



SOLUTIONS



MBS Newsletter to the International MultiValue Community

Volume 2004, Issue 10

December 2004



SEASONS GREETINGS

Well as another year draws to a close and the holiday period is upon us, I thought it fitting to pass on the Best Wishes from all at MBS for the upcoming festive season. 2004 has been an exciting year for MBS as we have developed many new business partnerships, added new customers and staff and positioned ourselves for the next phase of our growth.

With both the Melbourne and Sydney offices fully functional we have just commenced our expansion into Asia with the appointment of a Business Development Manager for the region (Edwin Mair) and the announcement of several new partnerships which will see MBS raise the awareness and utilisation of MultiValue throughout various countries in the Asia Pacific geography.

MBS proudly represents IBM (Data Management including U2 and Hardware), MITI (OLAP Data Analysis tool MITS), MICROGEN (mvQuery advanced data reporting tool for MultiValue databases), VIA Systems (WebWizard and ViaDuct) and Raining Data (D3). In addition we have formed strategic partnerships with a number of application Vendors who deliver stable, cost effective and functionally rich solutions to our many direct and indirect customers around the globe.

As a major contributing sponsor to the successful International Spectrum shows, MBS has attracted interest from developers of MultiValue solutions worldwide who see us as an ideal vehicle to introduce their products into this part of the world. If you are looking for a solution to a specific business need, please feel free to contact one of the team at MBS to see if we can provide access to a ready made solution for you.

So, on behalf of the management team at MBS, I would, once again, like to wish you and your families all the best for the festive season and a safe and prosperous 2005.

Cheers,
Brian Egan



MBS TO DEVELOP ASIAN MARKET

MBS has confirmed its intentions to develop the Asian MultiValue market with three significant announcements this month.

- We are pleased to announce the appointment of Edwin Mair as Business Development Manager- ASIA. A veteran of 15 years experience in developing the Partner Channel in Asia for organisations such as Ardent, Vmark and Clegg Driscoll, Edwin brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this new venture.
- MBS is to open an office in Kuala Lumpur to support this new initiative. "We see the Asian MultiValue community as one that has been left idle for far too long, and it is our intention to grow this market through enhanced marketing, sales and support activities, said Martin Meier, Managing Director, MBS, upon his recent return from Malaysia.
- MBS has formed a strategic partnership with Azure Technologies to deliver U2 solutions and services to the Malaysian U2 partner community (see page 5 for full announcement).

Our presence in Malaysia will provide an opportunity for Australian and International software developers to enter the Asian market.

To ensure our continued service and support throughout the Christmas – New Year period, MBS' offices will be closed on the Public Holidays only.

Monday 27th December 2004

Tuesday 28th December 2004

Monday 3rd January 2005

Our normal trading hours will apply on all other working days. Emergency support will be available by calling 1300 793 333

INDEX

Seasons Greetings	Page 1
MBS Develops Asian Market	Page 1
FusionWare and MBS	Page 2
Tech Tip	Page 2
MITS Success Story "J&B Wholesalers"	Page 3
MITS Success Story con't	Page 4
Azure & MBS Press Announcement	Page 5
Compliance & MultiValue	Page 6
MBS Contact Details	Page 5

MBS APPOINTED ASIA PACIFIC DISTRIBUTOR FOR FUSIONWARE'S INTEGRATION SERVER

In a move that recognises MBS' success in the Asia Pacific region, Fusionware Inc, a US headquartered corporation, has appointed MBS as it's Distributor for its successful Integration Server range of products. As a result of this appointment, MBS will provide the Fusionware Integration Server as well as support to resellers and end-users in the Asia Pacific region.

The FusionWare Integration Server is an XML-based application integration environment, designed to make it easy and affordable for organisations to integrate their disparate data and systems and collaborate more effectively with business and trading partners, suppliers and customers.

With its intuitive forms-based GUI interface, built-in code generators, wizards, query builders and powerful adapters to integrate all your legacy systems and data, the FusionWare Integration Server simplifies and accelerates the development and deployment of critical Web Services.

FusionWare Corporation is a company focused on one thing - solving the business integration needs of organizations who need to leverage their existing systems to create service-oriented applications that meet internal requirements, and support partner and customer collaboration.

With FusionWare products, enterprises can achieve the benefits of an integrated business affordably, without having to replace their legacy systems or hire experts to develop Web Services for them.

For more information about the Fusionware Integration server or becoming a reseller, please email info@mbs.net.au or contact your local account manager.



TECHTIP

Importing data to Excel via a TCL SORT/LIST statement using Dynamic Connect

Dynamic Connect is provided with Universe, and is similar to wIntegrate, however does not have file transfer capabilities.

