

"Ace Contact Manager" Joins DMAC's NetBased Products

"Ace Contact Manager" (www.goace.com) joins DMAC's NetBased Software Products division this fall. DMAC acquired Ace as a product that will take DMAC and its clients into new areas.

Although DMAC's first release of Ace Contact Manager is only slightly different from the last release by its prior owners, new features include true net-based capability and Noreen has doubled the content of the help files. The downloadable, demo version of Ace is fully functional, but is limited to three users and 30 records.

As usual, the plans DMAC has for it are wonderful (in our eyes of course). The first step was to move Ace to a network environment. The next step will be to upgrade to 32-bit and get Ace in sync with other DMAC products. Then enable Ace to readily exchange data between DMAC products and other products. Stay tuned; DMAC is hyped on this data management world!

Universal Naming Convention Comes To Unibase by DMAC Operating Systems

Years ago Ricky Nelson (not Rick Tarbox) wanted DMAC to put Universal Naming Convention (UNC) names into Unibase by DMAC. Well, finally most of the newer Microsoft and LINUX operating systems support UNC names so Unibase by DMAC now supports it.

If the operating system does not support UNC and a UNC name is used, it fails. When a user has various client operating systems, some may support it; some may not. Try it with older versions and find out.

So what is UNC? DMAC thinks this stands for calling a server and a volume by name instead of by letter. Thus the old way (what was this called?) to reference a file in the Unibase directory on serverf vol1 mapped as drive g: would have been to use the following:

```
G:\unibase\tmp\turkey.txt
```

Using UNC this could have been entered as the following:

```
\\serverf\vol1\unibase\tmp\turkey.txt
```

So that is the difference. DMAC has clients doing this new way when defining devices in spooler management. Printers can also be accessed using UNC:

```
\\serverf\canon
```

But of course, the little rules differ with each Microsoft operating system. Windows 95 and Windows 98 normally support only eight.three character names unless sufficient upgrades have been added to the OS. And remember printers have to have an eight.three character name for these operating systems.

This feature will be in release 8.1 of Unibase by DMAC. And, as usual, if there are problems that are not Microsoft OS problems, our clients will send us enough information to fix them. Happy device labeling. (We are checking unibase.ini file names now).

NetStaffTrakr Proceeds Through DMAC's Upgrade Process

DMAC's NetBased Product, NetStaffTrakr, will soon return from DMAC's repackaging /manufacturing process with lots of new features. As its first release as a DMAC product, users gave us a big list of "needs." Upgrading the help files was immediate. Noreen did that quickly and these new help files are in distribution

.NetStaffTrakr is in quality assurance on its other new features. This next release will include the following enhancements after they pass QA:

- Novell logout also logs out of NetStaffTrakr.
- Importing users from prior versions.
- Activity log can now be sorted.
- Comments can be entered while "in".
- Checked out field can be set as a mandatory fill.
- Forcing a default logout is possible as an option.

- Changing font size does not mean you cannot see text.
- Activity log has more data.
- More choices in clearing the activity log
- Ability to pre-schedule more than one logout.
- Display names by group.
- Ability to keep track of time zone differences.

As usual, the plans DMAC has for NetStafTrakr are wonderful (in our eyes of course). This step gets NetStafTrakr in sync with other DMAC products. The next step will be readily exchanging data between DMAC products and other products. Stay tuned; DMAC is hyped on this data management world!

Microsoft XP OS Runs Slow Sometimes. Why?

DMAC would love to say "Do not ask us why Microsoft's XP Operating System runs so slowly at times; we do not know." But actually there is a better answer in this day of the web. If you put the following search query, "XP OS Slow Problems" into Google you get over 60,000 returns. Reading through this information tells you at least two things:

1. The problem is real.
2. Lots of fixes are possible.

One quick answer, of course, would be for Microsoft to fix the problem.

After many hours of reading these returns, Fred selected one return for Rick to review. Rick read it and complained that Fred should have emailed it to him not printed it out. Then Rick tried one of the ideas and pronounced that it worked. Too early to tell if Fred agrees that it helped.

It seems that any time XP machines are on a local network with operating systems other than XP, problems arise.

MCSE, Brian M. Posey, has this to say (plus much more in his comments), "Service Pack 1 slows XP down. File lock problems occur. Windows XP has trouble writing to Windows 2000 domain controllers. Microsoft support article 321169 talks about the problems. Delayed TCP/IP packets cause problems.

