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Volume 1, Issue 4

October 2004

What's New

Kansas Selects Accenture eDemocracy Services

The State of Kansas has partnered with Accenture eDemocracy Services to deliver a comprehensive solution for voter registration and election management services as required by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).

Among the services that Accenture will deliver to Kansas are the deployment of HAVA-compliant voter registration and election management software. The service also will include change management support for training election workers who will use the new system and need to understand new processes.

Accenture eDemocracy Services is excited to partner with Kansas to implement its statewide Election Voter Information System.

The Support Corner

Who Controls the Remote?

Coming home from a restful vacation, I sit in my favorite chair with my feet propped up and a cool drink at my side. I reach for the TV remote, turn on the set, and to my dismay; the MTV channel comes blaring out so loud that I spill my drink. I frantically use the remote to switch to other stations; I skip from the Cartoon network to a show about building motorcycles to each of the reality channels. I can't get to any of my news and educational channels. I turn off the TV using the remote (I paid too much for the TV set to use my shoe).

Around the dinner table later that evening, my teenage son brags about how great the remote works now that he has changed a few of the

codes. Luckily for him, he was able to restore the remote to its previous state. He hasn't needed the remote much since he's been grounded for months.

The operation of ESM is much more flexible than your TV remote but codes can still control how the system functions in many areas. Some examples are:

1. Controlling what Handicap codes appear in a drop down list.
2. Controlling what Voter Status codes appear in a drop down list.
3. Selecting a specific Agency Source code that determines the HAVA "Show ID" setting for a voter.
4. Recording the return of a specific Correspondence Type only allows the user to select certain associated response types.

These examples are given because they show the two different categories of codes used in ESM:

1. Simple Codes. Generally, these codes are used in drop down lists to standardize the content of fields that are important to the function of your operation (e.g., selecting election workers who are 'Presiding Judges'). If each user had to manually spell that term each time it was entered, you can imagine the combinations of spellings that would occur. The use of simple code lists ensures the consistency of field content. The Handicap field uses a simple code list.
2. Business Rule Codes. Business rule codes are also used in drop down lists; however, they have an additional capability that is extremely important to the automation of your processes. The selection of a specific code (e.g., Agency

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Source of 'Mail In – No ID' can cause the population or setting of other fields on a record, and in some cases cause mailings, to be placed in the print queue. In this example, using this Agency Source on a new voter application will automatically set the 'Show ID' flag on the voter's record. It could even set a specific Status – Reason code for the voter or cause a different screen to display (e.g., the Unconfirmed Address form).

OK. You noticed that there were four examples given, but only two categories shown. This wasn't a test, but a little bit of a trick to make a point. Some codes (both Simple and Business) are maintained by the person that holds the System Administrator role for your database. Other codes have been "hard coded" by the ESM programmers so that ESM can consistently perform required tasks.

On the Codes tab under System Setup, the codes maintained by the System Administrator are marked 'Yes' under the 'Can Change?' column. Examples 1 and 3 are codes controlled by your System Administrator.

The really good news! The support desk is available to help determine the best way to implement a new code or feature for your system. Some can be done with the simple addition of a new code to the Codes List. Others may require an enhancement request.

By the way, if you didn't notice the 4 examples and only 2 categories, you're grounded.

Productivity Tips

Mouse Trap!

"Hello, this is the Election Department. Please hold. Someone will be with you by mid-November." You may be tempted to use this greeting now that another Presidential election is well underway, and you're overwhelmed with registrations piling up and absentee ballots pouring in. This is the time when shortcuts are essential, and that's where default buttons can help.

Anytime a message is displayed on the screen, a response is required from the user. The most common options are to press the [OK] button to continue. Other messages may require a [Yes] or [No] and/or some additional choice. When a message requires an answer, most of the time we grab the mouse and point and click on the desired response. For the expert mouse handler, that takes no time at all, but for many of us it's much faster to just press a simple key to accept the correct answer. That's where the default button comes in.

Usually the most common, or most used, answer is already highlighted by a small dashed line surrounding the button. This is the default. When a message pops up and the response you intend to make is set as the default, then the choice can be made by just pressing the [Enter] key on the keyboard. The default is particularly useful when running address verification on new voter records. After the address is entered, the [F7] key is pressed, and the address validates successfully, then a message pops up asking if you want to view the street information. The usual response here is [No] and that choice happens to be the default; so instead of grabbing the mouse to click the button, just tap the [Enter] key. The message closes, and you are on your way without fumbling

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with the mouse. The use of the default button in this case represents a lot of time saved because almost all functions for new voter applications are done using the keyboard. While your hands are placed on the keys, a slight move of the pinky to hit [Enter] can move you along quickly instead of leaving the keyboard, reaching for the mouse, aiming for and clicking on the little button, and then repositioning your hand over the keyboard to continue with the application. Move over mouse; the keys win this round!

