

# READER FEEDBACK



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**From:** [dcopping@daemarinc.com](mailto:dcopping@daemarinc.com)  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 15, 2003  
**Subject:** **Article - UNIX First Impressions (Part II of III)**

**Re: TUG May 2003 Issue** Great work on the Magazine, another "good read".

**Re: UNIX first impressions**

To all involved: This was a great "toe in the water" piece of work! From the perspective of a new user and AS/400 programmer, all the flavours and choices seem daunting, however the piece was written clearly and concisely from this view. Some quick points on the 10 items mentioned in the article:

**Addressing point #1** ... "Unix (or variations) is MS-DOS on steroids." MS-DOS is copied from Unix, so this statement should read MS-DOS is UNIX on valium. (enuf said.)

**Point #3) man pages** ... Most man pages I've read have been as in depth (or cryptic) as F4 prompt's on OS/400 systems, both are weak, this is not new to UNIX or OS/400 or any system I'm aware of. This is an industry wide problem not just a vendor or OS specific problem.

**#4) Executes without warning** ... In a working environment NO ONE should be signed-in and working as ROOT unless they know what their doing, just as no one should be working as QSECOFR without the same knowledge! Nothing executes on a UNIX system without the proper permissions set on a file, as you covered in #6.

**#5) VI** ... Yep, a very painful interface for those new to the system, Some get to love it, some get to hate it, but under UNIX you have a choice, switch to something more comfortable...eIVIs or MC (midnight commander), like nc, (norton commander in MS-DOS). One of the bonuses of UNIX based system (choice).

**#6) Clear as mud** ... Yes, as a new user this concept is different, but once you understand permissions, this element is rock solid. Can a user read the file (yes/no), can they modify the file (yes/no), can they execute the file (yes/no) ... very simple and very clean, all on a text based file.

**#7) Standards** ... "What standard!" Unfortunately (or not) because of the "flexibility" of UNIX there are many "standards". The current trend is toward a more open, but controlled development of

the operating system (i.e. Linux). Under this model changes are suggested and accepted by the programming community and not an individual or company.

**#10) Crontab** ... Yes it's ugly...but you have to like it, drop a simple ansi script into a directory and it will simply run 'dothat.now' all the time, everytime!

Again a great informative article, Kudo's to the author!

**Regards, David Copping**

**P.S.** I noticed that when connecting to my AS/400 from an UNIX station that my folder/ directory tree is mirrored as a UNIX structure, /usr / bin /var : I haven't explored how a Perl CGI script will work in /cgi-bin yet, but will advise you later when you tackle this issue.

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**From:** [shakir.hosein@cgi.com](mailto:shakir.hosein@cgi.com)  
**Sent:** April 25, 2003  
**Subject:** **Technical Education Conference**

**Hi Wendy,** My name is Shakir Hosein and I recently attended the TUG technical conference. Let me take the opportunity to commend all involved this year on a wonderful job! I really enjoyed myself. Thanks so much ! Have a great day !

**Shakir Hosein,** Consultant, CGI Group  
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**From:** [wally.jaroslowski@rbc.com](mailto:wally.jaroslowski@rbc.com)  
**Sent:** 05/15/2003  
**Subject:** **TUG Article**

Hi Richard! Just read your article pertaining to "Times Are Tough But Can We Change The Message?" I thought it was very precise and very uplifting. Thanks for the jolt! Keep up the great work Richard.

**Wally Jaroslowski**

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**From:** [bahie@sympatico.ca](mailto:bahie@sympatico.ca)  
**Sent:** 0/02/2003  
**Subject:** **President's Corner**

Good evening Richard:  
Just read your Presidents Corner article. Enjoyed it and it sure made me think. You identified the problem today and I think you are right in saying, "Let's move on." Good job as always. Take care.

Sincerely,  
**Betty Ann Hie**

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**From:** [hkerr@fclcanoe.com](mailto:hkerr@fclcanoe.com)  
**Sent:** Monday, May 26, 2003  
**Subject:** **Good article**

**Hi Thibault,**

I read your article in the TUG magazine for 2003/5. The switch to the mind set from the AS/400 is quite a leap in user friendliness though not insurmountable. I have two things to comment on and hopefully what you might find interesting and may be useful. They are as follows:

1) When I now see the term shell, I take it to mean a text based command interpreter so in the classic sense the shell for the AS/400 would be QCMD, QCL (S/38 environment) and of course QSHELL. As you are familiar the command level interpreters also run in batch. As another example In Windows and in Linux I use Python as a shell (better than any GUI calculator) and many years ago I even used BASIC as a shell. In the Unix environmental shells can behave quite differently, I have only ever used the Bourne Shell and probably because most of the Linux distributions I have used install it by default.

2) Yes that Unix file system security system sure seems primitive (and I feel is) when compared with what is available on the AS/400 but I feel there is about to be a change. As you are probably aware the ReiserFS (file system) can now be compiled into the Linux kernel. This group is just about to release their newest version, 4. It appears that the AS/400 has left its impression. There is a good read about this forthcoming file system at <http://www.namesys.com/> and the AS/400 file system gets honorably mentioned several times.

I have been making my living off of the AS/400 environment since 1980 (S/38 V2). I have also been using Linux constructively for about 4 years and our company is currently using it for mail, file, and print servers and for routers and firewalls.

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