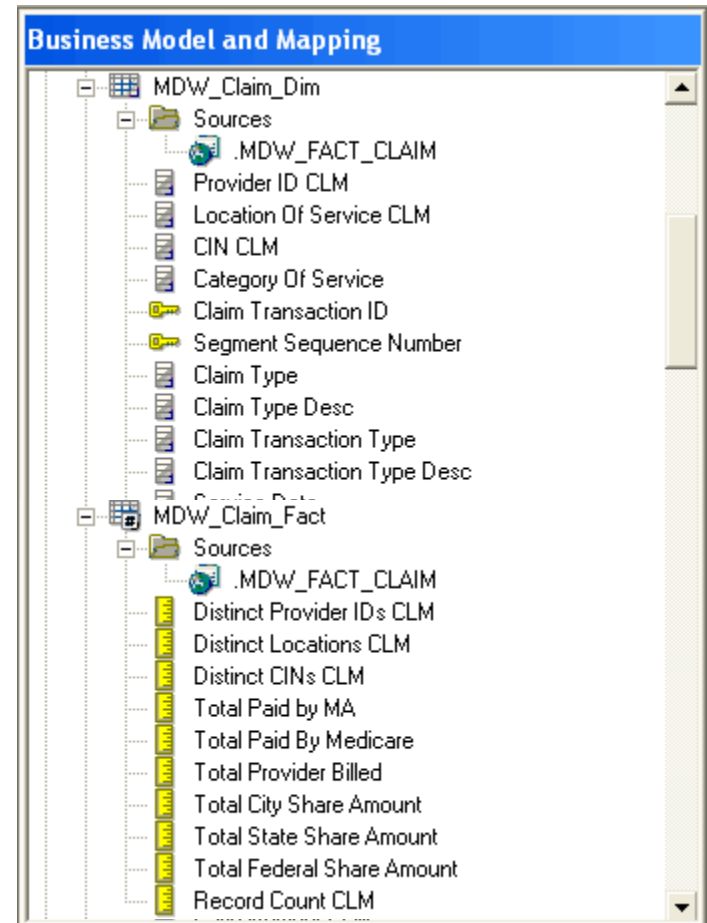- Find naming conventions that work for your team.

Physical Layer: Avoid Opaque Views

- WMS_PAYEE_ is one example

- Rather than forcing OBIEE to include all of those tables, let it decide which is best.

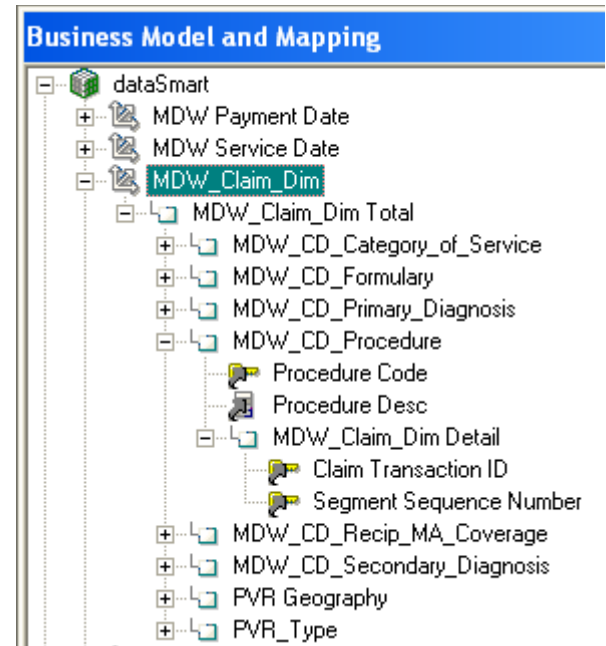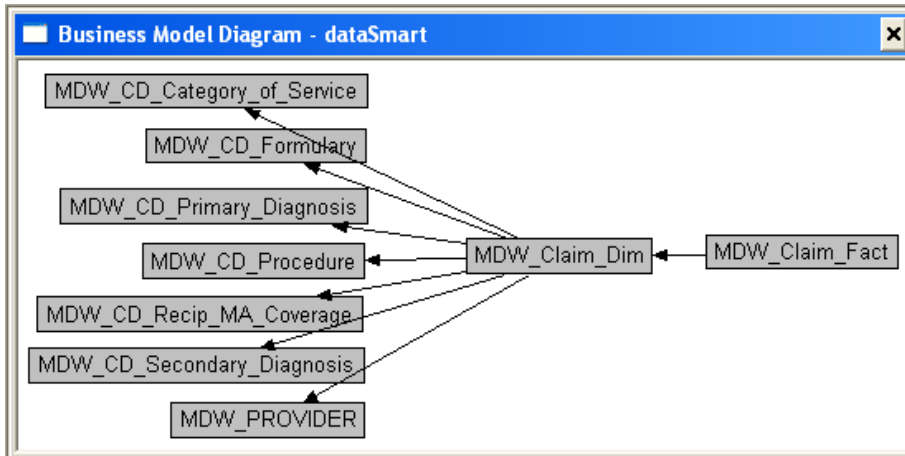- We have a lot of complex joins in the physical layer to handle this.

