



## “Bits & Bytes”

October/November 2006

[www.ratex.com](http://www.ratex.com)

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### Welcome!

Over the past several weeks I was able to meet face to face with many of you at the ICBA/CCRA meeting in Denver, CSC Symposium in Winnipeg, and the Mega Foursome Tradeshow in Reno.

I learned a great deal from our conversations and I want to thank each of you for taking the time to talk with me. I returned to the home office with some very good feedback to pass on to the RBS team.

October and November have been extremely busy months for RBS. Three clients went live on VisualRATEX and we converted a large percentage of our clients to the new ISBN-13 release. December brings more of the same. We have two more clients going live on VisualRATEX and four clients converting to legacy ISBN-13.

Coming to the end of 2006, RBS has built up a very positive momentum in the industry. We are proud of what we have accomplished these past few months, and pleased with the exciting new developments that have gone into our VisualRATEX software. We look forward to carrying this positive drive into the New Year and beyond.

On behalf of the entire RBS team, I wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Jere Warner

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## New RBS Employee!

Please welcome Tom Whitmore to RBS! Tom Whitmore has joined our team of employees at our home office in Plymouth Meeting, PA. Tom is a Senior Programmer/Analyst with 25+ years of knowledge in Universe and PICK/Basic. He will work with the development team on programming support issues, new development, and custom development. RBS looks forward to utilizing the skills Tom brings to the table.

Tom can be reached at [tewhitmore@ratex.com](mailto:tewhitmore@ratex.com) or by calling extension 4110.

## Development/Support

### ISBN-13 Updates

#### **RATEX 8.01 / VisualRATEX ISBN-13 Release**

RBS is proud to announce the RATEX 8.01 & VisualRATEX ISBN-13 releases are now **LIVE** at majority of our clients. A monumental effort has been in place to upgrade every customer to their respective ISBN-13 release. By the end of this calendar year, RBS will have converted most of our clients to the appropriate software. Remaining clients have been scheduled in early January/February 2007.

The entire RATEX community should be commended for the success of this project. It is not too often, thankfully, that our industry makes a change that requires every client to move to a complete new release of our software.

If you have any questions on the ISBN-13 upgrade procedures, please contact Jeff at [jmzayicek@ratex.com](mailto:jmzayicek@ratex.com).

#### **ISBN-13 Certification**

Pubnet has recognized Ratex Business Solutions' POS System / Textbook Management System to be Pubnet ISBN-13 certified. RBS is listed as ISBN-13 certified at the following web sites:

[http://www.pubnet.org/scs/isbn13\\_certified.html](http://www.pubnet.org/scs/isbn13_certified.html)

<http://www.pubnet.org/community/certifiedpos.html>

## eBook Integration

### **From Our Last Newsletter:**

We are pleased to announce that the Digital Delivery effort by RATEX Business Solutions in conjunction with the FHEG eBooks initiative has been completed, integrated, tested and deployed to RATEX installations for use this fall.

The project was a significant effort for all parties involved. Thanks to FHEG, the RBS development team, and the participating PACT clients for driving this initiative in a very short timeframe. Not only were technical hurdles tackled, but a significant number of enhancements for accommodating digital delivery were placed into the POS\*Liberty and VisualRATEX software solutions. These enhancements should make the offering of digital books a user and consumer friendly experience within the POS\*Liberty and VisualRATEX products.

### **eBook Update:**

A growing list of schools is moving forward toward the implementation of eBooks this fall. RBS is also in the process of automating the return process so everything can be handled directly through POS\*Liberty.

If you would like more information about eBooks, please contact Mario DiMascia at [madimascia@ratex.com](mailto:madimascia@ratex.com).

## Development 'Quick Bits'

Below is a list of development projects we are working on here at RBS:

- **CISP Certification** – RBS is working diligently with Ambiron Trust to get our certification. We know how important this is to our clients and hope to have an update shortly.
- **New Open Item Accounts Receivable** – RBS is heading into the final stage of this development project. We have some additional development that needs to be completed and we have been testing internally. We will be working with a beta school soon.
- **LINK in VisualRATEX** – The LINK module is currently undergoing beta testing at the University of British Columbia.
- **MITS Web Based Report Writer** – RBS working on building data sources. We hope to have this exciting new software available in early 2007.
- **New OTB/Planning Application** - Development for this application is on hold until January 2007.
- **New Order Management Application** – Development for this application is on hold until late December 2006.

**\*Note\*** Understandably, several of these projects were put on hold due to the immense workload involving the ISBN-13 conversions. We look forward to completing these projects in 2007, post ISBN-13.

