The Omni User

Three, Three, Three Sessions in One!

That's right, you lucky technophile, you! This month, we've outdone ourselves: Instead of just one awesome speaker, we will have not one, not two, but *three* of your Omni board members presenting their real-world experiences with the latest technologies. I feel bad for those poor folks at COMON who will miss this! Check for more information inside. You can register by clicking here.

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Last month's speaker was … well, it was me, so what can I say? We had a good draw I think and the topic was a good one (RPG and Java interoperability).

And there's lots more coming. We're definitely going to go out on a high note this year, and then start off 2007 with a bang. I'll keep pushing the lineup so you can mark your calendars: we have our Day of Education on October 10th, and you will **not** want to miss that one. George Farr, Marcy Brandt, Guy Vig and the irrepressible David Money will all be dropping in from IBM to enlighten us, along with a few other folks including yours truly to fill in the schedule. If you've been to a DoE recently, you know just how much information is to be had here, and if you *haven't* been to one in a bit, then this is definitely a good time to get to one!

I mentioned last month that October and November have two of our most esteemed board members speaking on some really **hot** topics: Mike Pavlak will be presenting PHP on the iSeries and David Andruchuk will be delivering his XML expertise right to your doorstep, figuratively speaking. And December is the month when I, your loyal editor, will regale you with everything you need to know to migrate from PDM and SEU to the brave new world of WDSC. You have my personal guarantee that you will not walk out of that seminar without having expanded your skill set.

And THEN comes the technical conference! We don't stop, folks, but that's because you're worth it!

President's Letter

- Mike Pavlak, OMNI Board President

Fall is in the air…

We are all about to witness the continued evolution of the seasons. While many of my family members have scattered to the four winds, I have remained in the Chicago area precisely because of one simple aspect: Change! So too am I continually drawn to the System i. As many of my associates are pulled to alternative technologies or professions, I am still drawn to this midrange platform and the continuing changes that are brought about. I still can't keep up with all of the new features regardless of how hard I try.

About the time you are all enjoying a wonderful meeting of my fellow board members, I will be in Miami Beach attending the Fall COMMON conference. I am fortunate as I get to participate on a council that gets to oversee some of the change that System i may undertake in the next several releases. As a charter member of the COMMON America Advisory Council (CAAC) I get to provide IBM with a formal representation of OS and hardware requirements from the constituency of the COMMON members. Along with a group of several members we have made several recommendations to IBM regarding the System i that include things from PHP to HA. I am very proud of what we have accomplished in our limited meetings, but am most proud of what we will be saying at the upcoming COMMON conference. There we will be promoting the Requirements Website.

The Requirements Website gives EVERYONE around the world an opportunity to make a suggestion about what to do with our beloved midrange computer. No holds barred, open discussion that is liberally moderated by the CAAC and not IBM. Oh, you may see an IBMer out there from time to time. From these forums, the CAAC will cull the next set of requirements. We will then prioritize them and present them to IBM for possible submission in a future version of the OS or even as part of a Cumulative PTF. You can gain access to this website and make suggestions at the following internet address: http://community.common.org/ .

Please take some time to register and enter in your suggestions. I never thought IBM would listen to what I had to say and BOY, was I surprised! Not only did they listen, they begged for more. This system did not become great by simply having the best folks in Rochester building it. They have been collecting suggestions for quite some time, mostly through other channels. Members of COMMON from days of old might remember the requirements process. This was where members would sit down in front of a dumb terminal at COMMON and type in suggestions. The requirements committee would sift through the requirements and present them to IBM. Sound familiar? Yes, we are bringing back the requirements process, with the help of some sharp folks at IBM, COMMON and the LUGs!

Now it is your turn to help. Has there been something missing from i5/OS? Maybe you would like to see a feature in the green screen or iSeries Navigator? Something that would simply make your day complete if it existed on the i5. Please, take a few minutes out of your busy day and register for this site. It's free, simple, and can benefit everyone who uses the System i brand. Check out what other folks are saying. Comment on a forum listing and make a good suggestion even better. Then watch for the comments to come back from the CAAC. You won't be disappointed!

September Dinner Meeting
Tuesday, September 19th, 2006

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

Three of a Kind: Omni User Demonstrations

This is going to be one exciting meeting, and a bit on the unusual side! Instead of a single speaker talking about a single topic, in this presentation you'll get not one, not two, but three of your board members presenting some hot new technologies.

