

January 2003
Happy New Year!!!

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CR 9.0 and CE 8.5 Webinars a Success!!!

Thank you to everyone who attended our December Webinars on Crystal Reports 9.0 and Crystal Enterprise 8.5. We enjoyed showing you the benefits of using these products and appreciate your feedback. To accommodate all of our clients and to continue to provide ongoing product education, BridgeBuilder will be holding these FREE Web Seminars on a monthly basis starting at the end of January.

Jill Howe, Senior Trainer and Consultant and author of *Prima's Guide to Crystal Reports 7.0, 8.0, and 9.0* will be presenting the Crystal Reports 9.0 Webinars. Will Mcrae, Senior Trainer and Crystal Enterprise Consultant will be presenting the Crystal Enterprise 8.5 Webinars. Each Seminar will be presented via WebEx so all you need is a PC with an Internet connection to attend. For more information or to sign up for a Webinar, please contact Samantha Ferrie at Samantha.Ferrie@BridgeBuilder.com or call (888) Bridge-B. See you there!

January Webinar Dates:

Crystal Reports 9.0 January 28 12:00-1:30 PM EST

Crystal Enterprise 8.5 January 29 9:00-10:30 AM EST

BridgeBuilder Participates in Angel Tree Program

BridgeBuilder "adopted" two children from the YMCA's Angle Tree this holiday season. Our 11-year-old boy and 9-year-old girl received a variety of new toys and clothes contributed by all members of BridgeBuilder. The holiday season is about giving and sharing and we look forward to sharing our good fortune with others in the community.

BridgeBuilder Foundation

2003 marks the second year of the BridgeBuilder Foundation endowment. The endowment was set up last year in an effort to establish a permanent fund for a variety of charitable organizations, such as *Food for the Poor*. A funding schedule has been set

in order for BridgeBuilder to automatically contribute a portion of profits each year to the fund. We hope to grow this fund to at least \$100,000 by the end of 2003.

Congratulations to our Survey Winner!

We'd like to thank everyone who participated in our BridgeBuilder customer satisfaction survey in December. Your positive comments and feedback on how we can improve will be used to make us better in the New Year. And, as promised, on December 23, our drawing was held for the winner of an MP3 Player. Congratulations to Alex Retter of Open Network! To all those who didn't win, we promise more opportunities at other great prizes coming your way soon and thank you once again for your invaluable feedback.

January Tip: The Crystal Repository

The Crystal Repository is a new feature in Crystal Reports 9 that deserves a formal introduction. Those of you using CR 9 can put this information immediately to use. If you have not yet upgraded, store this away for when you decide to do so. The repository is a new tool within Crystal Reports. It opens in the form of an "explorer" or docked dialog box on the left side of the design window. The repository contains folders, and in those folders you can add objects. There are several object types that can be stored in the repository - .BMP, text objects, SQL Commands, and Custom Functions. All objects are added to the repository from within Crystal Reports and once an object is saved to the repository, that object is available for any other Crystal Report users to add to their reports. Essentially the repository is a database where objects are stored and all Crystal Reports users connected to that same repository can add repository objects to their reports.

What makes the repository special is that any object added to a report from the repository is linked to the repository. This allows that object to be dynamically refreshed or changed in the report if the object is changed in the repository. For

example, your corporate logo is in the repository and all your reports contain the logo added to the reports from the repository. Now, your logo changes slightly. All you must do is update the object in the repository (from one report) and all other reports that contain that repository object will be updated when each report is opened. It gets better! Custom functions can be stored in the repository. Note that Crystal formulas, that you are likely familiar with, cannot be stored in the repository in their current format. Custom functions are functions you can build right within the Formula Workshop in Crystal Reports 9. A custom function can be built to perform any function you want – you can even use the custom function extractor to extract a function from a formula you wrote. Thus, even though you cannot technically save a formula to the repository for sharing with other users, you can extract that formula into a custom function, and save that function to the repository. Now that the custom function is saved to the repository, anyone with access to the repository can use that function on a report.

