

HDI January Meeting - Wednesday, Jan. 18th

Analyst Stream: Troubleshooting Techniques.....

Date: Wed. January 18, 2005

Time: 5:00 pm (note the earlier start time) to 7:00 pm

Location: Metro Hall

Speaker: Nick de Jong – ServiceMinds Inc.

This is a special 2 hour training session to introduce a more effective way to troubleshoot using a structured approach that reduces the time and effort in obtaining a solid fix. This session is directed towards technical analysts.

The role of troubleshooting within a service desk is twofold. One is to gather the proper information to identify what the issue at hand really is and second to use that information to remove the cause of the outage.

Since the vast majority of incidents handled by the desk have known causes and solutions, it is vitally important to identify the present issue properly so the known resolution can be found and applied. We will identify types of information required to do this effectively and the format the information must be in to find known solutions.

If there is no known solution, the information must be used in a given process to narrow down the possibilities to one logical cause. This is a disciplined process based on gathering all the required information into a set format that will steer us down a single correct path by eliminating invalid possibilities.

We will be doing some hands on work in this Troubleshooting session. In order to be able to apply this new learning to your day to day work, please come with the following:

A/ several blank copies of your system's logging screen for new Incidents (or ticket entry)

B/ copies of 5 historical Incidents- bring real problems not password changes or service requests.

AUDIENCE: Analyst stream for Helpdesk and Service Desk analysts and new Service Desk and Helpdesk managers.

Prize Draw: one Quality Troubleshooting Techniques training course (value \$450) courtesy of RADAR Solutions Group www.radarinteractive.com

In celebration of our new HDI "One Association" Toronto Chapter, everyone is invited to attend our January meeting at no charge!

As we will be serving a light supper (again, no charge), please RSVP to let us know how many people to plan for. **RSVP at** www.helpdesktoronto.org

The Front Line E-newsletter.

Please forward any submissions or suggestions to newsletter@helpdesktoronto.org

The Dawning Of The Age Of Thin-Client

By Cameron Stevens

There are many directions to the provision of desktop computing services; it's not as simple an answer as it was 2, 5, or 7 years ago. The fictional simplicity of a thin-client is a reality and the day of the desktop in the workplace is changing. Even with the advancements in Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), the necessity of being at an office is shedding its skin and the workplace is becoming less and less centralized.

While the computing power is returning to the model of mainframes and dumb-terminals, some of you may not even have a recollection of what a dumb terminal is aside from what you'd been told in your CS101 course. The concept is, quite simply, that the brains of the computer, the hard working portion, are locked away at head office or someplace safe. The non-thinking, display only portion that sits on your desk stores and knows nothing. The security types love this, so do the executives who are being sold on the cost of the dumb terminal to be at par with a desktop, with a hugely reduced cost in managing it. If a client goes down, the client is replaced. Downtime? Five minutes, the time it takes to walk the new system up to the user's desk.

Sun, Citrix, Microsoft, Wyse and other technology companies are allowing centralization of the computing power, minimizing the need for SMS, and reducing the need for expensive systems on desktops. In fact, the systems on the common desktop could remain unchanged, without a concern for a warranty, until they die because the migration to a thin-client model removes the need for extreme power at the client-side. As a help desk technician, this should offer you some guidance as to a career path. As a desktop technician, this should scream at you to get into the administration side of Citrix technologies or Microsoft Terminal Services or the thin-client model of choice at your workplace.

Deployment of packages (via SMS or Tivoli) in a centralized computing model is obsolete; you should be climbing the education ladder to climb out of the tar pit. There's a light for you though, a lifeline in the form of laptops. While they are very capable of assimilating into the centralized computing model, they will still require your talent, for now. Ok, so it's a 40-watt light at the end of the tunnel but after you get a nice healthy image with the bare minimum on it, possibly just the OS and the Thin-Client access tool, there's not a lot you need to do. People will still mess them up, but with tools like Deep Freeze (from Faronics), they can't even do that!

