SPREZZATURA

SENL

August 1997

Sprezzatura's Electronic Newsletter

For Revelation developers by Revelation developers

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Welcome

The artwork for the Sweatshirts is now with the manufacturers so by next issue those promised should have had them!

The Web Site (remember that?) has gone live albeit under construction. If you'd like to be linked from our soon to be very improved links site send mail to webmistress@sprezzatura.com. Feel free to include a biop and a Gif of your logo - between 50 to 100 pixels square. We reserve the right to PaintShop Pro it to death though to ensure it fits and doesn't waste bandwidth.

Many thanks to Mykl Belfatto for the following joke which had me in stitches for days...

A ventriloquist was visiting the far off countryside with no one around when suddenly he saw a lonely shepherd by his house sitting on the porch patting his dog. He decided he wanted to have a little fun...

Ventriloquist: "Hey--good looking dog, mate. Mind if I speak to him?"

Shepherd "The dog doesn't talk, you stupid Aussie."

Ventriloquist: "Hey dog, how's it going old mate?"

Dog: "Doin' alright."

Shepherd <extreme look of shock>

Ventriloquist: "Is this Shepherd your owner?" <pointing at the man>

Dog: "Yep"

Ventriloquist: "How does he treat you?"

Dog: "Real good. He walks me twice a day, feeds me great food, and takes me to the lake once a week to play."

Shepherd <look of disbelief>

Ventriloquist: "Mind if I talk to your horse?"

Shepherd "Horse doesn't talk either."

Ventriloquist: "Hey horse, how's it going?"

Horse: "Cool."

Shepherd <extreme look of shock>

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Ventriloquist: "Is this your owner?" <pointing at the Shepherd>

Horse: "Yep"

Ventriloquist: "How's he treat you?"

Horse: "Pretty good, thanks for asking. He rides me regularly, brushes me down often, and keeps me in the barn to protect me from the elements."

Shepherd <total look of amazement>

Ventriloquist: "Mind if I talk to your sheep?"

Shepherd " The Sheep Lies."

We're not getting any less busy but Elkie has kindly allowed me to work all weekend to ensure that this goes out before we go on vacation for a week from Friday. Those of you expecting to see us in Oz this summer - sorry we've rescheduled. We're now planning to come at Xmas and we'll be staying in Adelaide (where Elkie's folks are) before doing some diving on the Barrier Reef. Recommendations on Dive Schools, sites etc. welcomed!

On a side issue, Prospectus (our favourite RevSoft Recruitment house) are having great problems locating an Arev person with SQL Server skills at the moment for a job in central London. The job pays top dollar but is for a full time employee only. If you'd like to move countries <g> then why not drop Joseph Irvine a note at Joseph@prospectus.co.uk. He'll be glad to hear from you (and if you get the job you owe me a beer or 3 'cos this is consultancy we could be doing! <g>)

Thanks for all the feedback - we appreciate it! Keep it coming and keep flying the RevSoft flag! <g>

Andrew P McAuley
Publisher

Ramblings

The Call For Votes has been and gone and the newsgroup is now well and truly established. Traffic is a little slow at the moment, I guess it is taking its time to filter to the various newsservers around the world. It took weeks to reach Dave Sig's server so it has been kinda quiet up there! As a test I mailed as many of your ISPs as I could find and I can confirm that the following DEFINITELY carry the group.

News.compuserve.com - although no messages are appearing there news.ftech.net

lava.net

ziplink.net

globalnet.co.uk

news.ihug.co.nz

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island.net

shore.net

adan.kingston.net

Australian Netlink Support <support@netlink.com.au>, were helpful and replied as follows

"If one of our subscribers requests this group and we do not carry it (I have not checked), we would simply subscribe that group at that time.

This is our standard policy to accommodate our customers."

So if you don't get it netlink users, drop them a mail!

ozemail.com.au came back with

"Andrew,

The news group that you have requested is not fed by UUNET, you will need to get a wider propogation.

