



THE OMNI USER

2021 Midwest Road Suite 200

Oak Brook IL 60523

630.953.6312

<http://omniuser.org/>

May Your IDE Go With You

Well, it's May and I'm behind. Nobody's fault but my own; I've been on the road giving JSP Model II seminars all over the country and I got behind on the newsletter. Rather than put out a half-baked job, I'll take the heat and give you this full, unabridged version a little bit late.

And unabridged it is. For example, this month I'm notifying you of not only this month's speaker (a bit tardy, but you already got it in email, right?), but also *next month's* speaker. And hopefully we can continue with that trend. Lateness of this issue aside, we're really trying to have a focus on timeliness. We figure the sooner you know about things, the better your chance of attending, and that's what it's all about... because if you don't attend, you don't learn anything, and if you don't learn anything we're not doing our job.

The note above is in reference to WDSC, the little demon that should start whispering in your ear one of these days, if it's not already. There's a good chance that you will have to learn it, sooner rather than later, and with the new goodies coming out, it's going to be a great product. However, IBM is being coy about the release date for the next version, and that's giving me the heebie-jeebies.

Besides being a (poor) play on the word "May", the title this month pays homage to perhaps the best raconteur ever to grace the TV airwave: Dave Allen. Dave was so good that the last segment of his weekly comedy show was just him sitting on a stool, whiskey in hand, telling jokes. And he always closed with one of my favorite lines of all time (especially considering he was an Irishman doing a comedy show on British television): "Good night, and may your God go with you." -- Joe

Table of Contents

May your IDE go with you	1
Arbor Solutions http://www.arbsol.com/	2
Call for help!	2
May Meeting Information	3
California Software http://www.californiasoftware.com/	4
June Meeting Information	5
OMNI Midrange Event List	5
RJS Software http://www.rjssoftware.com/	6
April Dinner Meeting	6
Ask the Audience	7
Competitive Support Options http://www.csoinc.com/	8
COMMON Corner: New member benefit	9
T.L. Ashford http://www.tlashford.com/	11
OMNI Board	13

Edited by Joe Pluta - omni-comm@plutabrothers.com



Your source for iSeries Services, Hardware and Software.

- iSeries (AS/400) Hardware
- Application Development
- RPG Programming
- e-Business Solutions
- Disaster Planning & Recovery
- Performance Analysis
- Security Analysis/Design
- Lotus Domino/Notes

700 Commerce Dr. 5th Floor
Oak Brook, IL 60523
630.288.4831
wlorimer@arbsol.com

<http://www.arbsol.com/>

**EXTRA TIME ON YOUR HANDS?
HAVING TROUBLE KEEPING BUSY?
WANT AN EXCITING CAREER OPPORTUNITY?**

Well, okay, forget about the exciting part. But if you have some time and want to do something for your local user group, we could use your help. One of our initiatives this year is to make sure we get our database completely up to date, and to strengthen the communications channel with all our subscribers. To do that, we're going to need to send out some snail mail, maybe make some calls, that sort of thing. If you're interested in helping in that sort of activity, please contact our membership director, Sal Stangarone. You can email him at sals@mrc-productivity.com; we're sure he'd love to hear from you.

Also, please drop us a line and let us know about other user groups that are related, even in a small way, to the iSeries. Application vendors, technologies, you name it, if there's a group, we want to hear about it. Drop a line to your faithful communication director, omni-comm@plutabrothers.com.

May Dinner Meeting

Tuesday, May 17, 2005

**Embassy Suites Hotel
707 E. Butterfield Rd
Lombard, IL**

5:00 Registration and User Discussions

6:00 Dinner and Break

6:45 Business Meeting & Presentation

i5 Virtualization and LPAR

When the POWER5 hardware was announced, the virtualization capabilities of our favorite platform expanded to unprecedented levels. Now we can run multiple copies of i5/OS, AIX, a native version of Linux, an Intel version of Linux, and host Microsoft Windows environments. We will explore the opportunities we have to dynamically provision server, storage and application resources. We can build multiple 'virtual blades' or images of Linux and Windows-based workloads. You've heard the marketing, now let's talk about how to really implement and manage these environments in your shop.

