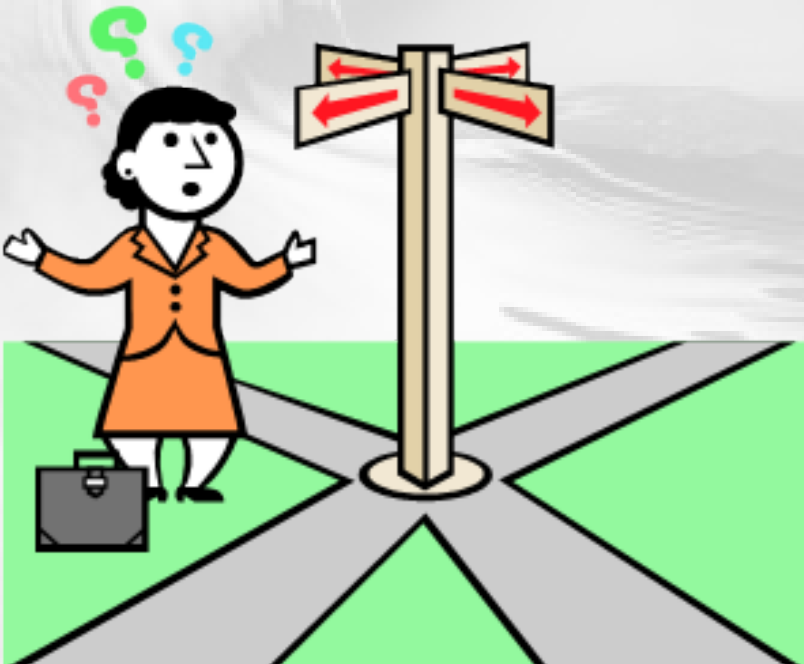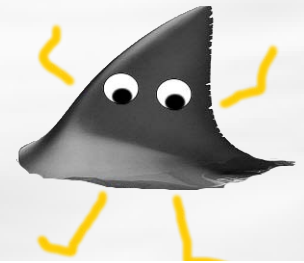# Mail Costs Scenario

How do our mail costs this year compare to last year?

The following slide will present you with a few questions to help refine your not-very-specific question into a well-defined business question that can be matched to General Ledger data for an accurate answer!

You can print this content by clicking on 'Attachments' link (above and to the right) to access the pdf, opening it, and then printing as usual.
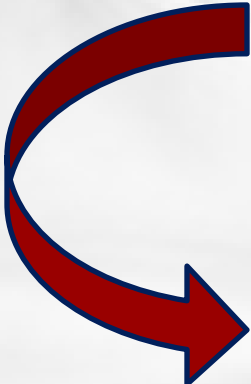
Mail Costs Scenario – Step 1
Re-defining Your Question

If your business question is not framed correctly (or completely), you will not be able to define your data query adequately. Here are some questions you should ask (and answer!) BEFORE attempting to write your query. Read them and consider what kinds of answers you might come up with. Besides asking/answering these questions, best practice is to check the cautions in the General Ledger table documentation as well.

- Do you want to look at a school, ORG, department?
  - If multiple ORGs in a department, you could use "parent"
- What do you mean by "mail costs"?
  - Internal? External? Packages? Bulk?
- How much and what detail do you want to see in your comparison?
- Do you want to look at fiscal year or calendar year?
- How do you want the query results sorted?
- Have you checked out the Express Mail corporate report in the repository to see if it will answer your needs?

Initial question: "How do our mail costs this year compare to last year?

Re-defined question: "How do the FYTD 2009 mail costs for the Pathology Department compare with the FYTD 2010 costs? I need to see all external and internal actuals for the years by object code and ORG."

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 2

For result objects, you'll want objects from **Balances, Org Code,** and **Object Code** tables in order to show the necessary details for the various ORGs and mail cost-related objects. Drag or double click the following objects to make them appear in **Result Objects**:

➢ **Balances:**
- ➢ Coa Object (BAL)
- ➢ Coa Org (BAL)
- ➢ Fiscal Month Seq (BAL)
- ➢ Fiscal Year (BAL)
- ➢ SUM Actual Fytd (BAL)

WHY? → Since you don't need journal-level detail, you should select objects from the **Balances** table. Since you are looking for FYTD information for the 2 FY, you need to include Fiscal Month Seq to limit the summed costs. **For more explanation on this…**

➢ **ORG description**
- ➢ Description (ORG)

➢ **Object Code**
- ➢ Object Desc (OC)

WHY? → These are tables that help you "look up" information about the ORGs included under the "parent" Pathology Department and about the Objects chosen in your query filters that have to do with mail costs.
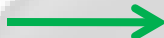
Reminder!

