



B&L NEWS

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Phil Laney
President
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R&D - It's More than Coding

B&L's R&D department does a tremendous job day in and day out. They are responsible for designing, developing and delivering the software that our customers rely on to run their business. Coding, or programming, the software is just a portion of the task. A significant step in the process of creating new software is the design portion.

Designing involves comprehending business processes, understanding the metal casting industry, listening to the customer (whether internal or external), and knowing how the new software will impact the rest of the system – including both partner and common use software. The software also has to be simple, elegant, easy to use, and yet handle complex applications. And it needs to be consistent with the rest of the application. In other words, there is a great deal of thought and discussion during the initial design phase before any actual coding takes place.

In some instances, this initial phase - with all resources involved - can be equal to the time required for one

software engineer to code it. Then, after it's coded, software enters the testing and debug cycle, where it could require significant time to properly ensure it functions according to design. And R&D's not done yet. Documenting the enhancement as part of the on-line help needs to be created. Packaging the enhancement for inclusion in either a Maintenance Release level or waiting until the next general release of the product is required. Finally, knowledge transfer and support is needed to educate others, both B&L staff and customers, on the features of the new software and answer the 1st wave of support questions that might come in.

Being a software engineer at B&L means more than being a coder. You need good listening skills; you need to understand business processes; you need to look at things from the user perspective with an eye towards simplicity and intuitiveness; you need to be a decent writer and; oh yeah, you need to be a detailed-oriented, technical coder as well. It's a tall order, but we have some of the best and brightest people around in our R&D department. And they're working for you... our customers.

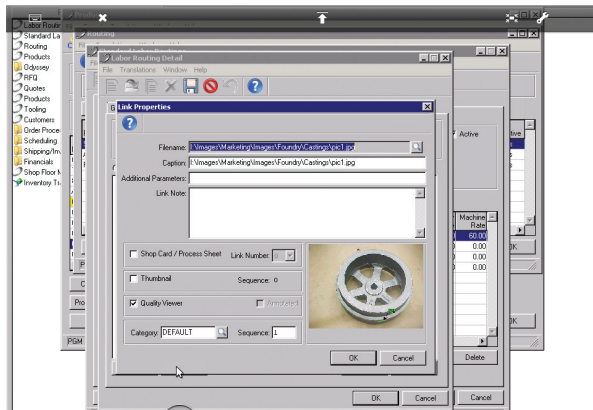
Thank you for your business,
Phil Laney

Quality Views Area

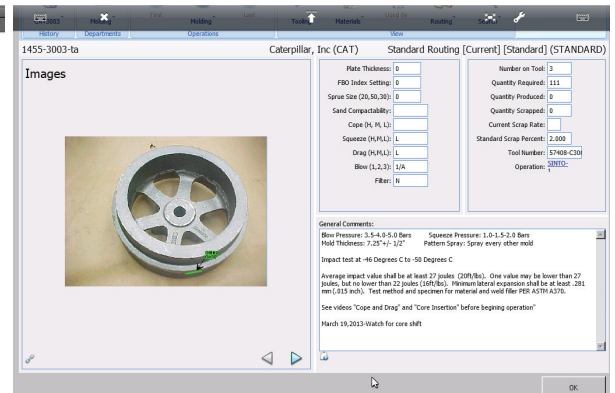
In Odyssey 4.5, B&L released the latest Shop Floor innovation – the Quality Viewer, an enhancement of the Intelligent Views module. With Quality Viewer, custom views – annotated with pictures and comments,

all in the Odyssey environment – are created based on operations requirements.

To see how easy it is to build a custom view in the Quality Viewer, please visit: BLInfo.com/Tips



START



FINISH



Dear Brenda

Brenda Povlock
Vice President — Client Services



Odyssey

Dear Brenda,

I have a weight-based operation which I have defined as being finite. My system is set to forward schedule. Many of my larger jobs tend to schedule this operation so far into the future that my job will never be on time. Can you tell me what is happening and how I can fix it?

