The Greater Salt Lake

IBM MIDRANGE USER GROUP

FOR USERS OF THE IBM AS/400 COMPUTER SYSTEM

September 1997 Newsletter

This Month

Last month IBM announced the AS/400e series of servers with its usual glitz and marketing hype. If you feel a little overwhelmed with all the new technology and wonder what it all means to the average user then come to September's user group meeting. We will have IBM representatives there to discuss in detail the announcements and answer your questions. You won't want to miss this meeting.

Our meeting this month will be held on **Wednesday, September 10th at 11:00 a.m. at the Murray City Offices (City Council Chambers), 5025 South State Street.**

August Meeting Highlights

In August we were treated with a presentation on **Delphi/400 Client/Server Suite** by our very own **Michael Meservy** of ***GSE Erudite Software.***

Mike treated us to a live demonstration of Delphi/400 using a portable AS/400 attached to his laptop. Basically we were shown how the AS/400 barrier to Windows has been eliminated by Delphi/400, giving you **full access** to AS/400 capabilities in a high performance development environment.

The Delphi/400 Client/Server Suite is Borland's high-performance RAD tool for Microsoft Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and Windows NT. It is based on Borland's Delphi 2.0 with added components to speed the development of Client/Server applications for the AS/400.

Some of the features are:

- Native, high speed access to AS/400 data via APPC
- Read, write, update, and delete records from both physical and logical files
- Full security support for AS/400 data files, records and fields
- Full access to AS/400 services, programs, commands, and APIs
- Rapid AS/400 subfile definition and management
- Independent Router support (IBM, NetSoft, Walldata, and Microsoft)
- AS/400 specific components to access all the AS/400 capabilities
- Access to other data sources, both desktop and server, via Borland Database Engine

With Delphi/400 the cost, time and headaches of development are lowered dramatically. Without changing your current AS/400 network, you can expand services, integrate current technologies, and add full visual value to existing applications. If this is the direction your company is heading you need to check out this product.

Thanks again, Mike, for a great presentation.

User Group Dues

Its that time of the year again. The user group dues are due. The fiscal year for the user group runs from September 1, 1997 through August 31, 1998. The yearly dues are only $45.00 per company. So what do you get for this small investment? First of all, you get to attend our exciting and informative monthly meetings with topics presented by some of the best local talent. Secondly, your membership in our user group gives you automatic membership in the **COMMON** user group. Third, you get to receive the hottest, most informative, extremely well written, up-to-date and hip ***newsletter*** in the industry each month! (Hint: you're reading it right now.) Fourth, you get to associate and rub shoulders with your peers in the IBM Midrange world - some of the finest people you will ever meet. And lastly, dues paying members get a free meal (2 per company) and a prize at our annual Christmas Luncheon. Where else could you get all this for a mere $45.00?

We will be faxing one invoice to each company separately from this newsletter, so please watch for it in the next few days. Thanks.

Letters to the Editor

Information Week magazine is a fairly mainstream publication with not much AS/400 coverage. But lately the AS/400 has come up in a number of letters to the editor. Here are a few you may be interested in:

Zealot Speaks

"As a zealot who heard Bob Evens' presentation at the AS/400 Executive Summit, I have a different perspective. Where Evans saw brass knuckles and rapiers being unsheathed, I heard a wake-up call. How can such superior technology have such a poor image? For years, IBM has done an extremely poor job in marketing the AS/400. This is not the first time marketing may triumph over technology. Does anybody remember OS/2? It is time for us zealots to force IBM to get the true message of the AS/400 out to the marketplace. Those brass knuckles and rapiers Evans saw were not aimed at him. They were being prepared to attack IBM AS/400 corporate marketing."

Alan Jay Zwiren
Aug. 11, 1997

In on the Secret

"I was disappointed that your article on Web interfaces for legacy data didn't mention the AS/400. These same applications are accessible through Web browsers, and presenting DB2/400 data with Net.Data is almost a no-brainer. The Web server and HTML gateway are part of OS/400. This newsworthy stuff seldom makes it into the news. But then, the AS/400 is not supposed to be discussed in mainstream publications."