1. Setup TCL Sort/List statement as required.
2. Before running the TCL statement click on Edit Menu Option on the Dynamic Connect Menus and then choose the Record option. You will get a record window as shown below:



3. At this point you may change the name and path of where the .txt file is to be saved.
4. Click OK and then run your TCL statement - all the output to the screen will be captured to the txt file specified.
5. Once the statement has completed stop recording by clicking on the Edit Menu and then choosing the Record option.

You can now open the txt file in Excel and use Excel's Text Import Wizard to get your txt file into Excel.

Points to note when using the Text Import Wizard:

1. Make sure that you have chosen the fixed width option and not the delimited option on the first screen.
2. Check that all the columns are wide enough to accommodate the data for that column - if not you could end up with the end of one column included in the cell below or next to the target cell.
3. If you have data starting with zeros remember to mark that column as a text column otherwise Excel will drop the zeros e.g. 001 will be returned as 1.
4. Date columns must be marked as dates and the correct date format must be chosen.

Note: When the data is returned to Excel the page headings are repeated in the same way, as they were output to the screen. Rather than going through and deleting these lines manually, increase your page depth term setting to accommodate your output in the fewest number of pages possible.

J&B WHOLESALE MANAGES ITS BUSINESS BETTER WITH MITS.



J&B Wholesale distributes quality food products and services to meat markets, retail grocery store and /food service distributors. It uses its own fleet of trucks and is a division of J&B Group, located in St. Michael, Minnesota. J&B Wholesale serves over 3,000 customers in 11 Midwestern US states.

The company runs its ERP software on an IBM RS6000 running UniVerse and AIX. All of the onsite desktop users are connected through a LAN and the remote users connect using Citrix. The IT department, which consists of seven full-time employees, provides all of the phone, network, desktop, software, and hardware maintenance for a total of about 375 J&B employees.

The company is located in two buildings in St. Michael, plus a warehouse in Detroit Lakes. There are about 150 active UniVerse users at J&B Wholesale, for whom Lyn Marshall, senior systems analyst/programmer, is directly responsible. She is the only MultiValue programmer with the company, so oversees all of the UniVerse design and analysis, programming, documentation, end-user training and phone support.

Marshall, who appears to love the challenges brought on by keeping a growing business state-of-the-art, explained that J&B has a mix of distribution, production and public cold storage, which leads to a corresponding mix of hardware and software solutions. "We have interfaces to scales, conveyor systems, mobile (truck) software and routing functions," she said. "We have such a variety of things happening that every day is interesting; every day holds opportunities to learn new things!" It's this diversity at J&B—and the desire to be leaders in employee productivity, industry respect and customer satisfaction—that created the escalating problems with the creation of customised reports.

The Circumstances: Users Were Demanding More Out of Their Reports

Before using MITS, J&B had purchased Cognos about five years ago. The Cognos cubes were built, but getting the users to utilize them proved difficult. "There was only one person that ever did use Cognos," Marshall remembered. She continued to say that J&B had several problems to overcome when considering a new BI (business intelligence) product. "We had a problem with eight to ten users

running sales history reports at the same time. They were all beating on one huge file simultaneously, slowing down both themselves and everyone else."

Marshall said another crucial issue was that everyone wanted the same data, sorted 40 or more different ways. She explained: "We had a report called the 'Ultimate Sales Report' which used one big sales history file and gave the user literally 32 primary and secondary sort/select options, yet that still wasn't enough! We kept adding options, or new menu selections, as needed.

Finally, these reports were sufficient, but they were still just hard-copy reports—no drill-down, no quick change of the sort selection or different output columns, etc."

The Solution: MITS Provides the Speed, Flexibility and Compatibility with IBM U2 that J&B Required

Once Marshall and her peers in IT heard about MITS, it didn't take long to make up their minds. "We saw a demo, saw how easy it was to use and how fast the response was, and we bought it! Veni, vini, vendi! (We came, we saw, we bought!)" Marshall said excitedly.

Three of them attended MITS training one year ago and, according to Marshall, "were able to hit the floor running upon our return! We installed the software, set up the server, modified a default hypercube that was provided from MITI, and began loading history. We had several people using the Sales hypercube before the past two years of history had even finished loading!" Marshall said they never really considered any product other than MITS. "MITS had the ability to use our UniVerse data without having to write all those flat file, third-party interface files. It had everything we needed."

For Marshall, the ability to utilize the data dictionary to drive the population of the hypercubes was the biggest advantage, because "I know from experience how flexible that makes the software. I can do anything I need with dictionary items."

Marshall, who was once a professional educator for the MultiValue training company, JES & Associates, said the ease-of-use was also a huge factor in selecting MITS. "I have worked with and trained users since the early 1980's, and MITS is a 'no-brainer' for the end-user. It is simple, straightforward, and easy. You can drill down, drill up, change your columns, change your sort sequence, etc. And it's all done very quickly."

