

# THOROUGHBRED NEWS

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## More Than Y2K by Mark Lewis, V.P. Sales and Marketing

All of us are involved in the Y2K issue in one way or another. In our private lives with home mortgages, utility bills, travel arrangements, etc. and in our professional lives with running our businesses and our customers businesses. Kevin Koskela, Thoroughbred's Vice President of Applications and Services, has related his personal experience in a comprehensive article in this issue. Also, Thoroughbred has published a comprehensive Y2K statement in compliance with the YEAR 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure Act (Public Law 105-271). This can be found on our web site [www.tbred.com](http://www.tbred.com).

There are new ideas and strategies that need to be considered when resolving Y2K issues. Whether you are a user or vendor of a Thoroughbred-based system, there are a number of decisions that have to be made. The first decision is whether the existing software will adequately operate the business in the next millennium. Does it have the "openness" to adopt new technologies in the rapidly changing world? Will it communicate with other databases? Will it operate over the Internet, and in network and client/server configurations? Can the investment in existing hardware be leveraged against new requirements? All good questions.

Thoroughbred has been addressing Y2K issues for several years, and believes we have a solid resolution to the problem for both existing "legacy" systems, and newly developed software systems. Information on these Y2K solutions can be found in our YEAR 2000 White Paper on our web site. Our Consulting Services group has implemented the changes and recommendations at a number of large user sites, successfully helping them beat the Y2K crunch.

The Y2K issue is a good time to evaluate your overall system, and your business requirements, and take advantage of Thoroughbred products that can add new dimensions to your

systems capability in helping you make critical business decisions.

Consider how TS ChartServer can give you instant graphical views of sales, inventory value, payables and profit and loss information; or how TS ReportServer provides great flexibility as to how reports can be easily viewed, stored and "cut and pasted" into other documents. *Gateway for Windows*<sup>™</sup> and TS ODBC DataServer provide direct access to Thoroughbred databases from Windows-based applications including spreadsheets, word processors and report writers. TS Network DataServer provides a client/server capability giving UNIX hosted systems the ability to become true network servers.

Thin client technologies including Citrix and Microsoft Terminal Server are now supported by all Thoroughbred 8.4.1 environments, adding an exciting new dimension to system configuration and capability. And...TS ORACLE DataServer provides direct access to Oracle databases from *Dictionary-IV* based applications. Additional reasons to review your systems capabilities as well as its YEAR 2000 compliance. This is the time to help your business and your customers into the new millennium with more than Y2K.

## What's New?

### Activations on the Web

Thoroughbred now offers activation for *OPENworkshop*, *IDOL-IV*, *Inquire-IV*, Thoroughbred Environment (*Basic*), TS ORACLE DataServer and TS Network DataServer via Thoroughbred's home page on the Internet! All other Thoroughbred products needing activation are shipped with an activation code included.

Simply select the "Activation" button on the home page at [www.tbred.com](http://www.tbred.com) and easy step-by-step instructions will guide you through the activation process.

On-line activation is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Now you can activate your Thoroughbred system any time at your convenience.

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## Are You Ready for Y2K? by Kevin Koskela, V.P. Applications and Services

The other day I was talking to a friend of mine who installs floors and he asked me if I'd checked out my computers for Y2K yet. I said something about starting to, but being really busy (mostly with Y2K work), I hadn't finished yet. Then he showed me an article in *Hardwood Floors Magazine* that explained, in terms a floor installer could understand, exactly how to make sure your computer and accounting system are okay for the new millenium. At the point when your flooring contractor starts asking you about Y2K, you really get the feeling *everyone* is talking about it!

We discussed the article for a few minutes and then he asks me, "So...how bad do *you* think Y2K is going to be?" I tell him that I think there are going to be a few problems, some of which will be fairly nasty, but its not going to be the end of the world as we know it. More importantly though, the conversation really got me thinking about how we as "computer experts" are handling the whole Y2K issue with our customers.

According to Manny Fernandez, Chairman and Chief Executive of Gartner Group, IT organizations will spend almost half of their budgets on YEAR 2000 compatibility issues this year. Despite this massive amount of spending however, most of us in this business realize that all the Y2K work is simply not going to be finished by December 31, 1999. Once we grasp this reality, we are left with some choices. We can either burn ourselves out working 80 hours a week in a vain attempt to *try* to get *everything* done for everyone or we can step back and help a broader range of customers to, hopefully, avoid disaster on January 1st.

