

**February 2003**

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### Crystal Reports 9 Essentials Released!!!

BridgeBuilder is pleased to announce the availability of our newest and best guide to using Crystal Reports! This publication contains step by step instructions for using all the features of Crystal Reports, both old and new. Each chapter also contains more examples, tips, and suggestions for integrating functions together to create efficient, functional reports. One of the authors spent a majority of the last 2 years doing full time report development, and that experience with real world data and databases, problems and issues, was poured into this new book.

A few of the most exceptional chapters cover selection criteria, parameters, subreports, and formulas. There is so much new content in these sections that users of versions 8 and 8.5 Crystal Reports, as well as new users of 9, will find tips and examples found in no other publication. Come flip through a copy in our office, or go check it out at Barnes and Noble (or your favorite bookstore) and see for yourself!

You can order the book directly from BridgeBuilder, ([www.bridgebuilder.com](http://www.bridgebuilder.com)) or go to your favorite bookstore. Also, like our previous publications, there are sample reports that accompany the text on our website for download. You must have Crystal Reports 9 to view the reports, though, since version 9 reports are not backward compatible

### Crystal Enterprise 9 Is Here!

Crystal Enterprise 9 is now available! CE 9 builds upon the strength of Crystal Decisions' proven enterprise reporting technology to deliver greater productivity and flexibility for all users, including end users, with more sophisticated analytic requirements. One of the most important features of Crystal Enterprise 9 is its compatibility with Crystal Reports 9. So those of you who were waiting to upgrade to Enterprise until it was compatible with the latest version of Crystal Reports, your wait is over!

For more information about upgrading to CE, please call us at 888-BridgeB or email [Info@BridgeBuilder.com](mailto:Info@BridgeBuilder.com). And learn more about Crystal Reports 9 and Crystal Enterprise 9 in our FREE monthly webinars. Go to [www.BridgeBuidler.com](http://www.BridgeBuidler.com) for details. Happy reporting!

### Tips & Tricks

#### Tip # 1

#### **CRYSTAL REPORTS 9 IS NOT BACKWARD COMPATIBLE**

Unlike versions 8 and 8.5 where you could save the report as a v7 or 8 report, to open the report in earlier versions of the tool or in Seagate Info or Crystal Enterprise, version 9 Crystal Reports cannot be saved "backwards" to previous versions, or opened in previous versions of Crystal Reports, Seagate Info, or Crystal Enterprise 8 or 8.5. Crystal Enterprise 9 was just released by Crystal Decisions late January. This new release supports Crystal Reports 9, but you must have build 2 of Crystal Reports 9. Contact us or Crystal Decisions if you have questions or problems with compatibility.

#### Tip #2

#### **CUSTOM FUNCTIONS IN CRYSTAL REPORTS 9**

Last month we provided information on the Crystal Repository, a new tool in Crystal Reports 9. This month I am providing some specific information on the Custom Function Extractor. The Crystal Repository is able to store several object types, but not formulas as we know them. Instead, we must extract custom functions from formulas. Custom functions can be stored in the Repository. Custom Functions can be written from scratch in Crystal Reports to perform a particular function. The user of a custom function in the Formula Expert simply chooses the function they wish to use, and plugs in database fields or values in one or several drop down lists depending on the function. This is fine and dandy, except that some of us might not want to re-write formulas as functions. Crystal Reports 9 has a tool called the Custom Function Extractor, which will allow you to extract custom

function logic from an existing formula you wrote in Crystal Reports.

The following sections detail using the Custom Function Extractor. This is really just the beginning, but it gets you started overcoming the depression caused last month with a repository that did not store formulas!

1. Open the Formula Workshop, and select Report Custom Function from the workshop tree. Click the New button, which opens the Custom Function Name dialog box. Type a name for your new custom function and click the Use Extractor button. The Extract Custom Function from Formula dialog box opens.
2. Select the formula you want to base the custom function on. Fill in the summary description and argument descriptions, which will help users when they call up and use the custom function in reports.
3. Depending on the formula you selected to base the custom function on, you may want to edit it to add another variable or more functionality. For example, if you had a formula named `{@OrderPlusTax}` on the report, and extracted a custom function from it, the formula text of `{Orders.Order Amount} * 1.08` would be translated by the extractor in to a custom function syntax or code of `Function (currencyVar v1) v1 * 1.08`.
4. When using this custom function, you are able to enter a value from a drop down list for v1, or variable 1. But you are not able to edit the tax rate. Since rates can change, we can edit the custom function to accommodate two variables, one for the field, which is v1 right now, and add a second for the tax rate.
5. The custom function is listed under Report Custom Functions in the workshop tree. Select the function and the syntax is listed on the right side, in the custom function editor. If the syntax is not listed, rather a dialog of custom function properties, click the properties toggle button in the toolbar, it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> icon from the right. This will open the custom function editor.
6. Edit the function to read `Function (currencyVar v1, numbertvar v2) v1 * (1 + v2/100)`. Note that this new function has a new variable, v2, which allows for entering the tax rate you wish to be used. So the edited function has two drop down lists in the Formula Expert to fill in, both the field you want to base the calculation on (amount field) and the rate tax to use, which is just a number you enter.

It is relatively easy to convert existing formulas into custom functions. Custom functions can be saved to the Repository, and shared among reports and users throughout your organization.

To learn more about Custom Functions, and just about every other functionality in Crystal Reports, pick up a copy of our just released book titled *Crystal Reports 9 Essentials*. This publication is meant to be a comprehensive teacher and resource for reporting with Crystal Reports. If you want hands on training, contact us regarding either a standard or custom training course.

### Trick #1 USING THE COMMENT BUTTON IN THE FORMULA EDITOR

The Formula Editor in CR 9 now has a comment button in the toolbar, with a picture of two forward slashes (//) on it. Use this symbol to comment out text or syntax in a formula, for either explanatory comments for the formula, or when troubleshooting to test portions of a formula for errors. Highlight the formula text you want to comment out, then click the comment button (//). This will comment out everything selected. How handy!

**Please share your tips and tricks! Send to [Samantha.Ferrie@BridgeBuilder.com](mailto: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 January's Brain Teasers:

**Brian Teaser #1** Answer: Overwhelming odds

**Brain Teaser #2** Answer: Calmness

#### February Brain Teasers:

##### Brain Teaser #1

What phrase or expression makes the following language equation true? (example: 365 = D. in a Y. = Days in a Year)

4 = and T. B. B. in a P

##### Brain Teaser #2

An old fashioned bike wheel has 21 spokes. How many spaces are between the spokes?

Send your answers to [Samantha.Ferrie@BridgeBuilder.com](mailto: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

Level 1 April 7-8

Level 2 April 9-10

Level 3 April 11

#### Crystal Reports 9.0 Classes

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

Level 1 May 19-20

Level 2 May 21-22

Level 3 May 23

#### Crystal Enterprise 8.5 Classes

CE Administrator April 24-25

#### Crystal Reports for SalesLogix Classes

March 5-7

### Cincinnati, OH

#### Crystal Reports 8.5 Classes

Level 1 February 20-21

Level 1 February 24-25

Level 2 February 26-27

Level 3 February 28

#### Crystal Reports 9.0 Classes

Level 1 March 31-April 1

Level 2 April 2-3

Level 3 April 4

Level 1 May 12-13

Level 2 May 14-15

Level 3 May 16

#### Crystal Reports for SalesLogix Classes

February 5-7

March 26-28

Call to register

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