



Talis Support Newsletter - Issue 9

July 2005

In this issue:

- [Important Announcements](#)
- [Database Options for Test and Tutor Talis Databases](#)
- [New Material from the Talis Developer Network](#)
- [Blog and Forum Update](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Did You Know?](#)
- [Meet the Team](#)
- [Comments, Feedback And Contacts](#)

Welcome to issue nine of the **Talis Support Newsletter**, in which we give further details of the release of Talis Alto 2.1. We welcome any queries or suggestions that you may have for this or future newsletters. Please use the Support Forum (www.talis.com/forums) to post your views on any aspect of Talis' products and services.

Important Announcements

Talis Alto 2.1 launched

The latest version of our Library Management System is available to download from www.talis.com/alto_downloads/downloads.html. Please also refer to the documentation as necessary at www.talis.com/customer_area/alto/documentation.html. Prior to upgrading, however, ensure that the **tutor_talis** and **test_talis** databases are set to the status of **trunc log on chk pt** first. This will minimise the chances of the log segment filling up. Please refer to [Database Options for Test and Tutor Talis Databases](#) below.

Talis Alto 2.1 features the tax handling enhancement which completes support for our new EDI Invoices service, and with it puts in place another significant component of Talis Gateway's functionality. It is now possible to import and detail multiple tax rates for a single item, thereby enabling EDI processing for orders made up of separate items each incurring different rates of tax. A subscription service for EDI invoices has also been launched which removes the need for copying data from paper invoices into the LMS, or for dealing with payment during receipting.

Please visit www.talis.com/downloads/products/talis_gateway/gateway.pdf for a fuller description of Talis Gateway, and how it can help its users realize the ambitions of quick, seamless EDI transmissions to and from libraries, and of delivery of "shelf-ready" books straight from the supplier. Purchase details are available via your Account Manager, or else sales@talis.com.

Changes suggested during the Reservations Focus Group in March which have now been implemented in Alto 2.1 include:

- moving the Item field to the top of the Reservation prompt screen in Circulation > Reservation,
- the improving of wording on selected reservation exceptions to aid understanding of what each means; "Active reservation", for example, now reads as "Item is reserved".

A number of significant defects have been fixed in Alto 2.1, including many in the Inter Library Loans and Acquisitions modules. For example, the Supplier field within Interloans > Interloans is now saved correctly, with no carrying forward of the Supplier from one Interloan into the record of the next, and extra charges are no longer levied against an Interloan if the Supplier is legitimately changed (Defects 4542 and 4556 respectively).

More details of the new functionality in Alto 2.1, along with a full list of Defects fixed, are available to view on Alto's Version History page; www.talis.com/customer_area/alto/history.html .

System Management Tasks – Advance Notice

You may be planning special System Management housekeeping tasks over the summer vacation or August Bank Holiday, such as running *auto_access_points*. To help us give you the best support and advice, we recommend that you log a call with Talis Support no fewer than two weeks prior to the holiday. Letting us know well in advance of your plans means we can ensure appropriate support is available to you at the right time.

We can advise you on the best times and ways to implement these tasks, particularly if they are new to you or are performed as infrequently as once every year. For example, you may not be familiar with the Financial Year Rollover, the latest checklist for which is now available at www.talis.com/services/documentation/docs/talis/fyr_2005.pdf.

Talis Training in 2005: Forthcoming Courses

18th October 2005 – Database and SQL

19th October 2005 – System Management : Managing Talis PERL reports

20th – 21st October 2005 – Business Objects

15th February 2006 – Financial Year Rollover

For details on these and other courses, please see www.talis.com/training. If you wish to discuss which training options are best for you, please contact the Training Team on +44 (0) 870 400 5419 or email training@talis.com.

In addition, the next Talis Support Day is scheduled for Thursday, October 6th. Please use the fax back form at www.talis.com/services/help_desk/support_day_06_10_05.pdf or contact Maria Dawson at med@talis.com to book a place. Admission to Support Days is free of charge.

Database Options for Test and Tutor Talis Databases

With the "live" **prod_talis** database, transactions are logged for security purposes and dumped to disk (using *trandump*) to backup changes to the database periodically. If you have a **tutor_talis** database, trandumps are not set up to run against this database by default. This database rarely has large numbers of transactions run against it, but as a precaution you are advised to set the database options to clear down the transaction log.

Check what the options are for this database by entering an ISQL session and running *sp_helpdb* as follows:

```
$ isql -Usa -P
1> sp_helpdb
2> go
```

```

name                db_size    owner                dbid
  created
  status
-----
-----
.....
prod_meta           20.0 MB sa                9
  Mar 25, 2005
  no options set

prod_talis          53000.0 MB sa            4
  Mar 25, 2005
  no options set

tutor_meta           20.0 MB sa                7
  Mar 25, 2005
  no options set

tutor_talis         100.0 MB sa              8
  Mar 25, 2005
  trunc log on chkpt
.....

  1> exit

$

```

If you see "no options set" against tutor_talis, run the following command whilst logged in as either "ops" or "talis":

```
$ /users/ops/trunc_log_opt tutor_talis true
```

You should then carry out a full_dbdump of the tutor_talis database .

Note: those libraries with a test_talis database set up are strongly advised to carry out the above for test_talis as well as tutor.

New Material from the Talis Developer Network

Five new articles have been added to the *TDN* website this month which offer invaluable advice on manipulating, customising and testing PERL tools, scripts and statements. They comprise;

- a guide to successful addition of email addresses into PERL MIS format.pl files, such that the "@" character is correctly read,
- instruction on how to transmit overdue, reservation and recall output letters via either printed letter, email, SMS or voicemail as per the individual borrower's stated preference,
- a list of all the standard PERL tools, where they are stored, and how to use them,
- details on how to set up a local area in which customers may place common subroutines they have developed into scripts,
- a harness script which can be used to test one or more PERL tools in isolation from the rest of the script to which they belong.