Another feature important to J&B was the fact the MITS did not require an additional SQL database and the hypercubes are built directly from the original UniVerse data. "This may sound like one of those 'too good to be true' stories, but MITS has everything we need: it is fast, it is easy, and the support is superb!"

The Process: Creating Hypercubes for Customized Business Requirements

Management Information Tools Professional Service staff provided J&B with an initial sales hypercube and Marshall used it as a template to expand upon the sales analysis and to immediately create additional hypercubes. The company has already created or is in the process of creating a MITS hypercube for nearly every department, including: Sales and Marketing, Purchasing and Receiving, Inventory and Warehouse, Accounting and Corporate. "Every department is clamoring to get more information more quickly, so we are constantly working on creating additional hypercubes," Marshall said.

The hypercube for Accounting will display customer data such as name and address information, account balances, days outstanding, and other information. "We need to look at our customer data in terms of different market segments (retail customers, wholesale, foodservice, etc.) and also by company groupings, such as grocery store chains," she explained.

The Inventory hypercube is used for analyzing a variety of multiple product groupings to look at inventory turns, balances, movement, and all of the activity occurring in the warehouses. "When you have a large inventory, a tool like MITS can have very tangible benefits when it comes to managing and controlling that inventory," said Marshall.

J&B is also defining a new Purchasing hypercube to provide insight into vendors' performances at different product grouping levels, as well as a new Sales hypercube aimed at the buyers—using the same source data but with completely different drill-downs. "I can foresee a hypercube built from warehouse activity data that could be utilized by Human Resources and the Warehouse for establishing productivity baselines and pay levels,"

Marshall forecasted. "Another hypercube could be developed to assist in setting pricing levels or to review assembly and cutting costs for Production. There is no limit to the applications and usefulness of this tool!"

The Results: The MITS Solution Empowers J&B Employees

According to Marshall, the business paybacks of using the product have completely justified the decision to purchase MITS just one year ago. "I only have so much time in a day, and I cannot add to or create new reports for every possible combination of sorts and selects that I know the users would like to see," she explained. "MITS has empowered each user and allows them to define and derive the data needed, adapting readily to their individual needs. That is a huge benefit to any company!"

J&B found MITS to be so easy to use, the company authorized two of its users to train the rest of the users. "I do not have to personally train everyone, which is a good thing since my day is already filled beyond capacity," Marshall said. "Our main in-house trainer is not a programmer, but attended the MITS 101 and 201 classes and has become a 'power MITS user'!" Marshall said that many of the MITS users have told her they love the speed with which they can generate their own reports, change the columns, or do whatever customization they need to do. "One of our users has used MITS to do a lot of comparisons and then used the results to define our new product price categories, which will be used to drive our new pricing strategies in the upcoming year," she explained.

MITS has also been manipulated by a user to generate a unique Profit & Loss Statement for the Marketing Department, not your standard accounting P&L, but one with tonnage alongside the dollars. This has proven invaluable, Marshall said, because in the food distribution business, tonnage can be at least as important as dollars. "Our users are also happy with the ease of exporting data into Microsoft Excel," she concluded, "which enables them to readily disperse data to the people who need it, including customers or vendors. Best of all, the MITS user can make the output as succinct or as comprehensive as they want, without the need for a programmer to modify any number of programs!"

MITS is the Business Intelligence/ Interactive Reporting solution available throughout Asia/Pacific from MBS and our Reseller network. MBS' Professional Services team can assist you with the design, development and implementation of MITS cubes. For more information, please contact your local Reseller or MBS Account Manager

MBS and Azure to Deliver IBM U2 to Malaysia

Azure Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd and Meier Business Systems (MBS) are pleased to announce a strategic partnership that will bring increased focus on the MultiValue market throughout Malaysia. Mr. Yue Lam Chiew, General Manager, Azure and Mr. Martin Meier, Managing Director, MBS are pictured after signing the Partnership Agreement.



MBS will initially target the development of Malaysian IBM U2 business partners by providing Web Deployment, Business Intelligence, .NET, J2EE and other technologies to complement their current range of IBM U2 solutions. These products include the data base products UniVerse and UniData, RedBack, the Rapid Application Development product System Builder, MITS, mvQuery and a variety of other MultiValue products and technologies.

“The U2 product range has been enjoying significant success throughout the Asia/Pacific region and this strategic partnership will deliver enhanced focus on these products”, said Edwin Mair, MBS Business Development Manager (ASIA). “MBS will add leading application solutions to the market to support those already offered by the local U2 partner community. These include applications and tools such as Advanced Warehouse Management, PDA Integration and Rapid Application Development Tools”.

