

# Atlanta OAUG

## Tips and Techniques

### Editor's Comments

This newsletter is volume one, issue one. That's right; you haven't missed a thing. Although this issue will probably not become a valuable collectors item, we hope you will find at least a few valuable tips and techniques to smooth your use and implementation of the Oracle Applications.

We are focused on tips, techniques, and news about the Atlanta Oracle Applications User Group. Our goal is to publish six times per year, and the distribution will be exclusively by e-mail and the Internet. Charter subscribers will have their e-mail addresses on file with the ATL OAUG. You can subscribe through our web page at [www.atloaug.org](http://www.atloaug.org). Tell your friends.

We do not have an advertising policy or fee structure yet, and the local board has been asked to provide guidance.

This issue is being written mostly by me and is the result of my four years of wrestling with these applications. If there is no attribution for the tip or technique, it came from me. Otherwise, the author has been identified for your reference and follow up. Please test for yourself these tips on a non-production database before using them in your business. You must accept sole responsibility for any usage of these items.

I am Jim Crum, your editor. I am a consultant and part owner of BOSS Corporation. I specialize in Financial and Distribution Applications and project management. You can e-mail me at [jcrum@sprynet.com](mailto:jcrum@sprynet.com) or fax material to 770-622-5400. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and will contribute your suggestions, tips and techniques so that others may benefit from your experience.



### Support



When you get a TAR number, the last digit indicates the support center (4 is Orlando, 5 is Colorado, and 6 is Redwood Shores).



TAR is an abbreviation for Technical Assistance Request. But it is the universal primary key for dealing with Oracle Support. The TAR number is your key to tracking problems, upgrade shipments, literature, bugs, etc. We suggest you create an historical log of every TAR and patch number you get from Oracle Support. This log will help you synchronize development, training, test and production installations, and when a problem comes back, you will have a record of the fix.

### Education

Before sending project team members to a "Set Up and Use" class for an application, have the students read the topical essays from the reference manual. They will have a much better understanding of the vocabulary and features of the application. Comprehension and retention of course material will be better.

If you are saving several screen shots in an MS-office document (Word or PowerPoint), you will have a problem with the file size. Cutting the screen shot to the clipboard will save a 24 bit color bit mapped graphic and each screen shot can be over a megabyte. To make a smaller file, open MS-Paint and set the image attributes to black and white. Paste the color screen shot image to MS-Paint, and then cut it back to the clipboard (just ctrl-V, ctrl-X while in paint). Then navigate over to Word or PowerPoint to make the final paste. Your resulting file may

be reduced by as much as 80% and will look just fine when printed on a laser printer.

### Project Management

A typical package implementation project should consist of several main phases. Consider planning, analysis, solution design, build, documentation, transition, and production phases. Each phase has distinct activities and skill requirements.

Don't plan your upgrade or implementation projects around Oracle's announced release schedule.

An upgrade project is completely different from an implementation.

90% of the huge effort to implement new applications usually just succeeds in replacing the existing business processes. Most of the business benefits of a project will be achieved in the last 10% of the effort.

Typically an implementation project requires one technical resource day for every two functional resource days.

### From the Internet

*We believe the following items may be helpful and the e-mail address of the original post is included for reference. Use Internet postings carefully. To read the full text of a posting, point your browser to [www.cpa.qc.ca/Lists/OraApps-L/Archives/](http://www.cpa.qc.ca/Lists/OraApps-L/Archives/) and search the digests for the date referenced. - ed.*

### Printers

On 20 Mar 1997 Simon Ambridge wrote.  
...to define printers in Release 10 :

- 1) Create an O/S queue for the printer.
- 2) Define printer types
- 3) Define printer styles
- 4) Define printer drivers
- 5) Assign drivers to styles
- 6) Register printers

In addition Simon listed many escape codes and drivers for the HP Laserjet family of printers. [I consider this the definitive answer to the FAQ about setting up HP laser printers with Oracle Apps - ed]

On April 4 Carmen Ma of Seaspan International Ltd. cma@seaspan.com wrote:

If you go into the Define Printer Driver form and change the Arguments to /NONOTIFY and also remove the /TITLE parameter, it would eliminate the banner pages.

### Chart of Accounts Errors

Oracle GL classifies accounts as Asset, Liability, Owner Equity, Revenue, or Expense. On 09 Jan 97: Nampally\_Mohan\_at\_EC1FNL@cmial.ae.g e.com wrote about accounts with the wrong classification (an easy mistake to make).