Why am I so excited about this? Many databases contain fields that need some manipulation in order to be useful, most commonly I see date data in a string type field. In any report requiring a date, the database field must be fed into a formula to convert it. For consistency across reports, and ease of report development, one user could extract a custom function from the conversion formula and *viola*, all users can share the same function. Custom functions are easy to use, and guarantee that all reports are using the same logic for the conversion.

Yes, it gets even better! Now in the process of reporting someone realizes that there is a small “issue” with your data and that some dates were updated automatically by an internal system and formatted incorrectly. Now, the custom function that all reports are using is not correct, as it does not accommodate for this incorrectly formatted date. Since all reports use the custom function stored in the repository one user can go to the custom function in the repository and make the necessary changes to accommodate for the different data. Each report that uses the custom function is dynamically linked to the repository so the next time any report is opened it will refresh against the repository and any objects will be updated in the report to match the version in the repository. Gone are the days of opening every report, scanning for the

formula in question, and updating each report individually.

Though not all object types can be stored in the repository, the ones that can speed up report development and formatting time. Dynamically updating custom functions, well that might be enough right there for you to consider upgrading. (Ok, ok, I really liked v8, but the new features in CR9 are just amazing!)

Thanks to Jill Howe of BridgeBuilder for this tip. Look for Jill's new book, Premier Press' Guide to Crystal Reports 9.0 due out this month!

Please share your tips and tricks! Send to Samantha.Ferrie@BridgeBuilder.com and if we use them in one of our newsletters, we'll send you a BridgeBuilder T-shirt to say thanks!

MENTAL BREAK!!!!

Answers to December Brain Teasers:

Brian Teaser #1 Answer: 20 feet
The squirrel travels 5 feet for every 4 feet of the pole

Brain Teaser #2 Answer: 25 minutes
If the walkway is wide enough to accommodate 8 of the ten snails then the first snail will be just leaving the path as the tenth snail is starting onto the path. Using that information you can simply divide the full 50 minutes by 2.

January Brain Teasers:

Brain Teaser #1
What English word contains the letter sequence LMN?

Brain Teaser #2
A Rebus Puzzle: What phrase or expression is represented below?

1 3 5 7 9

whelming

Special thanks to Dawn Rutan from Advent Christian General Conference for Brain Teaser #1!

Send your answers to Samantha.Ferrie@BridgeBuilder.com. One correct answer receives a BridgeBuilder 2003 calendar. Both correct answers

receive a calendar and a BridgeBuilder T-shirt! Good luck!

Upcoming Public Training Dates

Charlotte, NC

Crystal Reports 8.5 Classes

Level 1 February 3-4

Level 2 February 5-6

Level 3 February 7

Crystal Reports 9.0 Classes

Level 1 January 13-14

Level 2 January 15-16

Level 3 January 17

Level 1 February 24-25

Level 2 February 26-27

Level 3 February 28

Level 1 March 24-25

Level 2 March 26-27

Level 3 March 28

Crystal Enterprise Classes

Enterprise Administrator 8.5

Jan. 27-28

Enterprise Web Developer 8.0

Jan. 30-31

Crystal Reports for SalesLogix Classes

January 22-24

March 5-7

Cincinnati, OH

Crystal Reports 8.5 Classes

Level 1 February 24-25

Level 2 February 26-27

Level 3 February 28

Crystal Reports 9.0 Classes

Level 1 January 27-28

Level 2 January 29-30

Level 3 January 31

Level 1 March 31-April 1

Level 2 April 2-3

Level 3 April 4

Crystal Enterprise Classes

Enterprise Administrator 8.5

Feb. 10-11

Enterprise Web Developer 8.0

Feb. 12-13

Crystal Reports for SalesLogix Classes

February 5-7

March 26-28

Call to register

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