“We are extremely pleased to be able to partner with an organization such as MBS”, said Yue Lam “MBS’ reputation in the IBM U2 world is unsurpassed and they have been extremely committed to the development of the Multi-Value products throughout the region. As major sponsors of the past 2 International Spectrum MultiValue conferences in Australia, MBS is a true U2 champion”.

Azure Technologies (M) Sdn Bhd (www.azuretech.com.my) , established on 1st of April 1997, is the wholly-owned subsidiary of Vanda Group and a member of Hutchison Global Communications Holdings Limited which is a listed company on the main board of Stock Exchange of Hong. Vanda Group is a premier IT solutions provider in Asia that specializes in systems infrastructure and application solutions services. It provides extensive geographical coverage with operations spanning from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau to South Asian Countries including Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Meier Business Systems (www.mbs.net.au) is an Australian company, formed in 1987, that specializes in the delivery of solutions, services and support for the IBM U2 family of products. As the leading provider of such products in the Asia Pacific region, MBS provides a gateway for International organizations wishing to deliver their application solutions into this region.



INTERNATIONAL SPECTRUM

You are invited to attend International Spectrum San Diego, February 22-25 2005

To be held at the Hyatt Regency Islandia Hotel & Marina, this event promises a huge array of new software tools, major software releases, and technical presentations.

Visit www.intl-spectrum.com for conference details, and complete session information.



COMPLIANCE AND MULTIVALUE

By Susan Joslyn SJ+

To an American at the International Spectrum meetings in Sydney and Melbourne Australia during October it was interesting to note the similarities and differences in our somewhat tight-knit community. I think it's even more tightly-knit "down under" than it is in the US. The numbers are smaller, overall, but perhaps there is more constancy, continual growth and even positive outlook, making that community more cohesive. We American MultiValue-ers have always seen Australia as a "hotbed" of MultiValue activity - that doesn't appear to have changed - there is plenty of MultiValue business and buzz going on. And one thing I didn't hear - not even once! - is that whole chicken-little drama about the sky falling. Not one person wanted to engage me in doomsday speculation about the MultiValue industry. I reckon you can tell from my stunned disclosure of this fact that the subject is a rather constant refrain at similar meetings in the US. I don't know if Australians have had to go through all of that the way we've had to do here and they've recovered - or if they were immune to it from the outset.

Either way, MultiValue is alive and thriving in Australia, (Where *are* those immigration papers?), and Spectrum was the hotspot of the hotbed. There were plenty of people that drove plenty of miles to come and there was an interest and intensity that was refreshing (even nostalgic) for this American. I'd speculate that business, specifically IT business and even more specifically MultiValue IT business is on a pretty even keel for Australians.

Because my software and my specialty is software development life-cycle management, I'm a continual student of US and international IT governance initiatives. I knew that Australia does not have strong compliance requirements *yet*, but that some were in the works. So I went expecting a mild interest - a sort of "ho hum, someday" like when you talk about cleaning out the garage "next Spring". What I found was a surging interest in *our* new compliance requirements. Seems that Senator Sarbanes and Representative Oxley are as famous over there as they are over here! This turns out to be mainly because of the intimate relationships that many companies in Australia have with US companies.

You will find the rest of Susans' article on www.mbs.net.au. It is well worth a read, and certainly provokes some thoughts.



If your organisation has:

- Investment in legacy business applications which have repeatedly delivered a significant amount of mission-critical functionality that must be leveraged
- IT environments incorporating dissimilar hardware, operating systems, databases and applications
- IT teams skilled in legacy applications, that must be able to develop new "service oriented" applications without extensive investments in new technologies

And you need to:

- Intelligently integrate on demand, disparate data from internal departments to enable management to quickly make well-informed, critical business decisions
- Quickly optimise internal business processes to improve operational efficiencies
- Easily connect your legacy systems with your customers and partners
- Leverage your IT investments to create innovative business applications that drive your competitive advantage

Then, you need the [FusionWare Integration Server](#).

MEIER BUSINESS SYSTEMS

MELBOURNE:

50-54 Grange Road

Carnegie, VIC, 3163

Phone: +61 3 9571 3111 Fax: +61 3 9571 3222

SYDNEY:

Suite 1304, Level 13, 83 Mount Street,

North Sydney, NSW, 2060

Phone: +61 2 9954 5000 Fax: +61 2 9954 5100

National Phone Number: 1300 79 33 33 (Australia wide)

Email: info@mbs.net.au

Website: www.mbs.net.au

ACN 050 194 851

ABN 46 050 194 851

Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate, in no event will MBS be responsible or liable, directly or indirectly, for any cost, damage or loss caused, or alleged to be caused by or in connection with the use of or reliance on any such information.

Published December 2004, ©2004 Meier Business Systems

All trademarks are the property of their respective owners.