OMNI Treasurer Bill Parks will be presenting the Stitch-in-Time journaling tool from Unbeaten Path. He promises to make it short and lively.

OMNI Seminar VP Jerome Hughes will present a demonstration of creating a basic web application using Ruby on Rails. Rails is a full stack web application framework built on Ruby, an object oriented scripting language. The Rails framework uses Model/View/Controller constructs, intelligent code generation, and favors convention over configuration, yielding quickly implemented, easily evolved agile Web Applications.

OMNI Conference Director Jim Vance will brief you on Idokorro Mobile SSH, one of the products in the Idokorro Mobile suite. Mobile SSH lets you access your System i from anywhere with your Blackberry, Treo or Windows Mobile PC.

Where else can you get this much information and good eats, too?

Dinner Menu Options

Dinner (choice):
Chicken Hunter
Mahi Mahi
Pasta Primavera

Starter:
Caesar Salad

Dessert:
2-Layer Chocolate Cake

September Dinner Meeting Registration

Please make your reservations by Thursday, September 14th, 2006 at Noon. Call (630) 953-6312, and leave your company name, names of those attending, and the type of meal desired (meat, fish or vegetarian.)

Cancellation Policy

Full refund will be issued for cancellations made before 9:00 am August 18th. After 9:00 am Friday, 09/15/2006, 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.

October Meeting

At this month's dinner meeting, one of our speakers will be Jerome Hughes, who will be introducing you to one of the newer technologies available, called Ruby on Rails. In keeping with the spirit of presenting new technologies, October will continue on with the exciting topic of PHP. PHP for the iSeries recently got a huge boost when the language's founders (the Zend corporation) announced an iSeries native port.

What do they mean by native? What does PHP buy for me anyway? Is it a piece of my mission critical systems, or is it more of an end user productivity aid? Mike Pavlak will be answering these and many other questions next month!

August Recap

Many thanks to OMNI Communications Director Joe Pluta for his well researched, dynamically presented discussion **(Ed's Note: I didn't write this!)** of the many ways to interoperate between Java and RPG. A nice turnout of OMNI members enjoyed listening to Joe detail examples of many possible methods of interacting along with opinions as to the pros and cons of each.

Thanks, Joe!

Seminar VP Jerome Hughes reminds attendees who haven't yet done so to please reply to his email evaluation form, as he forgot to distribute the paper forms at the meeting. The OMNI board needs this information to tune OMNI offerings so they meet your needs, so please take a moment to fill out the email form and return it. Thanks to those who have done so and in advance to those who have yet to do it, send 'em in, please!

Fall Day of Education

More fun in October, and I don't mean Halloween!

Continuing on the back to school theme, we're packing the schedule with more training than you can shake a stick at. Our Day of Education on October 10th (be **sure** to mark your calendar!) is just in time to say goodbye to the summer and hello to a whole new world of iSeries technology.

George Farr will be on hand to continue to bring us IBM's vision of the future for RPG and COBOL development, and how they hope to help you protect your legacy system investment while extending it into the future.

Marcy Brandt, Sue Baker, Guy Vig and Mark Anderson bring us a range of topics from the long-awaited and much appreciated enhancements to CL to something we've been looking for forever: the virtual tape. There will be loads of other topics as well; look for a full announcement VERY shortly.

A great addition to this year's event: the inimitable David Money is no stranger to Omni, but this year he comes in his new IBM Blue incarnation. And no matter the guise, Dave brings us his always cogent message on web application design.

And just in case you haven't had enough Joe Pluta, I'll be giving sessions on WDSC for RPG Programmers as well as an introduction to the incredibly promising EGL language enhancements.

Lunch and refreshments are sponsored by vendor partners including Lakeview, LANSA and RJS.

