

# Before the Conference

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## *How to Register to Attend*

Please note that you must be a current COMMON member to attend a conference—you can join online at [www.common.org](http://www.common.org).

Every conference features special “early bird” savings on registration fees, so sign up to attend as soon as possible.

Once you decide to attend the next COMMON Conference, there are several ways to register. Approximately four months before the conference, you can register on-line from a link on our home page. Hard copies of the registration form are also available in issues of our bimonthly magazine COMMON.CONNECT, or you can download a copy of the registration form from our Web site. If none of the above is available, call 1.800.270-8223 and request to have a form faxed to you.

## **Staying in touch**

Once your registration has been processed, COMMON may send you e-mail updates to keep you informed. In the past, we’ve used these communications to invite attendees to tour the technology behind the IBM Rochester Lab (at our Spring 2006 Conference), and to let them know about breaking news related to the conference.

Depending on how soon before the conference we receive your registration, COMMON may mail out your attendee badge and other materials, or we may ask you to collect those items when you register on-site at the conference.



**Fall 2006 Conference & Expo**  
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# Before the Conference



## *Planning Makes the Difference*

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COMMON Conferences have been recognized by the IT industry as one of the highest-quality education conferences when ranked by usefulness and industry expert presentation and participation. One of the reasons COMMON Conferences receive high ratings is simply the breadth of education session offerings: COMMON Conferences offer four solid days of multiple education sessions to choose from.

Navigating successfully through a conference requires planning. We want you to get the most out of COMMON Conferences. And these pages will help you plan your week—and return home from the Conference ready to apply what you've learned.

### **Go to [www.common.org](http://www.common.org) Early and Often**

About 16 weeks prior to the Conference, COMMON begins posting Conference information on the Web site: [www.common.org](http://www.common.org). In addition to general information about the host city for the Conference, some basic Course of Study and session abstract (course description) information will be available. While some of the information will be preliminary at this stage, the information is updated continuously. The closer the conference starting date, the more detailed the information will become. So be sure to tune in to [www.common.org](http://www.common.org) early and often.

### **Planning Your Course Schedule**

About eight weeks prior to the Conference, detailed education session and Lab information will be posted on COMMON's Web site. To ensure a successful and productive week at the Conference, it is critical that you review the session grids on the Web site and prepare a schedule for yourself before you arrive at the Conference. (See the "How to Read a Session Grid" page for important details.)

### **Pre-Register for Labs**

Although you do not have to pre-register for the standard education sessions, you DO have to register for the hands-on Labs. COMMON's hands-on Labs are invaluable experiences that you shouldn't miss out on. These Labs fill up early, however, so be sure to pre-register at [www.common.org](http://www.common.org). Lab registration is usually available on the Web site about eight weeks prior to the Conference.

You can make changes to your Lab registrations via the Web site, and after you arrive on-site as well. Check with the Registration Desk on-site for more information after you arrive.

# Before & During the Conference

## Odds and Ends

**Dress Code.** The dress code for the Conference is casual. Close to conference time, check local Internet sites for the host city to find out what the average temperatures are, and pack accordingly. Pack a light sweater or jacket for temperatures that vary in meeting rooms, and be sure to wear comfortable shoes!

**Food.** Cash food stations will be available in the Expo hall; snack and beverage stations will be located at various locations in the conference facilities.

**Cyber Corner and Bookstore.** Laptop computers will be available for you at no charge to check your e-mail while on-site. COMMON will also host a bookstore where you'll find new releases by COMMON speakers.

**Restaurants and Sightseeing.** Restaurant and tourism information will be provided on-site to assist with your after-Conference activities.

## After the Conference

A few weeks after the Conference, a number of education session handouts will be available on COMMON's Web site. This information is available to COMMON members only, so be sure to take advantage of it.

# GTCA

## Guide to COMMON Acronyms

Over the years, COMMON has developed a language of its own. With this handy guide, you'll know what to say when someone at MOM asks if you met a SME at CUDS last night.

During the conference, you may hear acronyms that aren't included on this list. Check [www.common.org](http://www.common.org) under "Resources" for a complete and current list of acronyms.

<b>BOFS</b>	Birds-of-a-feather sessions
<b>CET</b>	Conference education team
<b>COS</b>	Course of Study
<b>CUDS</b>	COMMON user discussion session
<b>DSA</b>	Distinguished Service Award
<b>FER</b>	Focused Education Roadmap
<b>HOBO</b>	Honorary board official
<b>JAC</b>	Judicial affairs council
<b>LUG</b>	Local user group
<b>MOM</b>	Meeting of the Members
<b>SME</b>	Subject Matter Expert
<b>SUG</b>	Sister user group
<b>TLC</b>	Tactical liaisons to curriculum
<b>VDS</b>	Vendor demonstration session
<b>VPS</b>	Vendor product session

# Before & During the Conference

## How to Read a Session Grid

To prepare your schedule roadmap, you will need to be familiar with COMMON's daily session grids. In addition to being posted on the Web site, session grids for all days will also be published in the first issue of *COMMON Conference Daily*, our on-site newspaper. Each day's issue will include up-to-date grids for that day. Please note that grids are subject to change, and you should always check the latest edition of the newspaper before heading to your sessions.