Ed Smith
Aug. 18, 1997

Keep it Quiet

"Those of us who have worked on the AS/400 know that it has been the best-kept secret in the IBM arsenal. Unfortunately, as with other systems (Unix included), not all IT personnel who develop on this platform can write scaleable applications or know the extensive capabilities of the AS/400 that can optimize productivity. But on second thought, if everyone knew the capabilities of the AS/400, everyone would have one, and where would my competitive edge be? Keep recommending those Unix and NT systems."

Jim Barnes
Aug. 18, 1997

AS/Who?

"I was surprised when a company I consult for decided to port its accounting system to an AS/400. My reaction was 'AS/Who?' I remembered having heard about the IBM monster, but I had never come face-to-face with it - even though I've been an independent computer consultant for more than 10 years and have had assignments with lots of different companies, giant corporations included. If the AS/400 is as robust and scaleable as it is purported to be, then IBM had better tell somebody."

B. Balynskee Lee
Aug. 25, 1997

Who Needs Sexy?

"As a longtime user and developer on the AS/400, I find the platform very reliable and simple to maintain and operate. Sure, it ain't the sexiest thing on the block, but it does its job day in and day out. The survey results you quote need to indicate which machines are used by respondents. Also, many AS/400s are installed in smaller businesses and are not picked up by most IT industry surveys. It is also interesting to note that both Microsoft and Apple use AS/400s for many of their operational requirements such as inventory and distribution control."

Gary Arbeider
Aug. 25, 1997

Short Takes

C++ for the AS/400

Midrange Systems magazine reports that Borland International recently announced the availability of C++ for the AS/400. With this announcement, Borland opened the AS/400 door to more than 500,000 new client/server developers.

The big question is, "Why the AS/400?" The answer may be obvious to us in the AS/400 community, but what attracted Borland to the platform? Kevin Shannon, strategic business manager at Borland, responds, "The AS/400 is clearly the best server anywhere. It holds more data than anything in the world. It is a functionally-rich server. People who compare the AS/400 to an NT server always miss the fact that once you've purchased an NT server and the Windows NT operating system, you're nowhere close to having the features the AS/400 comes with."

Computers Made Easy!

Microsoft Press just released the third edition of it "Computer Dictionary." The company that promises to make computers easy for everybody increased the size of this edition by 50% over the last. The 560-page technical manual now has 7,600 descriptive entries and 300 illustrations.

Internet Growth to Skyrocket

The number of personal computers connected to the Internet will jump 71% by the end of the year to 82 million, driven by use in the business market, says market research firm Dataquest Inc. By 2001, about 268 million computers will be linked to the global computer network, according to a recent study. That will lead to more sales of Internet software and services, which are expected to rise 60% to $12.2 billion (U.S.) by the end of the year, up from $7.5 billion last year. The Internet software and services market is expected to reach $32.2 billion by 2001, with the services market alone reaching $7 billion in 1997 and rising to $29 billion by 2001, says Dataquest. By 2025, all ovens, riding lawn mowers and

most ceiling fans will also be linked to the WWW. Internet software and services will generate $66.6 trillion in sales. Every other store will be an Internet Service Provider. Major advances in computer processing power will take place every month. Vast wastelands of outmoded computer parts will dominate the landscape (since the Great Lakes were filled in by 2020 with old-technology 1234.6 baud modems) where the new homeless (those with carpel tunnel syndrome) will wander. People will live, eat, die and even reproduce across the WWW using virtual reality software. But some things will never change. The government will figure out some way to tax virtual reality food.

AS/400 Tips and Techniques

Character to Numeric Field Conversion in Query/400

Q: In Query/400, how can a character field be converted to a numeric field?