## **VisualRATEX Updates**

### **Clients Live on VR**

RBS has had a very busy fall 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

One university that recently went live is the University of Minnesota. Here is what Bob Crabb, Director at University of Minnesota Bookstores, had to say about their recent go-live experience:

*We decided to upgrade to VisualRATEX in early August and set a go-live date of October 31st after consulting with the RBS staff. We had nine customizations from Legacy RATEX that needed to be moved to our VisualRATEX environment as well as a number of interfaces to other systems, all of which required careful review. A project plan was developed using Microsoft Project 2003 Enterprise Environment; initial training was completed in late August; code changes and data conversions were made in September; comprehensive testing and user training took place in October and we were successfully up and running, on schedule, on October 31<sup>st</sup>.*

*The RBS staff was exceptionally helpful throughout the process and worked very closely all along the way with our Information Systems department staff. Responsiveness and issue resolution was outstanding.*

*Looking to the future, it is abundantly clear, having watched the RBS staff at work first hand, that the new VR development platform will enable rapid development of the product. VR already has numerous features not available in Legacy, and I am confident many more will be added in rapid succession heading into the new year.*

*Congratulations to you and your entire staff on a job very well done.*

*Thank you all!*

*- Bob*

*Bob Crabb  
Director  
University of Minnesota Bookstores*

### **Clients Going Live on VR**

Here is a list of clients expected to go live on VisualRATEX in the next several months:

- December 2006 – University of California, San Diego; Grant MacEwan College, University of Arkansas Men's Athletics
- January 2007 – McMaster University
- February 2007 – Auraria Higher Education Center, San Diego State University (Aztec Shops)
- March 2007 – University of Arkansas
- April 2007 – San Francisco State University
- May 2007 – Brigham Young University

- June 2007 – Ryerson University
- Summer 2007 – University of Southern California
- September 2007 – Oklahoma State University
- October 2007 – Point Loma Nazarene University

If you haven't scheduled a VisualRATEX conversion date, please contact Mario DiMascia at [madimascia@ratex.com](mailto: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](mailto:sales@ratex.com).

## VisualRATEX Custom Features Reminder

### User Menu and Rave Reports

Does your User Menu screen still have the generic "Your logo here" graphic? RBS wants to remind you that your User Menu screen and rave reports in VisualRATEX can be customized for your school. We can place your logo on the rave reports and any combination of logo and photographs on the User Menu screen. If you are unsure of what you want on your User Menu screen we will be happy to work with you to come up with some ideas or we can present you with some options.

Quotes for this service are available upon request.

If you are interested in this service, please contact Kevin Mayhew at [kmayhew@ratex.com](mailto:kmayhew@ratex.com)

### User Reference Fields

Any screen where you utilize user reference fields can be customized to display a custom label that better indicates what information is being displayed within the field.

Quotes for this service are available upon request.

If you are interested in this service, please contact Kevin Mayhew at [kmayhew@ratex.com](mailto:kmayhew@ratex.com)

### Help System

RBS is happy to offer VisualRATEX Help that can be customized for your school. Services include the following:

- ✓ documentation for your custom screens
- ✓ documentation for specific procedures used in your store
- ✓ modifications to the VisualRATEX Help layout to reflect your school colors (ex. headings, hyperlinks, text)
- ✓ your school logo on the Welcome page *in addition* to the VisualRATEX logo

Quotes for this service are available upon request.

If you are interested in this service, please contact Jessica Sobonya at [jksobonya@ratex.com](mailto:jksobonya@ratex.com)

## Universe Training

Based on feedback from our clients, RBS is working with IBM to schedule another round of Universe training courses in February and March. Once the dates are finalized with IBM, an email with specific training information will be sent out to the customer base.

IBM and RBS have partnered and created three new courses designed to give the RATEX user valuable UniVerse and RATEX knowledge in a targeted and intensive environment at 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.

We plan to offer three Universe training courses on the following subjects:

### **Course 1 - UniVerse Fundamentals**

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**

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 VisualRATEX. 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**

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 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.

### **General Course Information**

All courses will be taught in the training facility in the RBS offices in Plymouth Meeting, PA. Please [click here](#) for directions and hotel listings. The hotels are very close to RBS and have special rates for RBS visitors follow the links on the maps for more detail. Courses will begin at 9:00 am each day.

A five student minimum is required for each course. Each course will cost \$2,295 per person, which includes the tuition for the IBM and RATEX portions of the class and a classroom manual for you to take home.

To register, send an email to [support@ratex.com](mailto: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.

For questions about the courses contact Jeff Zayicek at 800-417-2839 x4107 or email him at [jmzayicek@ratex.com](mailto:jmzayicek@ratex.com)

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If you have any questions or comments about the newsletter, please send them to Jessica at [ksobonya@ratex.com](mailto:ksobonya@ratex.com).