Scheduled Short in Davenport

Dear Scheduled Short in Davenport,

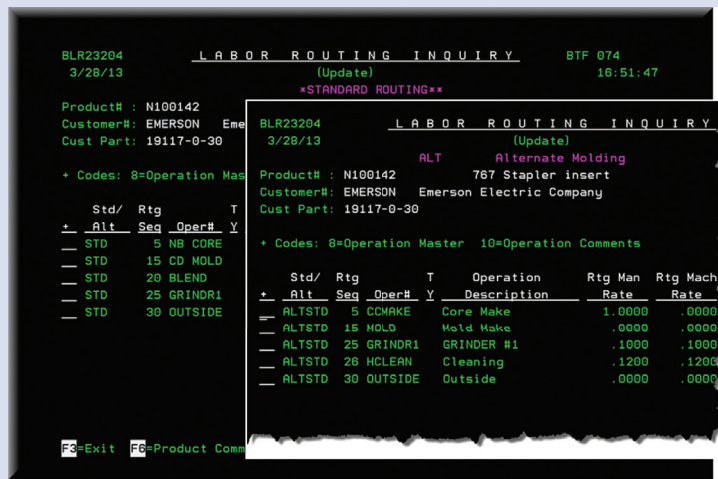
The reason this is most likely happening is because your finite operation does not have enough contiguous capacity in which to complete the number of pounds associated with this job/operation. The system has moved the operation out to the next nearest date where available contiguous capacity exists. You should use the Scheduling board to evaluate capacity for this operation and then use the "Smooth" button on the Schedule board. Think of "Smooth" as you would think of a trash compactor, it compresses all the loads together for a specific operation and allows you to make maximum utilization of your capacity.

BLIS-400

Dear Brenda,

I have system control set to autocreate 32 transactions when an operation is reported that is flagged in the labor routing to autocreate 32's. This is option 2 for autocreating 32 transactions. When I send castings outside and ship from outside, the system will autocreate the 32 transaction when I report the operation from the standard routing, but if I have an alternate routing with a different sequence number, and it is flagged to create the 32 transaction the system doesn't appear to recognize the flag and therefore no 32 transaction is created.

Thoroughly Frustrated in Ferndale



Dear Thoroughly Frustrated in Ferndale,

Even though an alternate routing is a completely separate routing from the standard, the meaning of the standard labor routing sequence number cannot be changed. This is to insure that Standard Cost and Job Cost remain correct. The system is working correctly. You see the system looks at the standard routing to find the transfer sequence number. That sequence

number has to be in the alternate routing and either be reported or cross referenced, and then your auto 32 transactions will be automatically created. For more detailed information on alternate routings see the PMIC documentation.

"And We're LIVE!"

B&L would like to recognize the following clients for their successful Q1 "go live" on Odyssey

- AFW Foundry Inc. (New)
- Brost Foundry Company (New)
- Garland Foundry Co., Inc. (Conversion from BLIS-400)
- New Products Corporation (Conversion from BLIS-400)

Communication Options

For the latest information on our software, tips/tricks, up-to-the-minute training schedule, and company news, please sign up for our weekly e-newsletter at BLInfo.com/enews.

On The Horizon

Joe Harmon
Vice President — Technology



Some of the duties of B&L's Technical Department are to install new software, upgrade

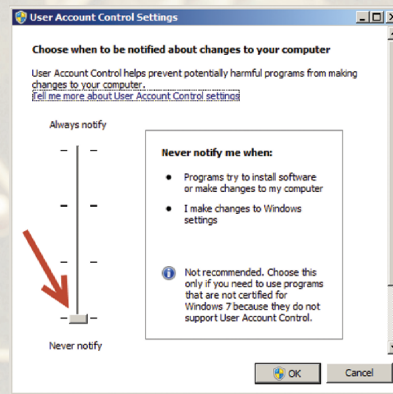
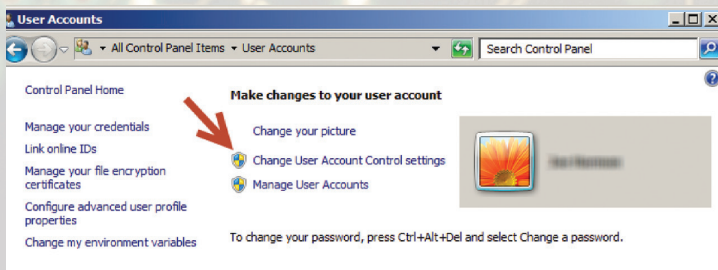
current customers to the latest Maintenance Release, and help with secondary customer support. It is interesting that we still have several customers that handle their own maintenance releases on their servers when this is a service that B&L provides as part of our support services. We can even schedule these upgrades at the client's convenience to minimize downtime.

So why would a customer want to do this server install themselves? We are not completely sure. Maybe they do not know we offer it? Maybe they are just do it yourself type people or they just want to stay abreast on how to do the install themselves? Anyway, if we do the server install or you do the server install you still have the client-side installation to contend with.

Listed next are the most common support issues we encounter with client-side installations. Keep in mind that one of the future advantages of our new User Interface (UI) will be the elimination of these issues along with other client-side idiosyncrasies.