The latter is my recommendation. Volumes have already been written on how to check out the hardware, BIOS and operating system layers of your PC. If you doubt that, just do a search on the Internet for "How to check Y2K Hardware Compatibility". You'll find lots of information on the subject. Instead, let's focus on the bigger picture of helping your customers analyze where they are at risk for Y2K problems in their enterprise-wide information systems.

As obvious as it may seem, the first step is to get your own house in order. Its difficult to help someone else out when you are drowning in your own sea of problems.

At Thoroughbred, we began by making a list of each PC we own and created a Y2K compatibility checklist to ensure its compliance. You should do the same. Next, check out your PC-based application software. There are patches and upgrades available for most commonly used Windows-based applications including the Windows 95/98 operating system itself. Finally, rather than waiting for 01/01/00 when things will be chaos, plan to do your own Y2K trial run. Simply change the system date to 12/31/99 and plan on running *everything* in your office for a week or two with the future date. (Don't be surprised if you get a few e-mails with dates in the next century as more and more people do this testing!)

Before changing your date to year 2000 however, be sure to

make a boot diskette in case you have problems booting your system after changing the date!

Once you have checked out your PC-based network or systems, it is time to move on to the fun stuff – testing your accounting and other mission critical systems. Go ahead and set up a test customer and vendor in your system and put in some transactions that go into the YEAR 2000 to see how your system behaves. For some ideas on the types of transactions to use, check out the *Solution-IV* test plan at [www.solution-iv.com/Y2KTest.html](http://www.solution-iv.com/Y2KTest.html).

Remember, at this point, you aren't trying to verify that every sales analysis report prints correctly, but on 01/01/00, can you:

- ship product to your customers?
- receive and process payments from customers?
- pay your bills?

Concentrate on the essential functions that will make or break your business. Then, as time permits, other areas can be brought into compliance. Obviously this kind of testing is an inconvenience, but the knowledge that you are really ready for Y2K will be worth it.

As you go through this process of testing, begin creating your own set of checklists and testing procedures. When you have completed your own organization's Y2K compatibility checks, you'll then have a ready made plan you can give to your customers. At a time when your customers are literally going into "panic mode" trying to get your attention to make Y2K changes to their system, providing this type of information and service is really what excellent customer service is all about.

### Here's a quick Y2K compatibility checklist to get you started:

- Make a complete system backup before doing anything!
- Make a list of each PC you own with its processor speed, RAM and O/S
- Check your PC hardware and BIOS compatibility
- Check your PC operating system
- Check your PC based application software
- Check your PC application data (Excel spreadsheets, Access databases, etc.)
- Check the server hardware, BIOS and operating system
- Check your accounting system and other mission critical systems

# Technical News

by Bill Clarke, V.P. Products and Development

## What's new on the Thoroughbred technical front?

Well, we are working on a new Thoroughbred *Basic* release, and an update to our ODBC capabilities as well as enhanced data server performance. These are things you should come to expect from Thoroughbred.

But there are two new projects that have generated quite a bit of excitement:

- Java GUI environment well suited for the *Basic* developer (as well as IDOL-IV and OPEN*workshop*)
- Web-enabled Thoroughbred *Basic*

### Tbred for Java

Whether we like to admit it or not, the life expectancy of our Business *Basic* legacy applications continues. Many of us have labored, over the recent past, modifying legacy code to provide Y2K support. If we learned anything during this process, these legacy applications are not going away anytime soon. So what's next for the 3GL developer? How about a GUI environment based on Java.

*Tbred for Java* is a complete Java graphical solution that can be employed with new and existing applications. Developers now have the ability to greatly enhance their application's Presentation layer.

The Java architecture is very similar to Thoroughbred *Basic*. Programs created with Java are portable across platforms and operating systems. Java employs a Virtual Machine much like Thoroughbred's run-time *Basic* engine. The Java VM interprets

'bytecode' in the same manner as *Basic* interpreting p-code from a saved program.

The Thoroughbred Java implementation takes an interesting approach. Rather than sending your engineers and programmers to a Java development school, why not continue using the *Basic* language and environment that they are already comfortable with. Obviously, there will be some new syntax to learn but Thoroughbred has reduced the learning curve for Java commands by using *Basic*-like syntax. These commands are communicated to Thoroughbred's Java API.

