The Omni User

March Dinner Meeting
Management Central and meeting format discussion
presented by
Tom Duncan, Omni President
Tuesday, March 24, 2009
Pompei
17W744 22nd Oakbrook Terrace IL

by Seminar VP Yvonne Enselman

Management Central

Please join us as we try something new! In an effort to make Omni as relevant as possible for our members we are going to be experimenting with different meeting types. Our first one is this month at Pompei in Oak Brook Terrace. Our own president Tom Duncan is going to talk about Management Central followed by information about meeting options and roundtable discussions with attendees about what they are interested in and what works for them.

From an IT management standpoint, there is nothing worse than finding out about IT failures and outages from your executives, who in turn were informed about it by irate users. Wouldn't it be nice if your operations staff could know about System i problems within a couple of minutes of their occurrence? Well, there is a facility that is native to the System i that can provide that piece of mind. It is nestled within the iSeries Navigator in a section called Management Central. After Tom has walked you through the monitoring functionality of Management Central you will feel like there is a way you can take back control over your responsiveness to System i failure and outage events.

Tom Duncan has worked in IT for 30+ years and on IBM midrange machines for 20+ years. He is a member of the COMMON Americas Advisory Council (CAAC) and the current president of the OMNI User Board of Directors. He is an IBM Certified System Administrator and at various times has worked as a consultant, programmer, analyst, programming manager, technical support, operations administrator, security administrator, and systems architect in companies ranging in size from small startups to Fortune 100. For the last 7 years he has been specializing in the operations area, providing administrator services to companies in both the Chicagoland and Tennessee areas. He is currently the senior iSeries Administrator for Collections Etc., a major gift cataloguer headquartered in Elk Grove Village, IL.

Further details and registration are available on the OMNI page at http://omniuser.org

February Dinner Meeting Recap, Slides and RPG World!

Omni's guest speaker at February's dinner meeting was Bob Cozzi, who gave us an overview and demonstration of "Web-based Sign On." His presentation slides are available at…

http://www.rpgworld.com/rpgweb/omni.pdf Another big round of Omni applause and many thank yous go to Bob Cozzi!

Also, Bob and his crew (including Greg Veal, Bruce Hoffman, Bertie Magee and Aaron Bartell) are presenting RPG World at the Monte Carlo hotel in Las Vegas from May 7 to 9, and there's much more information including a discounted registration deal available for those who register before April 1 at…

http://www.rpgworld.com/

WMCPA Spring Conference next week 3/31 - 4/2 in Kenosha!

Omni's friends at the Wisconsin Midrange Computer Professionals Association are presenting their 24th Annual Spring Technical Conference next week. It kicks off with an Expert's Roundtable on Tuesday evening featuring Alison Butterill, Linda Cole, Joe Pluta, Aaron Bartell and Mike Pavlak. On Tuesday and Wednesday, many sessions and labs from leading midrange speakers will be presented. Head to the WMCPA website to find out more about the conference and register to attend at http://www.wmcpa.org

http://www.rjssoftware.com/

Omni Fees Increase

by Bill Parks, Omni Treasurer

Several factors conspire to require that OMNI increase fees for the coming year, not the least of which is the increase in dinner costs at monthly meetings, where we are now losing money. Other factors include an increased use of non-local talent for meeting presentations, and recent decreases in income from our conferences.

OMNI has a unique history that would be difficult to duplicate for any other organization. Besides being made up of its many corporate and individual members, at OMNI's core is a board of directors whose purpose over the years has been to educate the membership, with a definite slant toward IBM midrange systems, for the betterment of information systems utilization in our employment. The board takes no salaries or compensation of any kind, unless you count the take-out dinner at the board meetings. And the board has been dedicated, from day one of the organization, to providing quality, relevant topics for all attendees. Additionally, Omni is one of the most efficiently run not-for-profit organizations in existence with less than 2% of its annual gross revenue going toward administrative costs. That means that more than 98% of your money is used to pay for program expenses.

So, OMNI is now being forced to increase some of its fees. As a note, the last fee increase from OMNI was to increase the non-member fee for dinners from $35 to $40, and that was back in 1994! Here is a schedule showing the new vs. old fees:
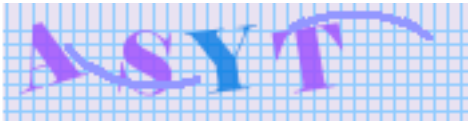
	Old Fee	New Fee
Dinner Meeting - Member	$25.00	$30.00
Dinner Meeting – Non-member	$40.00	$45.00
Dinner Meeting – Member, no dinner	$5.00	$10.00
Dinner Meeting – Non-member, no dinner	$15.00	$20.00
Annual Dues – Individual	$40.00	$50.00
Annual Dues – Corporate (unlimited)	$200.00	$240.00

Newsletter advertising fees will not change. Conference fees for participants and vendors will continue to reflect the costs of production of the individual events.

The Board of Directors has also decided to increase the number of non-fee meetings (informal pizza parties and technical discussions.) These meetings will continue to be at no cost to members. Your Board of Directors will continue to bring you quality technical discussions of issues important to your understanding of today's midrange computing environment for the least cost possible.

How to use PHP to add CAPTCHA

by Vince Salomon, Omni Webmaster

With the announcement that IBM is going to preload PHP on System i servers it is becoming clear that IBM believes that PHP is a great modern alternative for web programming on the System i. It's easy to see why. PHP has a shorter learning curve than Java. It is also very easy to take advantage of some of the many open source projects that are written in PHP.

Take the CAPTCHA I added to some of the OMNI web forms as an example of how easy this is. CAPTCHA is a solution to a common spamming problem. If you have ever seen an image of letters or numbers that looks somewhat distorted then you have seen CAPTCHA (see example image above.) The intent is to make sure that a person and not a computer program is filling out a form. Let's say you have a blog that accepts comments without being screened by an administrator. A spammer might take advantage of this. They can write a program that will submit multiple comments to a blog post and before you know it your blog will be filled with ads for mortgage refinancing, questionable pharmaceuticals, or worse. But because the CAPTCHA images are generated dynamically and are distorted it takes a person to be able to interpret the code in order to submit the form.

From the time that it took me to investigate how to set up CAPTCHA on our contact form until the time that I implemented it was about half an hour. You can do this just as easily by visiting http://www.phpcaptcha.org/ Simply download the software and follow the QuickStart guide. It will guide you thorough copying the files and modifying your form to take advangage of the software. Here is one helpful tip that I can offer. I had to add a dot to the references within the source code so that the server could find the files. The dot stands for the current folder.

Here is an example of what I mean:

```
src = './securimage/securimage_show.php'
```

The code originally looked like this:

```
src = '/securimage/securimage_show.php'
```

It's easy to try and because it's free, why not give it a shot? Don't have PHP loaded on your System i? No problem, try downloading and installing the WAMP development environment on your PC.

http://www.wampserver.com/en/

OMNI Newsletter Advertising Rates

Size	Monthly Insertion	Annual Contract
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If you're interested in attending board meetings, helping out with board issues, and/or helping with conference and event planning, please contact any of the members (we need your help!)