



The Business Intelligence Newsletter

A Human Resources Information Systems Publication
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See What's in the BIN!

Business Intelligence and the Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has been causing a lot of discussion and planning around campus over the last few months. The ACA is packed with details, requirements, and measurement periods. Even the condensed version of the Act is over 1000 pages.

The TOAD Business Intelligence Suite has been an invaluable tool in researching hours for those employees who are most affected by the ACA.

Figuring out which employees need to begin reporting hours, and which employees do not, was one aspect of understanding and being in compliance with the ACA.

One of the bigger challenges, and perhaps the most important, is the understanding of how

hours are to be counted, over what time period, and exactly how to interpret the results.

By leveraging the snapshots that are always available within the Decision Point tool and linking them to Excel files containing hours reported in eTIME, we are able to get summaries of average hours worked over any chosen time period. The tool then allows us to compare those averages to the FTE for each employee in order to analyze their benefit eligibility.

We will continue to make use of the Business Intelligence Suite on an on-going basis as we navigate the waters of the ACA reporting and measurement requirements. We hope to make the process an automatic one that will generate the needed exception reports on a recurring basis.

User Group Anyone?

This is a "shout out" to those of you who may be interested in forming a Business Intelligence Users Group in order to share ideas and experiences with the BI Tool. One of the key ways to get more comfortable with, and more knowledgeable about, the Decision Point tool of the BI Suite is to learn from the experiences of other users.

A user group is a great way to take advantage of knowledge gained by other KSU users and share your success stories with them as well. Many times you can get great ideas for other uses in your area by hearing what others have accomplished using the BI Tool.

If you are interested in being a part of a BI users group please contact Brad Smith at bsmit261@kennesaw.edu and we will take it from there. Thanks!

Academic Affairs Joins the Business Intelligence Family

On July 11th the Business Intelligence community welcomed some new members to the family. The Academic Affairs (AAF) office formally joined our group after attending a short training/orientation class in the Human Resources training room.

Access to selected Human Resource information for the various academic divisions has been approved by the Director of Human Resources. AAF will also have access to overload payment history for all faculty members. In addition, password-protected files containing detailed information about part-time faculty pay for the past academic year as well as summer payroll have been provided. Finally, certain position management information will be available for the academic divisions.

Access to this information will allow the Academic Affairs staff to monitor and analyze payments to faculty members for summer instructional and non-instructional work, as well as regular part-time faculty payments. Payments can be selected and/or sorted based on the payroll distribution, account, and departments being charged so that they can be compared to budgeted amounts on a proactive basis.

Please welcome Dr. Ron Matson, Lynn Lamanac, Jennifer Clarkson, Elizabeth Dolezal, Patricia Erdelyi, and Leesa Hay to the BI family!

Application Spotlight

Julie Rowe, Senior Payroll Manager

As part of the consolidation of Southern Polytechnic State University and Kennesaw State University, the institutions were charged with consolidating the deductions that are processed within their payroll functions. A review of the deductions that were unique to each institution revealed that KSU had many employees with deductions for the Credit Union of Georgia (CUGA). Further investigation showed that the Credit Union of Georgia was manually posting each deduction, often causing delays in the time that it took for deductions to hit employees' checking or savings accounts.

In an effort to improve the posting process for employees' credit union deposits and remove a multi-step post-payroll function for sending information to CUGA, KSU reached out to the credit union to come up with a solution that would be a win-win for both. CUGA agreed that it would be better for them if the payroll deductions to checking and savings accounts were converted to direct deposit transactions which could be automatically posted to the employees' accounts.

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Application Spotlight (*continued*)

