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# Interfacing With Non-JD Edwards Timecards

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W E1 *Editor's Note: Life would be so simple if we could accomplish everything without worrying about interfaces from/to JD Edwards. But that turns out to be the rare exception. Paul Hanson shows us how to bring payroll timecard data from "somebody else's" timecard application into your JDE Payroll system. In this article, you'll see both the business process and some of the technical specs. We also have a "long" version in the Document Library that includes the entire RPG program to finish up the process.*

## Introduction

I have been around JD Edwards software for the past 10 years as a technical consultant and project manager. In that time, I have developed several interfaces to both World and EnterpriseOne, some of which have been featured in the JDEtips Journal.

Since JD Edwards is frequently not the only system used by a customer, there are instances where data needs to be exchanged with non-JD Edwards systems. As with any technical solution, there are a variety of ways to accomplish this. The approach you will read about in this article involves the use of the Payroll "Z" table to import timecards into the JD Edwards World payroll module. The examples shown are specific to World. The same approach can also be used by a qualified EnterpriseOne developer.

## Business Case

As I mentioned above, the business case for this solution involves a JD Edwards customer who has a requirement to import timecard data from a non-JD Edwards time keeping system. There are several of them in use today. Many of the more common ones have an ERP interface included with the purchase of the software. But, there are just as many that are less expensive or less common that do not have an interface.

This solution is ideal for those of you who don't have an "out of the box" interface, but need to bring those timecards into JD Edwards. Or, perhaps you want to save some money by not purchasing an interface from the third party vendor. In any case, developing your own interface is not as difficult as you might think.

## The Solution

### Application Flow

To begin, let's take a look at the components of this type of interface from end to end. See Figure 1. It is pretty straight forward from an application process perspective.

#### Step 1:

The first thing you will do is extract data from your time keeping system. Then, you will upload the timecard data to the JD Edwards host. The timecard data will probably be in a flat file format using either fixed length fields or delimited fields.

For World, a fixed length field layout works best. You can use FTP, IBM Client Access, or Microsoft Access to insert the data into the interface table.

For EnterpriseOne, either fixed length fields or delimited fields work. You can use either Microsoft Access or a table conversion. If you have a delimited layout, you will probably need to write a table conversion UBE to convert the data into the interface table.

For both systems, the result is a populated custom timecard table matching the field layout of the time keeping extract file. You can name this table anything you like. I would suggest something like F55116Z1 so that you know it belongs to the timecard batch process.

#### Step 2:

Launch a custom program that will perform a pre-edit of the timecard data and populate the "Z" table. The name of this table is F06116Z1. There are specific fields that must be populated in this table in order for the batch processor to work properly.

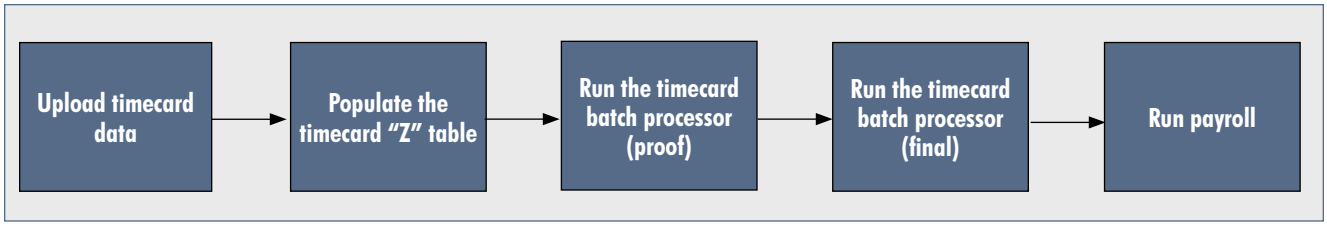


Figure 1 – Application Components



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If you use World, you will develop a custom RPG program that will perform the pre-edit and populate the "Z" table. A pre-edit error report is optional if you didn't want to worry about any errors until the batch processor is run. The choice is yours. However, the example shown here will create an error report prior to the batch processor step.

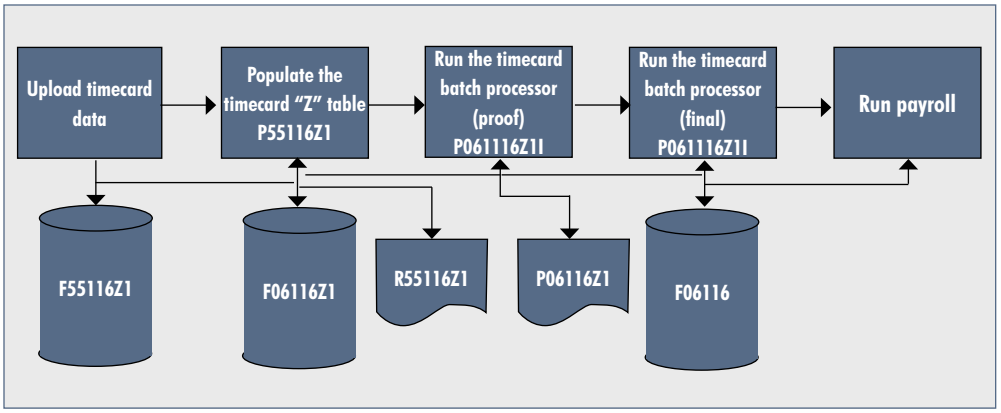


Figure 2 – Technical Components

If you are using EnterpriseOne, you will develop a UBE to perform the pre-edit and population of the "Z" table. Again, a pre-edit error report is optional depending upon your requirements.

### Step 3:

Once the "Z" table is populated, run the timecard batch processor in proof mode. This will provide you with a report showing any errors that have occurred. The errors could be caused by invalid data passed through the interface program (or UBE). Or, they could be caused by a bug in the interface program (or UBE) that is not populating the "Z" table fields properly. In any event, the proof mode will produce a report only and will not attempt to insert the timecard records into the payroll timecard table.

### Step 4:

Run the timecard batch processor one more time. But, this time run it in final mode. This will produce the same report mentioned above. In addition to the report, final mode will also insert all of the timecard records that pass validation into the payroll timecard table. It's important to note that if you encountered errors in proof mode and didn't resolve them, you will encounter the same errors here. Only this time, the records that pass validation will be inserted and you will have an incomplete batch of timecard records. For this reason, you should make sure you have a clean run in proof mode before proceeding to final mode.

After the timecards have been inserted into the payroll timecard table, you are ready to run the payroll processes that you would normally run after you created timecards using the JD Edwards time entry applications.

***The proof mode will produce a report only and will not attempt to insert the timecard records into the table.***

### Technical Components

Now that we've covered the application specifics of the solution, let's talk techie. Figure 2 illustrates a more technical rendition of Figure 1. It shows the tables used as well as each program that is part of the overall solution.

Remember the differences in object naming standards between World and EnterpriseOne. Figure 2 uses World object naming standards.

### Component 1 – The Interface Table:

First, develop the interface table (F55116Z1). For ease of using third party tools to upload into your JD Edwards host, it is best to create this table to match the exact layout of the time keeping system's extract. Figure 3 shows the layout that I have used recently. Keep in mind that Figure 3 shows a World table. EnterpriseOne would have a slightly different look, but the layout would be identical.

### Component 2 – Processing Options:

Next, create some processing


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