To correct balances for a misclassified account:

1. Reopen the last period of your prior fiscal year, if it is closed.
2. Create a journal entry that brings the misclassified account balance to zero for the last period of your prior fiscal year. Use a temporary account such as Suspense for the offsetting amount.
3. Post the journal entry.
4. Verify that the misclassified account balance is zero by reviewing account balances online or in reports.
5. Correct the account type of the misclassified account by changing the segment value qualifiers. General Ledger prevents you from changing the account type unless you first unfreeze all account structures that reference your account segment using the Key Flexfield Segments form.
6. Ask your System Administrator to correct the account type of all accounts referencing the misclassified account by updating the ACCOUNT\_TYPE column in the GL\_CODE\_COMBINATIONS table using SQL\*Plus.
7. Restore the misclassified account balance by reversing the journal entry you posted to the last period of your prior fiscal year. Reverse the journal entry into the same period in which it was originally posted.

### FSG Report Presentation Tip

From: "Carlton, Brenda" <bcarlton@tensarcorp.com> Manager at The Tensar Corporation

To prevent column labels of your accounting flexfield segments from appearing at the top of your reports, select "Total" rather than "Expand" or "Both" for the display type of your range. For example, if your flexfield is "Co - Acct - Subac - Dept" then those titles will appear on every FSG report where you use "E" or "B" for your display type. On your report, these column labels appear to the left of the columns in your column set. The display selection is made in the accounting flexfield ranges in the flexfield assignments zone of a row set or column set i.e. /Navigate Report Define Column Set then page down to "column details".

For example, when writing FSG reports for our published financial statements I tried to use a multi purpose row set by using the "Expand" option on parent values in conjunction with the "Financial Analyst" or "Supervisor" level of detail option on the define report screen. If I selected "Financial Analyst" I could get a detailed report of values in the segment which I chose to expand. This detailed report would be useful to the mid-level/cost center manager. If I selected "Supervisor" I could get a summarized high level report for use by executives and/or board of directors. Using one multi purpose row set reduced maintenance time on updates since I could go to the one row set and make the changes once. But, the pitfall was it didn't look "pretty" to have the labels "Co - Acct - Subac - Dept" printing on our published financials. Thus, I copied my row sets giving them a new name and replaced the "Expand" option with "Total" for the "Supervisor" reports given to upper management.

8. Post the reversing journal entry the Cash account type is now Asset so when you post the reversing journal entry, General Ledger rolls forward your Cash and Retained Earnings balances into the first period of the new fiscal year.  
Review the corrected account balances online or in reports.

## System Administration

### Alerts

On July 23 Sean Scott (sscott@prxm.com) writes

When you copy an alert, Oracle disables it. Make sure that the 'Enabled' field in the Define Alerts form is set to 'Yes'.

### User Accounts

Define an application user name as the first initial followed by the last name. - Sys Administration Reference Manual

### Setting Profiles

Set site-level option values before setting the other three levels of profile options. Site level options work as defaults until the same options are specified at the other levels.

You should set site-level default values for any required profile options after the application's installation. If you do not assign a particular profile option at any of the four levels, that option does not have a default value and may cause errors when you use forms, run reports, or run concurrent requests. - Sys Administration Reference

## Upgrades

Use menu reports to document your custom menus before upgrading. An upgrade will "refresh" (read overwrite) all menus for an application. Associate your local menus with a custom application to avoid losing your local menus.

Your Zoom is preserved in an upgrade only if you identify it with a custom application's name. If you identify your Zoom with Oracle's AOL or one of the Application products, your Zoom may *not* be preserved in an upgrade. - System Administration Reference Manual

See Paper #45 from the Orlando Spring 1996 OAUG Conference for a complete discussion of how to protect your local code during an upgrade.

### AutoInstall and Y2K Dates

From: Ferenc Mantfeld DBA at Pagemart, fmantfel@pagemart.com

AutoInstall DOES NOT automatically change the date parameter (AutoInstall does not detect the location of your init.ora file). On page 3-27 of the installation manual, it clearly states all the required parameters YOU need to manually change in the init.ora file BEFORE running AutoInstall. The nls\_date\_format needs to be set to 'DD-MON-RR', which is supported only by RDBMS 7.3 onwards. Now don't believe me because I told you so, check it out ! It's all in the installation manual and the 'Upgrade Preparation Manual'. Also read about this parameter in the Server Concept manual.