BMM: Facts vs. Dims

- ## Same Physical Layer Alias

- ## Claim Dim

  - ### Attribute columns only

  - ### Has logical business field primary key

- ## Claim Fact

  - ### Aggregate measure columns only

  - ### No key

Business Model and Mapping

- MDW_Claim_Dim
  - Sources
    - .MDW_FACT_CLAIM
  - Provider ID CLM
  - Location Of Service CLM
  - CIN CLM
  - Category Of Service
  - Claim Transaction ID
  - Segment Sequence Number
  - Claim Type
  - Claim Type Desc
  - Claim Transaction Type
  - Claim Transaction Type Desc
- MDW_Claim_Fact
  - Sources
    - .MDW_FACT_CLAIM
  - Distinct Provider IDs CLM
  - Distinct Locations CLM
  - Distinct CINs CLM
  - Total Paid by MA
  - Total Paid By Medicare
  - Total Provider Billed
  - Total City Share Amount
  - Total State Share Amount
  - Total Federal Share Amount
  - Record Count CLM

BMM: All dims in hierarchies

- Create default logical dimension hierarchy

  - Create BMM tables and joins, snowflake is ok

  - Create correct logical keys

  - Right click on dim closest to the fact (MDW_Claim_Dim)

  - Choose: Create Logical Dimension > Dimension with Level Based Hierarchy

- Add levels as desired, keeping same total and detail levels on all paths

- OBIEE may drop filters on dims that aren't in hierarchies.

Presentation: Names and Descriptions

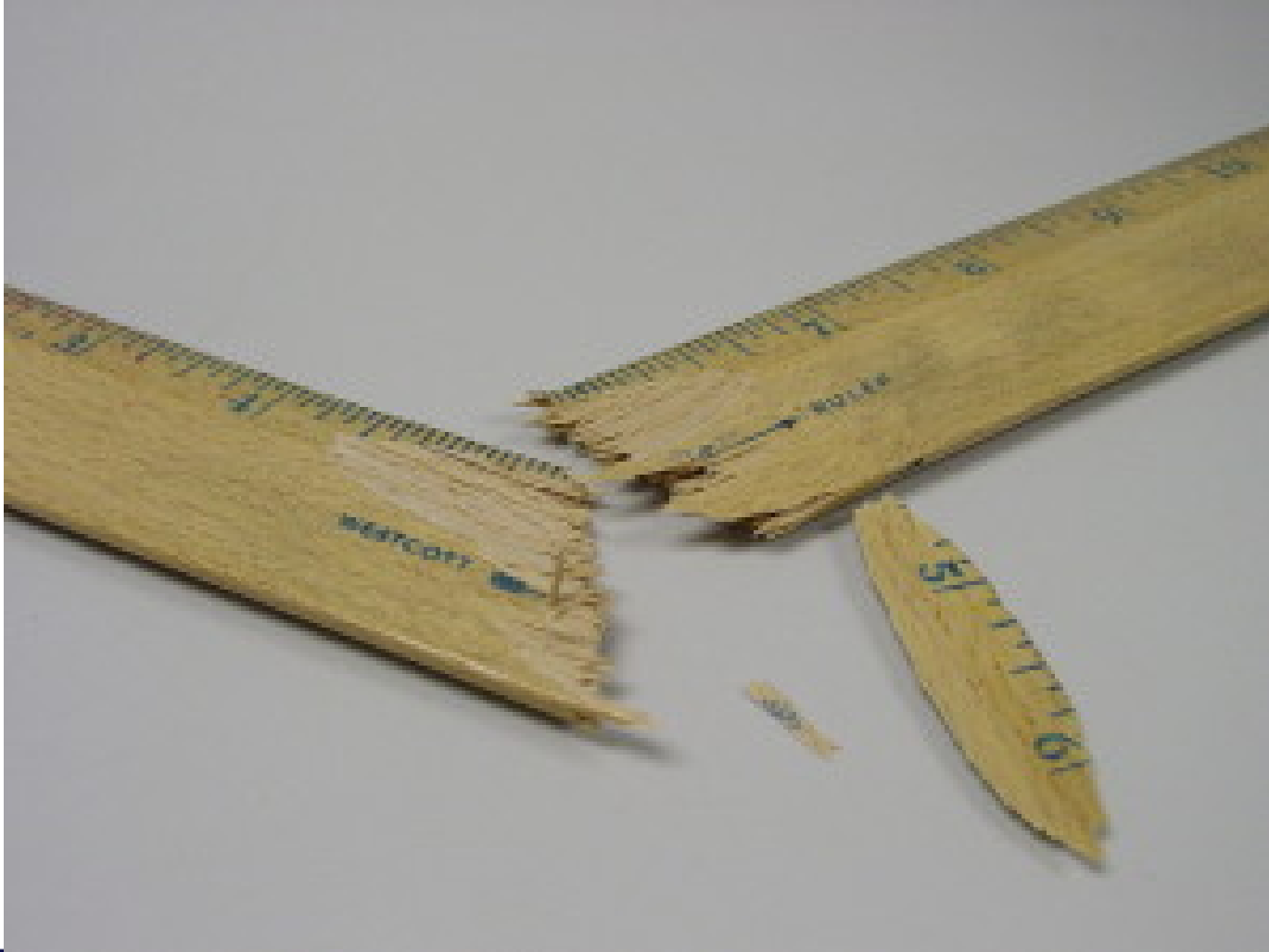Presentation Column - Payment Status Desc SSI

