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eDoc Strategies, Inc. Joins DMAC's Team To Help Clients

As the world changes, so must Data Management Assistance Corporation and DMAC's clients. So in November 2006 DMAC joins forces with Mike Callen and his company eDoc Strategies, Inc. (www.eDocStrategies.com).

DMAC tries to help lead its clients into areas which capitalize on its client's expertise. DMAC has led its clients into keying from images, at-home keyers, keying over the web, OCR/ICR support processes, utilizing the internet and several other areas since the 1980's. This document management field is one where DMAC clients can provide great value added services to their respective customers.

edocStrategies has as its focus the goal of helping clients gain competitive advantages through better understanding of increased process efficiencies, automated workflow, and

instant access to critical information.

DMAC's current clients can learn to provide the value added services associated with the above processes. Converting current, past and future paper documents requires skill sets similar to those used in the keying of data. Certainly the batching skills so critical to DMAC clients can readily transfer to document processing.

DMAC hopes to leverage Mike's fifteen years experience in the document management area to bring the next generation of data management people to DMAC. DMAC envisions with the addition of eDocStrategies to the already strong data management skill sets at DMAC, we can now assist DMAC clients in setting up any project or process in the data / document management area.

One of the new capabilities with eDocStrategies will be consulting on the installation and / or use of FileBound content management solutions. (www.filebound.com). eDocStrategies is a reseller for FileBound products. For DMAC's current clients, this means they can expand their scope of data project expertise resources to include the document management portion with the assistance of DMAC. DMAC and Mike will help transfer this expertise to DMAC clients.

With Mike Callen and Mark Rix, DMAC's Chief Operating Officer, leading the way, Fred Tarbox sees nothing but good things for DMAC's clients. Tina Kay sums it up this way - "DMAC now has the best of both worlds to offer our clients - Data Entry and Document Management expertise and software under one corporate roof. I hope our clients have a record breaking 2007 sales spurt." #

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Read Delimited Files Changes To Support Various Delimiters and Text Qualifiers

These days people like to have flexibility in choosing whether a delimited file is surrounded by commas, tabs, pipes, or what have you when they read them into the Unibase environment. So be it; mission accomplished.

A user can now specify the text qualifier (e.g. double quotes, single quotes, nothing or any ascii character)And the delimiter (comma, tab, pipe) when a delimited file is read into the Unibase environment.

This added flexibility came this past summer as Tina Kay figured out a solution which would meet most clients needs. Figuring out how to make the user interface work is still a hard part of adding new features to Unibase. #

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Happy Holidays from Microsoft; Internet Explorer 7 Breaks Code

Just in time for the holidays Microsoft released Internet Explorer 7. And for those connected to Microsoft's "Windows Update" a flurry of new changes also arrived.

A subtle change was occurring in the Windows runtime package. DMAC is not quite sure where the change occurred. One result of the change was that some processes which were in series are now in parallel. This is good. But of course it broke some code in DMAC's products - which we fixed.

DMAC's first clue that changes were afoot was a mandatory fix requirement from Intuit's Quick Books Pro. Then DMAC's users started calling. November was hustle time.

DMAC is sure that as Windows Vista becomes popular, more changes will occur. Everyone should be aware that the operating environment will change a lot in the next six months. This is a good year to keep up to date on all software maintenance with all vendors. #

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November 10th Novell Sent Novell Users a Surprise; Novell Killed 16 Bit DOS

After many years of the Novell client software being rather tame, November 10th Novell released an update for its users and platform developers as a new load. Two items changed. Novell officially separated 16 bit code from its 32bit API (Application Program Interface) for the client.

Previously DMAC was able to handle both 16 bit clients and 32 bit clients from the same DMAC load. Now it is impossible. DMAC was wondering when Microsoft would kill 16bit DOS code. Well, it was Novell which killed it first. Remember the date, November 10, 2006 as the death of 16 bit DOS code.

And second, Novell renumbered its entry points in its client. This means that you can run either the old client or the new client - but not both on your Novell servers.

And DMAC's code must support the new client. So when you update DMAC in the future, Novell users must make sure that the old Netware client has been updated also.

DMAC has stopped updating its 16bit code with this change. DMAC will still distribute it for now. The old Novell servers were the DMAC clients still running 16 bit code. Progress#

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Tina Kay's Building Samples; Lots and Lots of Samples

Most people have noticed that downloads and/or CDRoms have larger and larger amounts of data on them when a new software product is purchased.

We at DMAC have been looking at all these software product distributions as we significantly upgraded our networks this summer for the move to Texas. Seems that the executable programs are not growing - but the samples are.

Someone has determined that we human beings learn readily from seeing an example of what someone else did which was similar. Sooo, Tina Kay offered to put her teaching examples in the "samples" folders throughout the Unibase environment.

They tell us in Windows Vista, workstation users will be able to look through these samples easily. Let us hope so; otherwise DMAC developers will have to figure out something. DMAC is looking for feedback on this teaching method. #

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ImageDisplayDei Expands To Handle Multi-page Tiffs; More to Come

DMAC's new in 2006 ImageDisplayDei viewer with mouse interface capabilities has been upgraded to support multi-page tiffs. Several DMAC clients are working on a set of features they would like to see added to ImageDisplayDei in the support of the mouse.

As usual, no one wishes to lose any keyboard support features - only add mouse support features. All suggestions will be considered before the next update of ImageDisplayDei.