Scheduled tasks on remote machines causes problems. SMB signing incompatibility."

Fred thinks that if the above helps, then the articles might help more. The reasoning is that if the above is gibberish to you, the solutions will be also. If gibberish, then consult an expert (at least 50 miles away and with a briefcase?) to help. Or wait for Microsoft to sort it out. See the article on Microsoft updates.

TestITP Now Expands IDC To List All Pages In TIF File

Unibase Imaging users now can expand an image data control (IDC) file to show all the pages of a TIFF file outside of data capture in Unibase Imaging. Users requested this feature to allow creating IDC files automatically.

Previously, Unibase Imaging automatically expanded the IDC file when a work batch was first opened. Then a user creating the IDC file wanted to pick up only the second page of a TIFF file. But there was a catch; sometimes the second page of a TIFF file did not exist. In that case, the user wanted the first page.

Thus TestITP was created. The user now expands a work batch into IDC file. Next the user treats the IDC file as a text file in the Unibase Edit program. Here in the edit program the user throws away the pages not needed for the batch and keeps the pages needed. Result? From the newly created IDC file the keyer sees only images from which data is keyed. The keyer process is faster and less confusing because only needed pages are decoded and displayed from the TIFF file.

Time Zones Are Not Always One Hour Apart

Some facts we learned before the Internet era must be relearned. One fact which bit us at DMAC is that we thought times zones were one hour apart. They are not. New Delhi, India, where DMAC is currently doing a large install, is 30 minutes apart from some neighboring time zones.

Why is this important? DMAC tries to cope with various versions of Microsoft, and the way they treat file times, by ignoring the effects of time zones. What a headache when the 30 minute difference appeared. DMAC's client must have wondered as DMAC kept asking for them to send debug information to DMAC. But, it is fixed.

And now Calcutta with, its 45-minute time zone difference from its neighbors, is all set for an easier Unibase By DMAC installation.

Microsoft Updates Must Be Installed: "Suck up and deal."

Used to be that Fred never installed an update from Microsoft because many times the update made things worse. But with the rapid changes in operating systems due to security fixes (or whatever) no user now has a choice.

All of us users must update any currently supported operating system with whatever fixes Microsoft supplies. If the operating system is no longer supported, then the user must make sure it is not exposed to hackers. That includes local hackers and Internet hackers.

Microsoft has made it easy. Go to their web site and read about "Windows Updates." Follow the instructions or suffer the consequences.

DMAC will now be encouraging all its clients to run Unibase on the latest upgrades by Microsoft. DMAC will work to keep Unibase so that it runs on these upgrades. (No small task)

If you must use operating systems that have not been upgraded, do at least two things;

1. Make sure these computers with these operating systems cannot be accessed from the internet. Expect that local hacking can occur at any time.
2. Work out a way to replace these systems as soon as you can. If not, you stand a chance of being "out of business" with these machines for a long time.

We in the computer industry are where the automobile industry was when safety improvements were first introduced. We could fight changing, but we will not win. As my daughter would say, "Suck up and deal."

WebBase by DMAC Moves To IIS; Goes Into Alpha Test

WebBase by DMAC is now running at DMAC on a Microsoft IIS server. Soon it will be available to users on the Internet. Do not expect to see any differences between WebBase on LINUX and WebBase on Microsoft.

The only difference DMAC wants is for WebBase to be easier to administer at our clients sites. For administrators, LINUX in a Microsoft shop is like the proverbial oil and water problems. DMAC has found most administrators are able to support either Microsoft or LINUX – not both.

So now users can configure WebBase on the server operating system of their choice. This choice should be what their people know. Moving between does not work well for DMAC's clients.

Graphical Wmenu Gets First Round Feedback Improvements

Unibase by DMAC, Release 8.0, reception could not have been better! Everyone sent to DMAC what they thought should be added or changed in the Graphical Wmenu executable. So DMAC did it and the result is now in quality assurance for the 8.1 release.

The following feature additions resulted from first round Feedback:

- Mapping the keyboard has been improved.
- Multiple TIFF files move together in Image Data Control files.
- Imgpath.idx handled better in IDC editor.
- Queue editor looks at IDC directory now.
- Queue editor handles remarks.
- Improved Imgpath.idx editor added to job creation
- Readme viewer added to environment control task.
- Help and Tmp directories now available to Unibase Explorer.
- Wmenu now recognizes different ETROOTS.

The improvements will go into Release 8.0. See other newsletter articles about what is coming for the next release.