Regards"

this confuses me as I thought I'd seen ozemail people up there. If not I'm not to sure how to go about contacting uunet for Oz?

The weirdest reply was from uniserve.com who said "We will carry that group as soon as it passes a vote."... hmm, earth calling uniserver, come in uniserver..."

OpenInsight 3.4 has arrived and installed here with no problems! Way to go RevSoft fellas! Another nice stable release. Feedback from our Australian colleagues is that the RDK is progressing well also - being as near as damnit useable!

The new 3rd Party Utils section of the CD has PSL - a sort of TCL implementation from Phoenix Solutions, currently sharing the US consultancy premiership with Zadek. We've installed it and had a few problems with the install routine. If you're in the same boat it is easily got around - just copy the relevant subdirectory to your hard drive and install from there. It seems to then work fine (although a few of the software glitches we've experienced may be down to the install). PSL will allow you to use it for 30 days so you can get a feel for whether it is suitable for you!

Mark Martin's visit provided me with another excuse for falling asleep in front of guests on the wrong side of several bottles of wine. It also provided us with the information that the RevSoft Web Server is up for a major upgrade -so speed should improve.

A nice little piece of trivia he and Aaron off-loaded on me recently about AREV which I'd never thought of before. Do you know how you can use ! in a batch file to display a message? Well if you can't remember what an FS error is, just type in ! FSXXX for example ! FS401 and watch the error be revealed in all its glory! Remember the message must be in caps!

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More information about the Revsoft UK all dayer has now been received at Sprezz HQ courtesy of a flyer from RevSoft UK and I quote -

"Our European Conference is the premier event in Revelation Software's annual calendar. This is an opportunity for you to meet expert Revelation Developers, Solution Providers, Resellers and Business Partners. You will have the chance to listen to and meet top US Revelation executives, Jim Acquaviva, President & CEO, will be speaking on our corporate strategies and Cameron Purdy, Principal Software Engineer, will talk to you about the future of Revelation products".

In a break with tradition, the afternoon is being scheduled as a lot more free format so people can either hang around or just go shopping like a lot of people seem to every year!

We've heard from at least one non-UK person that they'll be there (hiya Oystein!) so hopefully a few more can make it or we'll have to spend all our beer vouchers on Norway! We'll have a stand and will be previewing SLIST 97 - the hottest user interface in the whole wide Revelation community!

For those of you with more than a passing interest in what Eric has been up to in the past - check out his self confessed daughter's confessions at this address

http://www.nexus.edu.au/ozprojects/journey/emu2.htm.

A corresponding piece of trivia for OI users. Looking for a replacement for NameCap in OI?

Declare Function MixedCase

NewString = MixedCase(OldString)

as of 3.1.

OK, onto the meat!

Regards

Andrew McAuley
Publisher

FEEDBACK

Well most of the feedback this time has been congratulations for getting the group started so we'll skip them. I appreciate all such messages but I know it'd be no fun for the readers to have to plough through them.

One cute message we did appreciate it (for many reasons as the sender will appreciate) was this one..

+++

Andrew,...

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BTW - The last SENL was great!!! You should be way to busy more often....

+++

The messages in comp.databases.pick were occasionally hilarious - Gulraj Rijhwani's self opinionated posturing being almost too funny, he seemed to be parodying himself. I've printed one of the best ones below. I've actually lost several of my favourites (sorry Jane!) and other great ones are a bit long! You can find a zipped file containing all of the messages I could find on our web site - just go to the news page and look for the "Added Comp.Databases.Pick Comp.Databases.Revelation thread" header.

+++

From: jimrtex@pipeline.com (Jim Riley)

In article <869138812snz@courtfld.demon.co.uk> Gulraj Rijhwani wrote:

>In article <33cd09e4.516815289@news.ftech.net>

> AMcA@Sprezzatura.com "Sprezzatura Ltd" writes:

>> Sorry David - the major point being missed here is that RevSoft people

>> DO NOT come here, and your well meaning intervention will not make them come here.

