



FOCUS on Revelation

Revelation Software Limited's Newsletter for the EMEA region

Old Names, New Names and a Boomerang

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Welcome
New Distributor
- 2 OI32 4.1x Overview
- 3 OI 4.1.2 released
Win2K Service 2.1
OLE
- 4 LH ODBC Driver
New User Group
Enterprise
www.revsoft.co.uk

WOW - What a difference 12 months makes!

As many of you will know, I left the Revelation world last November for a short while, before coming back to work with Sprezzatura wearing a Revelation Software hat. I left with a 16-bit version of OI and an NT Service that needed named pipes.

12 months on and I'm back with the distribution of Revelation products to the EMEA region (Europe, Middle East & Africa) under new management, OI32, Windows 2000 Service 2.1, an ODBC driver and a real buzz in the community – Mike where were you 5 years ago?

Many of these product changes are the reason for this newsletter, the first under the new management. This one is therefore more product, sales and marketing biased. However, I hope to correct that in future editions and satisfy your technical needs.

That's where I need your help. What do you want to see in this newsletter? I've already

been asked for help with new OI features such as XML, OLE, etc. (yes guys, I have been listening). I'll work on these shortly with the help of my new tech team.

We are also considering starting up a new user group in the UK for all EMEA Revelation Users, a brand new seminar program and we'll be at CeBit in March next year – more details can be found in the following pages.

I'd appreciate your feedback on this newsletter, ideas for content, stories from the community, hints and tips you want to share, etc.

It's recently been suggested that we send this newsletter out by email to make storage easier for you. **Please email me with 'newsletter' in the subject line to receive future issues and to submit your ideas and wishes.**

In the meantime, I hope you will find this newsletter useful and informative.

Martyn.

New face for the EMEA region

The 28th July 2002 saw one of the biggest and, we believe, most beneficial changes for the Revelation community in the EMEA region in quite sometime.

Sprezzatura, one of the longest standing and most respected users of Revelation products was awarded exclusive rights to distribute Revelation Software products in the UK.

"I'm excited to have Sprezzatura on board as our UK Partner." said Mike Ruane, President and CEO of Revelation Software. "Sprezzatura's reputation for top quality work and technological excellence is well known in our community. By selecting them as our distributor, we are keeping with our plan of increasing the value of our products to developers and users, and improve our market in the UK and EU".

However, we will not merely be a mover of product, but an organisation committed to both the success of Revelation Software and it's developers and users.

We have already seen a dramatic improvement in technical support. How? By simply localising the support to the UK and using Sprezzatura's extensive technical resources Revelation Software Limited have already reduced support times from a couple of days to a couple of hours, with initial response times reduced to minutes.

During 2003 we plan to deliver more value to the community through seminars and workshops designed to help you to take advantage of new and emerging technologies. Keep an eye on our new web site (www.revsoft.co.uk) for details of planned events.

Please be sure to contact Martyn or Francesca for all of your Revelation Software related needs.

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CeBIT One of our key strategies and a new initiative is to begin promoting Revelation products in the EMEA region. We are beginning discussions with editors about adverts and column space and we have already committed to CeBit 2003.

This major European IT event will be held in Hanover between the 12th and 19th March 2003. Is it really 8 days?

Watch out for more details on our web site:

www.revsoft.co.uk

OI32 4.1.2 delivers more and more and more ...

Since the first release of OI32, the product has seen many changes and several releases. The latest of which is version 4.1.2 and is now available from the OI WORKS download area on the States web site.

Initial releases of 4.0.x made use of the OEngine.exe converted to 32-bit from the old 16-bit product. At version 4.1 we saw this change to using the new OEngine.dll as the core of the product.

So what are the benefits to this change?

IN PROCESS ENGINE

OpenInsight 4.1 and above now runs with an In-process engine, which means that the engine is a dll running in the same process space as the presentation server. This provides a substantial increase in speed for a typical session. The presentation Server is the 'manager' which controls the components of OpenInsight and their interface with the operating system.

