



# EFTS Newsletter

Summer 2006



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## From the Director...

By Evelyn Morgen

This has been a season of great progress for the EFTS program. We're continuing to welcome new members and our membership now totals 1,132. We also are very happy to welcome two new staff members. Lucy Piechowski is our new administrative assistant who cheerfully and efficiently answers your questions and processes your paperwork. Steve Bazinet, a very talented and meticulous full-time programmer, joined us in May and has already had a major impact on both the current database and on our enhancements to an updated database.

We are pleased that the support from the National Library of Medicine has extended into the newest contract with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, and look forward to closer alliances with the NN/LM and the Resource Libraries.

Some big news is that the National Library of Medicine plans to develop a utility on Docline that will create an EFTS File which will facilitate uploads. This will make EFTS even easier for all Docline members to use. More details will be announced later this year, so stay tuned.

Meanwhile – enjoy the summer knowing we're working hard to help you share resources with minimal paperwork. Help us spread the word!

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### **EFTS-L Listserv**

The EFTS-L listserv is the primary mechanism for communication between Participants and the Office. New participants and software improvements are announced on the list. Participants can also ask questions and share information with others. Information on subscribing can be found under the Tools link on the homepage. Join today.



## **Code Words—Static versus Dynamic Content**

*By Steve Bazinet*

You may have noticed lately that work is being done on the EFTS site. The nature of this work comes in two flavors. One is static and the other is dynamic.

Static content is generally text, images, and links and how they appear and work. For example, if an administrative user asks a programmer to change a block of fixed text then he is asking for a change to static content.

Or, the administrative user may say, “Have you seen that image on the Reports’ page? It has a little red “x” in the upper left hand corner.” In this case, the link to the required image is broken. The page’s code points to an image that does not exist. The user is asking the programmer to figure out why the image is not coming up. Perhaps, it was moved to another folder by accident or worse it was deleted.

Of course, a link is the mechanism for transferring control between pages. If the target of a link is missing then again, one has a broken link. The programmer must figure out what of several things has changed to break the link assuming that it once worked.

Why do I bother to make this distinction? Well, as one learns the EFTS, static changes are the first tasks on which one can work. Again, why? This reason is simply that they constitute the easier work. But they are an introduction into the entire system. In other words, useful work is being done while the programmer is becoming more and more familiar with the system.

What is dynamic content? Of course dynamic content by definition implies active or changing content. This, for a programmer generally implies at our level of technology, a database. The information that is pulled from a database is dynamic because it can and does change on a daily basis. A good example of a page that contains dynamic content is a report. The report’s data are pulled from the database real-time then formatted into a coherent layout and presented to the user.

The main distinction from the perspective of the programmer is the type of coding involved in the two domains of content. One of the simplest static coding languages is HTML or Hypertext Markup Language.

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Hypertext is a type of text that has the ability to allow readers to jump between associated pages of text. The most common way to do this is with a hyperlink or simply a link. Hyperlinks are normally displayed in underlined blue text with a little pointing hand that appears when the cursor hovers over it.

The other important component of HTML is the markup language. A markup language (historically used by authors, editors, and printers) is the text and associated instructions (markups) which communicate how the text is to be displayed. Hence, when a programmer takes some content and formats it to a page his work is analogous to that of a printer. He is taking the content and instructions of the author and editor to make the text look as they intend.

The coding in the dynamic domain is of an entirely different nature. It involves a different and more complex programming language than HTML, e.g. Visual Basic, C++, Java, etc... These are full-blown general purpose programming languages. This type of language is used to develop most of the software currently available. It ranges from games to spreadsheets to ac-

counting packages and more.

In the context of dynamic web pages, they are used to access databases, validate user inputs, perform accounting or mathematical calculations, etc... When a programmer does this type of work it is analogous to an engineer building a small engine. The conceptual engine gathers data and information about the data to assemble them into a displayable web page.

In conclusion, although very different in form and functionality both types of content are required to develop modern state-of-the-art web sites.





## MLA '06 EFTS User's Group Meeting

By Jackie Lewis

I hope you all had a HOT time in Phoenix at MLA '06! 102 degrees was a shock for those of us coming from a cold, wet spring in New England.

At the EFTS User's Group meeting it was nice to have a room full of seasoned EFTS participants, newcomers and those who just needed more information. Approximately 35 persons were present. I hope it was as worthwhile for you as it was for EFTS staff.

Jackie Lewis presented the program with able assistance from Steve Bazinet the new EFTS application developer. The power point presentation is available on the website at: <https://efts.uchc.edu/efts/Static/EFTS%20WebSite/MLA2006.pdf> which includes two maps showing how EFTS is growing in membership.

NLM was thanked for their continued funding and support of EFTS. As part of the current RML contract all Regional Medical Libraries are required to be EFTS members. We hope to encourage all regional Resource libraries to join EFTS as well.

Highlights of the meeting included a report of personnel changes, projects worked on since MLA '05, member suggestions under consideration and most importantly, a discussion of other enhancements members would like to see.

It has been a year of changing personnel. We redirected resources from office support to software maintenance and development. Lucy Piechowski became our half-time administrative support after Cristina Alegria left EFTS in December '05, while Steve Bazinet was hired as our full time application developer replacing Bill Leslie who was only part time.

During the past year the currency conversion software was written and is in test now. In addition, we have a new brochure advertising how the Canadian conversion will work (slide 6 of the power point presentation).

Two Advisory Committee meetings were held in 2005. Minutes of the meetings can be found



on the website at:

<https://efts.uchc.edu/efts/Static/EFTS%20WebSite/ACminutes.html>

Marketing efforts were detailed as well as website updates, member report functionality and the Online Transaction File.

Steve Bazinet met with a CISTI representative to explore feasibility of membership. We will continue this dialog.

EFTS staff attended an informal meeting with NLM to discuss a DOCLINE/EFTS file interface. DOCLINE would build a file that could be uploaded to EFTS after member review. The upload file would be built using data from lending transactions as they are answered (filled) between DOCLINE/EFTS members. DOCLINE would send each library their file, for review. At that point the library could either edit the file or upload it to EFTS.

Some member suggestions under consideration—A "Release Notes" section on the EFTS website; a list, with pictures, of promotional items available with an order form; a search field for the participant's list and, in addition, adding OCLC codes to the list; a library with insufficient funds should be sent an email whenever a file is uploaded against their account; the ability to email reports; retaining information when adding requests to the Online Transaction File; and, enlisting the help of "Champions" in each state to promote EFTS and help with delinquent libraries.

We'd like to thank everyone for their suggestions and participation--keep your comments and suggestions coming—we love hearing from you.

**See you at MLA 2007 in Philadelphia!**



## *Listen to Lucy...*

By Lucy Piechowski

Credit Card transactions can promptly be processed, provided the information we have *on file* is complete and accurate. Please keep in mind that when your Credit Card expires, your 'new' information needs to be updated with EFTS. When a new card is issued, not only the expiration date changes, but also the 3 digit verification number (located on the back of your card in the signature line) also changes. Without that proper information we are unable to process your request and consequently must 'decline' that request for a credit card transaction. Whenever any changes occur with your Credit Card information please print the "Credit Card Transaction" form:

<https://efts.uhc.edu/efts/Static/EFTS%20WebSite/forms.html>

fill it out with the updated information and FAX it to our office as soon as possible as to avoid any delays in processing your Credit Card transaction request.



3 digit verification code

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