>But since they don't come to Usenet (irrespective of which particular newsgroup, although one would expect it to be cdp if any), you have no evidentiary support for the suggestion that there would be ANY demand >even if comp.databases.revelation did exist.

The proponents have a long time record of participation incomp.databases.pick. What they are saying is that someone who has a specific interest in Revelation would not find a more diverse and diffuse group as useful. The RFD for comp.databases.pick was posted to comp.os.misc, omp.sys.stratus, and comp.sys.prime.

>One doesn't normally attempt to create a newsgroup until there is sufficient traffic elsewhere in Usenet already better suited to the new creation.

The source of traffic need not be elsewhere in Usenet.

>If you want to create cdr, then I suggest you first of all educate people in the ways of usenet, bring them to cdp, and move on to creating the new group IFF (if and only if) the traffic shows an overwhelming demand and justification for it. Do that, show justification for the group, and I'm sure you'll get all the support you need (you'll certainly have mine under those circumstances), but until you do I doubt you'll get many compliments.

You're saying that the (A and B) is a subset of A and can be discussed in a newsgroup for A, while ignoring the parts of B not contained in A.

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>> Please do not make "exactly once" sound like an issue. It couldn't have been posted nearly once or approximately once. The reason for multiple postings is to modify the Charter and justifications based on user feedback. If changes are not requested it would be AGAINST Usenet practice to post again.

>Not at all. "Exactly once" IS an issue. It is perfectly normal to repost an RFD during the discussion phase even if it has not been materially revised, in order to engage interested parties who may have missed previous postings. (In my case, I was practically offline at the time the RFD would have appeared, having problems with resurrecting what was then a crashed news and mail machine. The first I saw of this nonsense was the recent CFV.)

It is extremely abnormal to have an RFD posted more than once, unless there is some exceptional cause such as a spate of rogue cancels. Sometimes discussion of the RFD is cross-posted to some groups other than news.groups, which would bring this to the attention of the other groups, but this is in no way necessary.

If you wish to change the policy about repeated postings of RFDs, I suggest that you contact tale@isc.org with your suggestion. You might also want to subscribe to ews.announce.newgroups to watch for RFDs that may be of interest to you.

--

Jim Riley

IT'S THAT MAN AGAIN - AARON P KAPLAN

Notes from a bloke

Having move quickly through the Engine Log, it's time to head back to the System Monitor.

First thing we want to do is turn back on the spy functionality. If you've been paying attention, you'll know how to do this. If you haven't been paying attention, I understand attention is getting tired of your delinquencies and will make sure you are sent to debtor's prison for eternity, or an index rebuild, which ever comes first.

Now that the SPY is re-enabled, let's run through a few things. However, before we do, some small explanations of what the system monitor is and does. In some respects it monitors the system. Truth in advertising. That's a good thing. However, it also gives you rudimentary command line. For you ARev people, consider it a "TCL Lite".

I'm sure you're thinking there's no TCL in OI (You ain't seen the new Slist - Ed) so what on <insert whatever planet you're from> do I mean. Well, good friends and neighbours, that's why I said TCL Lite. It's not everything, but it does enough. And, just to show you I'm a fair an impartial critic, it does a few things TCL won't do. Really.

So, what can we do with the System Monitor. As we saw last issue, we can use it as the default system receiver. This display all sorts of information on what event is running, and any other information returned to the system receiver.

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Now you might be asking yourself, what's a system receiver? It's the thing that received information from the system again. See, truth in advertising. It really does work. Sorta like "Budweiser. Tastes likes piss and makes you obnoxious, but at least everyone else knows you're American".

From the system help file:

"Get_Property returns an object that was set as receiver of messages sent through the OpenEngine C interface.

