Up In ARMS

Fall /Winter 2004

2005 User Group Conference/Training Session - Memphis, TN

We are pleased to announce Memphis TN, the Home of the Blues and The Birth Place of Rock and Roll, as the site of the 2005 UGC to be held on April 13th—15th. This years' conference will be held at the recently renovated Memphis Hilton, located 10 minutes from the Memphis International Airport and only 15 minutes from the world-famous Beale Street.

At this year's conference, we'll focus on current and future technologies, wireless developments, security models, UCR and Clery reporting, as well as information on our new products and future developments underway at End2End…and of course, we'll be offering the user-training on ARMS that our customers' have come to expect by delving in-depth into some of the areas of the ARMS application that may be overlooked and perhaps not used to your departments' benefit.

We'll also be sharing our top troubleshooting techniques and solutions to ARMS and discussing some of the features and benefits of migrating to our newest applications, ARMS Enterprise and ARMS Parking. Like in past conferences, though, our primary area of focus will be on you, the customer. We want to know what solutions you need and how we can help your department become more efficient and effective. If you would like more information on attending the conference…
email us at armssupport@e2e.org

MEMPHIS HILTON

Site of End2End's 2005

User Group Conference

"Meet Us in Memphis!"

Fall Focus Groups—Houston Extends "Texas-Sized" Welcome To End2End

On September 24, End2End held it's first regional focus group in the southwest in Houston, Texas at the Spring Independent School District. Over 20 users representing 11 agencies attended this successful day long conference and we gained valuable feedback and insight from everyone who participated. We are now in the planning stage for our next forum and want to encourage users of ARMS to mark your calendar to attend when we come to your neighborhood.

The purpose of these day-long focus groups is twofold; It gives us a chance to get to know our customers better in a small setting and it also gives ARMS users a chance to give us feedback…by letting us know how we're doing and what improvements they would like to see in future releases of our applications. It is our intention to host 3—4 of these gatherings in the fall and early winter months annually in locations where there are groups of customers so all ARMS users can easily participate. We've found that by limiting the size of our focus groups into regional areas, this has allowed us to spend more time with each customer and also to be able to fully explore ideas and requests in a round-table forum so that we can then take this information and incorporate many of these suggestions into new releases of ARMS.

Sites that are currently being considered for our next series of focus groups are Atlanta GA, Boston MA and San Francisco CA…If you would like to see a focus group in your area or perhaps would like to host such an event, let us hear from you! Email us at End2End and let us know what location would work best for your organization - mbryant@e2e.org

Inside this issue:

Note From the Manager of Customer Service

Once again we find ourselves looking at the close of another year. 2004 started with a new office, new staff and new software. I feel very good about the year and the accomplishments we and many of you have made. We have brought 26 new agencies into the End2End user group, by the time this newsletter is published, over 10 agencies will be migrated to the new ARMS v2 application with even more in the process.

Our 'Fall Focus Group' in Houston was a success and we are in the planning stages for even more. We intend to make this a part of our process of gaining information and ideas from you. 2005 will see a marked increase in the number of these day-long training/conference sessions we host and we hope to see you at one soon.

When End2End began, our goal was to create a company that would serve a public safety's information management needs…I believe we've been successful in accomplishing that mission by constantly improving and adding modules and features to our software ever since. Many of you may not be aware, but we offer full suite of applications to meet your growing needs, from Fire Inspections and Parking to Evacuation Planning. These modules are all part of the End2End Public Safety Information Management Suite.

As always, End2End wants to thank you for your continued support. We're looking forward to the upcoming year and hope you'll grow with us.

Michael Bryant

Manager, Customer Service

Public Safety Announcement:

Starting in January, 2005 - End2End.Org will be put to rest…

What a better time than the start of the New Year to formally adopt an *"Out With The Old—In With The New"* resolution…
we'll be launching our new web address, one that we feel more accurately describes End2End:

www.**End2EndPublicSafety**.com

Information Management Systems for the Public Safety Sector

Did You Know?

ARMS has long been known for it's CAD and RMS functions…but did you know about our additional modules that you can seamlessly incorporate into your existing Enterprise engine?

Fire Inspection Module: Keep dates, information and tracking history of all contacts, construction projects, occupancies, ordinances, inspections and violations. It's a Risk-Management tool that no department can do without!

Evacuation Module: Store detailed evacuation plans, building layouts and floor plans, include documentation for specific contingency plans, include lists of officers with specialized training, contact lists of first responders and more!

There's no debate – ARMS wins!

Were you one of the millions of Americans who tuned in this year to watch the series of Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates?

