



B&L NEWS

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ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING FOR METALCASTERS

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Spectrum 2024

Spectrum 2024 is just around the corner! It will be held October 6-8 at the Charleston Marriott in Charleston, South Carolina.

Spectrum is a user conference like no other. It is the largest gathering of metalcasters using Odyssey ERP software. Spectrum offers two full days of mini-classes, panel discussions and networking opportunities. Learn about the new features and enhancements being deployed in Odyssey. Take time to discover what challenges metalcasters are facing. The event will feature keynote speakers and the ability to work 1 on 1 with Odyssey experts. There are endless opportunities for take-home value to get more from your Odyssey implementation.

This year we have packed in the fun and networking possibilities! We will be starting our conference off on Sunday at the Charleston Marriott with our Welcome Reception. Monday night enjoy an unforgettable experience on the USS Yorktown aircraft carrier. There are 28 historic military aircraft throughout the



vessel on hanger bays and the flight deck waiting to be explored. A Medal of Honor museum and flight simulator will also be open. Transportation, dinner & drinks are included.

Please stay tuned, additional details will be shared with our customers soon by visiting www.blinfo.com and going to the Events page.

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Will we see you at Q3 classes?

Bootcamp
August 5-6, 2024

Crystal Reports
August 7-8, 2024

Bootcamp
October 21-22, 2024

Crystal Reports
October 23-24, 2024

Classes will be held both in person, at our new training facility, and virtually. Please see our website for full details. (BLInfo.com/Classes)

Odyssey Go-Lives

The following two companies went live with new installations of Odyssey ERP in the 2nd quarter of 2024:



- MCC International Corp. – McDonald, PA. MCC International is a global leader in the casting and finish machining of high grade centrifugally cast ferrous and non-ferrous products. Our patented near-net shape centrifugal casting process is unique and gives us the capability to cast and machine complex, irregular and concentric shapes in diameters up to 99 inches, and in weights up to 30,000 pounds.



- Col-Pump Company, Inc. – Columbiana, OH. With over 100 years of gray iron casting excellence from their job shop foundry, they produce the casting their customers ask for with quality results. They are members of the Ohio Cast Metals Association (OCMA), confer with American Foundry Society (AFS) and network with other organizations that educate and promote their industry's foundrymen and markets for metal casting.

Women in Tech

WITS – Women in Tech Summit 2024 was held in Philadelphia. Five of the women from B&L were in attendance this year, Ellie, Kristen, Stephanie, Tiffany, and Tara. Four of the women were also in attendance in 2023 in Washington DC. B&L promotes continued learning by providing their employees with opportunities to go to seminars and conferences to further their knowledge of the Tech Industry.

WITS was a chance for us to share and network with other women in a variety of technology areas and learn about the latest trends in technology – not just in software development but in all areas and levels of technology. The conference offered panel discussions, like how to adapt to changes in workforce, workplace culture, and growing in your organization. Break-out sessions were designed to educate, inspire, and connect attendees through insightful discussions and hands-on workshops. They had speakers on a wide variety of topics, such as, How to be the Most Productive You, Methodical Debugging, Generations, Supporting Differently Abled Persons, and Speaking to Make a Difference.

The WITS event energizes and empowers women – we all came back motivated and ready to hit the ground running again. It is such an uplifting conference and we all felt very supported by B&L in giving us the opportunity to attend the conference. Attending events like this makes us better at providing our customers with the best we can give in developing software and supporting their needs.

Photographed from left to right: Stephanie Ruszkowski, Software Developer; Kristen Wielenga, Project Consultant and Support Supervisor; Tiffany Elliott, Software Developer; Tara McKibben, Lead Software Engineer; Ellie O'Connor, Software Developer



ODYSSEY UPDATE

**Brad Clark, Vice President –
Research and Development**

R&D Update

The R&D team accomplished quite a bit in the first half of the year. We used our scheduled maintenance windows to upgrade nearly two-thirds of our servers. This is a part of our regular server upgrade rotation to ensure we are always running with modern hardware to meet our growing capacity needs. Additionally, we use these downtime windows to

upgrade system software and operating systems to ensure we have the latest and most secure systems running Odyssey. In April, Odyssey 6.4.5 was released. Along with the standard stability and performance updates, Odyssey 6.4.5 contained over seventy-five enhancements, of which twenty-six came directly from our Customer Feedback Forum.

