

CaTT Tales



A District Information Services Computer and Telecommunication Technology Initiatives Newsletter

February 2007

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Making the Most of Banner

By Deborah Ludford

Welcome to the latest edition of the CaTT Tales! As you know, we try to focus each edition on a theme, and the main focus of the articles this month is "Making the Most of Banner." This theme is appropriate as we look at the District-wide Strategic Plan and specifically goal #7, which reads "Through effective planning and using resources efficiently, the District/campuses provide facilities, equipment, technology and infrastructure to adequately support instructional programs and services."

Banner is the main technology solution we use to support students and operate the District and as such it needs to provide a strong foundation for good decision making and resource utilization. Banner has been used for four years now, and the depth of information it contains is a valuable asset we must preserve and leverage for the future. The focus in Information Services is to improve the functions Banner supports, find new ways of using the information contained within Banner to better run our operations, and develop and/or refine the processes surrounding Banner to help those who use it more effectively and efficiently.

Many of the projects we are doing today such as Portal (Luminis) and

Enrollment Management (EMS) are designed to do just that. Some projects we have done such as North Orange Card and Argos Reporting are already providing these services. In the future we are considering imaging, alumni management, and process re-engineering efforts to make Banner even more useful and helpful to our staff and students.

Please enjoy the articles presented in this issue to understand how we are "Making the Most of Banner." Happy reading.....

Laptop Training

By Deborah Ludford



District Information Services in conjunction with the campus Academic Computing Departments is working to create a Laptop Training Course, which will focus on the appropriate ways to use a laptop to access Banner. This training will be started in late March/early April and will cover such topics as connecting to Banner, security concerns, and general how-to information. Watch for more information in early March...

Debut of the North Orange Card

By Claudette Dain

In December 2006, the "North Orange Card" debuted to a pilot group of financial aid students from Cypress College and Fullerton College. What is a "North Orange Card" you ask? This is a Visa debit card with the NOCCCD logo and it is currently being offered to students who normally receive Financial Aid disbursements from Cypress College or Fullerton College (North Orange County Community College District). Financial Aid recipients may now opt to receive disbursements loaded onto their North Orange Card in lieu of receiving disbursements in the form of a check. This card can be used for purchases anywhere Visa is accepted or students can transfer the funds from their card to their bank account. There are many advantages of the North Orange Card, both to students and to NOCCCD. One of the biggest advantages to students perhaps is the ability to skip the hassles of check

cashing and bank accounts and avoid unnecessary fees for students who do not have bank accounts and have to resort to check cashing businesses.

To learn more about the North Orange Card, please visit www.northorangecard.com or call either of the Financial Aid offices at Cypress College or Fullerton College.



Progress towards a Portal

By Adam Howard

In the last issue of CaTT Tales, we reported that evaluation of portal software was underway. The evaluation has been completed, and at the end of 2006, the District signed a contract with Sungard Higher Education for the Luminis Portal.

What does this mean for you? Recall the three goals laid out for our portal: 1. Single Sign-on to other web applications, 2. Targeted communications to students, and 3. Development of a platform for future web services for students, faculty, and staff.

The Luminis portal is designed to tie into our Banner system. The portal will know who you are based on information in Banner. Because of this, we can implement one portal to serve the entire District, and that portal will be customized for each user. A student from Cypress will see the portal accented with blue and gold, bearing the Cypress logo, with campus news and links to registration and class schedules. A faculty member from Fullerton too will see the portal branded in school colors, and will be able to access her class rosters.

Other notable features of Luminis that leverage Banner include "Course Studio," which allows for every class to have its own workspace with discussion board, chat, and web page; Targeted Announcements to groups of portal users based on criteria in Banner; and a Directory Service populated from Banner that can provide single sign-on capabilities to websites such as WebCT and Blackboard.

Planning for the implementation of Luminis Portal has begun. Initial implementation will focus on installing the critical features, training for portal users, and laying the groundwork for future enhancements. More information on the project will be available soon at www.luminis.nocccd.edu.

“Just fill out this form and ...”

By Tom Wallace

Some of us may remember the days when we registered for classes by submitting 80-column punch cards. Those of you, who remember this, raise your hand (if you can get through the arthritis pain).

Gathering data from people and sending it to a computer has sometimes been a challenging event. In the olden days, a student would fill out a form, someone would copy the information from the form onto punch cards, and the cards would be given to a computer operator who would then feed the cards into a card reader that was connected to the computer. Whew! Just that sentence took a lot of energy!