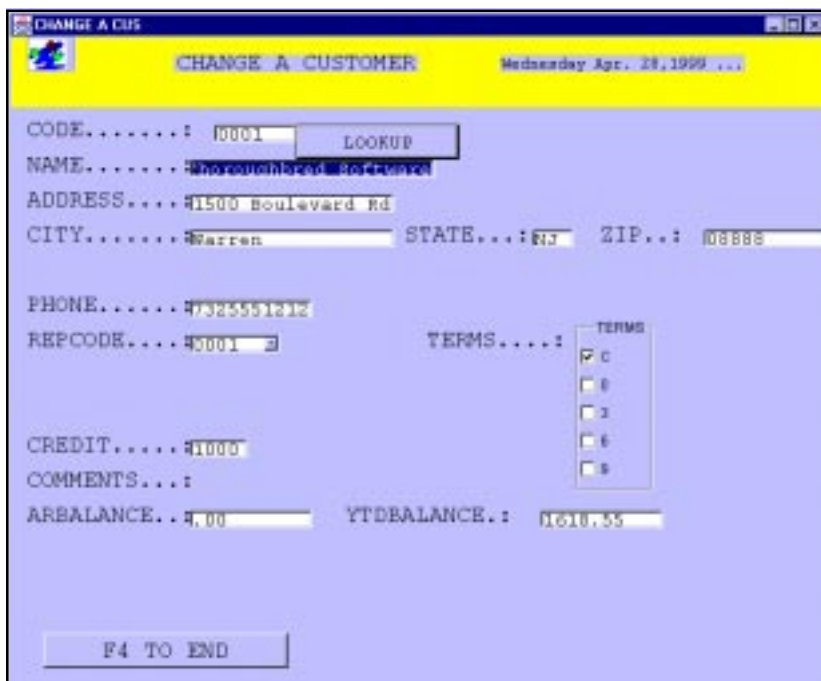
For example, to create a Java Window:

```
COMMAND$ = "WINDOW CREATE (80,24,0,0)"  
CALL "JAVACOM",COMMAND$(Java-communication-API)
```

The *Tbred for Java* environment consists of many Java controls that are defined and created as well as robust set directives to act on these controls. The Java controls go well beyond CheckBoxes and RadioButtons. With *Tbred for Java*, Business applications will be able to create an HTML viewer that renders HTML code directly from your local application or from any remote URL. Java Applets, streaming data between FTP/HTTP servers and event processing are just a few of the new tools available to the developer. And again, this is accomplished by passing *Basic*-like syntax to the Thoroughbred Java API from within your programs.

With the new year, Thoroughbred moved from it's Alpha test program into a Beta program. Today there are over 40 companies actively participating in the *Tbred for Java* Beta program.

### Simple Tbred for Java Screen



# Technical News

## Thoroughbred Web Server Environment

The Internet is a tremendous forum. It provides a business opportunity to sell more goods to more people than ever imagined. Potential customers can connect to your Web site using an Internet connection and any browser. Most Web sites work with static HTML pages providing lots of information but unfortunately not always well suited for processing interactive business applications. Interactive applications require dynamic HTML pages. Creating a Web site to process business transactions typically requires assistance from either outside sources or an extensive learning curve.

For a simple Order Processing application, there are a number of Internet sources that will provide the necessary services. These services typically include registering a Domain name, Web page design (using their templates), providing hardware (disk space), bandwidth and e-commerce transactions. You usually retrieve these orders either by fax, download into a database file, or view them over a secure Web connection. The bottom line is you're at the control and mercy of your selected provider. A second alternative, for developers that want to control their own destiny, is to build your own Web site. Again, you'll find a number of tools to generate your Web pages. In order to make your Web pages interactive, you have to create forms. HTML, by its nature, doesn't provide the interaction required by forms. HTML can send the contents of a form to another process for manipulation. A typical Web server will support a number of alternatives for programming languages. The most common interface is CGI scripts. CGI languages are very "C-like". Just what you needed, another new language to learn. CGI also has some architecture problems. Each time a Web page form is submitted, a new CGI process is created. This type of architecture can be slow and impose significant overhead on the Web Server. The Thoroughbred Web Server Environment solves all of these problems.

The Thoroughbred Web Server Environment runs as an integrated process with the popular Apache Web Server. The Thoroughbred Web API can physically reside on the Web server, an Application server, or multiple Application servers. This provides instant scalability as "the number hits" to the Web site increase. The Thoroughbred Web API runs as a background process and doesn't incur the overhead or performance pains inherent with CGI solutions.