Jim Oberholtzer, Senior Technical Architect, Computech Resources Inc.

Mr. Oberholtzer is a Senior Technical Architect for Computech Resources Inc., a Midwestern IBM Premier Business Partner, dedicated to understanding their customer's business in order to help them effectively leverage technology. Certified by IBM as a Systems Expert in iSeries Technical Solutions, LPAR, e-Business, RPG Development and systems administration, Mr. Oberholtzer assists clients in the focus areas of System Design and provisioning, conversions and migration planning, hardware/ software design & selection. Recognized by IBM as a Subject Matter Expert in the areas of i5 system design, implementation, LPAR, and System Administration, he is a member of the panel of SMEs that create the IBM certification tests for the iSeries.

Dinner Menu Options

Starter: Mixed Field Greens with 2 dressings

Meat: Havana Pork - Pork Medallions with caramelized bourbon and apples with Roasted Red Skin Potatoes

Veggie: Steamed Vegetables

Dessert: Carrot Cake

April Dinner Meeting Registration

Please make your reservations by Thursday, May 12, 2005 at Noon. Call (630) 953-6312, and leave your company name, names of those attending, and the type of meal desired (meat or vegetarian.)

Cancellation Policy

Full refund will be issued for cancellations made before 9:00 am Friday, May 13th.

After 9:00 am Friday, 05/13/2005, cancellation refund depends on meeting attendance. All cancellations must be made as described below.

Dinner Meeting Cancellation

It is VERY important to cancel your reservation(s) if you cannot attend, by calling (630) 953-6312 and leaving the name(s) of those unable to attend, or by using the web cancellation feature.

UNIX LINUX Microsoft Windows

CATERPILLAR

When Caterpillar's international dealers asked for an alternative platform for their IBM midrange applications, they turned to California Software. The iSeries-based applications were migrated to Windows in days without rewriting a single line of code.

Our INFINITE family of products replicates the iSeries environment under Windows, Linux and Unix. This allows end-users and ISV's alike to easily and quickly migrate their native iSeries-based applications without rewriting or translating the RPG or COBOL source.

In fact over 100,000 licenses of our INFINITE products have been sold worldwide. Companies such as **Kodak**, **DHL**, **BMW** and **Citicorp** have migrated their midrange applications to other operating systems.

Why? ...Because it works

infiniteiSeries

California Software®
www.californiasoftware.com

<http://www.californiasoftware.com/>

June Dinner Meeting Tuesday, June 21, 2005

SQL on iSeries – Concepts and Implementations

SQL is mostly an under-utilized technology on the iSeries. This presentation is designed to show the audience what can be done with SQL. The topics covered in this presentation include:

- DDL: SQL's Data Definition Language
- SQL Common Usage Methods
- Two SQL Implementations – Interpreted SQL and SQL Stored Procedures
- Performance Considerations with SQL

Most of the points in the presentation are covered with examples which illustrate each point.

Thibault Dambrine

Mr. Dambrine is a programmer with over 20 years of experience, most of them working on System/38, AS/400 and now iSeries. He has written a number of articles on programming techniques, published in the Toronto User Group Magazine, iSeries News, and MCPress Online. An independent contractor, he currently works for Shell Canada Limited, in the Data Warehouse department.

Coming Midrange Events

May 17 5:00 pm	OMNI Monthly Dinner Meeting i5 Virtualization and LPAR Jim Oberholtzer-Senior Technical Architect for Computech Resources Inc. Online registration available here!	Embassy Suites 707 E. Butterfield Rd Lombard, IL
May 24 6:30 pm	OMNI Board of Directors Meeting <i>all are welcome</i>	Hosted by IBM Two Lincoln Centre Oakbrook Terrace, IL
June 21 5:00 pm	OMNI Monthly Dinner Meeting i5 Virtualization and LPAR Thibault Dambrine	Embassy Suites 707 E. Butterfield Rd Lombard, IL
September 18 - 22	COMMON Fall Conference 2005 Online registration available here!	Orlando, FL
October 17 - 21	IBM i5/iSeries Technical Conference Online registration available here!	Miami Beach, FL
November 7 - 9	iSeries DevCon Online registration available here!	Rio Hotel and Casino Las Vegas, NV

