Lickety-Split®
Entering data in the blink of an i

It's already in a spreadsheet ... so why do I have to enter the data again in a green screen?

How many times have data analysts asked that question at your company?

The accurate answer has been:

> "Well, the program that runs the green screen data entry application performs a variety of edit checks on the data to sustain data integrity. Also, user authority to the data entry green screen program is carefully managed to make sure we don't end up with internal control issues or separation of duties conflicts. We'd surely get into control problems if everyone could upload spreadsheet data directly into our IBM i / iSeries / ERP LX / BPCS / JDEdwards / MAPICS / XA / XYZ database."

And ... if your enterprise has SOX or JSOX requirements ... a phrase about compliance audits would also get shoe-horned into the response.

Transport spreadsheet data with Lickety-Split

Lickety-Split software overcomes the difficulties enunciated in the answer above. It's even better than that: auditors will readily agree that using Lickety-Split to transport spreadsheet data into the IBM i will **improve** data integrity and internal control.

Product description - nutshell version

Lickety-Split software enables Excel spreadsheet data to be automatically transported to the IBM i. The data load process is performed by interactively executing the green screen program that would otherwise be employed to manually keypunch that same data.

If the green screen program finds an error during entry editing, that error text will be captured and stored in a "Results" column on the same row of spreadsheet data which triggered that error result. Lickety-Split skips the row of data when the green screen program detects an error.

Lickety-Split supports data transportation to both single panel and multiple consecutive green screen panel applications. The product also supports the entry of orders with header data followed by a variable number of detail order lines which are subsidiary to the header. Furthermore, Lickety-Split enables data entry processes which employ multiple consecutive programs.

The uniform reaction of people who see the GoToMeeting demo has been:

"Wow, that's slick!"

Sometimes we hear that three or four times during the same presentation.

Unbeaten Path®

Even better data integrity

Data governance savvy shops ask analysts to assemble data (almost always in a spreadsheet) and then present the finished information accumulation project for supervisor review. The supervisor's blue-ink signature on the printout or electronic signature on the .xlsx authorizes green screen data entry.

That review/signature process is great, but it doesn't prevent fat-finger errors during the green screen entry that evade edit checking. A good example of that: a price increase from $242.00 to $247.00 that ends up keypunched as $24.70. Or, how about a credit line increase from $10,000 to $15,000 that goes in as $1,500? The examples are legion. It happens for lots of reasons; after the first few dozen green screens, the green screen data entry task becomes tedious/boring at the hypnotic level.

> With Lickety-Split, all the data the supervisor signs gets into the IBM i with zero vulnerability to keypunch error.

With the notable exception of bar-code data capture, **faster** AND **better data quality** is an unusual combination of benefits.

How does Lickety-Split work?

Lickety-Split runs on a PC with Client Access. Each data entry application you want to create is constructed with the software's Build mode.

To perform the Build mode step, open the green screen data entry application inside Lickety-Split's Client Access session. Elect the first field you want your spreadsheet to populate. Lickety-Split will ask you to assign a name to that field which will then be written to an Excel spreadsheet column heading. Repeat that for the balance of the fields on the screen you elect to have your spreadsheet populate.

You can go on to additional consecutive screens if that is how the green screen application works. The Build mode will continue to add another column to the spreadsheet for each field you elect to populate on those additional screens. The Build mode then creates a proprietary script that relies on the column names in the Excel spreadsheet it has been linked with.

> Some manual attention is needed to ensure that a new script correctly anticipates panel-to-panel navigation. You'll also want to make manual decisions about alternative error-handling options. It's also possible to assign a password to the script.

Once the Build mode work has been accomplished, the appropriate user(s) can be given authority to execute the Run-Time mode for that spreadsheet. Lickety-Split's Run-Time mode transports data from the spreadsheet into the IBM i application in just a few seconds. Errors and edit checks encountered for any of the spreadsheet rows are captured back in a "Results" column in the spreadsheet. Rows without errors report the system clock time when the posting was completed.

If your spreadsheet had 200 data rows and three came back with errors, you can do this: save the spreadsheet as an audit trail of the records updated and failed. Use Excel's Filter feature on the Results column to change the Table to only include the failed rows. Investigate and fix problems in the three error rows. Then re-transport those three remediated rows into the IBM i using the same Lickety-Split script again. Save the newest spreadsheet with an amended name as an audit trail of the now successfully updated records. **That is slick.**

Video available

Click **here** to access a 16 minute video presentation of the software in action.