To accommodate the need to run out of process sessions, i.e. an OEngine separate from the OI process, additional parameters have been added to the OINSIGHT and OENGINE command lines, and Rbasic has been extended to have Rbasic stored procedures connect to multiple engines running on the same or other machines.

DIRECT TCPIP CONNECTION

Connections may now be made via named pipe and/or TCPIP. You need to be running the TCPIP All Networks driver to use the TCPIP connections. These changes make it possible to implement true client-server solutions, where some code runs on the client and other code runs on the server, sending only results back to the client.

So what else has happened recently?

UNICODE

As of version 4.1, OI32 supports Unicode for display purposes. The entire tool has not been written to be Unicode compliant, but output from OpenInsight systems, whether Forms, Menus, Popups, or Reports, now support Unicode.

The 4.1 release also saw the beginnings of another major move forward in the product. Revelation Software have begun to rewrite some of the tools that are currently supplied in OI as separate .exe files. These tools will be rewritten using OI32 itself – once again showing how flexible OI can be and how much we value it as an application development toolset.

REVISED TABLE BUILDER

The first of these tools to be rewritten is the Table Builder and it's no surprise to learn that this was also a new feature of the 4.1 release. This implementation is intended to initially complement the current Table Builder, however it will replace the current one in the fullness of time. The "OpenInsight 4.1 New Features" guide details the new features that we have delivered in the new Table Builder.

OECGI DIRECT CONNECTION

Another fundamental change was to the OICGI which now uses OpenEngine CGI (OECGI). Those of you using the OICGI for your browser based application will need to reconfigure your web server to make use of the new technology. These changes are detailed in the "OpenInsight 4.1 New Features" guide.

The new OECGI interface connects directly to an OpenEngine without using the OI presentation server. The Engine runs in-process with OECGI.exe. This means that the web server only creates one external process, and that process does not interact with the desktop. OECGI significantly reduces the overhead and security footprint of an OI32 web application

while providing a decreased response time. Additionally, it is possible to configure OECGI so that each web request gets a unique copy of the engine. This means that long running requests do not block each other.

This has also enabled us to do away with the requirement for the Web Deployment Pack (WDP). As of 4.1.2 you are now able to deploy your application to your web server using standard Server Deployment Packs (SDPs).

IMPORTANT: If you are using a version of OI prior to 4.1.2 and you want to make Linear Hash data available to browser based users via ANY means you must still use the current WDP. If you are not sure about your installation please contact us for clarification.

For intranet and extranet based applications this change at 4.1.2 should drastically reduce the cost to make your applications available over web technology. Using the create and destroy switch, you only need to purchase enough user licenses to meet your concurrent user needs. This change was being implemented as we went to press, so please contact Martyn for latest details.

Finally for this piece, we have rewritten/reformatted the OpenInsight Help Files for OpenInsight 4.1. They are now HTML-based, and should be much more useful. Some of the features of the new Help files include:

- Context-Sensitive Help
- Keyword Lookups
- Navigation Pane



What is Unicode?

The most popular character set used in personal computers today is ANSI (American National Standards Institute's character set).

The ANSI character set is adequate for Western languages, but it cannot fully support languages with more diverse characters, such as Cyrillic or Japanese.

Unicode provides a unique number for every character, no matter what the platform, no matter what the language is. With a total of 65,536 distinct characters, this includes technical symbols, punctuation symbols and fonts. The Unicode Standard has been adopted by such industry leaders as Apple, HP, IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP, Sun, Sybase, Unisys and many others.

Unicode is required by modern standards such as XML, Java, ECMAScript (JavaScript), LDAP, CORBA 3.0, WML, etc., and is the official way to implement ISO/IEC 10646. It is supported in many operating systems, all modern browsers, and many other products.

OI32 4.1.2 released

The 6th November saw the latest OI32 release 4.1.2 posted to the OI WORKS area on www.revelation.com

As expected this release is packed with new features and fixes. Some of the highlights are noted below. Sorry, but we could not fit them all in here. 😊

WORKS subscribers can view the complete list within the download readme file.

