What's Up, DOCumentation? 2002 # 12

December 2002

From: Bob Green, President

To: **Users of Robelle Software**

Re: **News of the HP e3000 and Robelle**

Our newsletter publication has been monthly for over a year now. Publication has been on-line, with an email notification to each customer. Each issue is jam-packed with articles, but if you get as much email as I do, you may have missed this valuable service. Back issues can be reviewed at http://www.robelle.com/newsletter

The Robelle newsletter really needs to be read on-line, since the headline of every story is actually a web link to the full story or more information. In the interest of keeping the newsletter short and readable, the details are often to be found in the web links. The on-line newsletter is at

http://www.robelle.com/library/newsletter/latest.html

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News and Upcoming Events

Homesteading By Tax Regulation

Marius Schild, the Robelle dealer in Holland, made us aware that in the EU, you must not only retain your business records for a tax audit, but your online computer data as well. This legal requirement may mean that many European companies will be "homesteading" with their HP 3000s more than they had planned. Click on the heading above for an article that he wrote on the subject, translated from Dutch into English.

One Year Anniversary

November 14, 2002 was the one-year anniversary of HP's end-of-support" announcement for the HP 3000. I re-read our press release of November 14, 2001 and I still stand by it today. If you decide to migrate, we will help you. If you decide to homestead on your HP 3000, we will help you too. Since last year we have done many enhancements to our Qedit and Suprtool product lines, for both MPE and HP-UX, and we plan to continue that support in the future.

Robelle ad from *3000 Newswire*

More Version Status Info

We have added to the "grids" of product status

down the left hand side of the main Robelle web page. The new grids denote the current production and pre-release versions, as well as the minimum version numbers for each release of MPE and HP-UX. We also added a note that says the version number for either OS are the "minimum" version for support on that version of the OS. If you have a later version of our product, of course you are okay as well.

2003 Manman Users Meeting

CAMUS (the Computer Aided Manufacturing User Society) is holding their annual conference May 4-7, 2003 in Dallas, Texas at the Hotel Inter-Continental (in nearby Addison). The theme is "Harnessing Change - Back to Basics". They offer early bird registation discount. Anyone interested in being a speaker should contact CAMUS by Februrary 3rd.

OpenMPE Membership Drive

OpenMPE is offering a "zero cost" membership as part of its effort to identify the initial "rank-and-file" of the community that desires to continue using and/or supporting the MPE environment beyond the end of 2006, the HP retirement year for MPE. in which Hewlett-Packard will end its support to the operating system. As of HPWorld, OpenMPE has largely completed its original "Gang of Six" objectives and is now working on details of license transfers and creation of a virtual MPE lab outside HP. Click the link to register.

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HP Tips

IMAGE: Are adjacent detail entries likely to have the same key value?

When we retrieve the entries for a customer from a sales detail dataset, we do a DBFIND by the customer number, then a DBGET mode 5 to read each detail entry for that customer. Our natural tendency is to think that since these detail entries are logically "grouped" they are probably physically grouped as well. If they are, then retrieving them should be very quick. However, if they are likely to be physically far apart on the disk hardware, then performance will be much less.

Firmware Patch for A-Class (no link available)

HP has announced a firmware upgrade for the original release of A and N-class servers for MPE. It is hard to find this patch on the IRTC web site. Try going to "Individual Patches" and entering patch ID of PF_CPREGSPA0111. You can't locate it through either the FIRMWARE path or the HP 3000 path, as one would have expected. (Thanks to Steve Cooper for this tip.)

Here is what the IRTC has to say:

- The A6696A GSP firmware provided in PF_CPREGSPA0111 incorrectly reports that the firmware is a BETA version. After PF_CPREGSPA0111 is installed, the GSP "HElp" command reports the following:

```
=== GSP Help =========(Administrator)===
Hardware Revision 8 Firmware Revision A.01.11
  BETASep 25 2002,09:45:01
```

- The A6696A GSP firmware provided in PF_CPREGSPA0111 is not a BETA version and is fully supported by HP. HP

recommends that the A6696A GSP firmware be updated using PF_CPREGSPA0111 to address the issues documented in the patch. The reference to the firmware being a BETA version can be ignored.

Update: HP posted a new patch, Revision A.01.12, identical to A.01.11, but with the word "BETA" removed. Our A-class server has been updated to that level without incident.

HP 3000 Trivia Challenge

If you are a long-time HP 3000 user, you may be able to answer the questions in this challenging Trivia Quiz (for example, "What colors did the original HP 3000 come in?").

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Qedit Tips

Qedit Visual for HP-UX Revived!

As you may know, HP has removed the block-mode routine from HP-UX version 11. This eliminated Visual mode from our host-based Qedit, a serious loss of functionality. However, after requests from many users, especially at HPWorld, we have re-implemented Visual Mode using a line-at-a-time screen read, as is done in Pscreen. Downloads of this prerelease 5.3.12 are available for Qedit/UX customers to evaluate.

Word Processing in Host-based Qedit

Host-based Qedit may not have the fancy user interface of Qedit for Windows, but it does have two very nice features for word processing: the Justify command to flow text into even paragraphs, and the Spell command to check the spelling of words in your text. Click the title above for examples!

Suprtool Tips

Suprtool 4.6.02 Beta: Power Update

Neil Armstrong, the Suprtool architect, writes:

I am truly proud to announce the release of Suprtool 4.6.02, which is one of the most exciting pre-releases of Suprtool in a long time. This version has many features that we (Bob and I) feel are very useful and have been asked for, for a very long time.

Bob and I collaborated on the new Table features on HP-UX, Bob wrote the underlying file handling and I incorporated the new code into Suprtool for HP-UX so that Update from a table is available on HP-UX as well as expanded tables.