Before ending this duel, let's look at one other common area where users tend to get trapped into using a mouse unnecessarily. When running a dupe check [F6] for new applications, we once again find silent options that often get ignored. For most dupe checks, the user must cycle through several times. If all checks are completed, and no duplicate record is located, then the screen must be exited. Usually this is done by using the mouse to click the [Cancel] button. Again, all other procedures are completed on the keyboard so rather than leaving the keyboard for one mouse click, the user can press the [Esc] key. The [Esc] key will quickly close the dupe screen and return you to the application without use of the mouse.

All messages have a default button which can offer a faster alternative to using the mouse, and other screens can be exited through the use of the [Esc] button. These are just two alternatives to a common task that can save time by helping you avoid an unnecessary mouse trap!

Team Member Spotlight

In this issue, we profile a member of the Accenture eDemocracy Services team who is focused on managing the implementation of AESM 2004 for Microsoft .NET in the State of Wyoming. Meet Jean Hockman, Accenture eDemocracy Services Project Manager, for Wyoming.

Jean Hockman has over 15 years of experience in project management with a demonstrated track record of excellent customer support and implementation and the successful identification and translation of customer needs into timely, state-of-the-art process and system solutions.

Jean has distinguished herself as a project manager during her eight-year career at Accenture. In particular, she has managed several university-based projects focused on the implementation of core business process management. Most recently, she served as the senior manager for the University of Illinois- UI Integrate Project, where she helped design and implement a best-practice, 5-year, roll-out and sequencing plan for the university's core business process management system.

Before the University of Illinois Project, Jean served as the Accenture lead manager for the University of Michigan, M-Pathways Project, where she oversaw the university-wide implementation of a core business process management, multi-module system supporting PeopleSoft Student Administration, including Campus Community, Student Records, Academic Advising, Financial Aid, and Student Financials. Jean also managed a PeopleSoft/Accenture software development project in Australia/New Zealand for the University of New South Wales and University of Auckland.

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Before joining Accenture, Jean worked for the State of Minnesota as a Management Analyst in the Department of Finance. In that role, she designed, implemented and managed the 65 person help desk charged with supporting both technical and functional requirements for the statewide implementation of new financial systems and software. For her management of the help desk, Jean received the Finance Department Achievement Award for outstanding project performance.

Because of her wide range of project implementations background, Jean was selected to join Accenture eDemocracy Services as the project manager for the delivery of a comprehensive solution for voter registration and election management services in the state of Wyoming. Today, Jean is helping to lead the effort at Accenture eDemocracy Services to assist Wyoming meet the requirements of the Help America Vote Act. Among the services that Accenture will deliver to Wyoming are the deployment of HAVA-compliant voter registration and election management software, hosting capabilities, and training and support.

Jean is leading the Wyoming Voter Registration (Wyo-Reg) team that is responsible for the initial implementation of AESM 2004 – the new .NET voter registration and election management software. The Wyo-Reg team members are responsible for delivering the new system, converting the existing data from the counties' current systems, building interfaces to carry data from four state agencies to AESM 2004, deploying equipment to county offices and providing training to the county staff users of the new system.

Jean can be reached at 612-277-6026 and at jean.hockman@accenture.com.

Client Profile

State of Colorado Selects AESM 2004

The State of Colorado has awarded Accenture a contract to implement the Statewide Colorado Registration and Election (SCORE) System, Colorado's centralized voter registration and election system.

Accenture will deliver the comprehensive solution for voter registration and election management services to help Colorado meet the requirements of the federally mandated Help America Vote Act (HAVA).

The agreement with Colorado calls for a team of Accenture professionals to work onsite at the Colorado Department of State. The team will deploy the Accenture Election System Manager 2004 for Microsoft.NET—an advanced voter registration and election management solution that provides a high level of capability and is designed to improve flexibility and functionality for end users. The project is scheduled to be completed by January 2006.

The central voter registration system will be built and maintained in the office of the Secretary of State in Denver. Locally, the County Clerk and Recorder election staff members will be responsible for the daily input of voter registration information. This system will provide a central system in Colorado with real time information for use by local election officials in their everyday administration of elections.

Colorado awarded the contract to Accenture following a competitive bid process that was led by a selection committee of state and county election officials.

Accenture will support the project through its local Denver office, which currently employs more than

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600 personnel. The project team will consist of more than 20 Accenture professionals, the vast majority of whom are registered voters in the State of Colorado.

Let Us Hear From You

Contact Amy Parker, Accenture eDemocracy Services, Marketing, at 860-756-2514 with your ideas and feedback. This is your newsletter, and we want to keep improving.