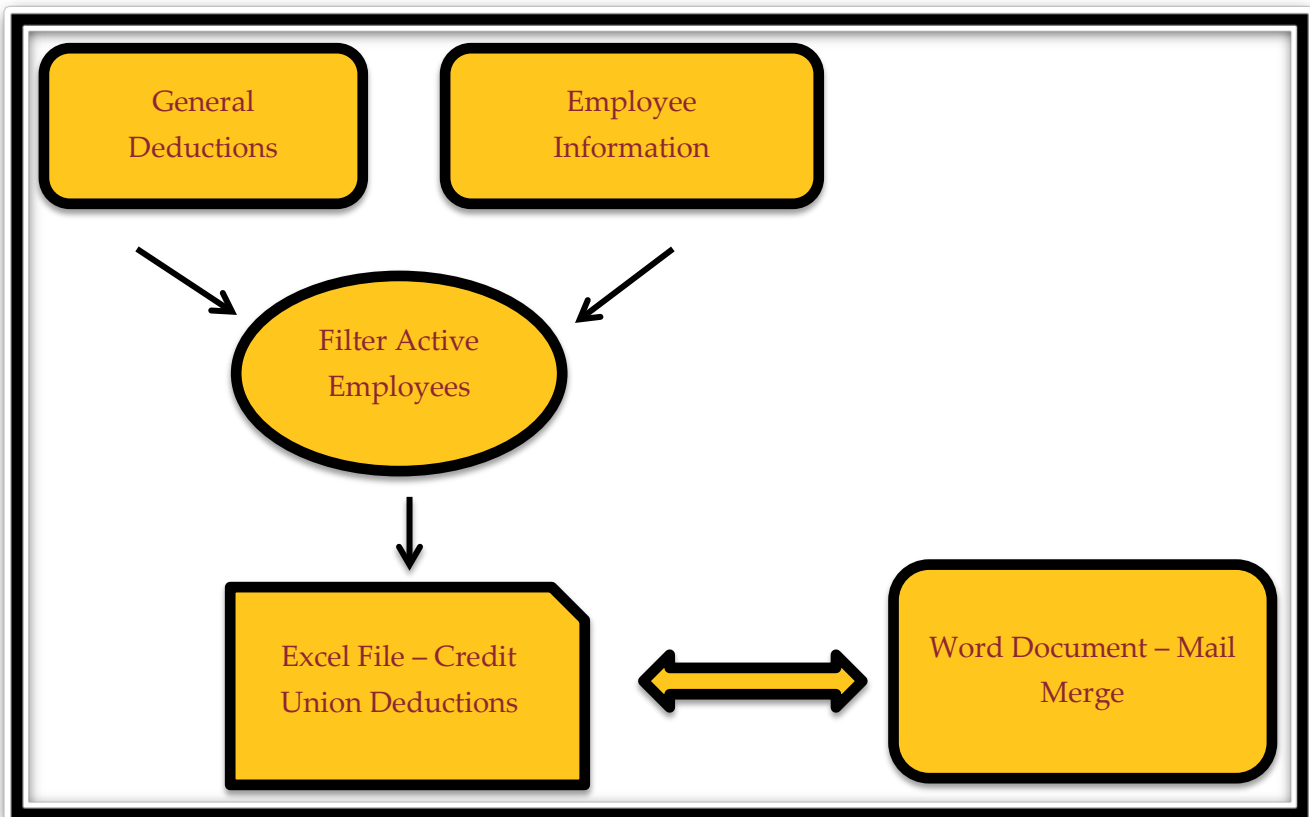
In order to accomplish this, KSU needed to identify, and then communicate with, the employees that had current credit union payroll deductions. Julie Rowe, senior payroll manager for KSU, was charged with identifying the employees who had current credit union deductions, and communicating the different options to them for converting these to direct deposits.

“I knew that the Decision Point application contained a snapshot of all general payroll deductions,” Julie said. She accessed the deduction snapshot and then linked that file to the employees snapshot. “Linking the files in Decision Point allowed me to easily remove those employees who were now retired and would not need to modify their credit union deduction,” Julie noted.

“Once the active employees were identified it was easy for me to extract all the information that I needed,” Julie said. She pulled the employee names, deduction amounts, email addresses, and other details that would be needed to start the communication process. “Once I had the data that I needed it was a one-click process to send the data to Excel,” Julie said. “Without Decision Point this process would have taken hours of manual work.”

With the data was in Excel it was a short process to create a mail merge in Word and send out the communication to each employee, personalized with their name and deduction amount. As the project continues Decision Point will be used to monitor the number of accounts that have been converted and make sure that all of the credit union deductions are stopped prior to the October payroll runs.

“The Business Intelligence Tool was invaluable in pulling this data and making the communication process easy,” Julie said. “I can see more and more uses for this tool each time I use it.”