Productivity and Development Tools

Integrate iSeries data with PC applications

iSeries Office Integrator

- Create letters and mail merges
- Transfer iSeries data
- Run PC commands
- Launch web links

Report and Data Delivery

Create Electronic Forms from iSeries or PC Reports

WinSpool/400 Electronic Forms

- Eliminate costly pre-printed forms
- Create customized forms from iSeries reports
- Add logos and graphics within forms
- Design forms with graphical PC editor
- Map spool file data to selected locations on forms

Call today for your 30 day **FREE** demo



1-888-RJSSOFT • rjsssoftware.com

iSeries and PC Solutions

Document & Image Management • Report & Data Delivery • Productivity & Development Tools

April Dinner Meeting

OMNI's April Dinner Meeting featured John Earl, VP and CTO of The PowerTech Group, presenting on "The Top Ten iSeries Security Exposures."

This topic was very timely for many in the audience who lately face increased security audit requirements, as was evidenced by rapt attendees observed throughout and plenty of Q & A.

The presentation did a nice job of exploring types of security exposures and steps that can be taken to keep iSeries systems secure, while providing some interesting and amusing "war stories" from John's deep background in security to keep it light and moving. Many thanks to John Earl from The OMNI User for this informative and interesting presentation.

<http://www.rjsssoftware.com/>

Ask the Audience

Last month, I put some questions out to you the reader. So far, the response has been less than stellar. In fact, it's been downright abysmal. I'm going to try the same questions this month to see if I get a little better response. If this doesn't work, then expect to see a huge, blaring banner on the front page.

To start with, we'll ask them right here in the newsletter and you can respond via email to me (send your responses to omni-comm@plutabrothers.com). And soon we hope to have questions like these on the website as well! Here are two different questions:

First, if you had your choice, what would be the ideal time of week and length for our Fall conference? Assume that the longer it is, the more excellent tracks we have. Would you like:

One day, midweek	One day, Friday	One day, Saturday
Two days, Thursday/Friday	Two days, Friday/Saturday	Two day, Saturday/Sunday

Second, please let us know which of the following you would like to see in the newsletter and/or on the website. Putting them in order of preference would be nice (and just because I list it doesn't mean it will get done immediately!):

- A list of IBM Redbooks published this month on the iSeries
- A list of IBM sales/marketing programs and contact numbers
- A list of other user groups
- A list of great web sites (including perhaps Site of the Month)

What else can you think of?





Custom Continuity - Access

Monthly
Subscription
\$199

Our Access Plan is the most cost effective disaster recovery offering available anywhere.

Access provides basic coverage for your IT operation plus offers flexible features like variable length test time and technical onsite assistance when you need it.



**Support
Specialists
At
Your Service**

With offices in:
Hickory Hills, IL
Mishawaka, IN

Phone: 888.599.0231
Fax: 708.599.0255
Eml: csoc@csoine.com
Web: www.csoinc.com

- Multiple Hot Sites available for maximum protection.
- T1 communications available.
- iSeries (up to 1000 CPW) and xSeries Server coverage.
- Automatic inclusion into your billing cycle for Customer 1st Service clients.
- Test time available on a pay as you need it basis at the CSO Hot Site of your choice.
- Configuration support available on a pay as you need it basis during tests or in the event of a disaster.



May 2005 COMMON Corner

Reprinted from the May 2005 issue of COMMON.CONNECT

A Server Consolidation Story from the Trenches

By Nigel Fortlage

It's said that the only sure things in life are death and taxes. This is a story about neither. It's a story about the reliability and "bet your business" mindset that comes from my company's experience with the IBM iSeries family of computers that originated with our first machine in 1989.

I'm the Vice President of Information Technology at GHY International, a privately held firm that provides professional business services in the international trade arena in the form of consulting and customs brokerage. We have eight offices and just over 100 associates, all supported by an IT staff of three.