No limit to Lickety-Split application creativity

The software enables users to overcome green screen data entry limitations with their well-practiced spreadsheet skills. Consider the ideas below. A click any one of the purple check-in-the-box icons will drill into more details:

- ☑ Flawlessly post cycle count inventory adjustments.

- ☑ Load BPCS / ERP LX exception messages into a spreadsheet using **PaperSaver** software. Planners enter their response in each exception message row. Then transport all those decisions back into the system automagically.

- ☑ Change the lead time field for hundreds of parts from 21 days to 14 days.

- ☑ For companies that want to handle inbound EDI from a few customers without buying/learning complicated software. Just parse the inbound EDI messages into a spreadsheet and transport it directly to the IBM i from there.

- ☑ Post bar-code scan data without using expensive middleware.

- ☑ Control which departments or which individuals have authority to maintain a subset of specific fields in a master file.

- ☑ Transport new prices into the IBM i from the same spreadsheet that was used to derive those new prices and extend the new prices by sales forecast unit volumes. (If your company doesn't use a convenient demand planning tool, take a look at our affordable, no-frills **Bucket Brigade** software.)

- ☑ Transport new standard costs into the system from the same spreadsheet the Controller used to tie out the new costs with the total company P+L budget.

- ☑ Mass populate your customer master file with new accounts obtained in a corporate merger.

- ☑ Quickly edit check an entire master file. Download the records into Excel and then transport that data back through the maintenance green screen application. Slick. Check out this link to review empirical results from performing this for an item master file.

- ☐ You're working on 150 new contacts for your IBM i prospect database. It's too early to load anything to the IBM i because more research is needed to close gaps in required fields. Gradually polish up the missing data in a data acquisition spreadsheet and then transport all of it to the system in **a blink of the i**.

- ☐ Use Lickety-Split scripting to perform system re-certifications or to execute stress testing. To accomplish stress testing, multiple simultaneous Lickety-Split sessions can be run from the same PC or multiple PCs could be simultaneously running Lickety-Split scripts against the same green screen application.

NoSeams professional services

Unbeaten Path's NoSeams service is available to construct and test more complicated kinds of Lickety-Split scripts. For example, it takes some experience with the Build mode to construct a script which transports customer order information. Additional scripting depth is needed for that application because a variable number of detail lines will be associated with any given order header.

Unbeaten Path can also completely automate a Lickety-Split script. We'll design/build/deliver an .exe file that launches the Lickety-Split process for a given spreadsheet at a specific time, completes the data transportation, and then closes Lickety-Split. Please click **here** to learn more about NoSeams services.

Enumerating Lickety-Split benefits - a very strong ROI story

Above and beyond mitigating the tedium, data quality, and data safety issues inherent in green-screen data entry, Lickety-Split also provides these categories of benefits:

Training   Your company can get a new user functional on the IBM i system without ever leaving Excel. It's easier to train employees how to load a spreadsheet than it is to teach them how to navigate through a green screen application.

Giving a brand-new person 500 transactions to enter into a spreadsheet is safer then launching the green screen app for him/her. A supervisor can inspect the spreadsheet before any data enters the IBM i.

Fast Start   When something about a business process has to be improved or if a brand-new process has to be implemented, the typical sequence of events is to sit tight until the change can be programmed/tested in IT. Once the new/revised objects are promoted to production, then you can start loading the data. With Lickety-Split you can get the data queued-up in a spreadsheet(s) before the IT Department has finished its work.

Data Science   Sometimes data acquisition and development is a very sophisticated process. High tech enterprises may end up relying upon proprietary science to develop information that's closely linked to their competitive advantage.

The high-cost approach is for the scientist to teach an RPG person how the science works. That takes time plus patience through umpteen testing iterations. With Lickety-Split, you can keep the intellectual property in the scientist's spreadsheet. That way, if the scientist invents one more twist to the data development methodology, that new twist can be implemented immediately in the spreadsheet. There's no need to re-open and re-certify RPG logic.

Questions ?

It would be a privilege to answer any questions about **Lickety-Split** software. We'd recommend a GoToMeeting demo. Here's Unbeaten Path International's contact information:

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Send us an e-mail (click **here**)

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