

# ACTion!



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## MARCH GREETING

We live in a seemingly mad time: Virginia and the East Coast have been bombarded with snowstorm after snowstorm; at one point Washington, D.C. had gotten more snow than New York; it was so cold in southern Florida that iguanas started falling out of the trees; and to top off everything, the U.S. won its first medal in the Nordic sports since the sports have been in the Olympics (as of Feb. 26, 2010 the U.S. has won 4 medals in the Nordic sports) even though the first week Vancouver had almost no snow.

With all the madness that we see around us, it may get a little depressing. We start to believe that the snow will never go away—that every weekend we will have another blizzard. But, as the recent weather has shown us, eventually spring will come; the snow will melt and a new madness will enter our lives—March Madness.

As the snow melts and basketball begins to consume the T.V. schedule, don't forget to get outside and enjoy the beautiful days ahead.

Enjoy the March 2010 edition of ACTion!

**Stephen Johnson**

President

Advanced Concepts Training Corp.

## Helping Your Business Get the Most From Technology

With the consistent influx of new technology hitting the market over the past few years, it has become harder to decipher what can be useful to you and your business and what can be written off as simply another means of entertainment.

If you look hard enough you can justify almost anything as “necessary” for effective business practice. However, due to our country's overall current economic state, the focus has shifted from the most advanced new developments, towards your overall ROI (Return on Investment) i.e. getting more bang for your buck. In order to attain your highest possible ROI, simply buying the latest version of the newest technology is not the solution; instead you should utilize an available product to its full, business-generating capacity.

In this issue, ACT/CS&T begin to explore new technological outlets for businesses breaking away from traditional means of operation. The first installment of this series provides helpful insight for utilizing social networks as an effective business tool. And we'll begin with the basics. . . . (page 2)

**P.S.: We invite you to submit suggestions for future articles. If there is something you would like us to explore, simply let us know!**



# Social Networking and Your Business: Getting Started

It seems you can't read a newspaper, watch tv or even have a conversation with someone these days without the topic of social networking being mentioned. Regardless of which site they prefer, it seems as if EVERYONE is engaged in some aspect of social networking. With such a large and easily accessible audience provided by these sites, it's no wonder businesses have gotten into the social networking game as well. But the questions now are can this tactic work for you, and is it the right way for you to grow your business?

If you aren't familiar with the concept of social networking, you might be asking yourself what the draw is or you may fail to see how these outlets could possibly benefit your business. The positive attributes of social networking are different for each business, but a few elements will carry across the board. Most importantly, it is the easiest way to humanize your company. It allows you to interact with your customers or potential customers on a personal level, through the same venue they communicate with friends and family. It fosters loyalty and trust and your simple presence online can be reassuring. As long as you include the proper information, it's also a great way to increase traffic to your company's website.

The first step in this new wave of electronic promotion is identifying which social network best fits your business and has the ability to reach your true target audience most efficiently. Visit the various sites that have piqued your interest and see which one(s) has(have) a "feel" that compliments the image you would like your business to convey. In perusing these sites, find popular members and identify what they have/utilize to keep them at that level. What do they do to increase their fan/customer base? It's also important to familiarize yourself with the various features of these sites including layout, application options, advertising options, groups, etc. to make sure you can effectively evaluate its true and full marketing potential for you.

Once you've made your selection, it's time to get started on your profile. If your chosen network has a photo option, it's a good idea to start with your logo as your profile picture to create greater brand familiarity.

As time goes on, you can change your profile picture to include the "face" of your business, featured products, or any deals/sales you would like to highlight.

Next, it's time for your description. While it is undoubtedly vital to include the specifications of your business (i.e. what you do/provide), do not forget the human aspect. Why are you passionate about what you do? What got you interested in your business? Do you have a unique start-up story? Sharing these things with customers and potential clients can create a stronger personal connection to your brand/company. Focus on the things that set you apart from other businesses. If there isn't a separate section for it, **MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR WEB ADDRESS** in your description. Conversely, you can usually acquire "widgets" from most social networks that can be posted on your company site so customers can connect to your Facebook, myspace, Twitter, etc. accounts.

Once you've effectively started developing a tangible image of your company, it's time to elaborate on it. Utilize the media options these networks provide for you. Take pictures of your business in operation and post them in an album. Have videos of your office holiday party? Post them! Posting videos of your company members being fun, ordinary people allow your customers to feel like they can relate to you and your employees/business on a deeper, more personal level.

So whether you're a small business looking to get more customers or a large business trying to connect to your existing customers, social networking can benefit you -- as long you set it up correctly!

**LOOKING FORWARD:**

**APRIL: SOCIAL NETWORKING PART 2**



  
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# Oracle Instructor's Corner!

