



“Bits & Bytes”

January/February 2007

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Welcome!

Punxsutawney Phil says, “Expect an early spring this year!” That is optimistic news for those of us in the frigid northeast. Most of you have your spring rush behind you and you are gearing up for some spring projects. Like you, RBS has many spring projects to accomplish.

CAMEX is right around the corner! RBS is very excited about the show this year. We have a few surprises in store, so please make sure you stop by booth 1843 before you visit Mickey and Minnie.

By popular demand, RBS has arranged to have another round of the IBM/UniVerse Training courses. Details are below. RBS needs to have at least 5 participants in each course or we must cancel that course. Please consider these beneficial training courses for your IT staff.

Thank you for reading our latest newsletter.

Sincerely,

Jere Warner

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CAMEX 2007: Experience the View!

Come visit with RBS representatives at the CAMEX 2007 Campus Market Expo from March 23-27, 2007 at the Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL.

This year, RBS will unveil a new tradeshow booth. The booth reflects the contemporary and feature-rich VisualRATEX solution. Stop by booth 1843 and [Experience the View!](#)

RBS representatives will be happy to provide you with an in-depth overview of the product, address any questions you may have, and exchange stories as we do at any gathering. Safe travels to all, and if we're lucky, we will see each other in the Disney parade.

CAMEX Saturday Training Sessions

FREE training sessions will be given at CAMEX on Saturday, March 24th, 2007. More information on the day's events can be found at www.camex.org under the **Schedule of Events** section.

The VisualRATEX sessions will be given in the following location:

Where: Rosen Shingle Creek Resort, Room Wekiwa 1
When: Saturday, March 24th, 2007

Session 4-24 - Block 4 - 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

RATEX POS Training Session 1: eBooks in VisualRATEX and the Customer Relationship

This session will cover the hot topic of eBooks in VisualRATEX. You will learn how to manage the customer experience within your store. RATEX staff will explain the entire process within the software and how to get your store involved.

Session 5-24 - Block 5 - 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

RATEX POS Training Session 2: VisualRATEX Textbook Enhancements

Since the first release of the VisualRATEX product, there have been a number of textbook enhancements to sales history, cross-listed courses, and of course the implementation of ISBN-13. We will discuss these enhancements and others in this session.

Session 6-24 - Block 6 - 2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

RATEX POS Training Session 3: VisualRATEX and Serialized Inventory

This session will be a review of how to setup serialization in VisualRATEX and the complete serial number tracking found in the software.

If you can not make a training session, please make sure to stop by our booth 1843 on the show floor and [Experience the View!](#)

VisualRATEX Success Story!

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

In August 2006, The Cornell Store implemented the VisualRATEX CRM tools in order to develop a history of transactions per customer. Due to Cornell's consistent requests that customers present their IDs at POS, over 63% of their transactions were linked to a customer. In this process, most customers gave Cornell permission to contact them by email. By capturing this information, Cornell had the ability to send emails to customers in bulk, to any particular segment they select, or personalized to individuals.

In late fall 2006, Cornell began using the "customer notify" tools in the VisualRATEX CRM solution. Cornell believes this contributed to slight increases in their end-of-semester sale and January Rush. The greatest impact was on Buyback. Cornell used the Buyback CRM tool to send personalized emails to over 12,000 students with the prices Cornell was paying for their books. The dollar value of their retail buy increased 33% compared to the previous year. Students appreciated the emails very much. Out of all their CRM emails to date, only 5 customers have asked not to be contacted in the future.

VisualRATEX Updates

Development/Support

Below are a few development projects we are working on here at RBS:

- **Buyback Alternate ISBN Guide – Complete** – The Buyback module has recently been enhanced to support the loading of the FHEG Alternate ISBN guide in VisualRATEX and the legacy RATEX products. The Alternate ISBN guide is a listing of titles which have the alternate ISBN which is associated to a parent/root title/ISBN. The Buyback module has the inherent capability to support synonym ISBNs and has been enhanced with a process for loading the FHEG Alternate ISBN guide to utilize this capability. If you're interested in pursuing the loading of this guide to create a more robust searching process during buyback, please contact customer support for additional details.
- **Buyback Phase II** – Analysis has begun on enhancements that will be made to Buyback. These enhancements will be ready for the spring buyback.
- **Wholesaler ISBN-13 guides** – RBS is in the process of testing the load of ISBN-13 wholesaler guides that have recently become available to the industry. Software changes will be done in both legacy RATEX and VisualRATEX.
- **CISP Certification** – The official certification is still in process with Ambiron Trust and Visa. The encryption software is currently being tested at CU Boulder and the University of Minnesota. We know how important this is to our clients to get the certification completed as soon as possible. We are doing everything we can to make that happen.
- **Order Management Application** – RBS is assigning development time for this project into the schedule now. We have an aggressive goal and hope to begin testing in the next couple of months.

- **Above the Tree Line** – The development on the trade book sales export program is almost complete. We hope to test this in March with a client and have a general release in April.
- **MITS Web Based Report Writer** – We had a small setback with MITS that required some reengineering on their part. That process has been completed. RBS is in the process of developing some data source files. Two clients have volunteered to be beta testers. We hope to release this new reporting tool sometime in late April.

Clients Live on VR

RBS has had a very busy schedule! In the past few months, several clients have gone live on the VisualRATEX software.

