

Do It

1. Examine the code from this section. Are there any areas in which error checking could have been converted to exception handling? Go to the book's web site and download the code for this section. Make the potential changes to the existing code to use additional exception handling.

Logging Exceptions

Applications must have an ability to notify systems analysts when problems occur. However, specific messages about errors should not be displayed to the user of the application. The user should be notified that the system is not currently operational. The systems analyst should be notified of the specific problem that has occurred.

The easiest way to provide this ability is to place error messages into a log file. PHP applications can log messages into the default PHP error file or in an application specific file. The `php.ini` file can be edited (see Chapter 1 for location) to specify the location and name of the default error log file. Once the `php.ini` file is open in an editor, search for `error_log`. If a semicolon is located at the beginning of the line, the location has been commented out. Just remove the semicolon and specify a location, such as:

```
error_log = c:/temp/php_errors.log
-or-
error_log = http://www.asite.com/temp/php\_errors.log
```

When writing to the default error log, PHP will insert a *timestamp* along with the error message that you submit. Your default time zone may not be set correctly in the `php.ini` file. Search for `date.timezone`. The valid time zone settings for the continental United States are:

```
date.timezone = "America/New_York"
date.timezone = "America/Chicago"
date.timezone = "America/Los_Angeles"
For all other American time zones visit: http://www.php.net/manual/en/timezones.america.php
For worldwide time zones visit: http://php.net/manual/en/timezones.php
```

The Apache `httpd` config file (see Chapter 1 for location) can override the settings in the `php.ini` file. You should also open this file and search for `date.timezone`. Replace the existing line with a format similar to the following.

```
php_value date.timezone "America/New_York"
```

Once you have updated and saved the `php.ini` and/or `apache.httpd` files, you must reload your Apache server for the changes to take place (see Chapter 1).

■ **Note** The time zone can also be set with program code. PHP 7 does not support the `datefmt_set_timezone_id` method. The `datefmt_set_timezone` method can be used for PHP 5.2+. For more information on setting the time zone with program code, visit <http://php.net/manual/en/datetime.settimezone.php>.
