

CaTT Tales



A District Information Services Computer and Telecommunication Technology Initiatives Newsletter

February 2006

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The CaTT is Back!

By Deborah Ludford

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that Information Services (I.S.) presents CaTT Tales once again! So many have requested that we bring back this publication to keep the NOCCCD family informed on I.S. related issues that we have decided to issue it quarterly. In keeping with the times, the newsletter will be distributed and stored electronically and printed for you upon request. In addition, it will be archived at www.nocccd.edu/CaTTTales.htm for easy reference. Should you have questions or comments about how this communication can be more effective, or you have ideas or suggestions for content please forward them via e-mail to me at dludford@nocccd.edu.

Better communications with our customers is one of the objectives Information Services has identified for the upcoming year. We hope that CaTT Tales will be one effective way to achieve that objective.

In this same spirit of better communications, Information Services would like to share our goals and objectives for the year with you in this first edition. These goals were developed with input from all I.S. Staff, and we hope they will help us to serve you better:

- Provide the best technology for the best value.
- Meet legal & system requirements.
- Provide high-quality customer service.
- Plan for the future.

Also developed were objectives and activities, which we think will work towards the identified goals. The details of these objectives and activities are available at:

www.nocccd.edu/Departments/goals&objectives2005.pdf

We hope you enjoy this first edition of CaTT Tales for the 2006 year.

The District Takes On .EDU

By Erin Ridley

We are happy to announce that, in order to simplify communications and follow a trend in our District and in higher education, we have changed our Internet domain name. Everything that used to end in @nocccd.cc.ca.us now ends with @nocccd.edu. This change affects our website (www.nocccd.edu) as well as the e-mail addresses for the District employees.

While these changes took effect on February 6, the District will operate on a "parallel mode" for a period of time (six months or more) to minimize change-over difficulties. This mode will allow e-mail sent to old addresses to reach intended destinations. It will also allow visitors using the old website address to reach our new website.

To assist in the change-over, the Information Services Department will provide instruction to employees on how to make the necessary changes in their e-mail address books and list serves to which they subscribe. Employees will be able to make their individual e-mail changes during the time of instruction.



Passwords.....they are a'changin'

By Erin Ridley

We have all seen those clever commercials on TV about identity theft. Even though the commercials are quite funny, it is really a very serious subject! You can never be too careful when protecting secure information. Well, that pertains to us at work as well! Every year auditors will give us recommendations on things we need to do. Our last audit report stated that we need to do more in regards to passwords, specifically, to ensure that passwords meet certain standards and are changed regularly. Because of this recommendation, Information Services has been doing some research into this very subject! The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS for short) have standards that the NOCCCD is required to abide by. Those standards are now going to become district standards for passwords in Banner as well. The following standards for password usage in Banner are being implemented:

- Passwords must be a minimum of 7 characters in length, with at least one character being a number.
- Passwords must be changed at least every 90 days.
- Reminders to change passwords will be received 30 days before the password expires.
- If you fail to change your password within that time, your password will expire and your account will be locked out. The only way to reactivate the account is to E-mail issecurity@nocccd.edu with your information.

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Banner and User Friendly in the same sentence?

By Mike Kessler

Since its original implementation, the Banner system has continually been upgraded to reflect changing requirements, functional enhancements, and technological advances. The version now in use at NOCCCD is version 6. Banner 7 is the next major upgrade for NOCCCD and is scheduled for a fall 2006 implementation. SunGard SCT is transforming Banner with new architecture, many operational improvements, and new user interface. You may be asking yourself, "What's in it for me?" Administrative users will notice that Banner is more user-friendly. Technical staff will find Banner easier to build on.

Here's a brief look at some of the improvements coming our way:

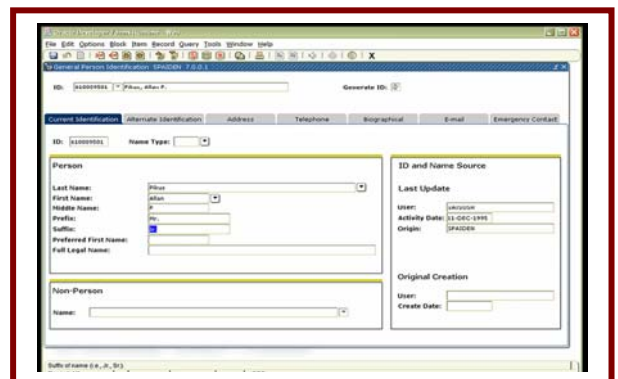
New user interface which provides the following:

- Forms sized to be full screen
- Smart toolbar with improved icon buttons
- Additional rows at the bottom of forms
- Equal left and right margins on forms
- Improved navigation between forms

Multiple PIDM (ID) Prevention – Common Matching is now available everywhere an ID is created to help prevent duplication of persons in the database.