Of course, being the innovative creatures we are, we improved the process by having the student fill out a form and someone then key the information from the form into a computer terminal screen that was connected to the computer. Fewer steps meant faster updates and fewer errors.

Okay, then some genius came up with the document scanner that could read the forms that the students completed. Someone would run the documents through the scanner, an Optical Character Recognition program would read and understand the students' handwriting and the information would be sent to the computer that was connected to the scanner. Again, fewer handlers of the information meant faster updates and fewer errors.

But now the World Wide Web and Web browsers have introduced an even better way. With online forms we can now enter our information directly into the computer. For example, students now log onto the CCCApply website, enter their information, and our system pulls the information down and puts it into Banner. And just around the corner is the transfer of transcripts from one institution to another, all without paper documents. Look, ma, no paper!

Now I am not predicting a paperless society; that's already been predicted and is still to be seen. And I'm not saying that there isn't a place for document scanners; there is. But what I am saying is that many of the forms we produce to gather information from our community are moving toward a paperless, online process that will not require card readers, additional keying or document scanners. Bypassing these processes increases the accuracy of the information, the security of the data, and our responsiveness to our students.

Over 21 Million Records

By Mike Kessler

If you have ever lived in a growing community for several years, you are sure to have noticed the increase in the size of the phone book, and the increasing length of time it took to search for a phone number. When we first went live with Banner, tables were populated with data gradually, and searching through them was a relatively speedy task.

Who would have thought that in just five years we have transaction tables used by Finance that contain millions of records? The transaction history table (FGBTRNH) now contains over 6.2 million records, and the transaction detail table (FGBTRND) now contains over 21.7 million records. Could you imagine the time it would take to find a phone number in a phone book with that many entries?

Fortunately, Banner provides a system for archiving and restoring data relative to the transaction history and transaction detail tables. Reducing the number of records stored in the database will improve the performance of Banner Finance forms and processes, and will increase the available disk space on our servers.

The Banner Archive process copies data from the production tables into a separate database structure with its own set of tables. Data residing in these archive tables can either be purged when it is outdated, or restored back into the production tables. Banner provides four additional forms to view the archived data: FXITRND, FXIGLAC, FXIENCD, and FXITRND.

This is one example of how we are leveraging Banner. We are currently testing this process and will prepare a recommendation for review by the Finance Department.

Forgotten Banner Password? Banner Account Locked?

By Erin Ridley

It has been almost a year since the changes with Banner passwords was implemented. We understand the challenges that go with having to change passwords on a regular basis, such as forgotten passwords, typing in the wrong password too many times, causing your account to lock, etc. Here are some tips for helping you remember to change your password:

* You will get a notice when your password is 60 days old, letting you know that you need to change it within the next 30 days. Change it *before* it hits "1 more day".

* If you don't sign in to Banner on a regular basis, mark your calendar! You can remind yourself to sign in at the beginning of every month. Or once you change your password, mark your calendar 2 ½ months from the date you changed it to sign into Banner and change your password.

* Set up an e-mail rule that will send you a reminder!

We also realize that even with the best of intentions, it just happens! People forget... accounts get locked... If this should ever happen to you, there is some information that we need in order to reset your Banner password and/or account.

* Send an e-mail to issecurity@nocccd.edu

* The e-mail must come from a district email address (cypresscollege.edu, fullcoll.edu, nocccd.edu or sce.cc.ca.us)

* Please include your name and your Banner log in ID. (example: name is John Smith, banner ID is JSMITH)

* If an hourly employee has forgotten their Banner password, the employee's supervisor should e-mail issecurity@nocccd.edu and request the password to be reset.

Once the information has been received, we will process the request within 24 hours. Once completed, we will e-mail you with the new information.

Can't Find An RQ?

By Erin Ridley

Have you ever needed to find an RQ and just was not sure how to go about finding it? It is just a short search away.

- Go to FPAREQN if the RQ has *not* been completed or FPIREQN if it *has* been completed.
- Click on the search icon.
- Press F7 to clear the screen and go into search mode.
- *HINT: Remember, the more criteria you enter, the narrower your results will be!*

Searching by the Requestor's Name:

- You can search for every RQ a person has done by entering in the person's name. Names can be a bit tricky at times so I would suggest entering in first name % last name, such as Erin%Ridley. This way it will not matter if the person uses a middle name/initial or not.
- Press F8 to execute the search.
- Banner will give you a list of every RQ that person has ever done!

Using the Request Date:

- Great... I have a list of every RQ that person has done. But I want to see only the ones done in 2007.
- Enter the Requestor name just like above.
- Tab to the Request Date. Enter in %2007 to see every RQ that person has done in calendar year 2007. OR - enter in JAN %2007 to see every RQ that person did in January 2007.
- Press F8 to execute and see the list.