Set_Property sets a control indicated in object (only an edit box is supported) as a receiver of data sent through the OpenEngine C interface using the Send_Dyn method. Some stored procedures, like RLIST (with target of 1), LIST_USERS, and most of the system procedures marked as Command Line, send their data to a client program, like the system editor, using a method called Send_Dyn. To support the capture of this information, the RECEIVER property specifies an edit box control that will receive the information."

This tells us that you can use this in your own programs by simply doing something like

```
unUsed = set_property( 'SYSTEM', 'RECEIVER', someEditBoxControl)
```

Notice that the help definition says that some stored procedures use the system receiver for it's output but it doesn't mention the system monitor, just the system editor.

Everything you can do in the system editor's exec line you can do in the system monitors command line section and a few things that the system editor cannot do. (That's the edit line on the top, incidentally). The only thing you need to be aware of it that everything is converted to upper case.

You can run any program from the command lines by prefixing the command with RUN. So, if you want to list the dictionary of a file, you just RUN LIST_DICT 'FILENAME'. You can attach tables, alias in tables, all sorts of things.

```
RUN ATTACH_TABLE 'N:\RPM\MYPROGS'
```

(there's a prize for the first correct response to what RPM stands for)

```
RUN ALIAS_TABLE 'REVBOOT','SYSPROG','REVMEDIA','REVMEDIA'

RUN COPY_ROW 'CUSTOMER','A','CUST_HIST','A'
```

and so forth.

The system monitor has the distinct advantage of being part of the Presentation Server. This mean that anything executed from it's command line is executed in Presentation Server context. Anyone who's tried to run a little utility from the system monitor has probably encounter this error message at one time or another.

Because you're running in PS context, you have a few extra things you can do.

```
RUN SET_PROPERTY 'SOMEWINDOW','SOMEPROPERTY','SOMEVALUE'
```

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Get_property works as well. Try it. Works like a champ.

Now, just so you think Revelation Software hasn't thought of everything, yes, Virginia, you can pass in system delimiters, starting with @FM. How? Through another little documented parameters value, brackets (that's square brackets for you English types (Like Americans

call the round ones parentheses - Ed)). The syntax would be [val1, val2]. So, if you wanted to set_Property ('SomeEditTable', 'ACCESSPOS',column:@FM:row) you could just set_Property 'SomeEditTable', 'ACCESSPOS', ['column, row']

If you need to use @VM, then nest in brackets. So, [a,[b,c],d] would be the same as a: @FM : b : @VM : c : @FM : d

To start a window, all you need to do is EXEC windowName.

If something goes wrong, STOP windowName

If something is seriously wrong, RUN UTILITY 'DESTROY', 'windowName'

Another little tidbit, one I just picked up on Cameron (posted on the RI web site as http://www.revelation.com/discussion/ff4e.htm) is you can pass in lower case paramters through the system monitor.

Generally, the system monitor converts everything to uppercase. So, when I RUN BUTTONLIST 'Cancel', my button shows up as CANCEL. As my good friend Bob(tm) used to say, this really pushes my buttons.

However, thanks to Cam's new information, if I _RUN BUTTONLIST 'Cancel', my button will show up as Cancel. Prefixing RUN with an underscore (_) supresses the uppercase conversion. And all you ARev people thought no good could come from underscores. So, who has the last laugh now, huh?

So much stuff in so little text. Amazing, isn't it? I'm sure you can see the power and flexibility of this little window.

However, at this juncture we have more important things to discuss. Those of you who've read the column for a while might recall I promised a continuation of the differences between the US and UK.

Now, the cynical amongst you might notice that US pronounced is US, like all of us, very inclusive. UK is pronounce UK, like yuck or suck or muck or fire truck or something like that.

Maybe it's not important, but I figured why not include it in here anyway.