Is this the end of desktop computers in the workplace? No. There will be pockets of Graphic Artists using Macintoshes, Programmers using over-powered PCs, specialty PCs that need some peculiar level of connectivity, and executives that feel they deserve a laptop. The movement towards web-based tools is a big reason for the success of thin-client; the Internet Web Browser was the first real thin-client tool we embraced since Windows was introduced. A well-designed web site will reduce the need for PC upgrades in any workplace; the new thin-client systems just call for a bigger envelope.

Even small companies are utilizing the thin-client solutions using existing hardware and a Virtual Private Network (VPN). They still have the headaches of having vulnerable laptops in use by employees, but the centralized model is in place, and growing. They may be even further ahead in the quest for a lower cost per user, eliminating the risks of viruses and downtime due to user interference with the hardware/software.

**Member submissions
are always welcome.**

Please send your article to:
editor@helpdesktoronto.org

The pre-sales literature on the Citrix web site boasts savings and simplicity. If you can realize reductions like these, you'd be sold on it. For example, one organisation claims they "reduced patch management time by 98% [and] cut set-up time for new users from five hours to 30 minutes." Another says that their Citrix solution, "enabled the firm to avoid the cost of purchasing about 110 laptops", allowing their lawyers to work from online from home. The web-based client from Citrix allows access to virtually any application that would be available in the office. While the cost of the hardware at home can be downloaded to the employee, this can be encouraged through an employee purchase plan. In outsourcing solutions the outsourcer can provide services and be responsible for the whole cost of the client systems.

Is thin-client as simple as not buying workstations year-after-year? No, there are costs on the server-side to configure and purchase a reliable system that will bring back some of the balance on the client-server vs. centralized approach. The physical network that carries the data will need to be very strong and reliable, the server that virtualizes the Windows PC and provides the user interface, etc. needs a significant amount of horsepower. The more horsepower your server has, the more users it can support. The newest 64-bit servers can support 40, 100, or more users. Depending on the applications the users are running, the demand on RAM and the processors in that server. You may be able to serve more than 350 users, but you don't want to spread this too thin, the worst thing for your IT department is an overloaded server.

Do all applications work in the framework of the Thin-Client? Most will. Anything commercially available should be workable but you'll need to verify that your applications are tested thoroughly. Internally written tools will be your most significant challenge. If you don't do the testing, you may have the largest nightmare and very frustrated users.

As a helpdesk technician, think about your options, think of where you want to be and as so many people have said, don't put all your eggs in one basket. An educational omelette might be your best choice.

Cameron Stevens is a technology integrator and desktop support lead, as well as being the webmaster for our HDI Toronto Chapter. To contact Cameron please visit <http://cameronstevens.netfirms.com> or e-mail him at j.camerons@gmail.com.

Resources

Deep Freeze by Faronics	www.faronics.com
Citrix	www.citrix.com
Sun Microsystems	www.sun.com
Brian Madden	www.brianmadden.com
Microsoft Corporation	www.microsoft.com

Inspirational Quote

Somehow I can't believe that there are any heights that can't be scaled by a man who knows the secrets of making dreams come true. This special secret, it seems to me, can be summarized in four Cs. They are curiosity, confidence, courage, and constancy, and the greatest of all is confidence. When you believe in a thing, believe in it all the way, implicitly and unquestionably.

- Walt Disney



HDI
2006 Annual Conference & Expo
World Conference on Customer & Technical Support

TELL A FRIEND
REGISTER NOW

March 19-22, 2006 – Nashville, TN
Get Connected. Get Energized. Get Results.



**Fascinating &
Provocative Keynotes**



GEOFFREY MOORE
Author of *Living on the Fault Line*



MARCUS BUCKINGHAM
Author of *First, Break All the Rules*



RON MUNS
The State of the IT and Support Industry Address



CHAD HYMAS
World Record Wheelchair Athlete



ROSS SHAFER
Author of *Nobody Moved Your Cheese*



DAVE TIMMONS
Creator, *Six Strings Leadership*



KEN JENNINGS
Multi-million Dollar *Jeopardy!* Champion

For further information and registration, please visit: www.thinkhdi.com/hdi2006/

Thinking about becoming a new member?