Here is a list of clients who are live on VisualRATEX:

- April 2005 – Cornell University
- July 2005 – University of Colorado at Boulder
- January 2006 – Brigham Young University-Idaho
- March 2006 – University of Waterloo
- May 2006 – University of Connecticut
- June 2006 – University of British Columbia
- October 2006 – University of New Mexico, University of Minnesota
- November 2006 – Mount Royal College
- December 2006 – University of California, San Diego; Grant MacEwan College
- January 2007 – McMaster University, University of Arkansas Men's Athletics
- February 2007 – Auraria Higher Education Center

Clients Going Live on VR

Here is a list of clients expected to go live on VisualRATEX this year:

- March 2007 – University of Arkansas
- April 2007 – San Francisco State University, Bookbee
- May 2007 – Brigham Young University
- June 2007 – Ryerson University
- Summer 2007 – University of Southern California
- September 2007 - Point Loma Nazarene University
- October 2007 – Oklahoma State University
- November 2007 – **Open**
- December 2007 – **Open**

Important! October and November are the most requested months to go live on VisualRATEX. Time slots are still available. Please contact RBS as soon as possible if you would like to consider a fall 07 date.

If you haven't scheduled a VisualRATEX conversion date, please contact Mario DiMascia at madimascia@ratex.com.

If you are interested in learning more about VisualRATEX, please view our web site at <http://www.ratex.com/visualratex/> or contact sales at sales@ratex.com.

[VR Tech Tip](#)

File Maintenance Notice:

When you maintain files which update the Universe file header in VisualRATEX (for example: adding, removing, or rebuilding Universe secondary indices; adding or dropping Universe triggers; resizing a file), it is **critical** that no users are logged into the system. In both the GUI and HostAccess sessions of VisualRATEX, all files are opened at the time the user logs in. If this file maintenance happens while users are logged in, the file handles will become invalid and cause errors like the following:

“Unable to reopen file unit”

“Date/time stamp in file header has been modified!”

This will subsequently lead to a write error on the affected file. Universe does this to ensure that it does not violate the new settings for the file (i.e. it might not update the new index or will ignore the recently added trigger) which could lead to inconsistent data or in extreme cases, data corruption.

New Faces & Open Positions at RBS!

[New Faces](#)

We have several new faces joining the RBS Team:

Trainer – RBS is pleased to announce that Ed Rafalski has joined our team as an additional resource for application training. Ed has a Masters degree in education and many years of software application training. As an added bonus, Ed also has a strong knowledge of UniVerse and associated tools. We are excited to add Ed to our team!

Project Manager – RBS is pleased to announce that Meighan Martin has accepted a project manager position. Meighan will be responsible for managing all development projects and new installations of VR. Meighan has very good communication skills and we are excited to add her to our team! Her 1st day on the job will be March, 1st, 2007.

Leadership Change – RBS recently hired Kevin Mayhew as the Vice President of Product Development. For personal reasons, Kevin has asked to step down from that role and continue working with RBS as a full time contract programmer. RBS has accepted Kevin’s offer and we are happy that he has chosen to continue working with us!

[Open Positions](#)

We have several open positions that we are looking to fill:

Entry Level Support – RBS is actively looking for an entry level support person that will join the VR support group.

Technical Programmer/Analyst – RBS is actively looking for a technical programmer and hardware specialist.

IBM/RBS UniVerse Training

General Course Information

IBM and RBS partnered and created three new courses designed to give the RATEX user valuable UniVerse and RATEX knowledge in a targeted and intensive environment and all at a 15-25% less than IBM direct. IBM will teach the first three days of the five day courses with a focus on UniVerse topics valid to our markets. RBS will focus on RATEX specific information for the last two days. Friday will be a morning session only.

All courses will be taught in the training facility in the RBS offices in Plymouth Meeting, PA. Classes will begin at 9:00 am each day. **We must register a minimum of 5 people for each session for the session to be held.** Available courses are as follows:

Course 1 UniVerse Fundamentals, \$2,295.00, April 16th – April 20th

The UniVerse Fundamentals course will start from the beginning with discussions of files, file structures, dictionaries, select lists, report writing and saving reports to run later. The RBS portion will cover RATEX account, file and dictionary structure as well as I-descriptors, report generator and HOSTACCESS. There are no prerequisites for this course. This course is designed for any user who wants to become a power user.

Course 2 UniVerse Administration, \$2,295.00, April 30th – May 4th

The UniVerse Administration course will begin with creating and managing accounts, creating files, device management, file sizing, performance analysis, load balancing and UniVerse daemons. The RBS portion will cover file lock management and triage, rebuilding indexes, RATEX peripherals, printer set up and preparation for Virtual RATEX. The user must have taken UniVerse Fundamentals OR be familiar with the fundamental concepts. This course is designed for the UniVerse database administrator.

Course 3 UniVerse Programming, \$2,295.00, May 14th – May 18th

The UniVerse Programming course will focus exclusively on programming in UniVerse Basic. It will start off with simple commands, move up to flow control and finally end with data manipulation. RBS programming standards and system variables will be covered in the second portion, as well as programming in the GUI environment. The user must have taken UniVerse Fundamentals OR be familiar with the fundamental concepts. Knowledge of at least one programming language is highly recommended. Knowledge of the UniVerse editor (ED) is required. This is an advanced course designed for developers.

Registration Information

To register, send an email to support@ratex.com containing the following information: Your school name and billing address and the name, email, phone number, position, date and course of each person attending. We will send out an invoice.

For questions about the courses contact Jeff Zayicek at 800-417-2839 x4107 or email him at jmzayicek@ratex.com

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If you have any questions or comments about the newsletter, please send them to Jessica at jksobonya@ratex.com.