In general, I'm the only American most of the people I know here are in contact with on a regular basis. This means I have to forever explain and defend American culture and beliefs. At this point, our esteemed editor will probably place in a comment about 'what culture, American culture is an oxymoron' or some other comment. (What's the difference between a yoghourt (note that cute British spelling) and the US? A yoghourt has a living culture! Happy now? - Ed) Yet, thumbing through the TV pages, movie listings, listening to the radio, it's the American culture that Britons want. So, whilst some

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of them might deign to look down upon us, it seems more like sour grapes about the rise and fall of the British empire.

The thing I hear the most about is general American ignorance and poor education standards. After a while, it really starts to grate on you. However, instead of getting mad, I concentrate on a existentialist identity question taught to us in kindergarten. "Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy has no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fussy, was he?".

Repeating this over and over again I can soothe the steaming cauldron that brews underneath.

When this doesn't work, I busily wonder a Zen mathematical puzzle posed to us in the first grade 'How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?' As I busily sit and achieve enlightenment, I smile and stare at my tormentors, knowing that they could never comprehend the depths of our education and philosophical insights.

And to think, they don't even get half the jokes in the Simpsons.

Britain is not known for it's cuisine. You don't find many British restaurants in downtown areas of major US Cities. You'll find all sorts of European delicacies, but never English. The other night at dinner, I figured out why. All their traditional food is brown. Beef, brown. Beer, brown. Fish and chips, brown and brown. Yorkshire pudding, brown. The vinegar they put on the chips, brown. HP sauce, brown. Baked beans, brown. Sausage, brown. Rashers, brown. Steak and kidney pie, brown and brown. Shepherd's pie, brown. Cornish pasties, brown. Need I go on? The other night, I asked to be taken out for a real traditional English meal and they took me for a curry.

I do have to say I like it here though. I might slam the place, but it's a great place to live for a while. If only they wouldn't have succumbed to the EC and gone metric on us. At least you knew where you stood before. Now, I'll go into the deli and ask for 143 grams of pastrami. It doesn't roll of the tongue right. Actually, this remind me of a story that happened when I was living in Boston. Darren, Mary and I were off doing the weekly hunting and gathering and waited in line at the deli counter of the local Star Market.

When our turn came, I asked the guy behind the counter for 12 oz of turkey ham. He stared at me blankly and said "What's that in pounds. I don't know the metric system". Darren laughed in the kid's face and had to walk away. I just shook my head and muttered three-quarters of a pound. After a brief pause, I figured it might be safe to add "that's point 75 on the scale". This isn't helping my American education argument much, is it?

Well, by the time this has gone out, I should be on the plane heading back home. Come for a one week trip, end up staying close to four months.

So, until next time, by bye and buy bonds.

Apk

(Actually he won't be back for over a week, so don't try calling! <g> - Ed)

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CELEBRITY INTERVIEW - Don Bakke

>> Who are you?

My name is Don (or Donald) Bakke, married with a 4 year old son and a 1 year old daughter, and I'm 30 years old.

>> Who do you work for?

My clients through my company, SRP Computer Solutions.

>> What is your role in the RevSoft community?

Solutions provider (aka Programmer/Developer) using AREV and OpenInsight.

>> How long have you been involved with RevSoft?

8 years.

>> Which products do you use?

AREV 3.12 and OpenInsight 3.4. Anything else is strictly by accident.

>> What do you most like about RevSoft products?

The ability to absolutely stump a D-Base programmer when I challenge him to duplicate the flexibility of a simple AREV application. (Translation: MVA, freedom from data types, complete access to the guts of my toolset, and that there will always be something AREV/OI can do that I haven't discovered yet.)

>> What do you most dislike about RevSoft products?

Not much with AREV, especially since it's not going anywhere. But with OI my top nitpicks are as follows:

1. No really solid, flexible, powerful, and built-in printing/ reporting tool

2. No easy way to expand my tools with third-party controls (VBX/OCX/ActiveX)

3. The fairly utilitarian grid control

4. The difficulty of making a deployed OI app look really self contained

5. The fear that if either Gene or Cameron fell off of the face of this earth then we can all say bye-bye to our investments

>> If you HAD to use another database what would it be and why?

