

– TUG MoM Review –

The May 2003 Meeting of Members

By *Eveline Gaede*



Eveline Gaede

“**W**here would you rather be?” This interesting thought started our first session of the May Meeting of Members. Considering the rather dreary spring we have been having, I can think of

many places I would rather be. Does a wet and cold spring mean we will be able to enjoy a warm and dry summer? Your guess is as good as mine and all our guesses are as good as any of the weather forecasters!



Speaker: Mike Warkentin

Session 1: HA

Over 60 people decided that the MoM was where they wanted to be on May 21st for the 5:00 p.m. session. Our first topic of the evening was “High Availability for the Real World”. **Mike Warkentin**, Product Sales Technology Leader for Resiliency (now how does he fit **that** on a business card?) for DataMirror Corporation started the session by asking “Where would you rather be?” Having occasionally dabbled in public speaking, I would never dare to ask this question as I am sure there would be a mass-exodus to the door.

However, his second thought-provoking question was the hook that ensured that everyone stayed to find out the answer – “How do you sell High Availability to upper management, for a box that never dies?” The iSeries has an uptime rating of 99.984% which translates to less than 5.2 hours/year of down time. The thing to remember, however, is to not only solve the issue of **unscheduled downtime**, but that solving the problem of **planned downtime** is the other reason to look at HA.

Mike’s excellent presentation covered a full range of topics from defining HA, to justifying it with cost & benefit analysis and right through to how it works and what types of options are available. An important distinction to make, when defining High Availability, is that it is a **process**, not a **product**. Its primary goal is to maintain up-time of your systems by avoiding, preventing or minimizing system outages. This obviously includes unscheduled downtime but also scheduled maintenance and upgrades to your system.





Often people assume that because they have a Disaster Recovery plan that they are covered for the unplanned outages. What they don't realize is that you have to be prepared to lose up to 12 hours of data as well as 12-24 hours of recovery time.

How much is 12 hours of data worth to your company? Mike included some "scary facts" that are enough to make you lose sleep over:

- 75% of all businesses are unable to function without computer support.
- Within 14 days (with no computer support):
 - 43% of all business never re-open, and
 - 29% of those who do re-open will close for good in 2 years.



TUG Association Manager, Wende Boddy presenting Mike Warkentin with speaker's gift





Richard Dolewski

And finally,

- Insiders cause 80% of all security damage and 55% of this is due to honest employees!

It is common knowledge that HA is not inexpensive. So what is it going to cost? In order to gain an appreciation for the cost, Mike said that by looking at what it will cost your company to have unscheduled downtime, the justification is easy. You would be amazed at the cost. Some examples Mike gave ranged from \$14,500 per hour for an ATM Service Fees company to \$6.5 million per hour for a Retail Brokerage Firm! The cost suddenly becomes irrelevant when you look at figures like that. To estimate the value of availability, you can look at the Orange Book GG22-9318 or use IBM's

downtime calculator at <http://www-1.ibm.com/services/its/us/dtw10.html>.

Session 2: EDI

After enjoying a great meal, we were ready for our second speaker. For this session, we tried something new – a Webcast! Our topic was “How to avoid the high cost of eCommerce Tools” with **Brian Bennett**. Brian is a Channels Manager and Integration Specialist at Extol International and has a long history in the world of EDI.

After a few technical problems, the presentation got under way. With all the talk today about the internet and how it affects EDI, a common misconception is that EDI may be old technology. I, for one was happy to hear that the EDI space is growing 37% a year and the volume of EDI transactions is quadrupling every year. What are the critical business issues that are supporting this continued growth?

- Survival – are you losing business to other companies who can do EDI?
- Growth – EDI touches 84% of the GNP and is growing.
- eCommerce – Companies are looking for a way to be interconnected to each other with minimal costs and reduced dependence on IT support


The question that was on everyone's mind and was asked by one of our attendees, was, “Is EDI more complicated now with the Internet?” Brian pointed out that the internet is simply another method of communication. With the internet, you no longer need a VAN but need to design a method of getting your data to and from your customer. At one time, speed may have been an issue, but now with the advent of broadband, this is no

longer the case. The ease of use is identical; however you need to remember to build in 24 hour availability.

One critical component of a successful implementation is total integration with your business processes and Brian gave some examples of how this should work. Some of the costs you can expect with a well-rounded solution are implementation cost, ongoing costs, cost of technical staff and cost of the user. A rule of thumb that Brian gave is that you should have 1 EDI Coordinator for 150 Trading Partners. According to Gartner Dataquest, the three top challenges to implementing e-Business solutions are:

- Can't implement quickly enough
- Cost issues
- Confusion about Technology and Applications

With a robust EDI product, the first two issues should be greatly minimized. And because we run on the iSeries, our options are many – from either iSeries native or Java based.

Once again, another successful year at TUG draws to a close. As an industry, we were faced with many challenges – some IT related and many due to current events. The good news is that our iSeries platform is ready and waiting for the next period of growth. As well, TUG is strong and looking forward to planning another great year of meetings and our yearly conference. Have a safe and happy summer and we look forward to seeing everyone in September! 



Vaughn Dragland with Bob Lesiw



Mike Warkentin

Eveline Gaede is a TUG Board Member & Vice President. She is also Manager, Information Technology Group at Challenger Motor Freight Inc., in Cambridge, Ontario. She can be reached at evelineg@challenger.com or (519) 658-5154.



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Toll Free: (888) 607-2546
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