General | Aliases

Name: Payment Status Desc SSI   Permissions...

☑ Use Logical Column Name

☐ Custom display name   VALUEOF(NQ_SESSION.CN_DataSmart_SSI_Key_Elements_Payment_Status_Desc_SSI)

Logical Column: "dataSmart"."SSI_CD_Payment_Status"."Payment Status Desc SSI"   Edit...

☐ Custom description   VALUEOF(NQ_SESSION.CD_DataSmart_SSI_Key_Elements_Payment_Status_Desc_SSI)

Hide object if

Description:

Description of SSI payment status and reason

OK   Cancel   Help

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Workarounds and Rules We Break

Physical Layer: Use aliases instead of circular joins
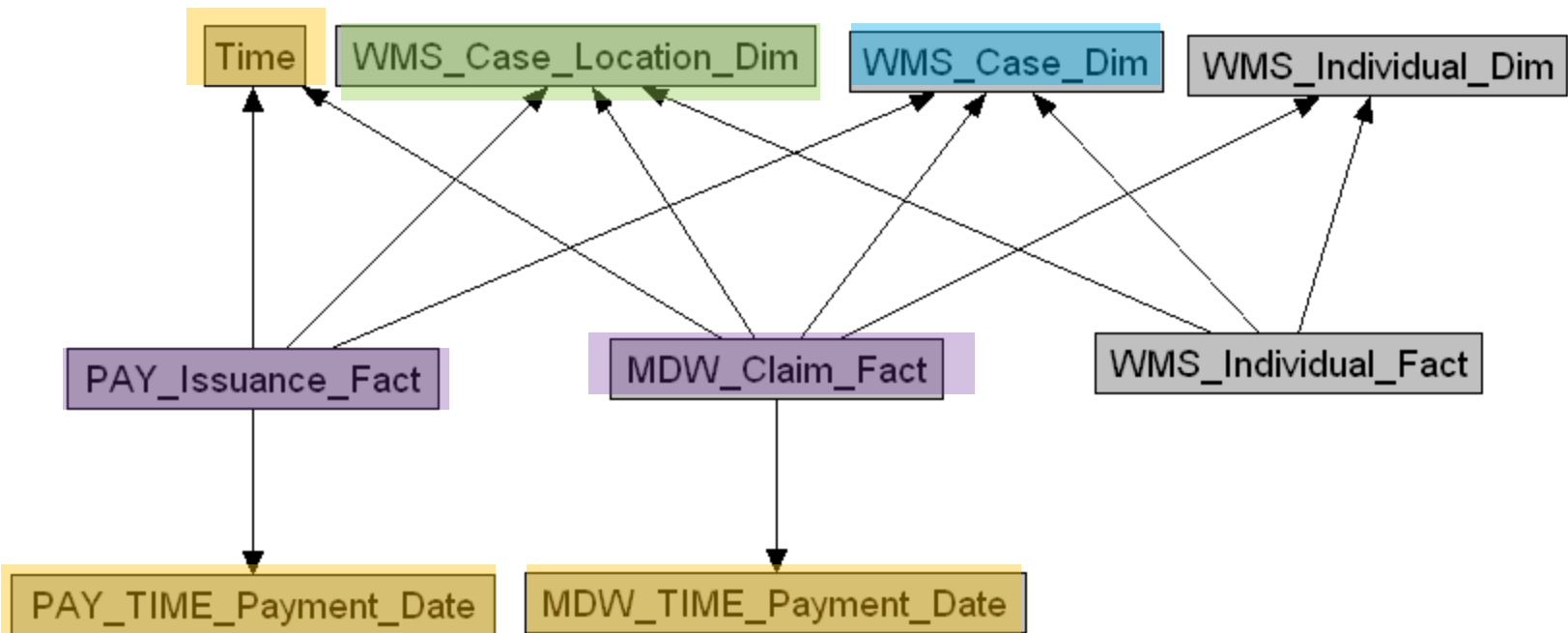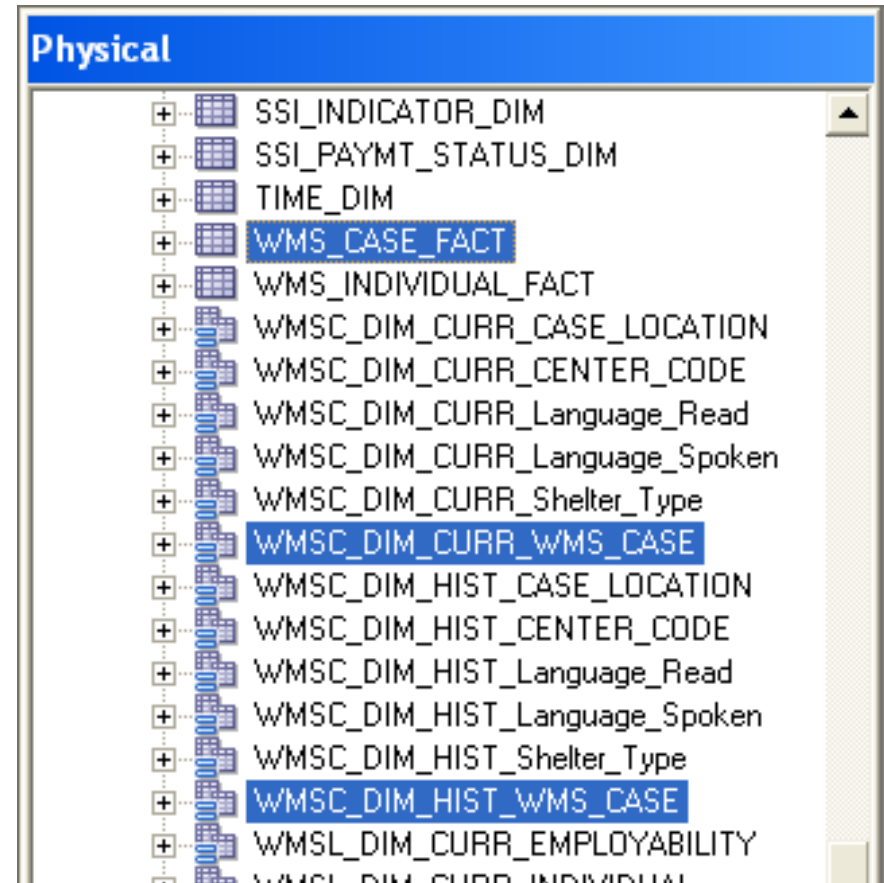
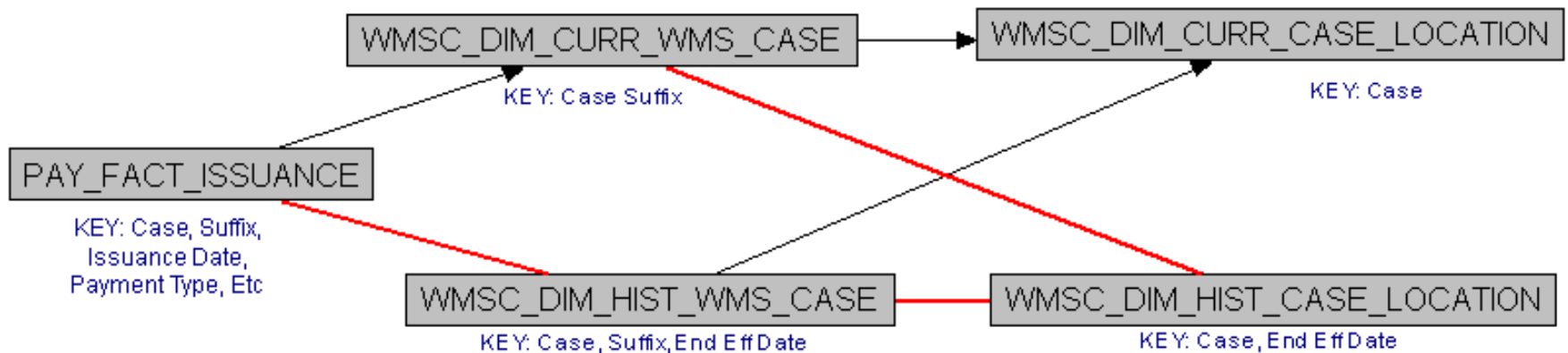# Time, Geography and Case Dims Combined in BMM

