



R11i Newsletter

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Oracle Applications R11i Newsletter

Due to the ever changing and inconsistent information about Release 11i, **Solution Beacon** is distributing a periodic newsletter to provide our customers and R11i users with the most up-to-date information relating to the recent releases of the Oracle Applications e-Business suite. The content for this newsletter was contributed by our consultants who have accumulated extensive experience in installations, implementations, and upgrades of Release 11i. Their "real world" experience is being condensed into this newsletter to share information, tips and tricks, and lessons learned, so that you don't have to go through the same pitfalls we encountered. Because we believe sharing information is better than hoarding it, we also welcome your participation in this newsletter. If you would like to contribute on any R11i topic, please send your contact information, topic, and a short abstract to mweiss@solutionbeacon.com.

Mary Lou Weiss and Randy Giefer, Editors, Solution Beacon

Solution Beacon, LLC

Solution Beacon, LLC is a leading provider of expert-level resources to Fortune 1000, government and educational organizations. Our resources are the most highly qualified, experienced and skilled in their respective industries. We specialize in the Oracle Applications marketplace with Upgrades, Implementations, Database Administration and Systems Architecture as our primary areas of expertise. **We also specialize in remote support services for Applications maintenance and monitoring.**

Solution Beacon is very active in the Oracle community. We consistently participate in the Oracle Applications Users Group conferences and provide webmaster resources for multiple regional users groups. We chair the OAUG Upgrade SIG, moderate and participate in several OAUG conference panels, and present whitepapers at national and regional forums. We provided the first of its kind two-day OAUG R11i workshop at the Fall 2001 OAUG conference. The Applications Release 11i Installation and Upgrade Workshop was so popular that **Solution Beacon** will be providing an updated workshop at the Spring 2002 conference in Toronto in May. We are in the process of improving the OAUG Fall 2001 workshop agenda (see <http://www.solutionbeacon.com/SBFallOAUG.html>), and would like your input on suggestions and improvements. Please send any suggestions to mweiss@solutionbeacon.com.

John Stouffer, Business Development, Solution Beacon



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Late Breaking News

While there is an 11.5.6 ERP Family Pack and an 11.5.6 CRP Family Pack, **Oracle has just announced there will not be a combined 11.5.6 Maintenance Pack or 11.5.6 CD Bundle.** The next Application Release will be 11.5.7, tentatively planned for March 2002 (subject to change). This is a quote from Oracle which has been posted to MetaLink: "In order to provide the best product quality and latest applications code to our customers, Oracle has decided not to release the 11.5.6 Maintenance Pack and the 11.5.6 Rapid Install CD Pack. Instead, Oracle is accelerating the availability of the 11.5.7 Maintenance Pack and Rapid Install CD Pack 6, tentatively planned for the March 2002 time frame."

Kirby Kraft, Solution Beacon

11i Release Matrix

Oracle Applications Release 11i is an ever changing software release. Oracle continues to introduce new modules, functionality and update the technology stack with each new "dot" release. As an example, there are 14 new products for CRM in 11.5.6 and 1 new product for ERP introduced in 11.5.6! We maintain a Release Matrix for the various 11i releases to help us keep track of the differences and changes introduced with each new "dot" release.

The following releases are currently available:

Release	Estimated Date for Availability	Patch Number
11.5.5 Maintenance Pack	Currently Available	1808429
ERP 11.5.6 Family Pack	Currently Available	1939818
CRM 11.5.6 Family Pack	Currently Available	2092384
11.5.6 Maintenance Pack	*See quote above	NA
11.5.7 Maintenance Pack	March 2002 (subject to change)	NA

"In order to minimize the number of issues customers encounter during an R11i install or upgrade, Oracle is strongly encouraging their applications customers install the 11i CD Pack 5 or upgrade to Maintenance Pack 11.5.5. In addition, ERP and CRM customers (as applicable) should apply the ERP and CRM 11.5.6 Family Packs which are



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now available. See the Release Availability section above for patch numbers." For more information on this announcement, please look in [MetaLink](#), Oracle Applications Release 11i Info Center.

For matrix changes from 10.7 thru 11.5.5 see our Free R11i Tools area of <http://www.solutionbeacon.com/>. Documentation and determination of the changes in the Technology stack for the next release of R11i are in progress.

John Stouffer, Solution Beacon

Desupport Updates

Applications Desupport as of 01/20/02

Version/ Release	Desupport Date	Notes
10.7	30-JUN-2003	Error Correction Support (ECS) 03-JUN-2003 US Payroll 2002 Q4 processing has been desupported Support for US, UK and Japanese Payroll 2002 Year End processing / 2003 Year Begin processing has been desupported Support for US Payroll 2003 Q1 processing has been desupported.
10.4, 10.5, 10.6	31-DEC-1998	ECS 31-DEC-1998, Extended Assistance Support, 31-DEC-2001

Oracle has reaffirmed that they will end support for Version 10.7 of in June 2003, despite customer requests for another extension. For more details on this topic, refer to:

http://www.computerworld.com/itresources/rcstory/0,4167,STO67427_KEY241,00.html.