By Terry W. Stough, ACT's Senior Oracle Instructor

This is a continuation of the series we started last month. If you didn't see that article, [Go to [www.actisit.com/newsletters](http://www.actisit.com/newsletters) & select February 2010] we are looking for a way to get directory listings so that we can manipulate all or some of the files in a directory. As I mentioned, UTL\_FILE has always lacked that capability.

I recently discovered that there was a totally undocumented package, DBMS\_BACKUP\_RESTORE, which was owned by SYS, that did have the ability to obtain information on files within a directory.

In this article, we will look at how to do the setup steps to be able to use this capability. In the last article in this series, we will look at the code that implements that capability.

Let's say that we have a user named ACT who needs to access all the files in a directory in order to make changes to them programmatically. There are a number of steps required.

First, ACT must be able to execute the procedures in the DBMS\_BACKUP\_RESTORE package owned by SYS. To do this, we connect as SYS and grant the required privilege:

```
CONNECT / AS SYSDBA
```

```
GRANT EXECUTE ON SYS.  
DBMS_BACKUP_RESTORE TO Act;
```

This package contains a procedure called SearchFiles. One would think that this procedure would return a variable containing the directory list. However, this is not the case.

Instead, the SearchFiles procedure writes the data into one of the "mysterious" X\$ tables: X\$KRBMSFT. This table will contain the directory information for the last call to Search files for a particular session.

Again, we think that what should be done is to grant the SELECT privilege on X\$KRBMSFT to ACT. However, the X\$ tables can only be viewed by those holding the SYSDBA privilege.

The workaround is to create a view based on X\$KRBMSFT and then grant SELECT on that view. As a user with SYSDBA privileges we would do the following:

```
CREATE OR REPLACE VIEW DirListing  
AS
```

```
SELECT * FROM X$KRBMSFT;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON DirListing TO Act;
```

Since SYS owns that view, ACT will still have to refer to it as SYS.DirListing unless we create a synonym.

If we plan on using UTL\_FILE, we would probably need to create one or more directory aliases. An example of this for the C:\Temp directory would be:

```
CREATE DIRECTORY TempDir AS  
'C:\Temp';
```

We would then grant access to the directory as follows:

```
GRANT READ, WRITE ON DIRECTORY  
TempDir TO ACT;
```

We then would need to create a mechanism for using the above package. For purposes of this series, we will create a stored procedure to retrieve file information. The procedure should return all the file names in a single structure.

To do that, we need to create a type to hold that information so that we can create a variable of that type for use in our directory listing procedure.

In PL/SQL such a type is known as a collection. We will be creating a special type of collection called a nested table. A nested table can hold up to two billion elements. In our case we will have it hold up to two billion character strings. Here is how it would be created.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TYPE DirListType  
AS TABLE OF VARCHAR2(1024);
```