Call us at 416-352-1792 or contact:

vp_membership@helpdesktoronto.org

HDI Toronto Chapter
1930 Yonge Street, Suite 1040
Toronto, ON M4S 1Z4
Phone 416-352-1792

www.helpdesktoronto.org



www.compassmc.com

A MIDDLE GROUND FOR VALUE CONTRIBUTION

A decade or so ago, business process reengineering was all the rage. Organizations hired consultants to analyze how things were done, to chart out better ways of doing things, and to write customized software applications to help implement the changes needed to create a streamlined and hyper-efficient new operation.

More recently, the pendulum has swung back the other way -- technology is again seen as the driver of the solution. Specifically, standardized enterprise-wide software applications designed to automate and streamline generic business functions are back in vogue. This approach means that the business processes -- however "generic" they may be -- must change to align with the IT solution.

Nigel Hughes, who directs Compass' IS Value Realization Service, says neither extreme has worked. "The traditional view has been that all of an organization's business processes have to be reengineered, or that IT has to change everything within a business. That's simply not the case."

According to Hughes, an effective IT value strategy takes the "middle ground," and is an incremental process that links discrete initiatives to specific results. "You need to begin by looking carefully at business processes and understand which ones aren't working well and should therefore be changed. Then you can look at how IT can impact that business change. You then need to spend time to understand where change can make the most difference, and where and how IT can best help drive that change."

The other key to actually implementing change is to identify IT's contribution to operational performance at a granular level. "The problem with many IT value initiatives is that they look at the relationship between IT and business strategy, but in fact there is no relationship there. For IT to be effective and actually drive change, the business strategy must define the operational requirements needed for the business to succeed. Then IT must address those operational requirements as efficiently as possible."

Compass E-Notes To receive Compass E-Notes, a free bi-weekly review of management issues, industry data, and emerging trends, visit www.compassmc.com and click on "free subscription."

Entire contents copyright (c) 2005 Compass Publishing BV. All rights reserved. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends and colleagues or post it on your site as long as it is left intact with all links unchanged and this notice.

COMMENTS, FEEDBACK, AND TOPIC SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME: <mailto:facts@compassmc.com>.



Mark your calendars now!!!!

Toronto HDI Chapter Conference

Monday April 3rd, 2006



Certification Training

HDI, the world's largest membership association for service and support professionals, sets the standard for soft skill certification for the service and support industry!

HDI Certification is based on internationally recognized open standards developed by committees of worldwide industry leaders, help desk and support center experts, consultants, and practitioners for the benefit of the support industry. HDI's certification preparatory programs, and those of others that cover HDI Certification exam objectives, were written to teach the learning objectives developed for each standard.



HDI Help Desk Manager (HDM) Certification is for help desk and support center supervisors, managers, and project managers who are responsible for day-to-day operations (or those individuals who want to move up into these roles). No prerequisites required.

**March 1-3, 2006
Mississauga**



HDI Help Desk Analyst Boot Camp combines the standards from the Customer Support Specialist and Help Desk Analyst Certifications in order to provide a "fast track" training option.

**February 8-10,
2006 Toronto**



HDI Knowledge Management Foundations: KCS Principles teaches knowledge management strategies to improve efficiency and maximise customer satisfaction.

**May 29-31,
Mississauga**



ITIL Foundations Certification, designed for all levels of IT Service and Support staff, provides IT professionals with accredited industry certification of the ITIL best practice framework. (includes 1-hour proctored ITIL Foundations Certification exam) Ask for **Discount Code HDI 001**

**February 13-15
April 11-13
June 6-8
Novotel, North York**

Membership has its Advantages!!!

Certification training is available in the Toronto area at a discount for our local Chapter Members. For HDI training, please contact Don McCarroll don@serviceminds.com or call (519) 570-9731 for further details. For ITIL training, please contact Janice Scott janice.scott@bwyze.com or call (905) 780-0444 ext. 227 for further details.

