

# BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

with Jackie

## Operations Navigator



Jackie Jansen

While visiting an iSeries customer recently I saw something that compelled me to write this column. One of the programmers, very new to the iSeries, was happily working with DB2 files and tables in a very graphical PC style way. I found it fascinating that he could, quite comfortably, work with DB2 via our graphical interface while the majority of programmers who have known and loved the AS/400 for years were still using the green screen interface.

This column is a quick overview of what many you are still missing in your life, at least as far as interfacing with the iSeries goes. In a future column I will delve in more depth into the specific areas of Operations Navigator that are most applicable to Business Intelligence

Rochester considers Operations Navigator the key interface method for the iSeries and you have started seeing new functionality in the Operating System that cannot be accessed via a green screen or command line interface.

I am constantly being told by customers that selling the iSeries internally for new application development areas can be a tough sell. Although the iSeries is well recognized as having exceptional reliability and scalability it's image as a platform for modern applications is still somewhat lacking. This shows how different perception and reality can be. What really concerns me is that the same people who complain about the hard time they have internally are still using the iSeries as if time had stood still.

We are all, myself included, very comfortable with our commands and our green screen. Lots of users were very comfortable with DOS also. When is the last time you saw someone on a PC type a COPY command out in full. They drag, drop and right mouse click automatically. We need to get to that mindset ourselves before we can start to convince everyone about the outstanding benefits of our system.

Operations Navigator splits its functionality into different subcomponents. Basic Operations allows you to work with messages, reports, and printers. Job Management basically allows you to access the WRKACTJOB functions. You can tailor the output display for the columns you wish to see. For example, the subsystem name is not one of the default columns. You can easily make it one of your default columns. You can quickly ask to see your jobs, all jobs in the system or filter out specific jobs that you are interested in. You can sort by any of the columns that you display. You can hold, move, change and delete jobs from this display. It is very handy.

Systems Configuration lets you work with your installed hardware and software products. New in V4R5 is vastly enhanced management of your disk drives and your disk/storage pools. You can add disk units, format new ones and you can actually view your disk units pictorially. You can see a picture of your iSeries and which unit is installed where, which ones are having operational or capacity problems and much more. This is an excellent addition for many iSeries operators.

My favourite capabilities are found in the database subcomponent. From here I can create, delete, edit etc. all my DB2 tables and files. I can quickly view and modify a table without using DFU. With V4R5 I have the capability to look at SQL statements or ODBC calls and have the system graphically show me exactly what the Query Optimizer is doing. This is called Visual Explain and will definitely be the subject of a future column.

Other subcomponents include working with your Network, working with Security (excellent wizards to speed up security implementations), working with users, the Integrated File System, and much more. Many third parties are developing plugins for their applications into Operations Navigator.

You need to be aware that when you install Client Access Express, by default you only install limited Operations Navigator functionality. You have to do a custom install to access most of the subcomponents mentioned above.

I have run out of room and there is so much more to say about this very much underused interface. Please check out our web site at [www.iseries.ibm.com/oper\\_nav](http://www.iseries.ibm.com/oper_nav) and enjoy. 

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