Our story begins in May 2002, when we began preparing for our lease renewal on our iSeries 720 machine. As in previous years, we expected to roll over that lease and continue with business as normal. This year that wasn't to be the case.

What made this year different was a desire to fix many ongoing issues that had built up over time and had become bottlenecks in the IT department's ability to service the business. This had resulted in a core business issue for IT: being stuck in maintenance mode and not evolving the business' ability to respond as needed.

Some very simple issues were defined as part of this review that became the basis for making the ultimate decision as to what to do. They were:

- 1) Lack of Time – to recover, to plan, to do something new
- 2) Lack of Energy – draining more in day-to-day operations than maximizing HR resources for value add functions.
- 3) Resource Utilization – using what we had effectively
- 4) Resource Allocation – having the right resource where it was needed, when it was needed
- 5) Backup – reliable, simple
- 6) Integration – simple, clean, fast

These six issues ultimately became our new goals with a server consolidation process.

Why We Got Here in the First Place

We all deal with server sprawl. In our case, it was a mix of various Windows server operating systems, UNIX and Linux servers that began to sprawl and impact the first two issues above in terms of HR resource. Windows servers were growing at twice the pace of Linux servers. Not once during this sprawl period did I consider adding my Windows servers to iSeries, because I didn't understand the value add that it would bring and I just saw it as one more way to complicate my world.

The next two issues evolved out of our requirement to start having one system interact with another. Nothing highlighted this more than when we developed our in-house document imaging system on a Linux base. In addition to the two Windows workstation machines that captured and indexed the images, we had four servers involved in the process. The data resided on our iSeries and we used IBM's Query/400 tool to create a daily report of data to index within a preset window. That report was then transferred and saved onto another system using BCD Corp's CATAPULT, which we had running on a second server, provided the functionality to grab the spool file and transform it into what we wanted and save it to a third machine which had the necessary disk space. This internal document imaging application ran under Linux on Intel at this time using Samba and PHP. The Linux server grabbed the report data from the Windows share on the third machine and created its index on its own server using MySQL database. The images stayed on the third server because it had disk space to house it.

The fifth issue—backup—became a nightmare because of the various backup devices and formats that I had no confidence in our ability to recover if needed.

The final issue—integration—came out of the document imaging solution looking for a better way to make this happen. Integration was here to stay and was a necessary evil to making things work better and more seamlessly.

As an IT professional, I knew it was time to stop putting band-aids on the problems, but that would require solid support from the rest of our executive team.

Good, Better, Best: Our Next Steps

You always hear the saying, “go with what you know,” and as a first step we did. We understood and were comfortable with the world of server sprawl on Intel platform so we look to that as our saving grace. That took us down a path of being clear on our strengths and weakness and for me, being prepared to put it on the line with the rest of the executive team in order to seek their support.

What evolved out of this exercise was a decision matrix we called “Good, Better, Best.” What you need to understand at this point is that server consolidation wasn't even a consideration, as the concepts were foreign at best. Looking back, I know IBM had local sessions discussing the latest announcement about virtualization, integrated X series servers, LPAR, Virtual I/O, etc., but not once had that made any link for me to my business.

Our first pass at this exercise had “Best” defined as a solution by revamping our existing server farm hardware to standardize and modernize it, and to add nine more servers to isolate each critical network function that was now running under one of two Linux servers. The problem with adding nine more servers which would effectively double our server farm to 17 machines, was that as a team of three we were already spending about 95% of our time keeping the server farm running. We would need more human resource to manage this solution.

The rest of the executive team was still living in year three of a four-year down turn in the economy. Adding extra cost in terms of human resource wasn't desirable or likely to get approval, so back to the drawing board we had to go.

At this point (now around September 2002), I turned to the only provider who over the past 14 yrs has ever been interested in our business. That is IBM.

iSeries: Supply Chain Label Printing Solution

T.L. ASHFORD

*"The Labeling Answer"®
for over 20 Years*

Barcode 400

The iSeries solution to bar code labeling.

www.tlashford.com

For information call: 800-541-4893 or 859-291-7555



©2003 T.L. Ashford. All trademarks reserved to their respective companies.