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*"Administrative users will notice that Banner is more user-friendly."
Mike Kessler*




"A new look for Banner"

User Corner

By Mike Kessler

How to Read and Search SCT Banner Documentation via Banner Bookshelf

The Banner Bookshelf includes PDF files for SCT Banner documentation. To use these PDF files, the users must have Adobe Reader installed on their client machines. Users can open, read, search, and print the PDF files. To access the Bookshelf logon to Banner, you need to click on the Bookshelf button  located on the right side of the menu bar. Adobe Acrobat Reader will open. Once the Bookshelf is open, you see two panes. The left pane contains a bookmark for each SCT Banner baseline and line extension product (Accounts Receivable, Finance, Financial Aid, General, Human Resources, Student, etc.) The right pane is the SCT Banner Documentation Bookshelf main page with icons to help you use the bookshelf. When you click the + sign in front of a product bookmark on the left pane, the bookmark expands to show your bookmarks for that product's manual. When you click the + sign in front of a manual bookmark, the bookmark expands to show you a list of the chapters in the manual. To open a chapter, click the chapter bookmark. Each chapter has its own bookmark.

How to Conduct Basic Search

- ② Select a product manual
- ② Click the "Search" icon in the toolbar
- ② In "What word or phrase would you like to search for?" enter the word or phrase you would like to search
- ② Click the "Search" button.
- ② The "Results" window will open showing each sentence containing your search request.

What's New in Argos

By Bob Hughes

It's hard to believe that just one year ago we made the commitment to purchase the district-wide reporting tool called **Argos**. It was a major change in how we provided users access to Banner data. Previously, you were on your own – either you had to master SDA Views or hire a consultant to create a script or build an Access database to get you the data you needed to do your job.

Today, we are happy to provide any Banner user with Argos training, an Argos account, and assistance with report development. In just 10 months we have trained nearly 300 employees in one or more Argos classes, and have developed over 100 Argos datablocks to accommodate your reporting needs.

Last November, we contracted with Bruce Nutting to help you move the reports you created in SDA Views to Argos. He met with staff members throughout the District, and has been steadily moving a long list of reports created in various other formats to Argos. If Bruce has asked you to test one of your reports in Argos, please do that as soon as possible so he can place them in production before he leaves in March.

We continue to hold Argos training classes every other week. To sign up for the next class, go to Reporting Central <http://www.reporting.nocccd.cc.ca.us> (Reporting Central will be converted to .edu in the near future).

Watch this space in future issues for information on new and innovative datablocks in Argos. Here are three in the 'Student' folder that might be of use to you:

"**Generic Label Maker**" – have you ever had a small list of Banner ID's and simply wanted to print a sheet of address labels or perform a quick mail merge? You can do that now in Argos. The "Generic Label Maker" allows you to enter up to 30 ID's (one full sheet of labels) on the screen, and the datablock will retrieve the current name and mailing addresses for printing in label format or for use in a mail merge.

"**Student Term GPA Greater Than**" and "**Student Term GPA Less Than**" – these two datablocks allow you to enter a GPA value (i.e. 3.5) and pull a list of students who had a GPA higher than or lower than that value for any term you specify. The list can be limited to students enrolled just at Cypress, just at Fullerton, or enrolled at both campuses. The results can output in either mailina labels or a spreadsheet.

Project Completed with Savings Realized

By Tom Wallace

As part of a project to reduce the cost of telephone services, The District Technology Roundtable (DTR), which consists of the Academic Computing Directors and Information Services managers, took on the charge to determine what could be done to reduce the costs of long-distance calling. Four objectives for the project were established:

1. **Reduce long distance rates** - get the best long distance service and rates for the entire District.
2. **Consolidate billing** – a simple billing structure that can be easily understood; a bill that would clearly delineate data circuit, local service and long-distance service charges.
3. **Eliminate unneeded services** – eliminate services that are no longer needed and add services that are needed.
4. **Improve our procedures** – put procedures in place that will help us control long-distance usage and changes to long-distance services.

Information Services collected telephone bills for the month of April 2004 and sent them to three vendors for analysis. The study showed that by moving all long-distance services to SBC, we could significantly reduce the cost of long-distance calling throughout the District. In July 2005, all long-distance services were moved to SBC and long-distance billing was consolidated to one monthly bill.

The result? For the months of August, September, and October of 2005, the average savings over the same period last year was \$1,755 per month.

Our next step, which is already in progress, is to review all voice and data circuits throughout the District. Our goal is to save additional costs by consolidating circuits where possible and eliminating all unneeded circuits.



Protecting Your Data

By Bob Hughes

Recently, several higher education institutions have had to notify students, employees, and others of unauthorized data access to personal information stored on the institutions' computing resources. In 2005 alone, the University of Colorado, CSU Stanislaus, Sonoma State University, Cal Poly Pomona, CSU Dominguez Hills, USC, UC Berkeley, UC San Francisco and CSU Chico have all been required to notify current and former students, faculty and/or staff of the unauthorized access to personal information.

Notifications have had a significant impact both to the finances and the reputations of these affected institutions. However, if these universities had stored data in an encrypted format, the notification requirement would not have been triggered.

Our District has the same risks. This risk is especially high when we use tools such as Argos or SDA views to download data from Banner to a PC or Laptop. It is especially of concern for laptops that might leave the confines of our work location and be stolen or lost in the process.