## FIN Apps

### GL

Create a separate budget organization for each of your budgets. If you share a budget organization between budgets, your risk increasing both your master and detail budget balances when you budget to a detail budget. - *GL Reference Topical Essay*

AutoCopy can save you a lot of work even if the Accounting Flexfield assignments in two budget organizations are not identical. After using AutoCopy, you can add or delete AFF ranges as needed. - *GL Reference Manual*

If you define a budget formula that uses summary account balances, be sure to first define the parent segment value 'T' for each segment of your Accounting Flexfield structure. Assign all detail values to the children of 'T'. - *GL Reference Manual*

It is easiest to define default format options in your column set. You can then override your defaults for specific rows of your report. - *GL Reference Manual*

When setting up GL, define your calendar at least one year before your current fiscal year. Defining one year at a time helps you be more accurate and reduces the amount of period maintenance you must do at the start of each accounting period. - *GL Reference Manual*

When you define a new set of books and open the first accounting period, choose carefully the accounting period you want to open. The accounting period you choose is the first period in which you can enter accounting information and generate reports. However, you cannot translate account balances for the first period ever opened. Therefore, open one period prior to the first accounting period in the calendar for your set of books, because once you open your first accounting period, Oracle GL does not allow you to open prior periods. - *GL Reference Manual*

To maximize the efficiency of the GL posting process, limit the number of calendar periods that are open at one time. - *GL Reference Manual*

### AP

PayGroup is a powerful feature which enables you to decide exactly which vendor's invoices to pay during a payment batch. Some examples of PayGroups you may define are employees, merchandise, non-merchandise, government, domestic, and international. - *AP Reference Manual*

If you want to make a zero payment on an invoice, you should not cancel the invoice. Instead, you can zero the invoice amount for the invoice and pay the invoice using a payment batch, manual payment, or QuickCheck. - *AP Reference Manual*

By setting up default values for terms, Distribution Sets, Accounting Flexfields and vendor site options, you can speed the invoice entry process. You can use AutoEntry so that Oracle Payables automatically fills in this information for you for every invoice. - *AP Reference Manual*

If you know a credit or debit memo pertains to a certain purchase order, you can query on that specific purchase order number and Oracle Payables will display all invoices that you previously matched to that purchase order. - *AP Reference Manual*

### FA

From: Phil.Lawrence@wj.com (Phil Lawrence)

Subject: Re: Oracle FA 10.

**Q** If a department segment has been disabled, and that department is tagged on some asset assignment accounts, why doesn't Oracle throw the expense into suspense (if that option is turned on in GL) versus 'blow up' the depreciation run?

**A** It's a "feature". FA is the only module that goes directly to gl\_je\_lines, etc., without going through gl\_interface.



Your budget book must use the same calendar as its associated corporate book. - *FA Reference Manual*

If you want to create hierarchical asset category flexfield segment values, use the Define Value Set, Define Key Segment, and Define Key Segment Value forms to define your asset category flexfield. Then, to set up the value of the minor segment to be dependent on the value of the major segment, define the Value Set for the minor segment to be dependent on the value of the major segment. - *FA Reference Manual*

You can also set up an asset category which uses a units of production depreciation method. Oracle Assets defaults the capacity and unit of measure from the asset category, and you can override them if necessary when you add the asset. - *FA Reference Manual*

Since Oracle Assets does not Mass Copy revaluations, when you perform a revaluation in your corporate book, also perform it in each tax book associated with that corporate book. - *FA Reference Manual*

## DISTRIBUTION Apps

### INV

The vendor item number is generally the best way you can identify purchase order lines when your vendor does not provide you with your purchase order number on its shipping documents. Therefore, make sure you provide a vendor item number on your purchase order lines when you create your purchase orders. - *INV Reference Manual*



To minimize the number of accounting entries, you should use the same valuation account for each cost element in the subinventory (material, material overhead, resource, outside processing, and overhead). Oracle Inventory automatically groups valuation accounting entries by account. For example, you can use different accounts for material and material overhead, and use the same accounts for resource, outside processing, and overhead. Any combination of unique cost element accounts is allowed. - *INV Reference Manual*



You should use only the Alphanumeric [Document] Number Type when you want to use non-numeric values. Because the ordering of values in QuickPick windows can appear random when you use the Alphanumeric number type, consider entering all numeric values with the same number of digits. For example, if you can assume all numeric values contain six digits, you should enter the first value as 000001. - *INV Reference Manual*