The flow of an application starts with a user/browser submitting data via an HTML POST or GET Method. The request is sent from the Apache API module to a Thoroughbred Web API process. The Thoroughbred Web API communicates with your *Basic* program. Yes, your Web application development is done in *Basic*. The Apache API request typically includes connection information for the back-end service and application specific information (i.e. data from a form). Sometimes it is also necessary to receive values for standard CGI variables. The Thoroughbred Web API and your *Basic* program are responsible for processing the request and generating the next Web page in the sequence.

The *Basic* program logic is fairly straight forward:

```
READ request from the API
Process the request
WRITE html to the API
GOTO READ
```

There is not a one-to-one correspondence between a Web browser (Netscape, IE) and an instance of The Thoroughbred Web API. Each request is independent of the previous. Each Web page may be processed by a different instance of The Thoroughbred Web Server Environment and each *Basic* READ in your Web application program (see above) may be processing requests from different users. For example, the instance of The Thoroughbred Web API and your *Basic* program that displays inventory items for user-A may not be the same instance that collects an order for user-B or processes a Credit Card transaction for user-C. Maintaining context and continuity from page to page is vital to a successful e-commerce Web site. The Thoroughbred Alpha sites have already begun to devise schemes to provide continuity between Web pages and *Basic* sessions.

To receive more information or participate in the Beta programs for either *Tbred for Java* or The Thoroughbred Web API, please contact your Thoroughbred Sales Representative.



Web-Enable Application with HTML Screen

# TSI Print Shop Services

As your business grows, communication with your customers becomes increasingly important. TSI Print Shop Services can help you provide the print, mail, and document customization services you want for your customers.

## *Printing Services Features: Xerox DocuTech 6135*



- **Scan or Machine-Readable Files**  
With our investment in the Xerox 6135, we have the ability to scan documents and images at 600dpi. If you have machine-readable copy, we can print from various file formats including: DOC, GIF, JPEG, PCL, PDF, PPT, PRN, PS, TIFF, and TXT.
- **Edit**  
Your scan or machine-readable files are converted into Xerox RDO files, which can be edited online before being printed.
- **Print, Staple/Bind/Drill, and Cut**  
Your job can be printed single-sided or duplex on 8-1/2 x 11 up to 11 x 17 sheets. We can print on any paper stock from 20# to 90#. Once the job is complete, you can have it stapled or bound. If you wish to place your document in a binder, we can drill the pages. Your documents can be cut to any size.
- **Folding**  
If you are printing a letter with inserts totaling 4 pages, we can make C, Z, and 1/2 folds.

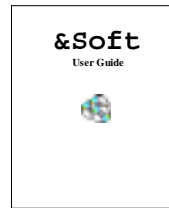
## *Mailing Services Features:*

- **Address**  
If you have a customer address database in XLS or DBF format we can address postcards, #10 envelopes, and 10 x 13 flats. With our ASCOM mailing solution, we can print your addresses and a message or graphic on your envelope. For mailings of 500 or greater, we can sort your addresses for bulk rates and print copies of the bulk mailing paperwork required by the Post Office.
- **Fold, Insert and Seal**  
Once your envelopes are printed, we have the ability to fold, insert, and seal your letters.
- **Postmark and Mail**  
We can post your mailing and deliver it to the Post Office.

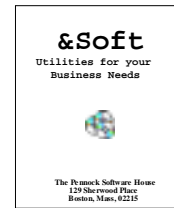
## *Document Customization*

Besides customizing your scan or machine-readable files, we

can customize entire Thoroughbred manuals or portions of Thoroughbred manuals for your specific needs.



Cover



Title Page

You can have your product name and company name on the cover and title page.

We can customize your headers and footers to include your company name and product name and create the page numbering format of your choice. We can then create your document based on Thoroughbred documentation.

For example: you want a User Guide for your product putting together portions of the *Dictionary-IV* User Guide and *Query-IV* Reference Manual. We can create such a document and print it for you. If you wish we can save it in HTML or PDF format for use on your Web site.

For more information about TSI Print Shop Services, call your Thoroughbred Sales Representative.



## **Solution-IV News Flash!**

### ***We are now updating the Solution-IV Technical Bulletins on the Web!***

Each night, we are updating the technical bulletins that were issued that day onto the Thoroughbred Support Web Page.