```
/
```

This type can be created by ACT as long as ACT has the CREATE TYPE or CREATE ANY TYPE system privilege. Note that the forward slash at the end is required when creating a type.

Now that we have this setup in place, the final article will cover the stored procedure that will use this functionality. Then we will show you a simple anonymous procedure which can get you a listing of all files in a directory. This can then be used for any purposes you could imagine.

I look forward to seeing you in a class soon so that we can explore the wonders of Oracle together!

## FUN RANDOM FACTS

The man who famously yodeled Yahoo!'s namesake in their early commercials, Wylie Gustafson, was paid a one-time only flat fee of just \$590.

In October of 1912, President Theodore Roosevelt delivered a campaign speech for almost an hour with a bullet lodged in his chest. The bullet, ruled to be no future danger to the President's health was never removed.

Approximately half the geysers in existence on Earth can be found in Yellowstone National Park.

Elephants are the only animal physically incapable of jumping. This is due to their tremendous weight.

Edwin Booth actually saved the life of Robert Todd Lincoln on a New Jersey train platform only a year or two before his brother John Wilkes would take the life of Robert's father.



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# UPCOMING COURSES/SCHEDULE

Classes in Blue marked with a \* are online.  
Classes in Red are Red Hat offerings.

START END PRICE  
DATE DATE

## MARCH 2010

|  |      |      |         |
|--|------|------|---------|
| JBoss Application Server Administration                | 3/1  | 3/5  | \$2,199 |
| UNIX Introduction to Commands                          | 3/1  | 3/4  | \$1,849 |
| PERL Programming                                       | 3/1  | 3/5  | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g SQL for Business & Data Analysts           | 3/8  | 3/10 | \$1,499 |
| Oracle 11g SQL for Business & Data Analysts            | 3/8  | 3/10 | \$1,499 |
| Introduction to Java and J2EE                          | 3/8  | 3/12 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Desktop for End Users | 3/11 | 3/12 | \$1,049 |
| Red Hat Linux Essentials                               | 3/15 | 3/19 | \$2,398 |
| *Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus               | 3/15 | 3/19 | \$2,199 |
| Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus                | 3/15 | 3/19 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 11g Database Administration I                  | 3/22 | 3/26 | \$2,199 |
| UNIX/Linux Shell Scripting                             | 3/22 | 3/25 | \$1,849 |
| J2EE Development using Spring, Struts, JSF             | 3/29 | 4/2  | \$2,199 |
| Oracle 11g Database Administration I                   | 3/29 | 4/2  | \$2,199 |

## APRIL 2010

|   |      |      |         |
|---|------|------|---------|
| *Oracle 10g PL/SQL Introduction                         | 4/5  | 4/6  | \$1,049 |
| *Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction                         | 4/5  | 4/6  | \$1,049 |
| UNIX/Linux Express Introduction                         | 4/5  | 4/9  | \$1,849 |
| Intro to Java&Enterprise Java w/ORACLE's JDeveloper     | 4/5  | 4/9  | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g PL/SQL Intermediate                         | 4/7  | 4/9  | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 11g PL/SQL Intermediate                         | 4/7  | 4/9  | \$1,499 |
| Oracle 11g SQL for Business & Data Analysts             | 4/7  | 4/9  | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 11g New Features for Administrators             | 4/12 | 4/15 | \$1,849 |
| *Oracle 11g Database Administration II                  | 4/12 | 4/16 | \$2,199 |
| Red Hat Linux System Administration-class only          | 4/12 | 4/15 | \$2,498 |
| Red Hat Linux System Administration and RHCT Exam       | 4/12 | 4/16 | \$2,698 |
| Red Hat RHCT Exam Only                                  | 4/16 | 4/16 | \$399   |
| Oracle 11g New Features for Administrators              | 4/19 | 4/22 | \$1,849 |
| UNIX/Linux Express Introduction                         | 4/19 | 4/23 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g SQL for Business & Data Analysts            | 4/19 | 4/21 | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 11g SQL for Business & Data Analysts            | 4/19 | 4/21 | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Desktop for End Users  | 4/22 | 4/23 | \$1,049 |
| Introduction to Java and Enterprise Java using Jbuilder | 4/26 | 4/30 | \$2,199 |
| Oracle 11g SQL Express Introduction                     | 4/26 | 4/28 | \$1,499 |
| Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction                          | 4/29 | 4/30 | \$1,049 |
| Oracle 11g SQL & PL/SQL Express Introduction            | 4/26 | 4/30 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus                | 4/26 | 4/30 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus                | 4/26 | 4/30 | \$2,199 |

## MAY 2010

|   |      |      |         |
|---|------|------|---------|
| Javascript Programming Essentials             | 5/3  | 5/7  | \$2,199 |
| UNIX/Linux Shell Scripting                    | 5/3  | 5/6  | \$1,849 |
| Oracle 11g PL/SQL Foundations                 | 5/3  | 5/7  | \$2,199 |
| Red Hat Rapid Track Course-class only         | 5/3  | 5/6  | \$2,698 |
| Red Hat Rapid Tack Course and RHCE exam       | 5/3  | 5/7  | \$2,998 |
| Red Hat RHCE Exam Only                        | 5/7  | 5/7  | \$799   |
| *Oracle 10g PL/SQL Introduction               | 5/3  | 5/4  | \$1,049 |
| *Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction               | 5/3  | 5/4  | \$1,049 |
| *Oracle 10g PL/SQL Intermediate               | 5/5  | 5/7  | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 11g PL/SQL Intermediate               | 5/5  | 5/7  | \$1,499 |
| Web Services Development                      | 5/10 | 5/14 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g Database Administration I         | 5/10 | 5/14 | \$2,199 |
| UNIX/Linux Introduction                       | 5/17 | 5/20 | \$1,849 |
| Oracle 11g SQL for Business and Data Analysts | 5/17 | 5/19 | \$1,499 |
| *Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus      | 5/17 | 5/21 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus      | 5/17 | 5/21 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 10g Database Administration II        | 5/24 | 5/28 | \$2,199 |
| *Oracle 11g Database Administration II        | 5/24 | 5/28 | \$2,199 |
| Oracle 11g New Features for Administrators    | 5/25 | 5/28 | \$1,849 |

## Scheduling News

**From now until March 31, 2010, enroll in ANY Oracle class (Regular or Online) & receive 25% off the retail price of the class!**

**Pay Advanced Concepts Training Corp. full price for ANY class held at our Richmond, VA location & receive a FREE hotel room for each day of class (1 room per registrant). This includes Red Hat classes! This offer applies to any class completed by Dec. 31, 2010.**



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