To begin, you need to know that each day of the conference is assigned a number and that all sessions are keyed according to these numbers:

- Sunday = Day 1
- Monday = Day 2
- Tuesday = Day 3
- Wednesday = Day 4
- Thursday = Day 5

COMMON's grids are designed to show you an entire day's sessions at a glance. Horizontal rows show the location of each session. Vertical columns show time and day. Both location and time have a two-digit code, and these combine to form a four-digit Agenda number for each session.

Example: Session 12CS will be held in room CS (which is named on the grid) and during the time slot designated as #12, or 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. on Day 1.

You'll find details about the room, including location and capacity, in the left column of each grid.

When planning your day, you can highlight each session on the grid and will be able to tell at a glance if you have overlapping commitments.

You can also create personalized grids online, selecting specific sessions and special events you're interested in attending.

**Session Title**  
(abbreviated)

**Session ID number**

**Speaker Name**

**Agenda Key**  
Day/Hour/Location of the session

<b>Track CA</b> Room 204 2nd Convention Center Capacity 105	V4 RPG IV 404604	iSeries Toolbox for Java -Basics 403552	Accessing DB2/400 with JDBC 408135
	Jon Paris 21CA	Chris Smith 22CA	Don Denoncourt 23CA
<b>Track CB</b> Room 205 2nd Convention Center Capacity 120		DB2 UDB: External Procedures 400608	I/O, You and Your Business Organization 409104
		Kent Milligan 22CB	Moshe Briel 23CB
<b>Track CC</b> Room 206 2nd Convention Center Capacity 290	Programming With SQL 407092	Transform Your Data Into Power! <b>402398</b>	RPG IV the 'D' Spec <b>401317</b>
	Mark Pollorff 21CC	Randall Munson 22CC	Robert Cozzi 23CC

### Take Advantage of a COMMON Mentor

Seasoned COMMON members have volunteered to mentor first-time attendees. Mentors are available on-site at the Conference if you need them. To sign up for this complimentary program, just send an e-mail stating your interest to: [VolunteerLiaison@common.org](mailto:VolunteerLiaison@common.org), or call 800.777.6734. The liaison will need your complete name, city and state, e-mail address and phone number.

# During the Conference



## *Special Sessions and Services for First-Timers*

COMMON offers two identical First-Timers' Sessions on-site to provide an overview of what to expect during the conference week. Also, you'll receive valuable tips on how to get the most out of the conference. These sessions are usually offered on Sunday and Monday. Check COMMON's Web site prior to the conference for exact dates and times.

A First-Timers' Social offers a chance to network with other members and volunteers while you enjoy fun, food and lots of prizes! The social is usually held on Sunday afternoon.

And a First-Timers' Focus Group, held near the end of the conference, is extremely valuable to COMMON. We want to hear your insights and ideas regarding your first conference. Bring your own lunch and join us for this important session.

These sessions are not only informational; they also offer the perfect opportunity to network and make new friends with peers from all over the country. So don't miss these valuable opportunities.



# During the Conference

## *Start off Your First COMMON Conference on the Right Foot*

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### **Your First Stop at the Conference: Registration**

Even though you have pre-registered for the Conference, you must check in at the Registration Desk on-site to pick up your Conference materials. Registration usually opens early on Sunday morning, so be sure to register in time to attend the Sunday afternoon Conference events.

You'll receive a badge either in the mail or when you register onsite. This badge is required for entrance into all COMMON sessions and events, including the First-Timers' events. Your badge should be worn at all times during the conference.

### **Key Sunday Sessions**

Opening Session occurs at noon on Sunday. That will be your first opportunity to hear from COMMON's president and hear top-notch keynote speakers. Don't miss it.

The Expo opens at midday on Sunday, and this is a great time to wander the Expo Hall and learn about the latest in product developments from technical experts at IBM and other exhibiting vendors. Although the Conference runs through Thursday, the product Expo continues through Tuesday only. So don't miss the opportunity to meet with technical experts and see product demonstrations of the latest and greatest high-tech solutions for your IT challenges.

### **Networking and Information-Sharing Opportunities**

COMMON's education sessions are outstanding. But the Conference attendees who take advantage of COMMON's informal networking sessions often take back with them something the other attendees don't: answers to those tough IT problems that they've been struggling with.

COMMON offers several sessions that allow you to rub shoulders with technical experts from IBM and other leading industry organizations. Be sure to include CUDS (COMMON User Group Discussion Sessions), BOFS (Birds of a Feather Sessions), and the Closing Event in your schedule. There is a special "Ask the Experts" CUDS session

that allows you to meet with peers and experts in a specific technical area. Check the session grids on the Web site or in the daily on-site conference newspaper for dates and times.

### **Check *COMMON Conference Daily* for Last-Minute Changes**

Life is sometimes unpredictable. And sometimes unexpected changes in our instructors' schedules force us to make last-minute changes to sessions and Labs. When you arrive at the Conference, be sure to pick up that day's *COMMON Conference Daily* to check for any last-minute changes to the sessions and Labs. Check the newspaper every day during the Conference, because that is where you will find all last-minute changes to the Conference schedule.

### **Answers Are Available at the Conference**

Have a question during the conference? Volunteers wearing blue vests circulate throughout the conference facilities and between sessions. They're available and approachable. Don't hesitate to stop and ask one of them for help.

### **Consider Volunteering**

COMMON is a volunteer-based organization. One of the best ways to learn how the organization works—and make new friends—is to contribute a little time as a volunteer during or after the conference. Open positions are posted on COMMON's Web site, or you can visit the onsite Headquarters Office during the conference to see if there are any opportunities that match your skills and abilities.



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