A: Although there is a function to convert a numeric field to character (DIGITS), there is no corresponding function to convert a character field to a numeric field. However, there is an indirect way of converting character data to numeric data by creating a "timestamp" field. Using the low order position of the timestamp field, a field containing up to six (6) characters can be converted. The MICROSECOND function can then be used to extract the "character" data from the low order positions as a numeric field. Here's how to convert a 5 character field, UOM (unit of measure) to a numeric field:

Field	Expression	Column Heading
TIMESTAMP	'2000-01-01-00.00.00.' || '0' || UOM	
UOMNUM	MICROSECOND(TIMESTAMP)	

The field TIMESTAMP must be a valid date for the microsecond function to work. Also, if the low order "microseconds" is less that 6 positions, the field will be filled with low order zeros (00005 will show as 000050).

Contributed by Dennis McConnehey

Humor Department

GETTING EVEN WITH A COUPLE OF JERKS

So there I was, sitting at my desk, when I remembered a phone call I had to make. I found the number and dialed it. A man answered nicely saying, "Hello?"

I politely said, "This is Patrick Hanifin and could I please speak to Robin Carter?" Suddenly the phone was slammed down on me! I couldn't believe that anyone could be that rude. I tracked down Robin's correct number and called her. She had transposed the last two digits. After I hung up with Robin, I spotted the wrong number still lying there on my desk. I decided to call it again. When the same person once more answered, I yelled "You're a jerk!" and hung up.

Next to his phone number I wrote the word "Jerk," and put it in my desk drawer. Every couple of weeks, when I was paying bills, or had a really bad day, I'd call him up. He'd answer, and then I'd yell, “You're a jerk!” It would always cheer me up.

Later in the year the phone company introduced caller ID. This was a real disappointment for me. I would have to stop calling the jerk. Then one day I had an idea. I dialed his number, then heard his voice, "Hello." I made up a name. "Hi. This is Herman with the telephone company and I'm just calling to see if you're familiar with our caller ID program?" He went, "No!" and slammed the phone down. I quickly called him back and said, "That's because you're a jerk!"

And the reason I took the time to tell you this story, is to show you how if there's ever anything really bothering you, you can do something about it. Just dial 722-4822.

The old lady at the mall really took her time pulling out of the parking space. I didn't think she was ever going to leave. Finally her car began to move and she started to very slowly back out of the stall. I backed up a little more to give her plenty of room to pull out. Great, I thought, she's finally leaving.

All of a sudden this black camaro comes flying up the parking isle in the wrong direction and pulls into her space. I started honking my horn and yelling, "You can't just do that, Buddy. I was here first!" The guy climbed out of his camaro completely ignored me. He walked toward the mall as if he didn't even hear me

I thought to myself, this guy's a jerk. There's sure a lot of jerks in this world. I noticed he had a For Sale sign in the back window of his car. I wrote down the number. Then I hunted for another place to park

A couple of days later, I'm at home sitting at my desk. I had just gotten off the phone after calling 722-4822 and yelling, "You're a jerk!" (It's really easy to call him now since I have his number on speed dial). I noticed the phone number of the guy with the black camaro lying on my desk and thought I'd better call this guy, too. After a couple rings someone answered the phone and said, "Hello." I said, "Is this the man with the black camaro for sale?"

"Yes it is."

"Can you tell me where I can see it?"

“Yes, I live at 1802 West 34th street. It's a yellow house and the car's parked right out front.”

I said, "What's your name?"

"My name is Don Hansen."

"When's a good time to catch you, Don?

"I'm home in the evenings."

"Listen Don, can I tell you something?"

"Yes."

"Don, you're a jerk!" And I slammed the phone down.

After I hung up I added Don Hansen's number to my speed dialer. For a while things seemed to be going better for me. Now when I had a problem I had two jerks to call. Then after several months of calling the jerks and hanging up on them, the whole thing started to seem like an obligation. It just wasn't as enjoyable as it used to be.