1.) User Account Control Settings

During the installation make sure the User Account Control settings are set to Never notify (see screenshots below). The reason why is User Account Control aims to improve the security of Microsoft Windows by limiting application software to standard user privileges until an administrator authorizes an increase or elevation. Even though you may be an Administrator,



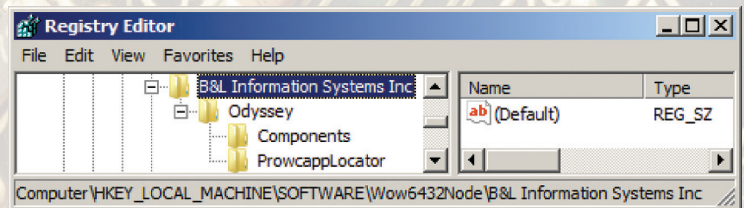
the PROGRESS platform Odyssey runs on needs this setting to be turned off during installation. Once you are finished installing feel free to set the level back to where you had it.

2.) Registry Settings

Make sure the user installing and running the software has the appropriate permissions to the registry settings. These settings are located under the following path:

32-bit - Computer\HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\B&L Information Systems Inc

64-bit - Computer\HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Wow6432Node\B&L Information Systems Inc



3.) Windows Firewall

Please refer to the Odyssey documentation for what ports need to be configured for open access.

If you are unsure how to change these settings then we would recommend you call the B&L support desk for assistance. If the local user does not have administrator rights then remember to log on as an administrator before applying MRs or installing Odyssey on the new client PCs.



R&D

DEVELOPMENTS

Doug Hinman
Vice President — Research & Development

One of our recent webinars was an overview of Odyssey's Shop Floor Manager, which got me wondering about how it fits into the overall manufacturing picture for our customers. So I Googled for "trends in shop floor control". The first article I found was offering to sell a whitepaper from IEEE*. Its abstract was so abstract I couldn't understand even the slightest about what it was saying. Another entry was an article by scientists from a university in South Korea titled "Biologically Inspired Techniques for Autonomous Shop Floor Control".

One of the lines read something like "machine tools, robots, and so on should be seen as biological organisms, which are capable of adapting themselves to environmental changes". All I could picture was a robot putting on a pair of long-johns when the weather turned cold.

We've built lots of flexibility into Odyssey's Shop Floor Manager (SFM). The webinar was very good, but really only scratched the surface of its extensive capabilities. Looking back at how we've continually enhanced the SFM you can see that it's been trending for a long time; and it will continue.

The Quality Viewer released in 4.5 is a major example. At Spectrum '12 some clients suggested that the Quality Viewer also have the ability to do quality alerts. So, we quickly included that feature at the last minute to roll it out in 4.5.

Look for another Quality Viewer feature that makes it easier to manage pictures of your castings. You can link JPG files to products, tools,

*The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

R&D continued from page 3

and routings directly from the Quality Viewer. When you link that way you will be able to rename and resize the JPG. You will also be able to automatically create a thumbnail of the picture, which is shown on the Quality Search as well as on the SFM when selecting a part to job on to. Probably the biggest thing about to happen to the SFM is the 4.6 version. It will be the new browser-based, zero-client User Interface (UI). It will look different, but have all the same functionality. We don't expect the look to cause any retraining for your workers, but if that's a concern, you can run the original UI version alongside the new version and roll it out as you see

fit. Keep in mind that lots of administration goes away for your shop floor devices with the new version.

Setting up your SFM definitions can be daunting because the software is so flexible. Don't get overwhelmed because we're here to help you with that. Once it's set up, SFM just runs. But, its flexibility means it's easily adaptable to changes in your environment. Unfortunately, Odyssey's Shop Floor Manager doesn't come with long-johns.

Upcoming Events & Training

For full details on our upcoming events and trainings, please visit our website BLInfo.com/events

Events	May 16-17, 2013 California Metals Coalition 40th Conference & Gala
	September 16-18, 2013 Die Cast Congress & Tabletop Booth 106
Training*	May 8, 2013 Odyssey General Ledger Monthly Processing (Webinar)
	May 22-23, 2013 Crystal Reports Training Class (B&L Offices)
	June 12, 2013 Data Explorer (Webinar)

(*Additional training available via on-line video for all customers signed up for the B&L Community. If your company has special training needs, please contact Brenda Povlock at ext. 321.)

SPECTRUM

What: Annual BLIS and Odyssey Users Conference

When: October 20-22, 2013

Do you have your passport ready? This year's Spectrum will be held over the border in Canada! Although we picked an "international" location – Toronto is centrally located and a relatively short flight from most major US hubs.

Spectrum is your chance to train with our staff in a dedicated, focused setting and to meet with other users. Past attendees tell us hearing (first-hand) new procedures and ideas from other users adds tremendous value to the training aspects of the conference.

Confirmed class topics include: Quality Viewer, Surcharges, and Returns Tracking for Odyssey. Returning are last year's popular panel discussions and an idea swap session. Additional Odyssey and BLIS-400 classes to be determined.



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