An estimated 43 million American voters, many of whom were undecided voters, tuned in to each of these forums to hear where the candidates stood on the issues facing our nation in order to decide for themselves who they should cast their vote for. Many of us came away with a clearer understanding of where each candidates stood but there is one thing that you probably did not know…

Two of those four debate sites are ARMS customers!

Both Case Western University, in Cleveland, Ohio and also the University of Washington, in St. Louis, Missouri are current ARMS customers. When safety and security are of the utmost importance in the selection process for such momentous events such as these national debates, we are extremely proud that ARMS sites were selected.

MONITORS— Changing Viewpoints   Cathode Ray vs Liquid Crystal

There have been numerous changes in technology over the past few years and one of the most often over-looked areas is computer monitor technology. As technology has improved, departments have upgraded both their software and hardware technology, but often times, there seems to be an ingrained "If it's not broken - Don't fix it" mentality towards workstation monitors. Fact is, the monitors your employees use have a **_direct impact_** on their job satisfaction and their effectiveness on the job.

Most of the monitors utilized by police departments today are CRT, or Cathode-Ray Tube. CRT monitors work by moving an electron beam back and forth across the back of the screen…each time the beam makes a pass across the screen, it lights up phosphor dots on the inside of the glass tube, thereby illuminating the active portions of the screen. By drawing many such lines from the top to the bottom of the screen, it creates an entire screen full of images. Over time though, the beam that passes over the screen becomes dirty and because of it's constant use, it loses it's brightness. This loss of brightness makes the monitor darker and much more difficult to read over time and eventually causes severe strain on the eyes to compensate for the loss in brightness. This darkening often goes unnoticed because it is gradual and takes place over the course of a few years.

In the past few years LCD, or Liquid Crystal Display, monitors have been introduced and have been integrating into society. LCD Displays utilize two sheets of polarizing material with a liquid crystal solution between them. An electric current passed through the liquid causing the crystals to align so that light cannot pass through them. Each crystal, essentially, is like a shutter, either allowing light to pass through or blocking the light. LCD monitors have many advantages over CRT monitors, including consuming about 70% **_less_** electricity than CRT monitors, diminished static electricity on the screen, they do not flicker and they do not output x-ray radiation. When introduced, LCD monitors were very expensive, but slowly, as they have become more available, prices have fallen dramatically in recent years. They are still more expensive than CRT monitors, but the difference in quality more than justifies the higher price.

CRT monitors can cause other conflicts with technology as well. Many applications today, including ARMS Enterprise, require a screen resolution on 1024x768. Application windows have become larger over time and a higher resolution becomes necessary. Most police departments have 15″ monitors at almost all of their workstations. In the past, this was fine because many applications only required 800x600 screen resolution…and although 15″ CRT monitors will allow for a screen resolution of 1024x768, it is not recommended because the windows are often too small to be viewed comfortably.

We recommend that departments upgrade to 17″ monitors. Whether you choose CRT or LCD monitors, the large screen size provides many advantages, the most obvious being the increase in viewable space. The larger viewing area will accomplish two tasks…first, 17″ monitors allow for 1024x768 screen resolution, allowing you to stay current with technology, secondly, the larger viewing area will make looking at the screen more comfortable and less stressful on the eyes.

As computers have become a staple in the world today, users spend more and more time in front of their monitors. The more time we sit in front of computer monitors, the more important it becomes to have larger or better quality monitors. An investment in monitors by your department will most likely more than pay for itself in satisfaction and peace of mind.

Networking and DNS for Dummies - What You Should Know

To begin with let me start with a bit of a disclaimer: This article, by no means, will be an in-depth study of how DNS services functions on all networks…nor is it guaranteed to give you a solution to a DNS or networking problem. The author of this article is *NOT A DNS Expert*, he is only a guy that has had to fight this service for the last few years. If this article insults you, please forgive me…

Defining DNS:

Short for Domain Name System (or Service or Server), an Internet service that translates domain names into IP addresses. Because domain names are alphabetic, they're easier to remember. The Internet however, is really based on IP addresses. Every time you type in a domain name, a DNS service must translate the name into a language it understands…i.e. the corresponding IP address. For example, the domain name www.example.com might translate to 198.105.232.4.

So…how does that relate to my LAN (local area network)? Same principal, smaller scale. You probably are using TCP/IP as the network protocol for your network, i.e. how the computers communicate with each other, and some form of 'name resolution' service. When a user types in a network resource, such as \\UPD or a mapped drive Z:\, the DNS is transferring the name to an IP address.

From our experience, what we've seen is that if DNS is not set up correctly, user may experience the following situations:

1) Slow Network, slow file transfer over the network, network applications are slow to respond.

2) Network applications crash or stop responding altogether.