Not to mention support for HP Eloquence version 7!!!!

Please see the What's new pre-release page and watch for upcoming articles on our web site. Suprtool 4.6.02 is available for download now.

I will post more on this very soon, but some of the key new features are as follows:

* The Table command now supports filenames up to 80 characters.
* The Table command truncated filenames at the limit of 36 characters.
* The number of defines allowed in Suprtool has been increased to 768.
* Suprtool and STExport now support features to Clean your data.
* STExport now supports an Escape command which will escape out certain characters.

* Suprtool now supports a $Counter function which will increment an integer field for output record (like >output,new - useful for resorting data back into original sequence).
* Suprtool now supports a $Total function which will total a specified field.

The HP-UX version has the following bug fixes and features:

* Suprtool for HP-UX now supports environment variable substitution.
* The Table command now supports filenames up to 80 characters.
* The Table command truncated filenames at the limit of 36 characters.
* The number of defines allowed in Suprtool has been increased to 768.
* Suprtool has been enhanced to support HP Eloquence 7.0 features.
* The Base and Put commands have been changed to support new syntax.
* Suprtool now supports the expanded database limits in HP Eloquence 7.0.
* Suprtool now support extract from a table and larger tables on HP-UX.
* Suprtool and STExport now support features to Clean your data.
* STExport now supports an Escape command which will escape out certain characters.
* Suprtool now supports a $Counter function which will increment an integer field for output record (like >output,new - useful for resorting data back into original sequence).
* Suprtool now supports a $Total function which will total a specified field.

What Detail Datasets Have the Bad Data?

You know there is an invalid key value in a TurboIMAGE automatic master, but you don't know which of the 16 details contain the bad value. How to find them all?

You could create a custom Suprtool job that looks in each of

the linked datasets. But perhaps you have not worked on this database in a year or so. It could take a long time to get the names of the related sets, and the names of the key field in each one, all spelled correctly! Nothing difficult, but time-consuming.

Click the link above to discover the one simple Suprtool command that solves this problem.

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HP-UX and Migration Planning

hp3000-l: Marxmeier Takes Control of Eloquence

R &D for Eloquence is done by a German software house, **Marxmeier Software AG**. Recently, they made an important announcement:

"Effective November 20, 2002, Hewlett-Packard transferred the HP Eloquence product responsibility to Marxmeier Software AG... Marxmeier Software AG has been responsible for the HP Eloquence product development and back level support under contract with Hewlett-Packard for the past 14 years. Marxmeier Software has, in addition, been responsible for worldwide Eloquence distribution since 1997. We have a long history of providing support and services for partners and end users."

Robelle sees this as a valuable development for Eloquence users because the most focused, qualified and motivated people will be in charge of Eloquence and its future.

On the 3000-L mailing list Russ Rino asked:

> Does anybody know why ?

Gavin Scott of Allegro replied:

I believe everyone involved considers this change to be a Good Thing(tm).

The product will now be directly owned by the company that wrote it and supports it, who will not have to deal with the HP bureaucracy when it comes to deciding what enhancements to fund, etc.

There were also concerns by a number of people that they could not be sure that HP wouldn't suddenly stop supporting Eloquence the way that they stopped supporting MPE. The only way to completely allay people's fears that HP would stop supporting it was to get HP to stop supporting it :-)

In fact I think you'll find that significant forces are in motion to provide expanding worldwide support and accelerating growth for the Eloquence product, especially in terms of its use as a TurboImage replacement. Some URLs that may be interesting:

http://www.eloquence3000.com/

http://www.mbfoster.com/enews/press_releases.cfm?Open=152

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Links/Resources/Industry News

Take a Quiz

How can you tell if a software group has gone off the track? Listen for tell-tale phrases that warn of trouble, remarks such as "that's not my job" and "it's against our policy." Click the link above and see how many of the excuses you have heard?

CASE - VAR for Asset Management

CASE is a long-time Robelle VAR whose flagship product, ABLE,

does portfolio management for asset-based and corporate finance lenders

Old Faithful & Reliable 3000 Server Retires

"At 8:30 a.m. today, November 4, 2002 I turned off our faithful H-P 3000 and the INLEX software for the last time..." INLEX is a package for libraries produced by DRA (now merged into SIRSI). In this 3kworld article, Howard Pringle of Waukesha Public Library describes how he feels about shutting down his amazingly reliable hardware/software combination.

HP's Software Tiers

Here is a chart on the Openmpe web site showing the tiers for different processors for HP's MPE software licensing.

HP's MPE Technical Support Links

This page on the CSY web site links to HP technical resources for MPE/iX users.

Broaden Your Knowledge: Unicode

Unicode is a character encoding standard that is designed to cover 95% of the world's written languages.

New Maintainer for MPE::IMAGE Perl Module

This module allows TurboIMAGE access from Perl. Maintenance is being taken over from Ted Ashton by David Oksner, who is adding Eloquence and HP-UX support.

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Newsletter Distribution

Robelle Solutions Technology Inc. provides the *What's Up, DOCumentation?* newsletter as a service to our customers. The

newsletter is available on the web: in HTML format for browsing and PDF format for printing. Visit www.robelle.com/library/newsletter/

Comments about this issue, as well as ideas for future issues, including news, tips, and suggestions for articles, can be sent to bgreen@robelle.com.

Previous Issue:

November Newsletter Posted

The November issue of Robelle's monthly newsletter is also available our web site, in case you missed it. Normally, this newsletter is shipped to our customers by email and web delivery, but in November we mailed a physical copy instead. If our customers have as much junk email as we do, they may have missed the email announcements.

Topics for November: Eloquence 3000 Inc, Suprtool Many-to-many links, a powerful beta release of Suprtool, IMAGE tips ("can your capacity be too large?"), and much more.