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No real experience with anything else so I'll just say D3 because from what I've read it seems to be the best alternative

>> What are your favourite 3 books and why?

#1 - The Bible. The simplest reason would be because if God said something, I want to know what it was.

#2 - The entire Lord of the Rings trilogy because this is where I became introduced into the fantasy genre of literature and so far nothing else has come close.

#3 - Could be many things but I'll give the position to The Dark Knight Returns (I hope a comic book qualifies) because it satisfies my urge to exact a little vigilante justice...

>> What are your favourite 3 CDs/Albums and why?

I don't have any, really.

>> What are your three favourite films and why?

#1 - Aliens. One of the finest action/sci-fi films ever produced.

#2 - Die Hard (I & II). Bruce Willis plays his character so well.

#3 - Predator. Not that many movies have Arnold get nearly wasted.

>> What event in history would you most like to have been present at?

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

>> Who is the best president/prime minister we never had and why?

Can't think of any.

>> Your motto/witty aphorism

It is what it is, you get what you get, and it'll get done when it gets done.

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ERIC EMU'S AREV TIPS

The feathered ground-dweller comes to roost yet again on yet another exciting episode of AREV sleuthing. This month we venture into the exciting field of amateur proctology - the patient? AREV! There are several issues of note here - string space blockages being the main one.

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Please wear rubber gloves and a wetsuit. And have Nurse Rhodes present in the Skin Two PVC gear at all times (imperative).

AREV's bowels are quite twisted. AREV looks OK on the surface, but underneath it's incredibly messy. String space holds programs and variables exactly the same way. All mixed up together. Worse, each time a variable requires more memory it is copied to a new memory location in string space. And because AREV resizes variables for you, like @RECORD and @TCL.STACK, it is very dynamic. So, Eric recommends the AREV vindaloo for some really cramped conditions!

AREV's string space is allocated in 16-byte mouthfuls. This is the reason that memspace(999999) returns available string memory in multiples of 16 bytes. (This turns out to be a slick way of handling memory in Intel's Real Mode under DOS) The 16 byte mouthfuls are important in understanding AREV's 64 kB variable size limit, and why it causes the colonic colic that it does.

Intel chips address memory in segmented fashion - via a 16 bit "segment register" (holding a value of 0-65535 decimal = 0 to ffff hex) combined with an "offset register" (another 0-65535 value). Under DOS (with the chip in "real" mode), these are overlapped so that the segment register is multiplied by 16 decimal (10 hex) and the offset is added to it. The format is 1234:1234 hex, which equals an absolute address of 13574 hex above address 0. This segmented architecture is only one of two modes for the Intel Chip. Windows is able to throw the processor into protected mode (32-bit addressing) where 1234:1234 hex is absolutely 12341234h above zero. This gives lots more address space. (Almost enough for Windows 95). But not readily usable by DOS, unless with some VDISK style reflux.

Arev's string space is divided into records with the following format:

- 2 bytes (max. = 65535) for the variable/program length in 16 byte paragraphs

- 2 bytes for storing descripter addresses during garbagecollects.- The variable itself.

- Waste space for coloring in with felt-tip pens (maximum 15 bytes)

If AREV were to remove the 64 kB string length limit, the variable length 2-byte entry above would need expanding too.

AREV's descripter array also contains variables' data, and starts in memory about the 550kB mark out of 640 kB. It contains a series of 10 byte records. Or probably really a series of 9-byte records each terminated by @RM. Or really one-byte records = @RM with random 9-bytedelimiters. Anyway, you can see the descripter contents by using AREV's descripter(variable) function. Or by standing behind your monitor and looking in the little slots. Some descripters contain the whole variable, if it is less than eight bytes in length. Other descripters contain an address of a spot in string space where the variable lives.