Default Most Recent, Step 1: More Aliases

- For each slowly changing dimension, create two aliases: one for current and one for history.

- History has end_eff_date as part of the primary key, current does not.

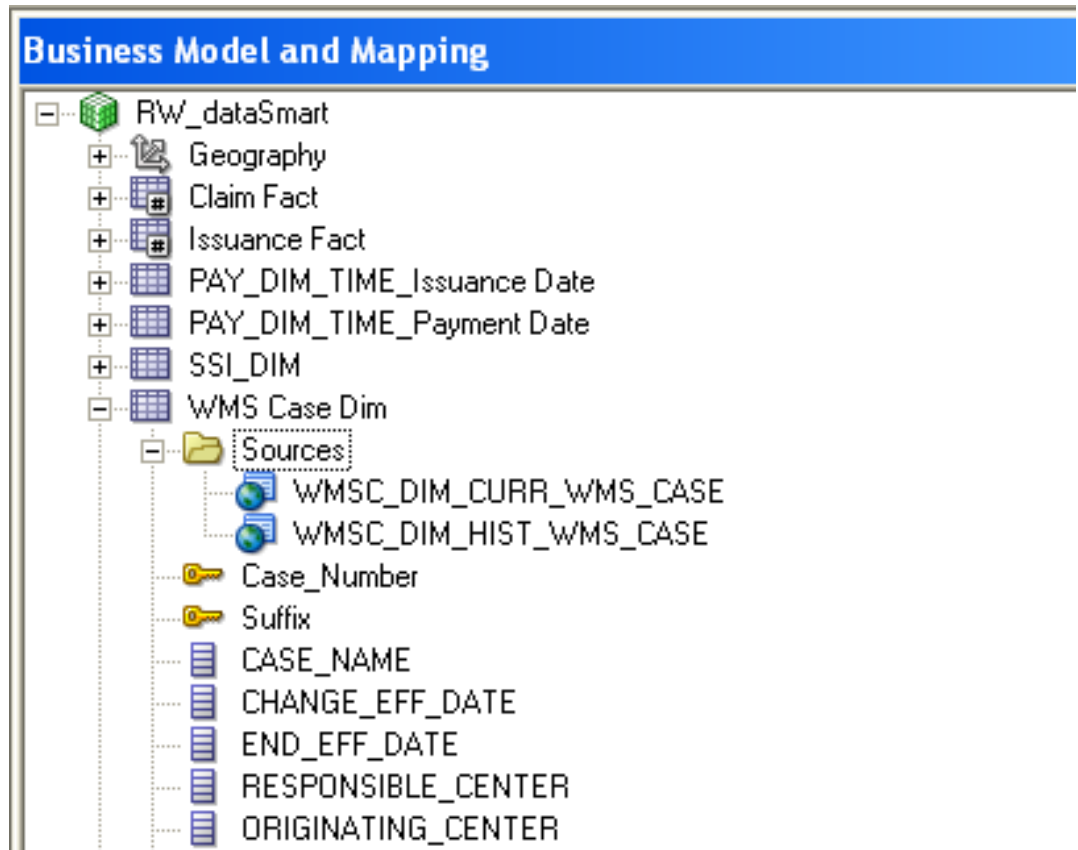- Without correct keys, OBIEE has no way to choose the better table.

