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# Seneca College Update

By Russell Pangborn

Some of you have lived through a few name changes of an outstanding machine over the last fifteen years. Most of you know that the AS/400, iSeries and System i are all the same platform. In contrast, a Mac fifteen years ago is still a Mac today. How does it affect us here at Seneca? I was thinking about this in my first week of classes as I was looking back at a few perplexed faces. The subject is DBT544 and takes a look at DB2 on an AS/400. We look at using embedded SQL in programs; journaling commands and commitment control; stored procedures; creating SPL user defined functions and several other interesting Database concepts.

We covered a lot of material in the first two hours, looking at how the relational database has evolved with new releases of the operating system. Listening to this in the class are students who are passionate about the iSeries architecture. There are also students present who are just passing through, getting one more subject to complete their diploma requirements. For that second category of students who are working on assimilating a lot of new information, it is not helpful that someone is intermingling three different terms to refer to the same thing. The teacher then, should just keep it simple. He could consistently use the latest name which is System i. The only problem is the pre requisite subject is IBC233 and that subject's title refers to an iSeries. We can't change the subject title without generating a whole new subject code. We also have an iSeries specialist designation that requires a new code. Changing the codes can be a problem because it needs to have some meaning and can not be the same as current codes in other departments. It also can't be the same as any

old subject code from the entire college that has been put out to pasture. At least the DBT544 outline was updated. It does not refer to a platform in the title. All iSeries references were changed to System i before the semester began.

In the class we were discussing software downloads and I brought up our tech support pages. Our tech support people, who are drowning in supporting a myriad of software and machines, have some helpful resources that unfortunately refer to all three machine names. That should be fixed to lessen student confusion. Hopefully my email request gets sent before IBM comes up with a new name. But, to be fair, it is a reality that if you are googleing some system concepts useful information can come from older pages that refer to an AS/400 as well as the other two names.

My strategy in writing this column was to intermingle the three platform names in some places where it would have been more consistent to just write System i. Since you are all pros, this shouldn't make this article slightly more confusing. It probably would to someone who had not heard any of the names. Do all of you stick to one name in all your conversations? Is it the latest one?

Anyway, my memory from the first DBT544 class was talking about something reasonably complex and being forced to mention AS/400, iSeries and System i in the same sentence. There were a few vacant looks in response. My next thought was: somebody just shoot me and put me out of my misery.

Who knows, if I am still teaching ten years from now it could be five names. AS/400, iSeries, System i, iSoltis, and Solution i.

Gee ... I hope nobody at IBM likes either of the last two names!



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