Some descriptors are to do with program loads, but we won't talk about those here, because Eric doesn't understand them fully. A 10-byte descripter ending in \F5FF\ is unassigned. The last two bytes are the key to the length or type of the descripter.

Because the descripter for variables in string-space (> 8 bytes long)holds the segment address and the offset in memory, a move to a > 64 kB variable length wouldn't necessarily alter the escripters,

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because an address is an address regardless of variable length. However, if over 64 KB was allowed, then very soon string space would be used up. So AREV would require 32-bit addressing to make string space work. One catch - DOS doesn't use 32-bit addressing, so the entire architecture of memory management would need to alter just to give you enough space to run a dozen over-64 kB variables. Extended memory would most likely be involved. AREV.EXE gets bloated....

Flipping between protected and real modes does have a performance hit, although it would be only noticeable for very large variables.

String-intensive processes on a 32-bit version of AREV would take a bit longer than on the 16 bit version, because string manipulations suddenly require two Intel registers (segment and offset) and tens of instructions to do a string transfer, whereas AREV 16-bit can do it in just eight machine code instructions, regardless of whether the string is big or small. Increased variable size would be won at the expense of speed, although the loss would be minor. The bowels get more twisted.

So what to do about RAM then...? Eric's tips include:

(1) Compiling with the compilation options, reducing object size

(2) Removing the date & time suffix from object records

(3) Nulling @SENTENCE and @TCL.STACK and @RECORD occasionally

(4) garbagecollect and flush regularly

(5) make subroutines and functions expendable

(6) make use of labelled commons infrequently, only for data used in most routines.

(7) removing unused insert libraries from source

(8) Use literals and literal abbreviations of under 8 bytes wherever possible

(9) Drinking lots of red wine and igniting one's flatulence. (Improves memory when you're reminded the morning after - also the cause of the recent landslide in Thredbo ski village, the Manchester plane landing, and the Korean air tragedy)

(10) Invoke the expanded memory and confuse half the network administrators you run into.

Just for a special treat, for those who have heard this all before, a NEW program just for you to practice your proctology:

```
declare function descripter.snoop
for i = 0 to 20
descripter.record = descripter.snoop(i)
  print oconv(descripter.record,'HEX')
next i
* i is limited to a max. value of...you guessed it....65535
```

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Oh....and the function itself....

```
ERIC = \0200000000000000000000EB0190B80013\
ERIC := \BA01002EFF1E0A008BC1BA0000B30AB7\
ERIC := \00B90A00F7E38BF0B83F8F13D08EDAB9\
ERIC := \0A00B90A00B40F2EFF1E0A0057F3A45F\
ERIC := \B90A0033C033D2B4102EFF1E0A00CB\
OPEN 'LIBRARYFILE' TO HANDLE THEN
   IF LEN(ERIC) = 79 THEN
     WRITE ERIC ON HANDLE,'$DESCRIPTER.SNOOP'
   END
END
```

Can you pick your variables from a descripter lineup? Will your friends recognise you on the "Wanted" posters?

Sure as hell is worth a snoop up the old AREV poop chute...

Eric the Emu

Who Needs Window_Common% Anyway? Andrew P McAuley

When Alan Humphrey worked at Revelation Technologies way back when, one of his avowed goals was to try and "black box" AREV's Window Common so that developers wouldn't complain when it was changed! With OpenInsight it looked as though this goal had been reached. After all, Window Common had disappeared... or had it?

Something we've been meaning to document for quite some time has more recently began to be talked about more openly - the existence of a window common equivalent for OI. We've had a Technical Bulletin in production for nearly a year on this question but just can't seem to get round to finishing it. As we've got so much consultancy on at the moment (and we'd always welcome more! <g>) I thought it'd be better just to print what we've got and let our loyal readers go off and

play. If anyone wants to research further and send the result off we'll happily include it in the next SENL.