Get most of your objects from either **Balances** or **GL_Detail** and use the other tables for "look up" purposes so that your queries run more efficiently (quickly!).

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 3a

You want to restrict the query by the Parent Org (Pathology Department), objects pertaining to m ail costs, and fiscal year to date. To do this, set up the query filters as follows:

CASE SENSITIVE

- ➢ **Parent org (pathology):** ❓ ➡️
  - ➢ Drag **Parent Org Desc (PORP)** to the **Query Filters** area.
  - ➢ Select "In list" from the operators, and then select "PA-Pathology Department"

> **WHY? →** You want a quick way to select all of the ORGs with the "parent" of Pathology Department. We used description because we didn't have the parent ORG code memorized. You could have also individually entered the ORG codes for that parent, but this is more efficient.

- ➢ **COA objects for mail costs:** ❓ ➡️
  - ➢ Drag **Coa Object (BAL)** to the **Query Filters** area.
  - ➢ Select "Between" from the operators, and then enter your upper and lower values for mail costs
  - ➢ Values are 5269 to 5274.

> **WHY? →** You need to identify all of the various mail costs. You can go to the Comptroller's website and look them up.

- ➢ **Time span for comparison:** ❓ ➡️
  - ➢ Drag **Fiscal Year (BAL)** to the **Query Filters** area.
  - ➢ Select "In list" from the operators, and then select "Prompt."
  - ➢ When running the query and prompted, type in "2009;2010"

> **WHY? →** We used "In list" and "Prompt" so that you can easily enter different fiscal years if you want to run this report in the future.

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 3b

➤ **Month:**
  ➤ Drag **Fiscal Month Seq (BAL)** to the **Query Filters** area.
  ➤ Select "Equal to" from the operators, and then select "Prompt"
  ➤ Select or type in a number from 01 to 12 corresponding to the month

?

WHY? ➔ You wanted to see in your report the fiscal year to date actual sums for FY 2009 and 2010 (using the result object "SUM Actual Fytd (BAL)" from the Balances table. Therefore you need to indicate which accounting period/month is the upper boundary for the sum. This object indicates the month (or accounting period) of the fiscal year as a number from 01 to 12 (these numbers are always 2 characters). This field is often used for when the accounting periods (months) need to be kept in order.

For example, if you wanted to look at the first 3 months of the fiscal year, you would enter "03" at the query prompt for MAR-11. The resulting query' report would show you a comparison of JAN through MAR of FY 2009 and 2010. Our example uses "06" (DEC) to compare the first 6 months of the year.

We chose "Prompt" while setting the filter conditions so that the report can be used in the future when different months might need to be reviewed.

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 4

Your **Edit Query Panel** should now appear like this.

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 5

Your results will appear in the **Edit Report** panel as below. You can now save your query/report (see next slide). The report has been formatted to have sections for each ORG in the Pathology Department and it uses crosstabs to compare the costs for the fiscal years.

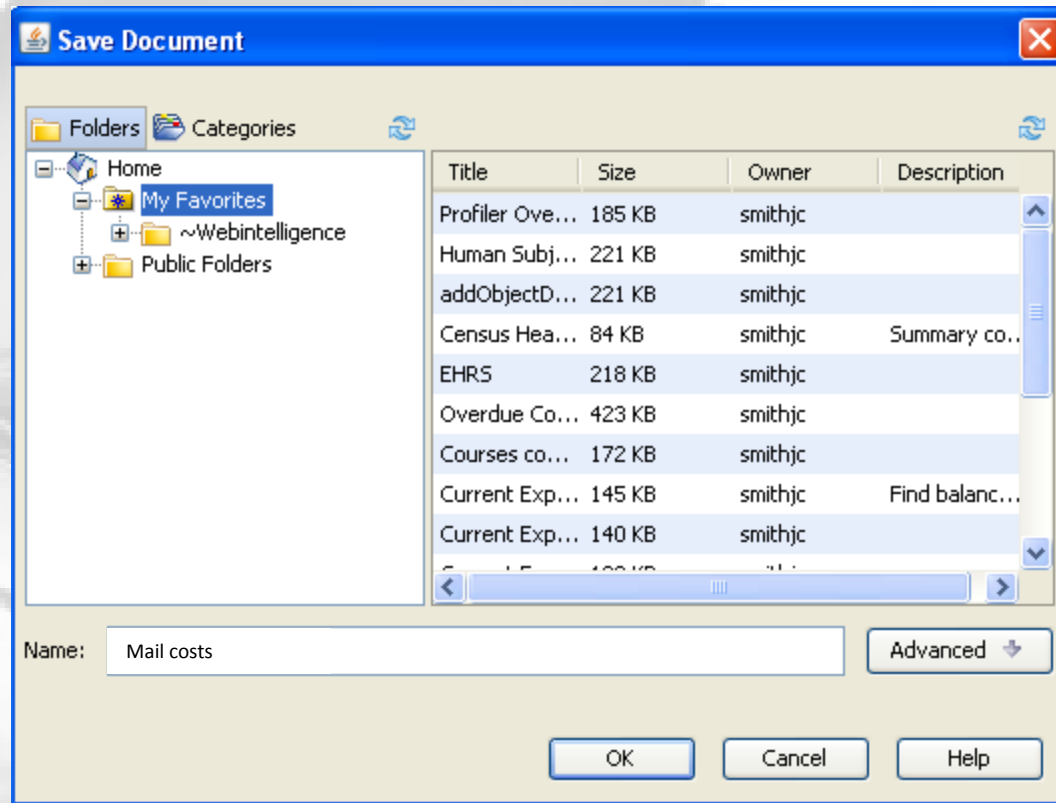For formatting tips and instruction, How To guides are available.