From the Developers Desk:

An Update from John White, HRIS Manager

We recently underwent a major upgrade, conversion, and migration of the BI Suite in partnership with Dell and Quest Software. In the long run, we will enjoy many benefits from this, including: improved performance from the server, enhancements to the software, and better security of the data under ITS' watchful eye. And, as some of you are aware, it has not gone as smoothly as we had hoped it would. I thought I'd give you a peek into the World of John and His Localized Migraines.

First, let me start by saying everyone, from our ITS division to Quest to Dell, has been remarkable in their support and effort in making this work. We had many stumbling blocks but the response from everyone involved and the team cooperation across multiple continents (the Dell BI development team is in Australia), helped smooth out the process as much as possible.

We received a new server from Dell to replace our old server. This new machine would be more up to date, more powerful, just an all-around good thing. The timing of the Toad software having an upgrade was coincidental. Our ITS group took possession of the server and placed it in the tech annex so it would become part of the server community on campus. However, before we could move the Toad software onto the machine, the back-end database (Oracle) would have to be installed.

ITS installed the latest and greatest Oracle database software onto the new server. The new machine is a 64-bit machine. The old server was a 32-bit machine. So when ITS installed Oracle, they installed the 64-bit version (which in and of itself was no big deal and what I would have done had I done it myself). But here's where the problems began. The Toad software on the old server was for 32-bit, not 64. This means all the software was using 32-bit drivers to power what was happening on the server. To illustrate why this was a problem, let me give you a visual. Imagine a train entering a tunnel. That's 32-bit. Now imagine two trains side by side. That's 64-bit. What happens if you don't widen the tunnel? That's 32-bit software trying to run 64-bit drivers.

We (meaning everybody else) had to find a way to widen the tunnel so the software and the server could communicate correctly. This involved much back and forth communication, sometimes overseas at very odd times, gnashing of teeth and rending of clothes. The solution, of course, turned out to be something simple and yet profoundly difficult to find if you didn't know where to look. Once we had the solution, of course everything started falling into place. The result of which is that currently our new server is running in tandem with the old and by the time you read this, we should have pointed all of the Toad users to the new server permanently.

Moral of the story: Many times in my career in IT I have seen how simple things can be the cause of much anguish and they are usually the hardest things to find. Once you do find them, you wonder why you didn't start there to begin with. Fortunately, I had a lot of help with our issues and we'll soon be enjoying the benefits of our brand new server!

Upcoming Payroll Dates

1st Biweekly Payroll of September

***Early deadlines due to Labor Day Holiday**

SPARs due: Wed, 8/27
eTIME due: Thursday, 8/28 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Friday, 8/29 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 9/5

2nd Biweekly Payroll of September

SPARs due: Thursday, 9/11
eTIME due: Friday, 9/12 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 9/15 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 9/19

1st Biweekly Payroll of October

SPARs due: Thursday, 9/25
eTIME due: Friday, 9/26 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 9/29 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 10/3

2nd Biweekly Payroll of October

SPARs due: Thursday, 10/9
eTIME due: Friday, 10/10 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 10/13 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 10/17

1st Biweekly Payroll of November

SPARs due: Thursday, 11/6
eTIME due: Friday, 11/7 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 11/10 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 11/14

2nd Biweekly Payroll of November

SPARs due: Thursday, 11/20
eTIME due: Friday, 11/21 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 11/24 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 11/28

September Monthly Payroll

SPARs due: Friday, 9/19
eTIME due: Monday, 9/22 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Tuesday, 9/23 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Tuesday, 9/30

October Monthly Payroll

SPARs due: Wed, 10/22
eTIME due: Thursday, 10/23 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Friday, 10/25 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 10/31

3rd Biweekly Payroll of October

SPARs due: Thursday, 10/23
eTIME due: Friday, 10/24 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Monday, 10/27 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 10/31

November Monthly Payroll

SPARs due: Tuesday, 11/18
eTIME due: Wed, 11/19 by 11:59 pm
Lockout: Thursday, 11/20 at 8:00 am
Pay Date: Friday, 11/28

Thank you for reading this issue of the BIN.

Comments? Questions? Suggestions? Contact us at decision_support@kennesaw.edu.

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