I gave the problem some serious thought and came up with a solution. First, I had my phone dial Jerk #1. A man answered nicely saying, "Hello." I yelled "You're a jerk!" But I didn't hang up.

The jerk said, "Are you still there?"

I said, "Yeah.."

He said, "Stop calling me."

I said, "No."

He said, "What's your name, Pal?"

I said, "Don Hansen."

"Where do you live?"

"1802 West 34th Street. It's a yellow house and my black camaro's parked out front."

"I'm coming over right now, Don. You'd better start saying your prayers."

"Yeah, like I'm really scared, Jerk!" and I hung up.

Then I called Jerk #2.

He answered, "Hello."

I said, "Hello, Jerk!"

He said, "If I ever find out who you are..."

"You'll what?"

"I'll kick your butt."

"Well, here's your chance. I'm coming over right now Jerk!" And I hung up. Then I picked up the phone and called the police. I told them a big gang fight was going down at 1802 West 34th Street. After that I climbed into my car and headed over to 34th Street to watch the whole thing. I turned onto 34th Street and parked my car under the shade of a tree half a block from Jerk #2's house. There were two guys fighting out front. Suddenly there were about 12 police cars and a helicopter. The police wrestled the two men to the ground and took them away.

A couple of months go by and I get a call for jury duty. I was picked to be on a trial of two guys charged with disorderly conduct. As luck would have it, it happened to be the same two guys. I might have influenced the jury, because when they announced the verdict, they said, "We the jury find
the defendants to be guilty, and a couple of jerks!"

Thanks to Dennis McConnehey for contributing this gem!

Humor Department 2

A year ago we sent the **"Welcome to Utah"** cartoon you will find at the end of this newsletter, thinking it was appropriate at the time. Little did we know what the future held for Utah highway construction. So we are including it again with the newsletter in case you lost your old copy. It seems much more appropriate at this time than it did a year ago. Feel free to make copies and distribute it throughout the office!

Mark Your Calendar

September 10
IBM Midrange User Group
Monthly meeting held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 11:00 AM at the Murray City Office (City Council Chambers), 5025 South State Street.

September 17
AS/400 Announcement Seminar (Repeat)
Held at IBM, Salt Lake City. See IBM Corner above for registration details.

September 21-26
Fall 1997 COMMON Conference
Held in San Antonio, Texas. Tel: 800-777-6734; Web: http://www.common.org

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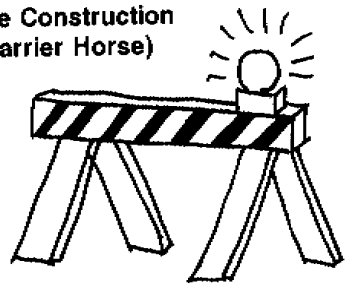
WELCOME TO UTAH

THE STATE WHERE EVERY HIGHWAY EVENTUALLY NARROWS TO A SINGLE LANE OR IS

✻ ✻ ✻ DETOURED ✻ ✻ ✻

"We Only Have Two Seasons...Winter and Construction"

STATE ANIMAL
(The Construction Barrier Horse)



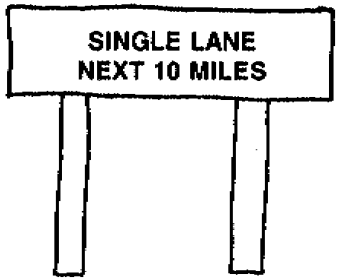
STATE FLAG

STATE HISTORICAL LANDMARK

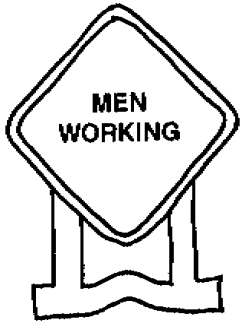
STATE MINERAL

STATE STATUE

STATE MOTTO



STATE TREE



STATE JOKE