<http://www.tlashford.com/>

The entire IT team went through a two-day exercise with IBM laying out all the history and good, bad, and ugly stuff that we uncovered in the first few months we spent working on this. We talked about where we wanted to go, what was the strategic direction the firm was going from a business standpoint. What did IT want to achieve? Ultimately, we isolated the six deliverables I identified earlier.

That’s when IBM introduced the idea of server consolidation and showed us how it applies to our business. We spent about one and a half months fin- tuning that first model to one that matched deliverables with price and performance. It was during this cycle that I saw a whole new IBM -- the new one we hear about, the one that’s SMB-focused, one that understands your business, one that invests in the sales cycle and not always at a consulting fee rate.

Below is the revised “Good, Better, Best” model that was a result of working with IBM. Because I became so entrenched in the process, I abstained from voting on which way the firm should go. However, I did recommend to either go best or do nothing at all, because anything in between is just a waste of money for the impact we would get. The hard business rationale to “best” was that the new best solution was \$30,000 CDN. That was less expensive than the adding nine more Intel servers in the now “better” solution, and we had no expectation to add human resource to manage this new model.

Good	Better	Best
Minimal Revamp	Complete Revamp – no consolidation	Complete Revamp - Consolidation
Replace 2 servers with newer ones	Replace all servers with better ones	Reduce number of servers under mgmt
No backup improvements	Dedicated backup for each machine	Consolidate, simplify, reduce time & effort
Status quo – no problems fixed	High available Intel	Best available on the market
7 Servers Still Add no more	Add 9 more servers to isolate critical functions & reduce impact of a failure	Use Most scalable, reliable, secure server we already had
Low \$\$\$ <20K	High \$\$\$	High \$\$\$
No +Impact	Medium +Impact	High +Impact

The fact I can write this story tells you that the executive team decided to go with the “best.”

The final piece to this story of rationalizing server consolidation is that at the end of our first full year of using this solution, our technology operating budget was over \$100,000 CDN lower than expected. So that means that we enjoyed the following savings for a less than one-year payback:

- Hardware \$30,000 less than Intel solution
- Do not hire three more staff members
- Over \$100,000 reduction in operating budget

One final note to this story: I tried as much as possible to utilize business partners for this process; unfortunately not one could come to the table with all the skills needed to implement this solution. I had to rely on IBM Global Services to deliver the breadth of services and/or sub-contract out for me.

About the Author

Nigel Fortlage joined GHY International in October 1988 as the first IT staff member in the firm's 100-year history. He is currently Vice President of Information Technology and a member of the executive team of the International Trade Services firm. Nigel is enrolled in the Edinburgh Business School-Heriot Watt University self paced MBA program. He is also an accomplished speaker with many international speaking engagements to his credit.

OMNI 2005 Board

President	Dale O'Leary	doleary@zysolutions.com
Vice-President	Ed Booth	ebooth@suncast.com
Secretary	Yvonne Enselman	yenselman@comcast.net
Treasurer	Bill Parks	wparks@worldnet.att.net
Seminar Vice-President	Rodger Greif	rgreif@ciber.com
Membership & DB Director	Sal Stangarone	sals@mrc-productivity.com
Communications Director	Joe Pluta	joepluta@plutabrothers.com
Advertising Director	Matt Gross	prgg1@sbcglobal.net
Conference Director	Mike Pavlak	mike@pavlak.com
Webmaster	Dave Andruchuk	dandruchuk@sungardfutures.com
Past President	Paul Nelson	pnelson@arbsol.com
IBM Liaison	Joe Thompson	jwthomp@us.ibm.com
Advisory Member	Jerome Hughes	jromeh@comcast.net

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT!

The annual OMNI Golf Outing is coming to a golf course near you in July. More information will be published as it becomes available, but if you'd like to help organize or get involved in any other way, please contact us. For now, you can feel free to contact your Communications Director, yours truly:

Omni-golf@plutabrothers.com