4.1.2 New Features and Fixes

- New user password security has been added. The New User dialog box in the Database Manager has been modified to prompt for password options- never expires, expires at a certain date, or must change password at next logon. The Update User dialog has also been modified accordingly. CREATE_USER now takes an additional two parameters.
- Expiration Value and Password Expiration Date have been added. Logon logic has been modified to warn when a user's logon is approaching the expiration date.
- NAMECAP has been added to the list of supplied Stored Procedures. Namecap takes a string and converts it to correct name capitalization.
- The default mode of the OpenEngine is now ANSI.
- Fixed a bug where aliasing to the same tablename more than three times would generate an FS210 error.
- Added the DCOUNT function to OpenInsight.
- Updated SYSPROCS record FSERRORS_400 to include documentation for errors FS450 through FS497

Contact Martyn if you are no longer an OI WORKS member and want to start taking advantage of this latest release and also gain access to future releases, support and OI WORKS content.

One for ARev & OI

Earlier this year we saw the long awaited release of the new network product for Windows NT and Windows 2000 servers. This was a very welcome release for those of you experiencing the weird issue of PC's hanging for no apparent reason. Was this really only a UK issue?

There are also big benefits for those users happily running on older versions of the NT Service.

So who should be using the new version?

Anyone who is running OpenInsight (16-bit) or Advanced Revelation on a Microsoft server based network and currently does not have any Revelation network products installed, or anyone who is planning on moving from a Novell Network to a Microsoft Network.

Anyone who is using the NT/2000 Service 1.5 or below but who wants to increase the speed of the product, or who cannot use Named Pipes any longer.

What are the benefits?

In a few words, the key benefits of TCP/IP are speed increases, increased data protection and resilience. The TCP/IP connections show a speed improvement some 30 - 50% above the current Windows 2000 Service 1.5. When a hardware fault, power fluctuation or similar causes data corruption, the error is recognised and the user notified, thus protecting the data. One more step towards the total elimination of data corruption errors.

More at: www.revsoft.co.uk/win200021.htm

Keep up to date with the latest Revelation offers.

www.revsoft.co.uk/offers.htm

What is OLE?

OLE, in addition to being a popular crossword puzzle answer for a Spanish cheer, is an acronym for Object Linking and Embedding. It is also known as COM (Component Object Model) or ActiveX.

OLE provides for application integration in two ways: linking or embedding. Object Link provides the ability to share data sources. Object embedding provides the ability to display data from one application in another.

Prior to OLE the major communication model for Windows was DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange). DDE provided simultaneous communication between two running programs.

DDE is a passive communication model in that the server application is passively waiting for a request from the client application and no processing occurs until a request is received and processing ceases once the request is fulfilled. OLE controls usually have a file extension of .OCX.

OLE and OpenInsight 4.1

The use of OLE controls in modern application development is becoming more and more important. OI32 version 4.1 saw new functionality to enable the use of OLE Controls. This functionality increases Revelation developer's ability to provide their clients with rapid development of their applications through the use of 3rd-party ActiveX controls. No longer is the application limited to using only OI controls.

Why OLE?

OLE controls provide the developer with a tool to use reusable components across applications. The need to create specific functionality per application or to copy source code from one application to the next is considerably decreased. Also, OLE provides the ability to use vendor provided controls within an application. In reality, the question should be: why not OLE? If one can exploit the use of pre-written objects, one should.

Want to find out more?

Watch www.revsoft.co.uk for details of our OLE developer workshop coming soon.

New LH ODBC Driver and an apology

The long awaited Revelation ODBC driver is now available for general release and details can be found on our web site at <http://www.revsoft.co.uk/odbc.htm>

The first release will be for OI32 and will be a read only ODBC driver. It is our intention to develop the driver further with read/write functionality early next year and details will be released through our web site at the above URL.

Those of you that Martyn has an email address for will have received an email a few weeks ago about the ODBC driver. This indicated that this driver could be used for ARev 3.12 applications as well as OI applications. This is slightly misleading, as a copy of OI32 (version 4.x) is required to attach the tables and might therefore not be suitable for some of our ARev only customers.