The Day of Education is inexpensive, which makes it easy to get away to and your best education value, especially if you register early. Please watch your email for registration news. If you're reading someone else's copy of this, please visit the OMNI site at http://www.omniuser.org and join, or at least register for the conference!

http://www.tlashford.com/

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Upcoming Midrange Events

September 17-21	COMMON Fall 2006 Conference Details\Registration Here!	Miami Beach Convention Center Miami Beach, FL
September 19 5:00 pm	OMNI September Dinner Meeting Three of a Kind: OMNI User Demonstrations Bill Parks, Jerome Hughes and Jim Vance Details\Registration here!	Embassy Suites Hotel 707 E. Butterfield Rd Lombard, IL
September 26 6:00 pm	OMNI Monthly Board Meeting All are welcome, contact a Board Member for details	IBM 2 Lincoln Center Oakbrook Terrace, IL
October 10	OMNI Day of Education 2006 Details\Registration soon!	IBM 2 Lincoln Center Oakbrook Terrace, IL
October 17 5:00 pm	OMNI October Dinner Meeting PHP on iSeries Mike Pavlak Details\Registration soon!	Embassy Suites Hotel 707 E. Butterfield Rd Lombard, IL
November 6 - 8	iSeries DevCon 2006 Conference Details\Registration Here!	Rio Hotel & Casino Las Vegas, NV
December 5	A Day with Joe Pluta Migrating from SEU/PDM to WDSC and beyond Details\Registration soon!	IBM 2 Lincoln Center Oakbrook Terrace, IL
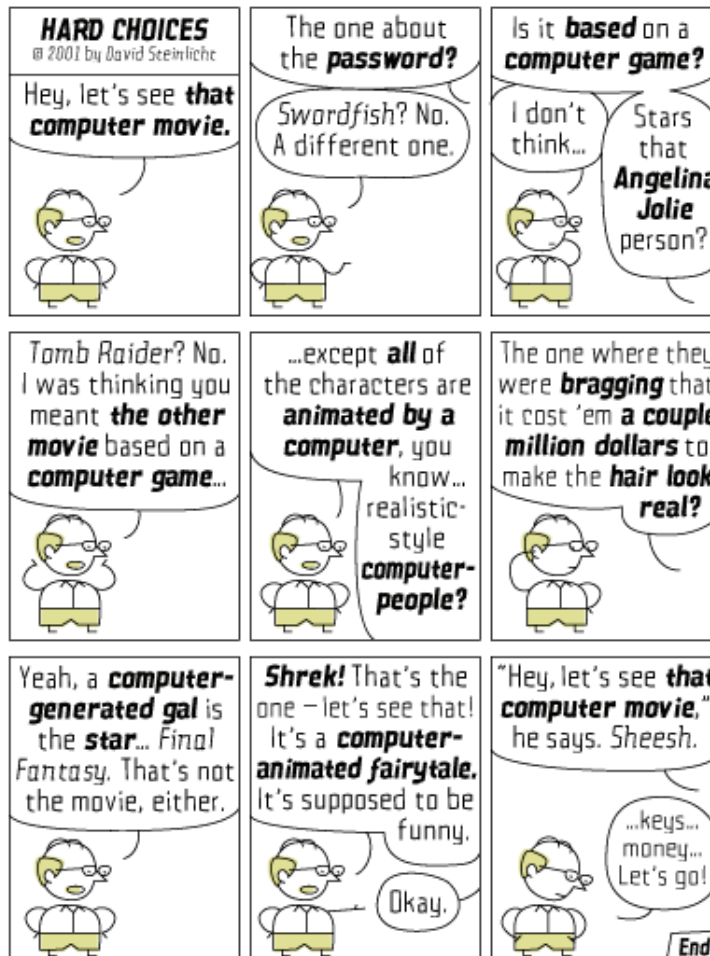
IBM Redbooks/Redpapers

A monthly compendium of recent IBM Redbooks and Redpapers of interest to System i developers.

WebSphere Application Server V6.1: Planning and Design
Revised: August, 30, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg247305.html

LPAR Simplification Tools Handbook
Published: August 24, 2006   ISBN: 0738494763
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg247231.html

System i Application Modernization: Building a New Interface to Your Legacy Applications
Revised: August 21, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg246671.html

WebSphere Application Server V6 Migration Guide
Published: August 17, 2006   ISBN: 0738495956   376 pages
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg246369.html

Implementing Integrated Windows Server through iSCSI to i5 Servers
Published: August, 16, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg247230.html

Web Services Handbook for WebSphere Application Server 6.1
Revised: August, 11, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg247257.html