### AR

Use either the Reconcile Receipts form in Oracle Receivables or the reconciliation forms in Oracle Cash Management to clear your receipts. We suggest you do not use both methods of reconciliation as the two features duplicate functionality. In later releases of Oracle Receivables the Reconcile Receipts form will be obsolete. - *AR Reference Manual*



If you use Oracle Inventory and Oracle Order Entry for sales order shipments, you should

elect to derive your dates, and use the shipment date for your invoice general ledger date. In this way you can ensure that you have booked your revenue and cost to the same accounting period. - *AR Reference Manual*



To avoid duplicate customer names, you should query your existing customer names before entering another. For example, if you are entering an order for ACME, you should first query the customer name using %ACME%, which searches for all customers with ACME in their name. If you find duplicate customer names, then you should inactivate the duplicate customer name as soon as possible to avoid using it in data entry. You should then use the Merge Customers form to select the original customer name into which you want to merge the duplicate customer information. - *AR Reference Manual*

You should enter the telephone numbers that you want to use for collections as type General or Fax. - *AR Reference Manual*

## OE

If you want to create a hold source for all orders and returns for a customer, or for all orders and returns containing a specific item, do not navigate to the Orders zone [of the apply holds form]. Simply identify in this zone the customer or item that you want to hold, and save your changes. All existing and future orders and returns that match your criteria are placed on hold until you remove the hold or the hold source. You can remove a hold source in the Remove Holds form. If you want to apply a hold to a specific order or return, navigate to the Orders zone without saving your changes after you enter your criteria in the Hold Source zone. If you want to apply a hold to a specific order or return line, navigate to the Lines zone without saving your changes after you enter your criteria in the Orders zone. - *OE Reference Manual*

If you choose to process the shipment online you must wait for the process to complete before your session is available for further activity. Running the concurrent programs, however, allows you to continue using Oracle Order Entry while the shipment is processed in the background. - *OE Reference Manual*

If you want to create price lists as the cost plus a certain percent, add the items at cost and then use the Update Price Lists form to increase the list price. - *OE Reference Manual*

## PO

If you want to continue to use the default information for other purchase orders, choose \ Row Next to create a new purchase order or \ Query Enter to locate an existing purchase order from the Purchase Order Headers zone. If you want to clear the default information, either choose \ Row Erase in the Purchase Order Line Defaults zone or run the form again to create or query other purchase orders. - *PO Reference Manual*



If you have not yet provided a vendor on your standard purchase order, you cannot choose any contracts for your purchase order lines. If you want to change the vendor on your standard purchase order after you reference a contract on your purchase order lines, you must remove the references to the contract purchase agreement first. Oracle Purchasing lets you change vendors only on standard purchase orders with the status Never Approved. - *PO Reference Manual*



The requisition description is optional. Adding a description helps you, your approver, and your buyers quickly recognize the content of your requisition. For example, a description may be: Request for Office Furniture. - *PO Reference Manual*

## MFG Apps

### BOM

If you enter a negative quantity for a component, you should enter either Assembly pull or Operation pull in the Supply Type field to ensure that you transact the material when you build the bill. - *BOM Reference Manual*

Even if you do not use configurations, you should define bill of material parameters for each organization. The parameters tell the Define Item Costs and Define Overhead forms that you are using bills of material and routings for costing. If you do not define bill of material parameters, you will not have access to the resource, outside processing, and overhead cost elements in these forms. - *BOM Reference Manual*



If an item's routing references another item's routing as a common, you should set both items' lead time lot size to the same value. Oracle Bills of Material uses item lead time lot size and routing information to compute lead times. - *BOM Reference Manual*

## MRP

If you are creating a name for simulation only, you may want to set the Relieve option to No. This limits the processing time associated with production and shipment relief occurring against multiple master schedule names. - *MRP Reference Manual*

You should load sales orders with forecasts that have already been consumed, rather than separately to ensure that your forecast entries reflect actual demand. - *MRP Reference Manual*

You should run the exploder if you have changed your bills of material since you last launched the planning process, or if you change the value in the Planned Items field. - *MRP Reference Manual*

## WIP

If you add or delete an operation to a job or repetitive schedule, you may want to reschedule the job or repetitive schedule to correctly reflect the start and completion dates. - *WIP Reference Manual*

The detailed scheduling that Oracle Work in Process performs is not a finite scheduling algorithm. However, you schedule resources to simulate load that other jobs place on a department and resource and thus achieve scheduling results similar to those created by finite scheduling algorithms. - *WIP Reference Manual*

## Multi - Org

*From Multiple Organizations Manual*

These are the Set Up steps.