So without any further ado, here comes the rough draft of Tech Bulletin Number 2 - "OpenInsight for Workgroups - Window Common".

(Chapter 1 merely set the scene)...

Chapter 2: OpenInsight Window Common - An Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the issues which will be addressed within the rest of the document.

It deals with the following issues :-

What is Window Common

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What structure does it have

What is Window Common?

Advanced Revelation (the predecessor to OpenInsight) developers were used to having access to an area of common called "Window Common" which exposed the structure of the 4GL window that they were currently running. Modifying this area was the prime method by which developers were able to make Advanced Revelation windows alter their characteristic behaviour. Thus, if prompts were to be made visible or invisible on the fly, a combination of WC_Redisplay_List, WC_Reset and other variables was used.

Over the years it became more and more difficult for the Advanced Revelation developers to modify these common areas as so many applications depended on them.

When the developers started to work on the Windows version of Advanced Revelation it seemed an ideal time to get away from this exposed common area and to move towards functions which encapsulated all that developers wished to achieve. This was done.

However, the way in which functionality was built into the Windows version of Advanced Revelation still relied upon the previous technology (why change a winning formula?) so behind every window there still existed a common area.

The problem was that the Windows version had to allow the coexistence of multiple versions of the same entry window without overwriting its own common area. Thus was born "Dynamic Labelled Common" . Dynamic Labelled Common allows a labelled common area to be created with a variable name simply by using the syntax demonstrated below

```
CommonName = @UserName : "_COM"
Common //CommonName/ CN_Var1@, CN_Var2@, ...
The above would create an area of labelled common named individually for
each user.
This technique was used to create individual labelled common areas for each
occurrence of a window as follows
CommName@ = "%COM_" : @Window
common //CommName@// WindowCommonVars@...
```

What Structure Does It Have?

In total there are 17 dynamic variables within the window common definition. Sprezzatura have traditionally used their own naming conventions for these but for the purposed of this document they will be referred to by their RevSoft identifiers as defined within the SYSPROCS OIWIN_COMM_INIT insert (which appeared with release 3.12 of OpenInsight) as follows:

- ▨ JoinMap@

- ▨ RowMaps@

- ▨ MasterRowMap@

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- KeyMap@

- ControlMap@

- ControlList@

- OrigResultRow@

- ControlSemantics@

- QBFIds@

- QBFRows@

- QBFCount@

- QBFPos@

- RowLocks@

- SubRows@(10)

- QBFMode@

- DataSourceMap@

- OIWinReserved

+++

Back to the informal...

The Variable names themselves are self-explanatory, but to assist any budding Sherlock Holmes, we'll define two below...

ControlMap@

The ControlMap@ variable is a field mark delimited list of the names of every control in the current window, including the window itself which is always field one.

Note that the controls will include "child" controls, thus a radio button having three values would have four entries in the ControlMap@ variable, one for the parent radio button control and one each for each individual button.

ControlList@

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The slightly confusingly named ControlList@ actually contains the structure of the window and controls, in a field mark delimited list corresponding exactly to the control names in ControlMap@. The structure is that which is passed to a Utility "CREATE" to create the control and can thus be modified and recreated on the fly.

Playing with ControlSemantics@ will let you change all sorts of things on the fly - and if you want "@Record functionality" all the data is there for you!

We'll have a look at this a little more in the next issue but your feedback would be appreciated on what you use the things for!

Peripheral Trivia

As this issue of S/ENL was put to bed we fed the inner man with:

- TV : Prisoner Cell Block H

- Book: Nope, still too busy

- CD: Donna Summer - Donna Summer, especially for her cover of "Lush Life

- WEB: http://sunsite.unc.edu/jembin/mb.pl.

Join us :	Send Mail to Admin@Sprezzatura.com with subject SUBSCRIBE SENL or complete our online registration form.
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