Of course, these are only a few items that may indicate a DNS problem. Fortunately, Microsoft has developed a network tool that provides you with a diagnostic test for these issues:

http://www.microsoft.com/windows2000/techinfo/reskit/tools/existing/netdiag-o.asp

(NETDIAG.exe)

"This command-line diagnostic tool helps to isolate networking and connectivity problems, by performing a series of tests to determine the state of your network client, and whether it is functional. These tests, and the key network status information they expose, give network administrators and support personnel a more direct means of identifying and isolating network problems. Moreover, because this tool does not require that parameters or switches be specified, support personnel and network administrators can focus on analyzing the output, rather than on training users how to use the tool."

We've found this to be an invaluable tool in helping us find and troubleshoot some of the more common network errors.

Windows Time Sync: Why Is It Important?

We have received calls from users who are having errors with their time-stamping inside the CAD application. These errors will occur when the time synchronization between the server and the client does not match.

It is important that the times on machines are closely synchronized, especially when time-stamped logs from several machines on a server will be analyzed together. When creating a new CAD event the time is stamped automatically. When the times from the client and server do not match, the program does not know how to respond, therefore giving some type of an incorrect time. It is imperative that you utilize the Windows Time Synchronization function to solve this problem.
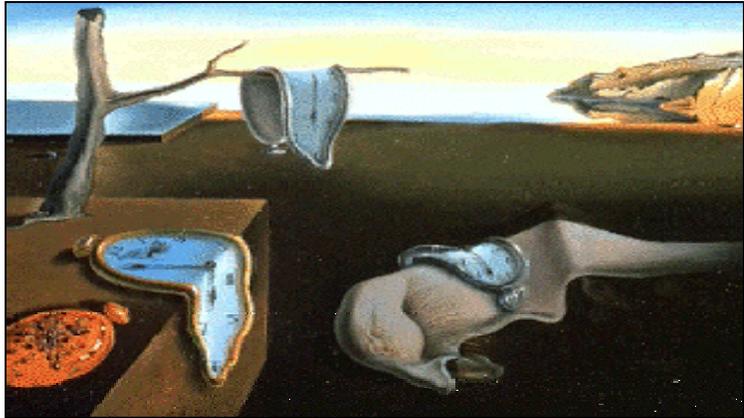
Here are some references to aid you with your task in keeping your server and client's time correctly synchronized…

http://www.wilsonmar.com/1clocks.htm, offers a thorough explanation of windows time synchronization and the steps to keep the time synchronized on a Windows 2000 Server.

The Microsoft article "Basic Operation of the Windows Time Service," found at:

http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=224799, describes the default behavior of the time service synchronization.

You can fine tune how the time service operates (e.g., changing the synchronization interval or the machine to contact for a time update) by adjusting the service's registry entries, as documented in the Microsoft article Registry Entries for the W32Time Service at:

http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=223184.

XP Service Pack 2 Update:

In August, Microsoft rolled out Service Pack 2 (better known as SP2) for Windows XP users…widely viewed as a valuable aid in combating the raging spyware, viruses and spam that afflict computer users today. SP2 effectively fights malicious intruders, reduces pop-up ads and consolidates security settings.

While you may be familiar with some users who have reported technical difficulties stemming from this patch, End2End wants you to know that this update has had **no impact** on the ARMS Suite of Information Management Systems.

Customer Support Website for Users & Administrators

As an added service to all of our valued customers, End2End maintains a customer support website, full of valuable end-user and system administrator information for your ARMS product. Just recently, our support site underwent major reconstructive surgery, and now we'd like to introduce to you the new and improved End2End Support Site, which can be accessed at: http://www.e2e.org/support

Q: What do I need to have installed on my computer in order to access the support site?

A: If you have an internet connection and some form of web browser (Internet Explorer, for ex ample), then you have everything you'll ever need to surf around our site.

Q: Will I need specific login to the support site?

A: Yes. If you do not already have a login, or are unsure of your existing login, please email ARMS Support to receive your login information at: armssupport@e2e.org

Once you have received your login from ARMS Support, proceed to the site URL listed above, enter your username and password, and click the Login button. Should you ever forget your new username and password, you can use the 'Forgot Password' utility.

There are many features to the End2End Support Site including -
        FAQ's (frequently asked questions)
        Documents - (help files, "how-to", reports, maintenance, etc.)
        Downloads - (powerpoints files, implementation help, streaming support, etc.)

These reference and help files contain an enormous amount of resource materials available at your fingertips that will help your department improve its efficiency and workplace effectiveness. Often times, you may find an answer to your question over the web faster (and you can even print off detailed directions for future reference)…which is especially helpful in situations where you may not have uninterrupted access to a phone. End2End strives to keep our support site full of material that can answer any possible questions our customers may have encountered previously.