Using the Vendor number:

- Now I have a list of every RQ that someone did in the entire calendar year 2007. But I want to see just the RQ's they did that went to Office Depot.
- *HINT! You will need to know the vendor's @ number before doing this search. If you don't know it, go to FTIIDEN and search for the number first. Write it down and then do your search in FPIREQN.*
- Enter the name (Erin%Ridley) and Request Date (%2007). Tab to Vendor and enter in the vendor number (@00008874).
- Press F8 to execute and see the list.

For a more detailed description on searching for RQ, please see the handout located on our website under Training Handouts.

Tip: Missing Training Handouts

Want an updated copy of a handout? All of our training handouts are available online. They include all of the changes that came with Banner 7. We have rewritten both the Navigation and the Requisition Training manual. Just click and print the handout!

There's No Escaping Technology Upgrades!

By Carl Schoner

Ah, the good old days. I remember the day when I upgraded my old Gateway PC with additional storage capacity. I bought a 100MB Iomega Zip parallel port drive, plugged it in, and loaded the drivers - all 40K of them - from the toolbox diskette. Voila! Everything worked perfectly. A few years later I purchased a Palm OS personal information manager, and for the next several years I was a very happy man indeed. I carried my schedule, my contact list, and my checkbook in the palm of hand, and my data synchronized easily with my happy little desktop computer equipped with its removable Iomega Zip drive!

My desktop PC was also equipped with an HP 500 Ink Jet printer and this worked fine in black and white, but then one day my daughter exclaimed that she "*like totally, had to have*" color printing. I didn't think so, but she and my wife joined forces and surreptitiously purchased a new HP All-In-One printer using my credit card. You can imagine how happy I was when I came home one night to find my daughter completely reconfiguring my happy little PC in her attempts to install the printer drivers for this new monster printer that I did not yet know I had purchased. I was even more animated when the HP installation wizard rudely declared that my PC was inadequate, and stipulated that I needed to purchase a new hard drive, CPU, display adapter, memory, and monitor in order to support the new printer's drivers that would claim an additional 600MB of disk space!

I tried de-installing what my daughter had attempted to install, but encountered lots of problems along the way, and in the end, none of the applications important to me worked properly. My beloved PC was simply too old to keep up with changing technology, so I finally capitulated to the need for a hardware upgrade and purchased a new PC. Well, it wasn't really "new," but it met all of the requirements of the new printer drivers. After some trial and error, I was able to complete the upgrade so that the printer worked as it should and my Palm device talked happily to the desktop computer once again.

Just a couple of months ago I purchased a new Wi-Fi enabled Palm TX. I was really happy with this purchase until I discovered that I would be forced to upgrade yet again to a more powerful desktop PC running Windows XP in order to support the device! After emphatically vociferating a list of words I never learned in grammar school, I finally capitulated for what I thought would be the last time. I purchased a new laptop computer and applied software upgrades as instructed in order to get the Palm talking to the desktop. But then I discovered that I also needed yet another set of new drivers in order for my Zip Drive to run under Windows XP! So I downloaded and applied them - all 60MB of them - and after much tweaking and re-configuration, my computer system is happy and smiling again, at least for the time being. All of this just to manage my contacts, check e-mail, and balance my checkbook in the palm of my hand!

Then I came home to find my daughter attempting to install a Nokia PC-Suite toolset on my desktop PC so she could download ring-tones from the Internet to her cell phone! Oh well - there's no stopping technology!

Options - A Right Click Away

TIP: Do you want to make what you do in banner just a little faster? Instead of having to take your mouse up to the options menu, just right click! All the options are there! And even better yet, so are Save, Rollback, Print and Exit!

Predicting Future Enrollments

By Bob Hughes

Predicting or forecasting future enrollments is a bit like trying to forecast what the weather is going to be like six months from now. It requires not only the use of historical trends and computer models but also the wisdom and experience that comes from years of being a researcher, dean, or faculty member at a college.

Accurate predictions are important because it will determine what classes should be offered, how many sections of a class should be scheduled, and how many seats should be offered in each class. Decisions to hire additional faculty members will need to be made, and all this needs to happen prior to the printing of the schedule. The goal is to provide the right mix of classes as efficiently as possible so that students meet their academic goals, faculty members maintain their contracts, and facilities are properly used.

For several years now, the District has provided on-line reports that provide five-year historical trends, current enrollments, and enrollment projections down to the individual course level. While many have found these reports useful, there has been a demand for a more flexible method of predicting enrollments.