Currently users can bring up ImageDisplayDei any time in Unibase Imaging by using the {Ctrl F5} key. #

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Old Recover Corrupted Files Capability Gets Upgrade To Handle Image Files

Old routines never die, they won't even fade away. In this day of great, reliable computers who would think that some DMAC clients still use the old AFL (recover corrupted files) routines from back in the times of 9 track magnetic tape?

Well DMAC clients do. Seems file servers and networks do fail. Recovering a batch file which has a lot of labor content still makes the effort worthwhile.

So, this summer DMAC added the ability to recover batch files with images to the AFL programs which were created before DMAC had Unibase Imaging. Naturally, these new versions automatically can tell whether image data is present or not and do what is necessary.

For the younger set, these programs take advantage of the fact that DMAC data batches are double linked. Double linked means each record is linked to the record before and after the record. The links run forward through the file and backwards through the file. So the AFL program works its way down each path of the links creating a restored file from the data.

When the program cannot proceed, it starts at the back and works forward. So if only one record was destroyed, it will be the only record missing from the recovered file. Amazing what they used to protect from frequent computer crashes. And it still helps in this time of almost perfect computer systems. #

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"when newfield" Joins the AID Language For Special Cases

DMAC clients ask for the most interesting enhancements to the AID language. Recently a DMAC client had a need to back up through a data batch record which had a large prefield edit on the first field which ended up positioning past the beginning of the record. Talk about a loop.

After much discussion as to how to solve this issue with the least amount of client work and most clearly for the client, DMAC added the "when newfield" conditional modifier to the AID language. As you can see, the concept is simple. When a field is entered for the first time, the "when newfield" test is TRUE; otherwise it is FALSE.

As those who have learned from requesting their own enhancement to Unibase, this addition is described in the readme.txt file which comes with each new update to DMAC. The readme file just grows and grows as new feature after new feature is added. Eventually the new features are added to the online help and manuals - but that takes a while. Have fun reading about the new features.

As a final note, in the latest release of Unibase you can read the readme.txt file by clicking on help in wmenu. #

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Unibase Users On Support Asked For it; Now A Single Executable Update Exists

During 2006, DMAC moved Unibase by DMAC, Unibase Imaging, and WebBase by DMAC to Microsoft's Visual Studio 2005 Development Platform. And earlier DMAC had switched to the

Installshield Installer.

Now another great feature has been tested and is available for DMAC clients using DMAC support. DMAC can now send a DMAC client an email with a link and password to the DMAC ftp site which has the latest single executable update file for Unibase by DMAC, Unibase Imaging and WebBase by DMAC.

The single file is a complete install. Using Installshield, Visual Studio 2005, and Microsoft's Installer as a package lets DMAC update only those files which need to be changed for a DMAC client.

Since DMAC's server orientation with its only one copy of the DMAC executables is rather unique and timesaving, there are a couple items to remember.

First, DMAC still recommends installing from the workstation not directly on the server. This solves a lot of the permission issues by giving simple error message when permissions do not exist. From now on, a DMAC client should always install to the server from the same workstation if the client wishes to take advantage of the Microsoft Installers great effort at checking out version numbers and creating hidden backup files.

Regardless, DMAC's install does not destroy anything which needs to carry over from the existing installation. DMAC thanks Installshield for this feature.

And yes, a DMAC support client can still obtain a CDROM with all the software on it. And yes again, the CDROM can be installed anywhere and the executables and dlls can be copied to the production environment.

DMAC is watching all this to see what users want next for ease of installing and updating. #

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Whoever Thought Universal Naming Convention (UNC) Would Allow Such Long Computer Names?

In Unibase by DMAC, Unibase Imaging, and WebBase by DMAC, release 8.3, the use of Universal Naming Convention (UNC) was added to provide independence from mapped drive letters for DMAC client networks.

Everyone seems to like this ability to map the server which houses the Unibase file folders with any old drive letter. Slowly all the bugs have been removed from this approach.

One new bug is worth mentioning. The oldtimers remember when a command line exceeded a certain limit, the command line was moved to a file and a reference was passed to the file throughout Unibase.

This process has been spiffed up because one of DMAC's clients named his server "TheOldMountainOnWhichTheNewHouseWasBuilt" or something like that. Not so bad when a single UNC name is passed on the command line, to let us say, drun. But wow, it really makes a difference when one thousand data batches are passed to drun using this server UNC. The problem is fixed; but just goes to show that your server could remind you every day of how hard it is to type a long name correctly. Have fun in Vista. #

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Mother Said To Never Brag About What Is Planned; Only About What Is Complete -

That Said; Here comes WDE (witty)

Mother was right; it is very dangerous to talk about what you will have in the future. Too many times; the future does not turn out as you hope. So take this whole article with a large dose of salt.

Most remember when wMenu, the Graphical User Interface (GUI) functional equivalent of menu, was created. It arrived after wRfmouse was used to replace the menu based screen painting. And wMenu arrived before the wEz_edit editor replaced the ez_edit editor.

So, hopefully, in 2007 WDE (witty) will arrive to replace / augment the Unibase by DMAC keying module and Unibase Imaging. Tina Kay and Rick Tarbox have been working out the details for quite a while. Soon these specs go to the developers.

This round, as different from the 2003 GUI version which no one at DMAC liked enough to release, should please both old and new keyers while still allowing DMAC clients to control the environment.

Rick Tarbox sums it up this way: "I am very excited to see Data Entry and Image Entry move into the full GUI Windows environment. Such a move promises to reduce training costs for new keyers significantly, while maintaining the rich feature set that has given Unibase by DMAC and Unibase Imaging the edge over its competitors." The year 2007 promises to be a great year. #

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