

KISTERS Australia News

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Contents

Contents	1
From The GM's Desk	1
Kisters News	1
Kisters User Group Meeting Darwin	2
Client Services News	2
Hydstra Product News	2
Current Releases	4
Staff News	4
Contact Information	4

From The GM's Desk

The staff at Kisters Pty Ltd are now preparing for our 15th annual user group meeting to be held in Darwin on the 1st September. This year, like previous years, promises to be as informative with the introduction of new features and discussions on future applications.

With the serious skill shortage facing the Australian industry many agencies are now looking at how they can address routine data management functions. We have been working with our users to address some of the industry needs through the development of automated task management and improved KPI and Web reporting.

These features will be demonstrated at this years user group meeting with practical demonstrations and discussions.

We look forward to seeing you all in Darwin.

Bill Steen

General Manager, Kisters Pty Ltd, Australia

Kisters News

Acquisition of EUS GmbH

Kisters has purchased the shares of EUS GmbH, Dortmund, Germany from MVV AG, Mannheim, Germany. Since 1994 EUS has played a leading role in the implementation of highly innovative projects in the power generation industry specially using renewable energy generation. The range of services provided by EUS includes an added value

chain ranging from collecting energy data from decentralized renewable and classical energy generation units to optimization and decision-support. EUS also provides systems for strategic scheduling of works related to asset risk management .

EUS GmbH will technically be incorporated into the RMS Department of KISTERS AG. The co-operation of the two companies generates synergies and improved opportunities in further establishing our market position in the area of control technology and power industry systems by optimizing power generation-related processes as well as in the area of asset management.

For now EUS GmbH Dortmund will be run as a 100% subsidiary of KISTERS AG. A merger with KISTERS AG will be examined within the next few years.

Technical Meeting in Aachen

Technical staff from Kisters offices all over the world met in Aachen in June for a week of technical discussions. The topics ranged over all aspects of the Kisters product suite, including the development of the new time-series engine that will eventually underlie all Kisters products.

Australian staff who made the trek to Aachen included Peter Taylor, Trevor Magnusson and Peter Heweston. The week coincided with the early rounds of the World Cup, and soccer-mania had overtaken Germany. Many a happy hour was spent downing lager and munching on roasted pigs knuckles while watching the games.



Someone playing someone else

Kisters User Group Meeting Darwin

The Kisters User Group meeting will be held in conjunction with the AHA Conference in Darwin. The dates for the conference are 29th August to 1st September.

Registrations are still open and we encourage all our users to attend. Registration forms can be downloaded from

<http://www.ahahydro2006.com/forms/registration.pdf>

A provisional agenda for the conference is available at

<http://www.aha.net.au/Conference%20Program.htm>

You can register for the whole week or just the Kisters Users Group day if you wish.

Client Services News

Client Development

The client services group has had a particularly busy time within Australia lately. A range of interesting client projects have kept us amused and entertained, including:

- Developing a link between SQL Server and Hydstra via a stored procedure in SQL Server that loads Hydstra time-series data on demand
- Assisting in the consolidation of two Hydstra databases that have used different variables, quality codes etc
- Upgrading of Hydstra systems in Namibia and South Africa, with training and scripting as required
- Development of links between Hydstra and SODA to allow HYAUDIT to generate SODA polls
- Development of scripts to simplify the management of site groups for KPI purposes
- Assisting several organisations to upgrade their Hydstra infrastructure

Hydstra System Refresh

Many of our larger organisations are upgrading their Hydstra-based processing and data publication systems. Hydstra has been running in many of these organisations for up to 20 years now, and the architecture of a system refresh seems to follow a typical path:

- Install SODA to consolidate and centralise real-

time data collection

- Install Citrix to centralise the software and data management.
- Install the Hydstra/SVR server module to automate a range of processes and tasks.
- Use HYBATCH and MAPWEB to automate the production of web-based outputs. Hydstra/SVR provides on-change trigger events that can ensure that data is updated to the web immediately after the time-series is changed in any way.
- Use HYAUDIT to collect organisational performance statistics and Key Performance Indicators.

The result of updating the underlying technologies is a data system that is easier to administer and which provides near real-time results on the web. Using the tools described above you would expect that within a minute of SODA completing a logger download the data would be available on the web or intranet.

Accessing modems securely from SODA

As part of a system refresh for a large customer we needed to provide a secure path through the firewall for SODA telemetry. The solution involved a Telnet pathway through the internal and external firewalls to a Cisco modem gateway device that then connected to physical modems outside the firewall. This solution may well be of interest to other large agencies with security concerns around using modems for data retrieval from within a secure corporate network.

Hydstra Product News

Hydstra V9.4 Released

Hydstra version 9.4 has been released. The major new feature released with 9.4 is the new server module Hydstra/SVR, along with a host of smaller changes and enhancements.

Hydstra/SVR Server Module

Hydstra/SVR is a new Hydstra module that provides tools for the automation of many tasks. The SRV module includes the ability to register on-change events against time-series files, database tables and HYAUDIT runs. This provides a powerful way of running tasks whenever the relevant data changes. Examples include:

- Publish plots to the web that update automatically whenever telemetry data is added

to the file, or the file is edited with the Workbench.