To access these bulletins, go to the Thoroughbred Web Page at:

<http://www.tbred.com>

Then select **Support** (from the left hand column). Once the support page is displayed, you'll see the following prompt on the top of the screen:

#### **Select Product/Server to Go To:**

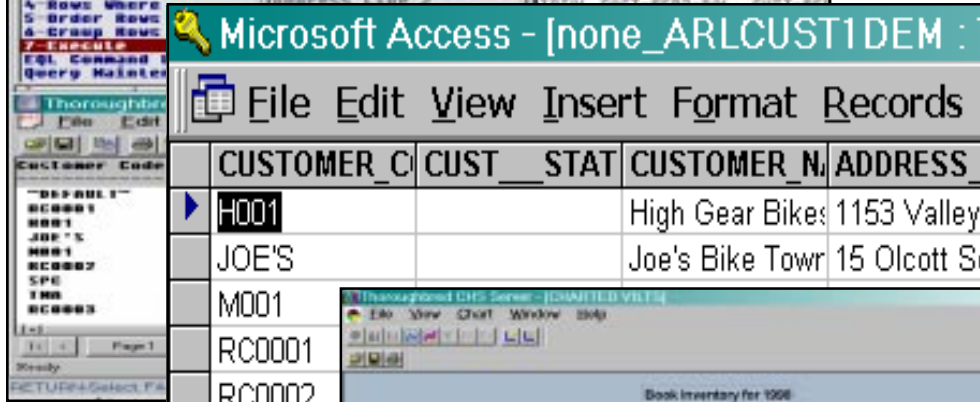
Select **Solution-IV**. Select **Go**. When the next selector box is displayed, you will choose the version that you are currently running. Fixes that have been applied to our most current release are found under version 8.41R2.

You will then see a list of all the technical bulletins. To view the detailed change, simply click on the technical bulletin number of interest (ie: AP-859).

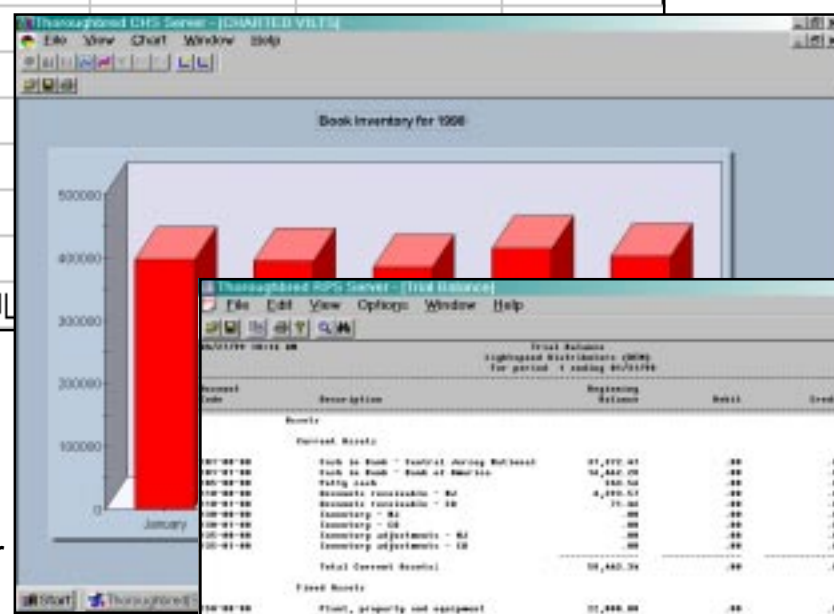
# Don't Forget These Revenue Producing Products



Query-IV



TS ODBC DataServer



TS ChartServer

Description	Beginning Balance	Debit	Credit	Ending Balance
<b>Assets</b>				
Bank to Bank - Federal Savings Network	27,272.00			27,272.00
Bank to Bank - Bank of America	14,440.00			14,440.00
Bank to Cash	140.00			140.00
Accounts Receivable - 01	4,470.00			4,470.00
Accounts Receivable - 02	10.00			10.00
Inventory - 01				
Inventory - 02				
Inventory adjustments - 01				
Inventory adjustments - 02				
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>46,442.00</b>			<b>46,442.00</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Fixed, property and equipment	21,400.00			21,400.00
Accumulated Depreciation			1,400.00	1,400.00
Organizational expenses	10,000.00			10,000.00
Amortization of organizational expenses				
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>31,400.00</b>			<b>31,400.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>77,842.00</b>			<b>77,842.00</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>				
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Accounts Payable		10,000.00		10,000.00
Income tax payable		10,440.00		10,440.00
Deferred income payable				
Other income payable				
Other - current				

TS ReportServer

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