Physical

- SSI_INDICATOR_DIM
- SSI_PAYMT_STATUS_DIM
- TIME_DIM
- WMS_CASE_FACT
- WMS_INDIVIDUAL_FACT
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_CASE_LOCATION
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_CENTER_CODE
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_Language_Read
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_Language_Spoken
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_Shelter_Type
- WMSC_DIM_CURR_WMS_CASE
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_CASE_LOCATION
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_CENTER_CODE
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_Language_Read
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_Language_Spoken
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_Shelter_Type
- WMSC_DIM_HIST_WMS_CASE
- WMSL_DIM_CURR_EMPLOYABILITY
- WMSL_DIM_CURR_INDIVIDUAL

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Default Most Recent, Step 2: Joins Among Aliases

- Physical layer joins do *not* include date conditions.
  - Many-to-many "complex" joins to history aliases.
  - Simple foreign key joins to the current aliases.

WMSC_DIM_CURR_WMS_CASE

WMSC_DIM_CURR_CASE_LOCATION
KEY: Case

KEY: Case Suffix

PAY_FACT_ISSUANCE
KEY: Case, Suffix,
Issuance Date,
Payment Type, Etc

WMSC_DIM_HIST_WMS_CASE
KEY: Case, Suffix, End Eff Date

WMSC_DIM_HIST_CASE_LOCATION
KEY: Case, End Eff Date

Default Most Recent, Step 3: Combined Logical Tables

- One BMM folder for each slowly changing dimension.

- Two logical table sources, one for history and one for current.

- Logical key is the same as the **Current** primary key.

Business Model and Mapping

- RW_dataSmart
  - Geography
  - Claim Fact
  - Issuance Fact
  - PAY_DIM_TIME_Issuance Date
  - PAY_DIM_TIME_Payment Date
  - SSI_DIM
  - WMS Case Dim
    - Sources
      - WMSC_DIM_CURR_WMS_CASE
      - WMSC_DIM_HIST_WMS_CASE
    - Case_Number
    - Suffix
    - CASE_NAME
    - CHANGE_EFF_DATE
    - END_EFF_DATE
    - RESPONSIBLE_CENTER
    - ORIGINATING_CENTER

- In the **current** logical table source,

- On the "Content" tab,

- Add a "WHERE clause" on the field that is part of the history primary key, but not the current:

- end_eff_date = 12/31/9999

Default Most Recent, Step 5: Map "History" Attribute only to the History LTS

- Create a new logical column.

- On the Column Source tab, map it to the **history** LTS, but not the current.

- We use a constant, Char(89) or Y.

"Maintain existing flexibility in date logic, while improving usability."

- Most recent is now the default filter.

- To access historical records, add "Include History" from the History subfolder.

- Consider all parent-folders (separate SCD2s) in your analysis.

  - Discoverer had Most Recent in many folders.

  - OBIEE has History in many folders.

  - Include it for all folders where it's needed!

- Don't forget your filters!

  - Don't write the zipper yourself.

  - Try historical filters saved in "OBIEE Tools".

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Lying to OBIEE, Part 1: BMM Keys and Hierarchies

- History Logical Table Sources are *more* detailed than the key for their logical tables.

  - So, they do not have their own level in a hierarchy, AND

  - You cannot assign levels to the LTS's for these dims.

- This was a choice because drilling into history in this way doesn't make sense for our users.

Lying to OBIEE, Part 2:
Treating Factless Facts as Dims in the BMM

- We have attribute-only "facts" in NYCWAY database tables.

- Our users tend to focus on attribute only queries.

- To allow users to combine attributes from different NYCWAY "Fact" tables in a single query, we treat them as dims in the BMM.

- Lies involved:

  - Many to 1 joins are actually 1 to Many

  - Inadequate primary keys allow for foreign key joins

  - *Only works with count distinct measures*.