Mail Costs Scenario – Step 6

Once you have run your query, you can save it. *If you do further formatting or query edits, continue to save often so you don't lose your work to an untimely "timeout"!*

➢ Click the **Save** icon and the following **Save Document** dialog box will appear
➢ Select the **My Favorites** folder on the **Folders** tab
➢ Type in a distinctive title for your report in the **Name**: textbox
➢ Click **OK**.

You can only save queries/reports to your own **My Favorites** folder or any subfolders that you have created within it to help organize your cache of reports.

Save Document

Title	Size	Owner	Description
Profiler Ove...	185 KB	smithjc	
Human Subj...	221 KB	smithjc	
addObjectD...	221 KB	smithjc	
Census Hea...	84 KB	smithjc	Summary co...
EHRS	218 KB	smithjc	
Overdue Co...	423 KB	smithjc	
Courses co...	172 KB	smithjc	
Current Exp...	145 KB	smithjc	Find balanc...
Current Exp...	140 KB	smithjc	

Folders — Categories — Home — My Favorites — ~Webintelligence — Public Folders

Name: Mail costs   Advanced

OK   Cancel   Help

Save Often!

Mail Costs Scenario – Wrap up

How do our mail costs this year compare to last year?

The report below shows all of the individual mail object costs for the Pathology Department ORGs for fiscal year to date 2009 and 2010, up to and including the month of June. The report is sectioned by ORG and the crosstab compares the 2 FYTD figures.
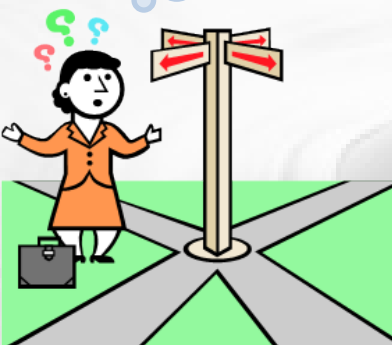
4531

PA-Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research

			2009	2010
06	5269	US POSTAGE		
06	5270	EXPRESS MAIL		
06	5271	BULK MAIL		
06	5272	INTERNATL POST		
06	5273	OTH POSTAGE		
06	5274	MAIL SVC CHG		

You can print this content by clicking on 'Attachments' link (above and to the right) to access the pdf, opening it, and then printing as usual.

Some cautions about using "SUM…" objects and selecting the time spans for your data

➢ In the Balances data, **amounts are all as of a point in time**, and, depending upon which balance it is, it may or may not make sense to add it up over multiple periods.

  ➢ E.g., the **Actual_FYTD** in May already includes data from prior months in the fiscal year, so you definitely don't want to add months together. But, the **Actual_Month** balance shows just the activity for the given month, so it's ok to add up.

  ➢ Most often, you will want data for just one accounting period. Be careful about summarizing beginning balance, ending balance, fiscal year-to-date, project-to-date, fiscal year-total, or project-total figures for multiple accounting periods. You could end up adding an amount twice or more times!

➢ It is often easiest to use **Accounting_Period** when setting the record selection query filters. If, instead, **Month** or **Fiscal_Month_Seq** is used in the record selection filters for a query, **Fiscal_Year** ought to be used as well. (*Fiscal_Month_Seq should be used for sorting accounting periods in chronological order within a fiscal year*.) Likewise, if CALENDAR_MONTH is used, CALENDAR_YEAR should be paired with it.