At the same time, very simple method for protecting data exists for most users. You can store sensitive data in an encrypted folder that you create on your PC. An encrypted folder functions just like any other folder on your desktop, and the fact that the data stored is encrypted will be transparent to you. Use of encrypted folders will ensure, even if your laptop or desktop is stolen or accessed by an unauthorized person, the notification process which could be potentially harmful to the District reputation will not be triggered.

Specific instructions for creating and using encrypted folders can be found at:

<http://www.nocccd.edu/Departments/Encrypted.pdf>



Banner continued from page 2

Protection of Personally Identifiable Information -- Also based upon FGAC technology, this enhanced feature configured expressly for your institution enables you to protect sensitive information by determining whether a user should have access to a given PIDM. To control the display or masking of sensitive information, new forms and tables define the fields and types of masking that should be applied to personal data.

The NEW Online Help -- Available for all Banner forms, online help includes form, field, and task help. It is accessible via the Web one click away. Navigation between forms is simple and straightforward.

Passwords continued from page 2

- Your new password must be different from the last four passwords you have used.
- Your account will be locked after six attempts of signing in with the incorrect password.
- A Banner session will automatically log out if you have been idle for 90 minutes. If this occurs, you just need to log back in.



Tips 'N' Tricks

By Information Services. Help Desk

Banner Printing Tip:

We have received several calls regarding not being able to print in Banner. The problem is often because of a pop-up blocker that is coming with the latest updates of Microsoft Windows XP. When users call with this problem, we instruct them to do the following:

- Close all Banner and Internet Explorer (IE) windows.
- Open IE, go to Tools, and disable the pop-up blocker.
- Restart Banner, rerun report, and then IE will open a second window to allow printing.
- Call your campus IT staff and have them set an exception to allow Banner pop-ups.

Windows Updates:

When you are shutting down your computer and you see the option "Install updates then shutdown", just click it; you don't need to stand around and wait for it to finish since the system will automatically power off when it has completed the update.

Avoid Phishing Attacks:

Information Services has received several reports of phishing attacks that target customers of Ebay, SBC Yahoo, Farmers & Merchants Bank, Symantec's Norton Anti Virus, Complex Community Credit Union, Associated Bank, Regions Bank & First Hawaii Bank. Phishing attacks are a way to trick users into giving up certain personal information that can be used illegally. Users usually receive an e-mail that claims the customer's account must be verified. The e-mail usually urges users to click on a link to prevent account termination. **DO NOT CLICK ON ANY OF THE LINKS IN THESE E-MAILS!!!** Simply delete the e-mails.

Shut Off Your PC Before Leaving Work:

When you leave the office for the evening, power off your systems. A system left on all night not only consumes electrical power, it is also a security risk if it is left logged on to the network

Security Tip:

When you need to dispose of your backup media such as floppy disks, Zip disks, or CD's, be sure to destroy them before placing in the trashcan. If they are not destroyed, someone could retrieve the data files on these disks.

*"A system left on all night not only consumes electrical power, it is also a security risk if it's left logged on to the network"
- I.S. Help Desk*

Training Schedule 2006

By Erin Ridley

Navigation Training

February 22	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
February 28	2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
March 9	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
March 16	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
March 24	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
March 29	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
April 7	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
April 26	2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
May 5	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
May 11	2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
May 19	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
May 24	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

RQ Training

February 16	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
April 12	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Argos Training – Power Users

February 9	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
April 6	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Argos Training - End Users

February 23	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
March 9	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
March 23	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
April 20	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**To sign up for either the Navigation or RQ training classes, please contact your campus training coordinator:

AC: Sandy Palmer, CC: Vicki Sykes
 FC: Laurie Barrett, SCE: Irene Beck

**To sign up for Argos Training go to Reporting Central (<http://www.reporting.nocccd.cc.ca.us>).

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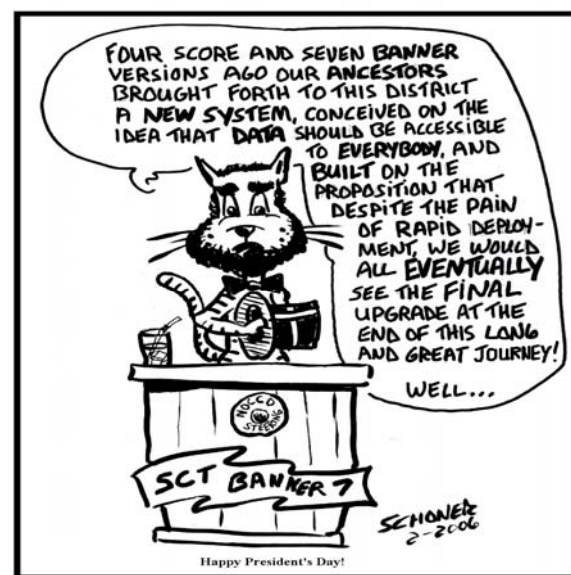
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CaTT Toon

By Carl Schoner



"There isn't anyone who doesn't count"