

## Article

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## Terminal tip: Running OS-level commands

When working at the Caché command prompt I sometimes want to run an operating system command on the server host. By prefixing my command line with ! or \$ I can do this with ease. The following examples are from 2017.1 on Windows, but the feature is available on all versions and platforms:

USER>**!dir**

Volume in drive C has no label.

Volume Serial Number is 2EF9-50B3

Directory of c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user

```
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      .
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      ..
02/02/2017 18:05      11,534,336 CACHE.DAT
16/06/2017 12:05           36 cache.lck
07/11/2016 17:18 <DIR>      stream
                2 File(s)  11,534,372 bytes
                3 Dir(s)  83,540,684,800 bytes free
```

USER>**\$dir**

Volume in drive C has no label.

Volume Serial Number is 2EF9-50B3

Directory of c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user

```
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      .
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      ..
02/02/2017 18:05      11,534,336 CACHE.DAT
16/06/2017 12:05           36 cache.lck
07/11/2016 17:18 <DIR>      stream
                2 File(s)  11,534,372 bytes
                3 Dir(s)  83,075,710,976 bytes free
```

USER>

If I need to issue more than one command I can almost get myself an interactive shell:

USER>**!**

c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user>**dir**

Volume in drive C has no label.

Volume Serial Number is 2EF9-50B3

Directory of c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user

```
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      .
12/06/2017 12:41 <DIR>      ..
02/02/2017 18:05      11,534,336 CACHE.DAT
16/06/2017 12:05           36 cache.lck
07/11/2016 17:18 <DIR>      stream
```

```
      2 File(s)    11,534,372 bytes
      3 Dir(s)  83,075,211,264 bytes free
c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user>
c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user> date
The current date is: 23/06/2017
Enter the new date: (dd-mm-yy)
c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user>
c:\intersystems\ens171\mgr\user> exit
USER>
```

I wrote "almost" because in the example above the 'date' command prompted me to enter a new date but didn't wait for my keystrokes. It behaved as though I had immediately pressed Enter.

Still, I find it a useful feature.

To use it you will need the %SystemCallout:USE privilege.

More documentation [here](#).

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