

IACU Fall 2002 Meeting Notes

Friday System Admin Session

Before the official agenda discussion began, Jonathan (new Riccorp programmer) led a discussion on his work on the "Design View" wish list item # 173. He handed out a document showing his proposed physical layout of the visual report designer. See attached Word doc.

The official Friday meeting agenda was as follows:

Topics

[Pervasive SQL](#)

[Auditing capabilities in the Accounting Module](#)

[Troubleshooting minor quirks and problems](#)

[Remote Access to EWO](#)

[Equipment Rates](#)

Meeting with RIC Corp for the following items:

[Online help desk - Options and solutions](#)

[Upgrade Beta Periods](#)

[Proper release notes for website](#)

[What happens to pending user issues when Rick/Joni are out of town](#)

[DDF File creation](#)

[Anti-virus protection at RIC Corp](#)

[Delivery dates for incomplete wish list items](#)

[MAPI Interface for Win2000](#)

Pervasive Tuning Discussion

There was a discussion of how to tune the Pervasive database to improve performance. There was some talk about it being self adjusting. I know in our case (Boston) it would

not work properly (out of the box) and had to be adjusted. We are using Pervasive 2000 version. There was discussion of having Pervasive on the client or the server. Some centers are using the client, some are not.

Rick's recommendation is to take the dll files from the c:\pvsw\bin directory on the Concentrics server and copy them to the exe32 directory on the Concentrics server. This eliminates the need for the Pervasive client install. Note if you call Pervasive tech support they not know about this method and may even tell you not to do it. Note: Novell setup (Phoenix) is different! Terry in Portland has narrowed down the number of the dll files you actually need in the EXE32 directory to 11. See <http://www.riccorp.com/Htdocs/IN200206.htm> for the list of dll files for the 2000i version.

Also, for those facilities that need to access ConCentRICs through a network that uses Network Address Translation, it is only possible if we use Rick's way of Pervasive dll copy. Pervasive has confirmed that they do not support NAT.

Using Pervasive Monitor, you can keep an eye on on system resource usage and determine possible areas needing adjustment. Using Pervasive Control Center, Configuration Utility, you can make changes to the Pervasive parameters.

Auditing Capabilities in Accounting

After much discussion, the end result was there would now be an audit trail for journal entry contents that have been manipulated.

They will build in this feature. Nothing else will be changed.

Troubleshooting minor quirks and problems

We received a handout for useful tips for maintaining your Concentrics system. See attached document.

This is the same document that he passed out last fall.

With regard to the Log File deletion, I believe it is worthwhile to mention that currently when the log is purged, everything in it is cleared including entries to who cleared the log and when. Rick has promised to change this so that the last entry will remain.

Also, the best method for purging the log is to make a copy of the log to another location or to rename the log. This way you can have a copy of the log if you need to refer to it at another time. Storing the log in printed out format or in .RIC format does not help with the filter functionality. If one wanted to look at an older log and you had it stored in its original format, you could then do so by copying back to the original location.

Remote Access to EWO

Gwen introduced the topic by explaining the concept. Remote Access to EWO refers to using handheld (wireless) devices to access and enter exhibitor work order information from the show floor as well as process credit card transactions wirelessly using a handheld device and also capturing signatures using the same equipment and having the ability to upload said signatures into Concentrics.

Boston can do the first part (access Exhibitor info) using a combination of a Compaq Ipaq with an expansion pack and wireless network card and Citrix Metaframe. Several other centers are using Citrix as well. I asked Rick if we should proceed based on the Citrix platform for remote access to Concentrics. He stated we should.

We did not want the discussion to revolve around the technology so much as the functionality within Concentrics. We talked about what would be a good place to start. We look at booth inquiry. We later decided Joni would start with Exhibitor Register and add check off fields for the technician. That was where we stopped.

Equipment Rates

The Equipment Rates are in Scheduling Administration. The issue at hand was that many facilities do not guarantee their equipment rates when the event is contracted. However, since the system assigns location rates based on the Rate Date field, Equipment Rates were also being charged at the same rate.

The solution is to set the Equipment Rates Date Range such that the effective Date for any Equipment Date Range to be set to 01/01/1970. When the Effective Date is set in 1970 (none of the facilities should be having rate calculations at that time) then the equipment rates will be based on the Start Date field in the Equipment Date Range. This would permit facilities to have their equipment rates follow a schedule which is not the same as the one used to calculate rent (based on the Rate Date in Event Profile).

Online help desk

Several IACU members have expressed an interest in an online help desk where we (Concentrics Admins) can go and, prior to contacting Rick or Joni, search through a knowledge base for common Concentrics information and solutions. We would also use this help desk to submit "tickets" of particular problems we cannot resolve on our own. Over time, we would be able to check on the status of the ticket and know what Rick and/or Joni has done so far in terms of working on the issue. Several of us have issues that we feel have "gotten lost out there" and we feel the online help desk would allow us and Riccorp to keep track of our issues and be more accountable instead of us wondering what's been done.