In addition to these, a new script called **charges_notification_letter** has been created owing to popular demand from our customer base. As the name implies, it creates an output (via physical

letter or email) of outstanding charges against a given borrower, irrespective of whether the items to which those charges pertain are still on loan or not.

Please remember that this material is only accessible by signing up to the *Talis Developer Network*. For more information on the material, or to acquire a login if you have not already done so, please visit www.talis.com/tdn/index.shtml .

Blog and Forum Update

Following on from the article outlined in the May Support Newsletter on the Infrastructure Team's exploration of Solaris 10, Infrablog (<http://blogs.talis.com/infrablog>) now features a resume of the features of the newly-released Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise, such as dynamic cache management and a job scheduler which could be used instead of a cron file. Feedback on the Team's thoughts and investigations is welcome as always; please use the Infrastructure Forum or else mail Jim Prince at jim@talis.com .

A new addition to the Talis Blog cannon is The Wonderful World of Mr C, a software development blog compiled by Ian Corns of the Metadata Team. Recent posts to this blog include a consideration of the virtues of needs-driven software, and how, through the availability of RSS feeds, the Talis Forums, increasing embracing of agile development, etc., Talis is driving forward in its commitment to getting closer to its customers and building to meet their needs. Please visit <http://wonderfulworldofmrc.blogspot.com> to see more.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Talis Support receives a vast number of questions and has a large Knowledgebase. In this section, we cover some of the most frequently asked and answered questions.

When using the Eterm-32 emulator I get the error message *vt320: Unknown terminal type. I don't know what terminal you are on – all I have is 'vt320'*. How do I get round this?

In Unix, try setting the TERM environment variable as follows:

```
TERM=vt220 ; export TERM
```

If this makes no difference, in ETerm-32 click *Setup/Terminal*, and select *Terminal Type VT220*.

I have "Only Include Items on Loan" set to "No" in my reservation filter, but I still can only reserve on loan items. Why?

Check if "AutoRecall" is set to "Yes" in the Reservation Filter. If it is, then it will effectively override the "Only include Items on loan" flag, i.e. it will cause only items that are already on loan to be reservable. To quote the manual:

This field is another "Yes" and "No" toggle, editable using <F6> ("Select"). When this field displays a "Yes" value, all copies of the Work identified by the filter as suitable for inclusion in the reservation will be recalled automatically.

Note:

Setting this field to "Yes" will automatically reserve only Items which are on loan (that is, it overrides "Only Include Items on Loan").

In Circulation, why does the Item History have no discharge date?

This happens when a discharge has taken place in backup. When Talis Offline transactions are recovered, the import_loan process only updates the LOAN table. This means the item's loan history can look like the item has not discharged. As long as there is no due date when entering the item barcode in Item, the item is not on loan and there is nothing to worry about.

Did You Know?

This section highlights some of the interesting features of our products. In this issue, we will look at some Talis Alto features.

Did you know that the **Server Name** field of the Set Alto Database application will accept either a server name or an IP address? Further, the **Source Name** and **Description** fields can contain any suitable text of your choice, but the **Server Port** value must remain set at 2025.

Did you know that as long as you have Talis Alto 1.2 or newer, it is possible to avoid having to perform upgrades on each PC individually when moving up a version of Alto? The Automatic Installation option, if selected, will download and install the necessary PC files required for the upgrade without further intervention required by the user. The Manual Upgrade option is available if individual upgrading of each PC is still preferred. For more information, refer to the Release Notes, e.g. www.talis.com/services/documentation/docs/alto/talis_alto_2.1.pdf for Alto 2.1 .

Did you know it is possible to display your institution's name at the top of the TalisAlto window? Locate the file *libparam.data* in \$TALIS_HOME/bin and replace the text in speechmarks with your chosen text.

For further information about Talis Alto, please refer to the documentation available at www.talis.com/documentation.

Meet the Team

In this issue, we present a profile of Imraz Mohammed:

Name: Imraz Mohammed BSc (Hons), SCSA

Age: 24

Role: Technical Support Analyst

History at Talis: Joined firstly as a placement student in 2001 and then returned in 2003 to join the support team

Speciality: Certified Solaris 8 Administrator and Redhat Linux administrator

Hobbies and interests: Keeping fit, football, keeping fish, having the latest gadgets

Comments, Feedback and Contacts

Please let us know what you think of the Talis Support Newsletter. We want to hear your views and contributions so we can share them with our community of customers, and of course use them to improve our products and services. You can contact us via email support@talis.com or call +44 (0) 870 400 5400.

If you have been forwarded this by a colleague and would like to subscribe to Talis Support Newsletter, please email subscribe@talis.com. Please email unsubscribe@talis.com to unsubscribe.

Talis Information Limited

Telephone: +44 (0) 870 400 5000 Fax: +44 (0) 870 400 5001 www.talis.com

The copyright in the content (content being images, text, sound and video files, programs and scripts) of this newsletter is owned by Talis Information Limited ("Talis"). The content of this newsletter may be retrieved and downloaded solely for personal use. No content may otherwise be copied, modified, published, broadcast or otherwise distributed, in whole or in part, without the prior written permission of Talis. Requests for permission to reproduce material from this newsletter should be addressed to: marketing@talis.com. Talis® is a registered trademark of Talis Information Ltd. All other rights reserved.