RDBMS Desupport as of 01/20/02

9.0.1.X	Not yet decided	9.0.1.2 available now on most platforms. The first Oracle9i Production release on NT
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		first Oracle9i Production release on NT includes all 9.0.1.1 fixes
8.1.7.X	31-DEC-2003 with EMS to 31-DEC-2005 (Novell NetWare 30-SEP-2002 with no EMS)	8.1.7.2 available on most platforms
8.1.6.X	Extended to 01-JUN-02 for E-Business Suite Customers only.	Extended Maintenance Support Not Available
8.1.5.X	01-JAN-02	8.1.5.1 exists on Solaris / NT / SNI / SGI only
8.0.6.X	30-Sep-2001 EMS to 30-Sep-2003	Fixes only possible for customers with EMS or using E-Business Suite (in Server Partitioned mode). Must be on 8.0.6.3
8.0.3-8.0.5.X	31-MAR-1999 to 31-MAR-2000	OS/390 was desupported 01-Nov-2000
7.3.4.X	31-Dec-2000 31-Dec-2002 for EMS	Fixes only possible for customers with EMS. Must be on 7.3.4.5.
7.3.2.X-7.3.3.X	31-JAN-1998	EMS has ended.

R11i Tips/Techniques

Tip #1 - Are you having problems with your Forms locking up (FRM-92100)? To lessen the problem:

Make sure your JInitiator version is 1.1.8.13 or higher and you are on Forms version 6.0.8.14.2 (Patch 5a).

Tip #2 - To delay the disconnect on idle sessions:

Set the FORMS60_TIMEOUT=120 (2 hours) in the APPLSYS.env (ORACLE_SID.env) file located in the SAPPL_TOP. The default value is 15 minutes.

The definitive MetaLink note on Applications timeout is 151879.1 We have NOT had to setup any of the heartbeat modifications that the note mentions. We normally just set the forms timeout to 2 hours and this seems to work OK, as we are on current JInitiator and Forms versions. There are also settings in the Apache/Java configuration files that you can increase to prevent the timeout, but we would perform tasks 1 and 2 above before further tweaking the other configuration files. The other files are the https.conf, appswb.cfg (2 places), appbase.htm and the zone.properties files. Refer to MetaLink doc 109471.1 for additional information on terminating a client connection based on idle time.

John Stouffer, Solution Beacon



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R11i Developer Tools Updates

You probably already know that R11i has a completely different technology stack from what was in 11.0 or 10.7. Instead of using Forms 4.5 and Reports 2.5, this version of the Applications uses Forms 6 and Reports 6. These new tools are definitely more advanced than their predecessors, but the changes are more revolutionary than evolutionary:

- Wizards make many tasks much easier than they were in both tools.
- The elements that make up your report now have property sheets similar to the ones in Forms.
- The properties for your Forms “boilerplate” (labels, graphics, etc.) now have property sheets.
- Text items in Forms now have a “Label” property, which you can dynamically control.
- The Reports tool has a “live” previewer, which allows you to tweak the appearance of your report directly on the output. You no longer have to make your changes in the layout editor and then run the report again to see the results.
- The Forms tool has built-in support for tabs, which in many cases are easier to program than alternative regions.
- Creating HTML or PDF output from the reports designer is extremely easy, using the Web Wizard.

If you are comfortable using Forms 4.5 and Reports 2.5, it won't take long to adapt to the new features.

A few general notes about these tools:

- The version you receive on CD may not be the most up-to-date, and some versions tend to crash often. If you experience problems with the tools crashing, check MetaLink for the latest compatible patch.
- Save your work often! Though the patched version is pretty stable, it will still probably crash if you have been working on a particularly difficult problem for two hours without saving. Murphy's law demands it.
- If you're developing forms for Oracle Applications, you should follow the User Interface Standards and the Developer's Guide closely. Despite the all-new look and feel of the Applications, the standards haven't changed very much, so if you are upgrading a form that follows the 10.7 standards, you won't have much trouble. If you don't follow standards, all bets are off.
- The wizards can save you a lot of time, but don't expect them to do everything for you. Sometimes it's easier to bend over and pick up the paperclip than to keep running the vacuum cleaner over it. If your report has to look a particular way, you may have to do some of your layout the hard way.
- Sometimes what you see isn't what you get. When you're developing a form, what you see in the layout editor looks a lot like the 10.7 and 11.0 forms. The slick new 11i interface doesn't show up until you



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generate your form on the application server and run it from an application menu. Then your rectangles and buttons become rounded, and the colors change to blue and gray.