1. Develop the Organization Structure
2. Define Sets of Books
3. Define Organizations
4. Define Organization Relationships
5. Define Responsibilities
6. Set Profile Option for Each Responsibility
7. Conversion to Multi-Org
8. Define Inventory Organization Security (optional)
9. Change Order Entry Profile Options (optional)
10. Update Profile Options Specific to Operating Units
11. Implement the Applications Products
12. Secure Balancing Segment Values by Legal Entity (optional)
13. Run the Setup Validation Report (recommended)

## Other Newsletters, Lists, and Links

### Atlanta OAUG

[www.atloaug.org](http://www.atloaug.org)

### OAUG

[www.oaug.org](http://www.oaug.org)

### Mid South Users Group

[www.midsoug.org](http://www.midsoug.org)

### Dallas Users Group

[www.doug.org](http://www.doug.org)

### Oracle Support

[www.oracle.com/support/index.html](http://www.oracle.com/support/index.html)

### Oracle Education

<http://education.oracle.com/>

### Oracle Documentation

[www.oracle.com/documentation/sales](http://www.oracle.com/documentation/sales)  
800-252-0303

### Oracle Magazine

<http://www.oramag.com/>

### OraApps

The OraApps mailing list has over 2000 users posting questions and answers to applications questions.

To subscribe send an e-mail message to [listproc@cpa.qc.ca](mailto:listproc@cpa.qc.ca) with the following command as the only message.

subscribe OraApps-L Your\_real\_name

You will receive an e-mail from the list processor explaining other commands and how to interact with the mailing list.

### OraJobs

The OraJobs mailing list is less formal than OraApps and permits recruitment messages. Recruiters and consulting firms advertise heavily here. DBA's, developers, consultants, project managers, and apps users are the target of this list.

To subscribe send an e-mail message to [majordomo@doug.org](mailto:majordomo@doug.org) with the following command as the only message.

subscribe orajobs-l your\_email\_addr

## Database Administration

### OE-RPC Tip

From: Michael S Barone a Database Administrator at BOSS Corporation

Only ONE (1) OERPC needs to be running per \$APPL\_TOP. Normally DBA's have been over-burdening their machines with an OERPC for each instance.

### Top Tuning Tips

From: Advanced Oracle Tuning and Administration - Oracle Press

- Avoid unplanned full table scans
- Use only selective indexes
- Manage multi-table joins
- Manage statements containing views
- Tune sub-queries
- Manage large table accesses
- Revisit the tuning process

## Consulting

### Costs

Although implementation consultants may seem expensive, try to resist measuring their contribution minute by minute or hourly. A good consultant should be able to contribute plans, templates, ideas, and advice every week that may save thousands of dollars and make the difference between success and failure.



Rule of thumb: A typical application implementation takes three to five times as many client project team days as consulting days.



A "good" consultant in a technology field may have to spend 25% of his/her time to stay current with changes in technology.

### Analysis Technique

Discovering the business process flow is an important analysis activity for the project team. To facilitate analysis by a group, tack a large piece of newsprint or butcher paper to

a wall. Then write the process action words and documents on Post-it-Notes, and stick the notes to the paper. Draw horizontal "swim lanes" on the paper to show departmental process boundaries and use the bottom edge of the paper to show elapsed time.

## Call for Contributions



Now that you have read this first edition newsletter, we hope you will write a short note to let us know your favorite tips and techniques. Your ideas and experience are valuable to our readers, and your contributions are very much appreciated. As you can see, we have very broad topics, and try to include something for everyone. You have something to contribute.

It takes a lot of effort to assemble just five pages of news letter. After spending over a day on this one, I can tell you we will need your contributions to make it a long term publication. It takes a lot of work for one person, and we have to divide the load many ways. If you run across something in your daily interaction with the Oracle Applications that makes you think "isn't that clever, strange, well done, impressive, difficult, etc." drop me a note and we will share it with our readers.



Send e-mail to [jcrum@sprynet.com](mailto:jcrum@sprynet.com) or FAX to BOSS Corporation at 770-622-5400. Thanks!