Preparing for and Tuning the SQL Query Engine on DB2 for i5/OS
Revised: August, 10, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg246598.html

i5/OS V5R4 Virtual Tape: A Guide to Planning and Implementation
Published: August 4, 2006   ISBN: 0738497207   498 pages
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg247164.html

Availability Management—A Guide to Planning and Implementing Cross-Site Mirroring on System i5
Published: July 28, 2006   ISBN: 0738495980   210 pages
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg246661.html

Understanding LDAP—Design and Implementation
Revised: July 19, 2006   ISBN: 073849786X   768 pages
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg244986.html

IBM WebSphere and Microsoft .NET Interoperability
Revised: July 19, 2006   ISBN: 0738495573   418 pages
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/sg246799.html

Securing Communications with OpenSSH on IBM i5/OS
Revised: July 19, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpapers/abstracts/redp4163.html

IBM System i5, eServer i5, and iSeries System Builder IBM i5/OS Version 5 Release 4
Revised: July 10, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg242155.html

Sizing I5/OS Work on IBM System i5 Partitions
Published: June, 27, 2006
http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/redpieces/abstracts/sg246656.html

Common Corner

Reprinted from the August 2006 issue of COMMON.CONNECT

Innovation in Education:
Integrating i5/OS into IMS Education Works
By Jane Jerrard

Five organizations that are setting new standards for System i5 innovation were honored at the COMMON Spring 2006 Conference & Expo in Minneapolis in March. IBM and COMMON named them as this year's recipients of the System i Innovation Awards, designed to showcase end-user achievements in IT innovation using the IBM System i5 platform. The winners are:

- **Application Deployment – Elie Tahari, Ltd.**
- **Business Resiliency – Quixtar, Inc.**
- **Infrastructure Simplification – Trans Word Entertainment**
- **i5/OS Leadership – Bank of America, Toronto, Canada Division**
- **Education – Moraine Valley Community College**

In this article, we'll look at the winner of the education award.

Rolling i5 into Standard Curriculum

Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills, Illinois, was experiencing a steady decline in students signing up for IBM midrange-specific classes. After more than 18 years of offering OS/400-specific courses, "enrollments were terrible," says Michelle August, IMS Curriculum Coordinator and Assistant Professor. "The college wanted to get rid the system altogether and cancel all the courses. But we have nothing else besides Microsoft, so I was really against that. It's ridiculous that students would graduate thinking that everything is Microsoft. I probably spent 18 months fighting to keep the [i5]."

While August was struggling to keep the i5 as part of her department, she'd discuss options with other IT faculty at curriculum coordination meetings. It was at one of those meetings that she came up with the idea of integrating i5 topics into general courses.

The college's new i5 520 with a Linux partition was installed last spring, and is now integrated into the department's required course on operating systems, a database course and an e-commerce course, and it will soon play a role in a Java course as well. "We have a Java course every semester," says August. "I'm hoping that I can come in for part of it and just show them how to take an application and bring it over to the i5."

The other classes have been integrated to some extent. "It was a long haul getting started, but we started incorporating the i5 into the curriculum last fall," says August. "Of course, the instructors don't know the i5 yet. I taught the first operating system course, while the instructor sat and learned along with the students. I hope to get two other instructors to come to COMMON this fall so they can learn the system." Part of the Innovation Award won by Moraine Valley Community College is five free registrations, so the Fall 2006 Conference is an ideal learning opportunity for these instructors.

Students Benefit from i5 Exposure

The students who have been in the two semesters of integrated courses are extremely receptive to learning the i5. August conducted a brief survey at the end of the Spring 2006 semester, which drew positive comments, including, "I enjoyed learning about the i5/OS. It was fun learning about another operating system that was not Windows.… I wish that we had a full class on it." Another student wrote, "The i5/OS would definitely be my choice for an operating system to run a business off of."

August is pleased with the results of integrating the i5 into the curriculum. "These students were not aware of the platform at all; they never chose the midrange classes because they didn't know what it was. Now, because the operating system class is required, more students are exposed to it. It's really worked out well."

A First for Education

Although the System i Innovation Awards debuted in 2005, this was the first year that an award was offered in the category of education. August, who is an active member and volunteer for COMMON, entered the Innovation Award competition early this year, but did not find out that Moraine Valley was the education winner until she attended the awards banquet on-site at the Spring 2006 COMMON Conference in Minneapolis.

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