

TUG MOM REVIEW

THE OCTOBER 2007 MEETING OF MEMBERS



By Kathy Gregson

The October Meeting of Members was held at the Sheraton Parkway Hotel on October 3, 2007, with close to 175 attentive attendees who had come to listen to a legend. The IBM Chief Scientist for System i, and creator of its architecture, **Dr. Frank Soltis**, had returned to Toronto for the first time since his appearance at TEC 2006. Always a popular speaker, Dr. Soltis did not disappoint. The audience also had the opportunity to hear more about WebFOCUS, the big brother to the hot new offering, DB2 Web Query for System i, providing a follow-on presentation to the session delivered by DB2 Web Query expert, **Jackie Jansen** at the May MOM. This event was co-sponsored by TUG, IBM and AVNET.

The meeting began with **Robert Eckersley**, the IBM Alliance Manager for Information Builders. Robert's topic was "Beyond Query/400... WebFOCUS, the Big Daddy to IBM DB2 Web Query."

IBM DB2 Web Query for System i™ offers a set of modernized tools for a more robust, extensible and productive reporting solution than the popular Query for iSeries (also known as Query/400) tool. DB2 Web Query for System i preserves investments in the reports developed with Query/400 by offering a choice of importing definitions into the new technology or continuing to run existing Query/400 reports as is.

DB2 Web Query provides the ability to query or build reports against data stored in DB2 for i5/OS databases through browser-based user interface technologies. Build new reports with ease through the Ajax-based WYSIWYG Power Painter component, or leverage the wizard-like Report and Graph Assistant components.

Simplify the management of reports by significantly reducing the number of report definitions required through the use of parameter driven reports. Deliver data to end users in many different formats, including directly into spreadsheets, or in boardroom-quality PDF format, or viewed from the browser in HTML. Leverage advanced reporting functions such as matrix reporting, ranking, color coding, drill-down, and font customization to enhance the visualization of DB2 data.

Add the OLAP (On-Line Analytical Processing) feature to interact with the data through slicing and dicing and drill-down capabilities. For the end user on the go, choose the Active Reports feature to allow reporting without having to be connected to the server. Build simple dashboards or compound reports with the optional DB2 Web Query Developer Workbench. Use the Developer Workbench to hide the complexities of the database (for example, join logic) from end users through metadata.



Kathy Gregson

DB2 for Web Query started shipping on September 14, 2007. Any company that has Query/400 today and is covered by i5/OS SW Maintenance, is entitled to a no-charge upgrade to the base DB2 for Web Query product (5733-QU2) when they go to V5R4 of i5/OS. Robert's talk re-capped IBM's DB2 Web Query for System i, which was developed by Information Builders, and he then introduced the full blown Information Builder product, WebFOCUS.

This interactive session included demonstrations with lots of questions coming from the audience. Attendees saw for themselves the reporting power that is delivered in the base DB2 Web Query product for all System i shops, and what is possible with WebFOCUS for organizations who are looking for robust self-service reporting or a rich full-function Business Intelligence solution. WebFOCUS is a comprehensive and fully integrated enterprise business intelligence platform whose architecture, integration, and simplicity can permeate every level of the organization—executive, analytical, and operational—and make any data available, accessible, and meaningful to every person or application who needs it, when and how they need it.



5:00 speaker Robert Eckersley





TUG Meeting of Members & IBM Solutions Tour, October 3, 2007 — Sheraton Parkway Toronto North

This definitely isn't your father's Query/400 as the graphic in Figure 1 illustrates. All this running natively and securely on System i, where your business data resides today.

Following Robert's talk, the group enjoyed some social networking over a great buffet dinner. Then it was time to bring on the ever popular Dr. Frank Soltis, Chief Scientist for System i and fondly referred to as the "father" of the System i.

In his typical folksy style, using no charts, Frank spoke to the group for approximately 90 minutes about today's topical areas for System i.

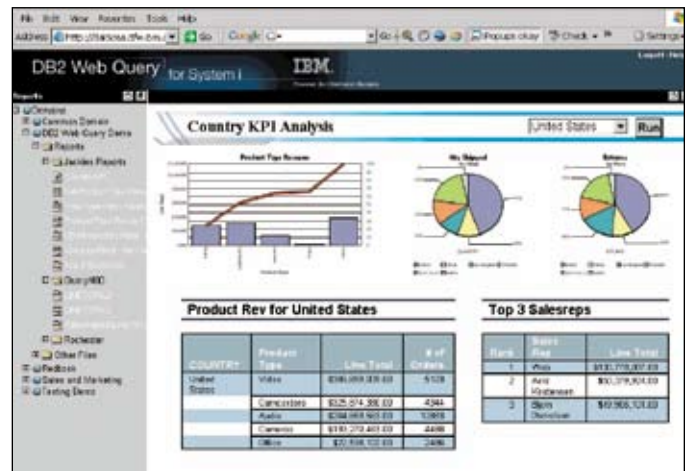


Figure 1. DB2 for Web Query sample screen

Frank covered a little on the history of the product, and the name changes we have gone through, and hinted that another one may be in the offing next year although nothing is definite at this time.



Door prize winner Michael Marston with Kathy Gregson



He talked about the possibility of the System i and System p merging into one HW product, running multiple, different operating environments, as is possible today on System i. The possibility of this has been discussed for some time but in the past it was determined that it made sense to keep the products separate, even though they are essentially the same HW. If that does happen, and he did state nothing has been decided for sure, then the product would need a new name. He asked the audience what a good product name would be, and many in the audience felt that a great name for the product would be AS/400! That brought a smile to Frank's face.

Frank went on to talk about the real value of System i being in i5/OS so no matter what the product is called, AS/400, iSeries, System i or ????, as long as there is an i5/OS environment, applications will continue running and a company's investment in System i continues to be protected. System i users should feel re-assured, their beloved i5/OS will go on for many years into the future, as is demonstrated by the disclosure of some of the function of the upcoming 2008 release of V6R1.

Some time was spent talking about the split of the System i Technology team into two different business units, the POWER Systems unit and the Business Systems unit. The POWER Systems unit is in place to focus on the needs of the larger customers, with responsibility for the high end models i570 and i595. The Business Systems unit will focus on the needs of the Small and Medium Business (SMB) customers with responsibility for the low end System i models i515, i520, i525 and i550. Frank joked about the names of the units being somewhat ambiguous since all System i servers are POWER servers and all System i servers are used as business systems. He did say, naming aside, what's important is to be responsive to our customer's requirements and unique needs, with solutions and offerings to match, and that is what the design point is in putting these groups in place.

Next Dr. Soltis spoke about the POWER 6 chip technology that is available today in the i570 and in the p570 and the technologies that are built into the chip to help with things like power consumption and running in a cooler environment, resulting in a much "greener" datacenter. He indicated that we would see a System i Blade model in the near future and more POWER 6 models come to market in 2008.

A lively question and answer session followed Frank's talk and attendees left feeling secure in the knowledge that their beloved system has a future, whatever the name, and the future is bright.



Kathy Gregson has worked for IBM for 32 years, supporting mid-range systems since the early 1980's. She worked on the product announcement for AS/400 in 1988 and has been loyal to this platform ever since. Kathy's current role is the Canadian "iVangelist", System i Customer Advocate and author of the iSay Customer Newsletter. She can be reached at kathyt@ca.ibm.com.



7:00 speaker Dr. Frank Soltis

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