Sam Brown from GWCC gave a demonstration of the online help desk GWCC uses (see Helpdesk Expert for IT Support - <http://www.innovate.com> for more info.). He dialed into his system and submitted a sample trouble ticket. The product GWCC uses cost them \$3,000 and comes with an Access database built in. They switched to SQL however, for the back end database. The product is accessed by users via their Intranet. We are looking for a similar concept for IACU users, except the product would reside on the Riccorp webserver.

The way the product works, the first time a user logs in, he creates an account. This is a one time deal. He then creates his user profile (i.e. email address, etc.) The email address is used later by the help desk software to email updates, etc. to the user, regarding the problem submitted. There are many ways to display tickets or search on tickets. The product has “escalation rules” and “claim tickets”. The product is licensed per staff member on help desk. Initially you get a 4 pack.

GWCC is not using the knowledge base feature of the product so could not demo it. Overall it looked like a great solution for keeping track of help desk type items.

RICK is going to come up with his own version of an online help desk on the web and tie it to email. When asked, he stated it would be in real time, not batch time. This will be based on what we saw via the demo performed by Sam Brown.

Sidenote: Gwen asked why you can only get back to January 02 release notes on the Riccorp website. Rick stated some data was lost and they had trouble restoring it from tape. So if you search through the release notes you will only get info going back to a certain day in January 02.

Upgrade Beta Periods

Rick will create a “Beta Version” section on the website for software releases that have not yet been fully tested. This would replace/supplement Rick/Joni from dialing into our systems and downloading “test versions” of software to test software updates and work out problems.

An update/patch will not be moved from Beta to Approved status until the facility that reported the issue notifies Ric Corp that everything is okay at their end using the Beta.

(Note: Ric Corp can work on a wishlist item while the Beta for an issue is being tested. That wishlist can be made available even if the Beta has not been regression tested. Net Result may be you have a wishlist upgrade sitting on an executable with issues which have not been resolved)

Proper Release Notes for Web Site

The Beta versions will include notes detailing issues addressed in that release.

There was discussion that Rick and Joni do not make notations on library changes that do not effect the functionality of the executable. This is why we sometimes see updated versions of executables on the website without notes corresponding to the reason for the release.

What happens to pending user issues when Rick/Joni are out of town

Jonathan (the new programmer) is now doing programming on his own. Rick is very confident in his abilities. Nick takes care of user issues.

As Jonathan has emerged, Rick is working with him to get more familiar with the existing programs. With time, Rick feels that Jonathan will be able to step in and do minor issues. If someone has a critical issue, Rick will attempt to get those folks up and running immediately irrespective of where he is.

All other non-emergency issues will wait until they get back in the office.

Pervasive SQL DDF discussion

David Seuss of Phoenix has been working on this project. He has created several DDFs using a utility he downloaded from the Internet (found by doing a google search) (cost \$40). His DDFs will be published on the Riccorp website in a "Beta" section, however, with some caveats, notably, each center has unique pathnames. In the DDFs, the pathnames are hardcoded, and, UNC names are not allowed. It takes approximately 3-5 minutes per ddf to convert to our custom pathnames.

The Pervasive server engine also contains a DDF writer.

I believe there was a point made that DDFs created to work in one version of Pervasive will not work with another version (i.e. 2000 vs. 7).

Anti-virus protection at RIC Corp

This item was brought up because not too long ago a portion of the Riccorp website disappeared and it was due to Nick's pc getting infected with a virus. Rick stated the virus was from India and that the antivirus protection on Nick's computer did not detect the virus.

Rick said this was a rare occurrence. Hopefully it won't happen again.

Their current anti-virus software uses a built-in update process that will pick up anti-virus updates as and when they become available.

Wish List Delivery Dates

Rick would not provide delivery dates for wish list items.

Below is a priority list for what items get worked on when and in what order:

1. Critical issues at a facility - something is broken and needs fixed ASAP.
(This does not apply to a program being broken as a result of something else that they worked on!)
2. Custom items - We have been aware of this on the VAX version and I knew that you can pay for this on the Windows version BUT I did not know that wishlist items could bypass the wishlist process if the facility wanted to pay for it. However, I did understand that if a wishlist item looked like it is "debatable", then Rick would have the item submitted as a wishlist and if the item passed, then it would get 2nd priority in getting done.
3. Wishlist Items - but not in order of which passed first, second, etc. Instead Rick does them on the basis of how many people will benefit them, working on multiple items in the same module at one time, etc. On the other hand Joni does them on a FIFO system. This is possible for Joni considering the fact that she still is responsible only for Exhibitors and A/R while Rick has the rest.
4. Blue Sky Items - even if they were processed via the wishlist process.

Mapi Interface

Rick will be going to the CDO interface.

See <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;EN-US;Q238085&> and <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;Q254458> for more information.

Also see <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;EN-US;Q200018&>