- Most reports you run in Applications are character mode reports, but the Reports designer defaults to bitmapped reports. Items that fit easily on a bitmapped report (due to various font sizes and proportional spacing) may be clipped if you run the report as in character mode (where each letter takes the same amount of space on a regular grid). There are two ways to fix this. If you have the right drivers on your server, you can set up the Apps to run certain reports in bitmap mode. Or, you can set the Reports designer to design the report as a character mode report.

Most of these issues are not new to these versions of the Developer tools or to this version of Applications. But they haven't gone away, either.

Kevin Bailey, Solution Beacon

R11i Administration and Maintenance

Are you tired of writing startup and shutdown scripts for all those instances and having to edit and maintain multiple profile files? Then use our free utility! The Oracle Applications Environment Manager (oaem) is a comprehensive utility for managing the various and complex applications, web, and database components in a Release 11i environment. Use of oaem eliminates the tedious and often error-prone maintenance of multiple profiles and start/stop scripts. The oaem utility provides the following functionality:

- The oaem function manages all of the UNIX environment settings for the Oracle Applications, eliminating the need to develop and maintain numerous UNIX profiles across multiple systems. DBAs can now switch back and forth between environments without having to logoff and re-login.
- The oaemst function manages the starting and stopping of all of the various Release 11i applications, web, and database components. It even provides status information on all components.
- All internal functions used by oaem and oaemst can be called and used by external scripts and utilities, providing for an easy integration with existing scripts and tools.

Download your free copy from the Free R11i Tools section of our website at <http://www.solutionbeacon.com/>.

Randy Giefer, Solution Beacon



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Guest Contributor Spotlight

Each future R11i Newsletter will contain an article about a specific applications module or process from a guest contributor who is an expert on the topic. If you would like to contribute an article please submit it to mweiss@solutionbeacon.com.

OAUG Upgrade SIG

The Upgrade SIG is back! The Upgrade SIG will focus on the specific issues, concerns and solutions related to upgrading to Oracle's e-Business Suite of Applications (R11i). The first meeting since being re-established was held at the OAUG Fall 2001 Conference in San Diego. The SIG will meet again at OAUG Spring 2002 in Toronto in May. Our first step in providing useful information has been to establish a link for OAUG members to search their geographic regions for other users with similar configurations. Please visit the Upgrade SIG on the web at <http://www.oaug.org/upgsig/>. If you would like to join the Upgrade SIG or have suggestion, please send email to UPGSig@solutionbeacon.com.

John Stouffer, Upgrade SIG Group Coordinator, Solution Beacon

Useful Resources

Oracle Appsnet website provides a good resource for information on Oracle Architecture. There is information on e-Business Suite, Self Service, CRM and more. You can download numerous presentations, white papers and FAQs on Overviews, Network Architecture and Global Operations at:

<http://www.oracle.com/appsnet/technology/architecture/index.htm>

Kirby Kraft, Solution Beacon



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Industry News

Oracle has announced a simplified pricing for Oracle R11i applications. Customers will now pay \$4000 for a super user and \$400 for a casual user. See the following URL for more details:

<http://www.infoworld.com/articles/hn/xml/02/01/17/020117honoraprice.xml?0117t>

Randy Giefer, Solution Beacon

Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Location
NorthWest Oracle User Group Conference	February 4-5, 2002	Bellevue, WA
Stonebridge Technologies Apps DBA Workshop	March 18-20, 2002	Dallas, TX
Oracle AppsWorld	April 7-10, 2002	San Diego, CA
OAUG Spring 2002	May 19-22, 2002	Toronto, Canada
OAUG Fall 2002	October 23-27, 2002	San Diego, CA

Mary Lou Weiss, Solution Beacon

3rd Party Software Updates

RingMaster® tools are the tools of choice for managing the most costly parts of Oracle Applications: patching and customizations.

RingMaster reduces a DBA's time spent patching by up to 90% and acts as a complete Management Information System for Oracle Applications patches. It will let the DBA schedule WHEN a patch should apply, and then let the DBA go home at a sensible hour. RingMaster will unzip the patch, shut down the concurrent manager, apply the patch to the correct server, recompile invalid objects, and provide detailed reports of all the objects and tables the patch touches. With integrated paging and email capability, you know that everything applied correctly if you wake up with your alarm clock rather than with RingMaster calling your cell phone. From impact analysis to notification if the current patch release level has been superseded by Oracle, DBAs gain the control that spells savings and productivity. It also protects your system passwords by encrypting them, so that even if you have a less skilled team



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member handle the patch application, you do not compromise system security. Your team will do a lot more in a lot less time with RingMaster.

If your Oracle Applications system is customized, you need to be very cautious about which patches you apply and when. With RingMaster's innovative Patch Prediction, you can know what a patch will do before it ever hits your system. It runs the patch in Apply=No mode and then reports on the results. This safety feature can prevent many problems from ever occurring. To review detailed system features, visit RingMaster at <http://www.ringmastertools.com/>.

Judy Soles, Cinap

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