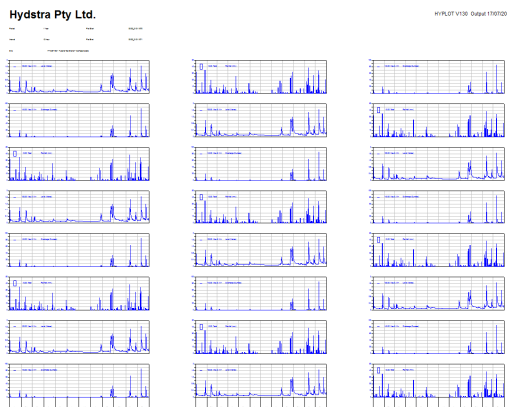
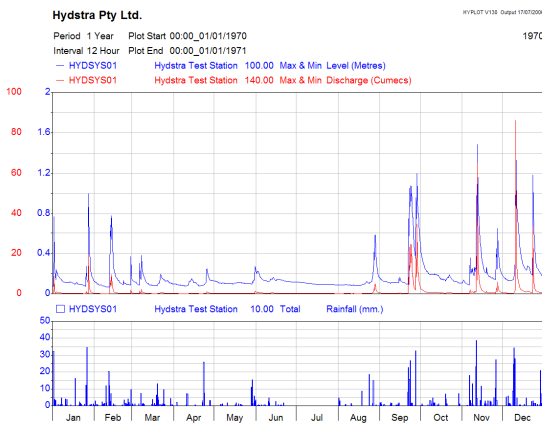
- Update SQL tables of time-series data like daily flows
- Transfer information to other agencies whenever a change is detected
- Run automated system admin tasks like HYMKHELP, HYPERUPD, HYARCHSIZ etc.

The data import program HYSODA has been renamed to SVRIMP and serves as the automated data import part of the server module.

Hydstra/SVR is highly scalable and can be run on more than one server PC if necessary. We would recommend you dedicate at least one PC specifically to running the server tasks, and more if necessary depending on projected load.

HYPLOT Enhancements

HYPLOT has been enhanced in 9.5 and patched to 9.4 to provide additional layout control over plots. The following examples give some idea of the increased power available:



Enhanced HYPLOT Examples

HYXPLORE vs HYMENU


We have already foreshadowed that HYMENU will be dropped in the next release, so you should start getting used to HYXPLORE instead.

One issue to watch for is that HYXPLORE and HYMENU are strict about the USERLEVS field in USRMENUS and expect a syntax of the form TS=2. It will not recognize the (very) old syntax T2, and you may lose menu entries. We suggest you check the syntax of all USERLEVS fields in USRMENUS.

Supported Windows Platforms

Hydstra is no longer guaranteed to run under Windows 95, 98, ME or NT. These operating systems have all been declared unsupported by Microsoft. Use of NT file servers is probably not a problem, but NT as a client PC is unsupported.

Windows Tips

I bet most of you never use the Windows key on your keyboard (the one labelled  on your keyboard in between Ctrl and Alt). It has some neat shortcuts underneath it that can save time. A few that I like include:

- Windows/L - lock your computer
- Windows/D - minimise all windows and show the desktop. Do it again and restore all windows to how they were.
- Windows/<tab> - cycle through buttons on the taskbar. Press Enter to select one.
- Windows/E - start Explorer

The full set of Windows keyboard shortcuts is documented at:

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q126449>

And how many of you know what the <tab> key does in DOS box after CD? Try it - you'll be amazed. For example try

```
c:
cd \
cd d<tab>
```

You will be cycled through all the subdirectories beginning with 'd' each time you press <tab>. Press <enter> when you see the one you want. Much quicker than manually typing cd "documents and settings"

If command completion is not enabled on your PC there are plenty of articles on how to turn it on - for example:

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;310530&>

Current Releases

Hydstra Release

The current release version of Hydstra is 9.4.0. If you want an upgrade CD please email support@hydstra.com.

The release is also available in zipped form on the Kisters web site. Contact Hydstra support for information on how to download and install it.

TimeStudio Release

The current release version of TimeStudio is 4.2.0.8. We have delivered a 4.2.0.8 CD to all registered TimeStudio users. Any further updates will be delivered via the Kisters FTP site. All registered TimeStudio users have been sent instructions on how to log in to the FTP site.

WISKI Release

The current release version of WISKI is 6.3. Version 6.4 is scheduled for release in late 2006.

Staff News

Employment Opportunities at Kisters Pty Ltd

Kisters Pty Ltd are always looking for staff with a mix of computing and hydrographic skills to join us in the Client Services group in Canberra. The work requires demonstrated programming experience, though we will provide specific Perl training if necessary. The group provides front-line client support, carries out Hydstra installations, provides Hydstra training, and works on consulting projects for clients. A considerable amount of local and overseas travel is involved. Please contact Paul Sheahan or Peter Heweston if you are interested.

Contact Information

This newsletter is published by Kisters Pty Ltd and edited by Peter Heweston.

Homepage: <http://www.kisters.com.au>

All support and accounts questions should be directed to support@hydstra.com.

All personal Hydstra email addresses are of the form firstname.lastname@kisters.com.au, but all general emails should be addressed to support@hydstra.com.

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