Exploring Metadata Objects and Relationships

Once you have metadata extracted and collected, it time to explore the results. Here, we will cover the various interfaces in Information Steward for browsing and searching metadata objects & relationships.

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Metadata Management Metadata Explorer

This is the Metadata Management Explorer. It is a web-based portal that supports directory style browsing and navigation for all of the metadata used in a project. The top-level categories represent the different types of integration sources that can populate the Metadata Management Repository including:

- Business Intelligence (e.g. SAP BusinessObjects Enterprise, NetWeaver Business Warehouse and HANA)
- Data Modeling (e.g. SAP PowerDesigner, Erwin)
- Data Integration (e.g. Data Services)
- Relational Databases. (e.g. MS SQL Server)

Searching

The search feature of Metadata Management allows you to search for an object - across sources - based on the name, description, annotation, custom attributes and associated Metapedia business terms and categories.
The scope of the search depends on where you are at within the Explorer:

- When you enter the search string on the home page of the Explorer, you search the entire Metadata Management Repository.
- When you navigate (or drill) into the objects of an Integrator source, you have the option to search only objects within the current integrator source.

**Viewing Object Detail**

After you locate what you are looking for, you can drill into each metadata object to get into its associated metadata objects, each layer exposing additional detail. And, with each step taken, a bread crumb trail is left (see upper left-hand corner). In this case you can see that the drill down started at Server Instance to Database to Schema to Table and finally Column detail.
Integrated Data Quality

In addition to metadata, the Metadata Explorer provides an integrated link to Data Quality and other associated content available within Information Steward. Exposed below are links to the Metadata object’s quality score, profiling results, associated metapedia terms & categories and access to the data itself.
Viewing Metadata Relationships

You also have access to the metadata relationships – Impact, Lineage, Same As, Related To, User Defined - that exist for a particular object from within the Metadata Explorer.

The following are the relationships that exist within the Metadata Explorer itself:
**Association** is automatically defined and discovered by the Metadata Integrators. The meaning of this relationship is really specific to the source application or database.

- For example in the Business Intelligence category, a report can contain multiple universe objects. An association relationship then exists between the report and each universe object.
- In the Data Integration category, a job can contain multiple data flows. An association relationship exists between the job and each data flow.

There is also the **Parent-Child** relationship represented here – again, a relationship that is automatically defined by the Metadata Integrators. In a parent-child relationship, the parent is a level above the child. A parent can have several children, but a child can have only one parent.

- For example, a table can have multiple columns, but a column can belong to only to a single table.
- In the Business Intelligence category, a universe can have multiple classes, but a class can belong to only one universe.

The most commonly talked about relationships in Metadata Management are the **Impact** and **Lineage**, both of which are automatically defined by the Metadata Integrator and are available as tabs here.

- Check out the Main Features of the Information Steward (4.2) Impact and Lineage Diagram

**Impact** lists other metadata objects that are affected by data within a particular metadata object.

- For example, a universe object can impact multiple reports.

**Lineage** lists sources from which a particular metadata object obtains its data.

- For example, a report column obtains its data from a universe object, which in turn obtains its data from a column in a table in a relational database.

The Same As tab shows **Alias** or **Synonym** information along with **Same As** relationships.

An **alias** is another name for an object in a different system.

- For example, an alias in one database might refer to a relational table in a different database.
A synonym is just another name for an object in the same system.

Same As means just that - the object is the same as another object. This relationship can exist only between objects of the same type.

- For example, a Same As relationship can exist between each object in a test system and its corresponding object in a production system.

Same As is also highlighted on the Impact and Lineage diagram with a dashed line between the two objects.

The Related To tab will display Primary Key – Foreign Key relationships as well as any additional relationships that you have created on your own will show up here.

The User Defined tab will also display user-defined relationships if applicable. Here, you can view the name of the related metadata object, the name of the relationship and the path of the related metadata object in Metadata Management.

Additional Information Steward Information