Each item we store on our support site is designed to help our customers become more efficient and familiar with the product at hand. If you have any enhancement ideas you'd like to see on the site, please feel free to send them to us at: armssupport@e2e.org

We'd like to extend our ARMS to others in need...

At End2End, our approach to Customer Service and Support has always been to treat our ARMS customers like an extended family.   We're proud to serve each and every member, so should a problem arise, like family, we're always there to help make things right. End2End wants to see the family grow too though...in fact, we want our next User Group Conference in Memphis, April 2005, to be the biggest and best family reunion we've had yet. We've welcomed many new agencies into the fold just recently including the Cedar Hill Independent School District in Cedar Hill, Texas...Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg, Mississippi and the Waterford Police Services in Waterford, California...but we're always searching for opportunities to grow another branch on our extended family tree.

If you are a current customer and can provide leads or references that lead to a sale, we'll recognize your generosity by providing your department with cost-savings we've designed to help your budget. End2End will provide discounts to your department on technical support payments or even discounts on an upgrade to the Enterprise version of ARMS. In addition, the individual who is responsible for providing the references could earn gift certificates or other reward ideas we've been tossing around the office. If you have questions or comments please email us at sales@e2e.org or simply call us at 800-365-9962 and let us know your suggestions and references.

End2End offers secure off-site data storage for your backups!!

Our technical support services have been busy lately with questions regarding backing up data files...and we're glad to see attention called to this problem. Recently, we've seen instances where an organizations' disaster recovery plans have simply been: "Pray a disaster never happens!" As a solution, End2End is proud to offer off-site storage services for users to secure their data files. We'll regularly schedule a backup of your files to our secure FTP site that will ensure your data is received with it's integrity intact. Data storage can be added to your existing subscription fees making this an IT headache you'll never have to endure. Give us a call or send us an email to learn more about this service - sales@e2e.org 800-365-9962
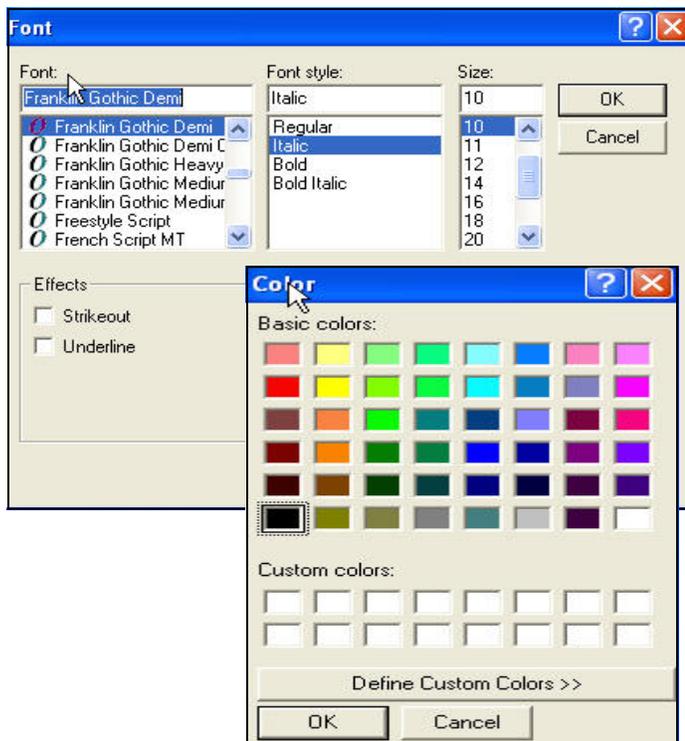
New Enterprise Features -

Part of making ARMS Enterprise V2 more user-friendly included giving users the ability to edit text fields as they would in other word-processing programs.

We've added **Font Controls**, **Colors** and also an embedded **Spell Check** features into every large area of text fields throughout every module of the application.

In previous versions of ARMS, users had to manually review their narratives for errors as they progressed through their copy...this new feature allows users to add emphasis where it is needed, highlight crucial information that demands attention and check their wordage for grammatical and spelling errors for more professional reporting.

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Public Safety
Information Management Solutions

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UP in ARMS ENTERPRISE!!

We would like to thank these customers for migrating to the new Enterprise application:

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Ohio University

Tarrant County College

Mansfield Independent School District

Angleton ISD

Austin ISD Police

Cedar Hill ISD

Clark County School District

University of Nevada - Las Vegas

Washoe County School District

Western Washington University

University of Southern Maine

Willows Police Department, CA

End2End Customers

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