Description	Duration	CDN List / HDI member	Location / Date
Help Desk Analyst Boot Camp	3 days	List \$1765 / HDI \$1665	Toronto: February 8-10
Help Desk Manager (HDM)	3 days	List \$1900 / HDI \$1800	Mississauga: March 1-3
Knowledge Management Foundations: KCS Principles	3 days	List \$1765 / HDI \$1665	Mississauga: May 29-31
ITIL Foundations Certification (price includes exam)	3 days	List \$1,495 / HDI \$1,195 Discount Code HDI 001	Novotel North York: Feb.13-15 April 11-13, June 6-8

HDI Training through RADAR Solutions Group – Canada's Premier HDI Authorized Training Partner – www.radarinteractive.com

ITIL Training provided by B Wyze Solutions – www.bwyze.com

Applicable taxes are extra

2005-2006 Chapter Meeting Schedule

Date	Topic	Speaker
September 21st, 2005	Kick-off Networking Meeting - Milestones Grill	Peer to Peer
October 26th, 2005	Service Desk Analyst's ITIL - Metro Hall	Katherine Lord - B Wyze
November 30 th , 2005	Asset Management - Lunch Meeting	Craig Morrison - McCarthy Tétrault
December 14th, 2005	No meeting scheduled	Happy Holidays !!!
January 18th, 2006	Troubleshooting Techniques - (Analyst stream)	Nick de Jong
February 15th, 2006	To be announced - (Management stream)	TBA
April 3 rd , 2006	HDI Toronto Conference	Full Day of speakers
May 17th, 2006		
June 14th, 2005	Annual Networking Event	

MEETING LOCATION

Place and Time

Metro Hall 55 John Street, Toronto (between Wellington and King) We'll be meeting in different rooms, (typically on the 3rd floor) , check the sign in the main lobby for the specific room #.

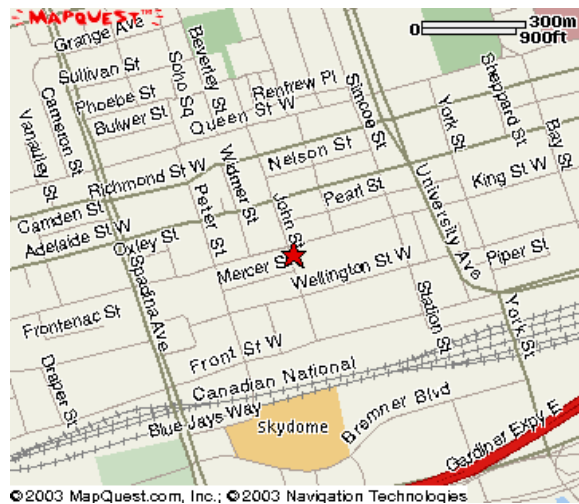
RSVP on-line by 4:00 pm the day prior to the meeting. All RSVP'ers will be entered into a draw for a door prize at the meeting.

Meeting time

5:00-5:30 Registration and Refreshments
5:30-7:00 Meeting

Fees

Chapter Members: No charge
Guests & Non-Members: \$20.00 per person



HDI Toronto Chapter Executive 2005-2006 Contact List

Name	Email
Carol Parker - President	president@helpdesktoronto.org
Cameron Stevens - Web Master	webmaster@helpdesktoronto.org
Kim Proud & Ann Roach VP Programs	vp_programs@helpdesktoronto.org
Chantal Gallant & Sharon Lovett VP Membership	vp_membership@helpdesktoronto.org
Don McCarroll - VP Communications	vp_communications@helpdesktoronto.org
Anton Kritzinger - VP Marketing	vp_marketing@helpdesktoronto.org
Kim Proud - Secretary	secretary@helpdesktoronto.org
Todd Van Horne - Treasurer	treasurer@helpdesktoronto.org
John Peco - Past President	
Volunteers Welcomed !!!	If you could spare a few hours each month, we would appreciate your help as an assistant to one of the above volunteers. This is an ideal way to get involved without having to take on sole responsibility for a specific function. It's a lot of fun and we'll help you by sharing our ideas, past experiences, etc.