Discussions are currently taking place on the viability of an ARev ODBC driver. If this project goes ahead, we should be releasing the ARev version early in 2003. Please email Martyn (mp@revsoft.co.uk) if you are interested in the ARev ODBC driver for further details on this project.

The current product will be licensed per user and this should help to keep the cost for users to a minimum. The cost will be £135.00 for a single user and £399.00 for a five user license. It will only be necessary to purchase ODBC driver licenses for those users who require ODBC functionality. The purchase of ODBC Driver licenses does not affect Revelation's single or multi-user licenses, which should be purchased in the usual way.

Licensing

With load balancing across multiple servers, centralised applications and the need to reduce administration man hours we are seeing many new ways of making applications available to our users.

In addition, Revelation are constantly changing their licenses to cater for and reduce the cost of such deployments. Unfortunately, as environments become more and more complicated we are starting to come across systems that step outside of the license.

Revelation Software Inc. take their licensing very seriously and as such we are always happy to discuss new and existing deployments and to advise accordingly.

If you have concerns regarding any of your deployments please contact Martyn to discuss them further.

Latest Version Checker:

ARev	
Full Dev	– 3.12
OpenInsight	
Full Dev 16-bit	– 3.7.5
Full Dev 32-bit	– 4.1.2
Network Products	
Win 2K, NT and XP	– Windows 2K Svc 2.1
Novell 3.x & 4.x	– Revelation NLM 1.5
Novell 5.x & 6.x	– Revelation NLM 5.5
	– Latest Novell vipx.exe

Running ARev?

**CPU Utilisation up,
Performance down,
on modern operating
systems, Win 2K, XP?**

**Call Martyn on
+44 (0)20 8832 7380**

revsoft.co.uk is dead - long live revsoft.co.uk

During November and December saw the old EMEA Revelation web site disappear to be replaced by, what we hope, is a fresher more developer focused site. Along with the usual product (sales and marketing speak) pages are areas that include:

- o Hints & Tips page (please donate your tip)
- o Downloads page with:
 - o Demos and evaluations
 - o Installations Manuals
 - o Client installs, Patches and upgrades
 - o White Papers & Tutorials
- o EMEA Price List
- o News and Info
- o The months special offer



We want this site to become a reference area that complements and extends the US site (www.revelation.com). To this end we would welcome your ideas and suggestions for content that you would like to see on the site. Please email your suggestions to webmaster@revsoft.co.uk.

Enterprise has landed!

No we are not talking Captain Kirk. This is the new product set for those Revelation clients wanting to have large numbers of users. The old Unlimited licenses were put together in the good old days when 256 users on a single server was the max and no one dreamed of having hundreds of users using our applications as we do today.

With the good work that Mike and the team are doing in the US, we are looking to break into new and larger markets, where many hundreds of users is not uncommon – yes we are really going scaleable. Available licenses are now 250, 500 & 1000 users. The larger licenses carry an annual maintenance fee and include a free OI WORKS subscription. Please contact Martyn for further details (+44 (0) 20 8832 7380).

User Group

We have recently been approached on several occasions with the request to begin a new Revelation User Group.

Ideas are already being collated by Martyn and, if there is sufficient interest, we hope to begin holding quarterly meetings early in 2003.

A recent unofficial Revelation user group held on the Isle Of Man was very well attended and reports indicate that the meeting was very positive and everyone found the meeting useful.

Please register your interest by contacting Martyn by email (mp@revsoft.co.uk) with your ideas and what you hope to obtain from these meetings.

We plan to contact all interested customers shortly after publication of this newsletter with more details.

Don't Forget

Please do not forget to send an email to mp@revsoft.co.uk with your email address and those of any colleagues who wish to receive future Revelation newsletters via email.

Please also contact Martyn should you wish to continue to receive a hard copy of future editions of this newsletter or to be removed from our newsletter mailing list.