Several years ago, I began talking about our User Interface revamp. Rather than using the big-bang approach to replace all the screens at once, we decided to roll out what we are calling the Modern UI over several versions. After a handful of releases that included many behind-the-scenes and framework changes, Odyssey 6.4.5 put the new Modern User Interface front-and-center with an update to our Comments and Links screens, and a select group of report prompts.

Our next release of Odyssey, in November, will be Odyssey 7.0, and it will be a significant milestone in Odyssey's evolution. The update involves upgrading to Progress PASOE 12.8. This will include moving to version 12 of their database, which is a more robust and performant database. It also consists of a major change to the underlying systems that run Odyssey. We have upgraded Progress versions before, but none have been as innovative and significant as this one. Because of the Progress upgrade, the November B&L Cloud update will be spread across two weekends – November 9th/10th and November 16th/17th. Before the end of summer, you will receive a notification about which weekend we will upgrade your Odyssey.

Odyssey 7.0 isn't only about the Progress upgrade. Odyssey 7.0 will include many Feedback Forum enhancements and some new features we could not implement without the new Modern UI. In Odyssey 7.0, Quick Clock and the Shop Floor Manager will be updated to the new Modern UI. While the Quick Clock will change to the new Modern UI, the Shop Floor Manager's Modern UI will be added as a new opt-in menu option. When your shop floor users first run Odyssey 7.0, they will continue to see the Legacy Web UI version. They will see the new screens only if you change their devices to use the Modern UI. This opt-in option will only be available for Odyssey 7.0. When the next version of Odyssey comes out, the Legacy Web UI SFM will be removed, and the only option will be the Modern UI version.

The Odyssey 7.0 release will complete our update of all report screens to the Modern UI. A new feature of the report prompts will be the ability to schedule when your report will run. The scheduling system allows you to schedule reports daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. Nearly any report can be scheduled, even reports such as A/R Statements. This could allow you to set up a bi-weekly email to all your customers to email them their statements automatically. The scheduling system is built into our existing batch queue framework, so look for other parts of the system, such as imports, exports, and even data views to be included in a future release.

Another significant enhancement to Odyssey 7.0 will be multilingual support for reports, comments, urgent notes, and the Shop Floor Manager. Odyssey will not do the translation for you, but you can design reports and have comments and urgent notes for different languages. The Shop Floor Manager multilingual support will allow for easier configuration of screens based on employee language settings. This will allow you to have screens designed for different languages that are only available for those employees assigned to them.

Odyssey continues to evolve and improve, and your input remains invaluable. Visit the Feedback Forum to add your good ideas or to vote on others. Most importantly, join us in Charleston, South Carolina for Spectrum 2024 in October. I'll be there to discuss all the new features of Odyssey 7.0 and to listen to your great ideas.

Brad Clark
Vice President – Research and Development

Upcoming B&L Webinars

Gauge Management

August 19, 2024

Commissions

September 16, 2024

Webinars are hosted through Microsoft Teams. Please see our website for full details. (<https://www.blnfo.com/services/educational/webinars/>)



06/24

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Industry Events



NADCA 2024 Congress & Exposition

9/30/24-10/2/24 | Indianapolis, IN

The 2024 Die Casting Congress & Exposition, a must-attend event for anyone in the die casting industry, will be held September 30 - October 2, 2024, at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis, IN. This event will include three days of Congress sessions given by experts from around the world.

Visit us at booth 806.



ICI Technical Conference & Expo

10/20/24-10/23/24 | Milwaukee, WI

The Investment Casting Institute is a manufacturer's trade association, whose primary mission is to promote the investment casting process and members as well as collecting and disseminating information about the industry and providing education opportunities to members.

Visit us at booth 202.