We have contracted with Information Technology Partners Inc. (ITPI) to license their Enrollment Management System (EMS). This tool, based on a Microsoft SQL server database utilizing a familiar Microsoft Excel entry screen, is touted to provide this flexibility to those tasked with projecting enrollments. The server has been installed, and a consultant with ITPI will begin meeting in the next few weeks with a task force made up of academic leaders from all three campuses to make sure the EMS system is implemented in a way that helps departments make better decisions with regard to projecting future enrollments.

Daylight Savings Time Change

By Erin Ridley

Daylight Saving Time (DST) dates will be changing this year. Specifically, the start and end dates for the United States will comply with the U.S. Energy Policy Act of 2005. DST dates will start three weeks earlier (on the second Sunday in March) and will end one week later (on the first Sunday of November).

So, what does this have to do with you and me? In the past, we just changed the time on the clocks around the house and most computers changed the time automatically. However, this year may be a little different! Due to the new dates, companies will have software patches that need to be applied to computers, servers, etc. that will make the computer change the time on the correct date! Information Services will be checking in on their various equipment and application needs to ensure that the time change is as seamless as it has been in the past!



Tips 'N' Tricks

By I.S. Help Desk



The "Go To" Box

When you are right in the middle of doing something in a form and find you need to go to another form to find something, you don't have to stop what you are doing! Just press F5 and a "Go To" box will appear at the top of the screen. Key in the name of the form and press enter. Do what you need to do and exit the form. You will be right back where you started! Press F5 again to make the Go To box disappear.

Learning A New Form in Banner?

As you are learning a new form or task in Banner you can create your own little training manual. While in the form, click on the printer icon. This will send a screen shot to your printer. This screen shot takes up half of the page. This leaves you plenty of room to write your self notes on what you need to do in this form. For example, FOIDCH - this is the form that you can use to enter in the RQ number and find out the assigned PO number.

Creating Personal Menu in Banner

It is easy to remember the names for the forms we use all the time... but what about forms we use only once in a while? It can sometimes be hard to remember the form names. Well, now you can create your very own personal menu!

In Banner, you have either inquiry or update capability, depending on your security set up. An easy way to tell what kind of access you have to a particular form is look at the top title bar. If you see a [Q] you have query or inquiry access only. If you don't see a [Q], you have update access to the form.

Forms You Have Update Access To:

When you are in a form, such as FPAREQN, when you right click you will see one of the options is "Add to Personal Menu". Just click on that option - it is that easy! You have just added that form to your personal menu.

Forms You Have Query Access To:

Forms you have query only access to; you have to treat a little differently. If you were to right click, you will see that Add to Personal Menu is grayed out. Query forms can still be added - just follow these few steps:

- Go to form GUAPMNU.
- Click in the first row of the forms listed on the left side.
- Press F7 (enter query). This will clear the list and puts you into search mode.
- Key in the name of the form you want, example: SPAIDEN
- Press F8 to execute the search.
- The form and description will show on the left side.
- Double click on it, turning it blue.
- Once it is in blue text you can click on the single arrow pointing to the right to swoosh it over.
- Repeat this for every form you want to add. This works on query or update forms.
- When done, press F10 to save your new changes.

Refresh Your Menu to See the Changes

To see the new additions to your personal menu you will need to refresh the menu. Just click on the MENU link (right above the My Links section on the right side of your screen). Now, double click on MY BANNER to open your very own personal menu! Double click on the form you want to go to.

This information is also located in the Customizing Banner 7 handout located on the NOCCCD.edu website.

Training Schedule 2007

By Erin Ridley

Navigation Training

February 15	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
February 23	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
February 27	2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
March 8	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
March 22	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
March 28	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
April 5	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

RQ Training

March 16	8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
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**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

Argos Training - Power Users

March 15	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
April 26	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Argos Training - End Users

February 15	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
March 1	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
March 29	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
April 12	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
May 3	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
May 17	2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

If you are one of the remaining people in the District still using SDA Views to generate your reports, please consider attending an Argos training class. Argos has replaced SDA views as the District's reporting tool, and any use of SDA views will be discontinued this academic year.

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

Information Services

1830 W. Romneya Dr. Anaheim, CA 92801

Phone:

714-808-4849

Fax:

714-808-4845

E-Mail:

ishelpdesk@nocccd.edu

Web Address:

www.nocccd.edu/Departments/InfoServices.htm

CaTT Toon

By Carl Schoner



"Happiness is an inside job"