

### Accounting & Technical Support For Petroleum Marketers!

September and October are good months for us to travel. Bill is willing to book 8-10 days a month on the road, Sarah is ready to get out and start working with clients, Susan Brewer and Fred Hughes are each ready to start traveling and training for up to 4 days a month.

What is outlined here is a combination of programming and training aimed at those of you who are relatively new to Petroleum Rx, those of you who are missing nearly everything developed since 2001.

Bill Smallwood has created a list of 21 items that he rates as “essential” to future service and development. It’s not a complete list, but it’s a good start and is something that can be handled in a 2-day training trip.

What follows is about \$3,000 worth of upgrades, plus \$1600 in time if taken piece by piece. We are offering the package, with 2 days on site for training, for \$2595, plus travel costs.

Here is the 21-item core list:

- 1) Installation of the Archive Structure. This is the foundation that allows us to rationally store and categorize reports, journals, and documents such as statements and invoices on your disk. This is a prerequisite to presenting documents on the Web, to reducing your need for paper reports in binders, and so forth.
- 2) Logging of major file changes. This is a service issue for us, and should be an audit issue for you. If your people change data in Customer, Vendor, or Product Maintenance, we want to know who did it, when they did it, and what the old value was. So let’s install the Log screens.
- 3) Permanent A/R. No more purging the A/R file, please. Disks are cheap, so let’s keep this data around, just in case. This patch will shift old data into archival files named by year.
- 4) Journal storage enforcement. When journals print, an archival copy is stored to disk. Maybe. Your system doesn’t really check, and if a printer script is faulty we will discover someday that some of the journals we thought were safely archived are absent. That’s a hole we must close. We need to install the patches that block the post if the journal isn’t safely in the archives.
- 5) Native e-mail ability and tracking. Some of you “mail” by having outgoing mail FTP’ed to a third party, who is then responsible for its distribution. You shouldn’t have to rely on this. In addition, you should be tracking what got mailed, when, and to whom. Let’s install what’s needed to turn your server into an active e-mailer.

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- 6) OrdPlus support. This is a file that is used to track additional data regarding orders. With this patch, we will install, at a minimum, the patches needed to show us in Order Inquiry the ID, date and time of Entry, Last Edit, Confirmation, Register run and Post. This information can be crucial in diagnosing pricing and taxation errors. In addition, this file is essential for five other features, and counting.
- 7) Make the Vendor payment and purchase buckets accurate. These are seen on the Vendor P screen and in the 1099 print --- and are notoriously wrong much of the time. Let's install the patches to make these figures always sum the live transactions, a trusty figure.
- 8) The Prodware \$ screen. We want, and you should want to know what your Prodware price tables used to be, and when they were changed. Let's install the patches to store and display this history.
- 9) The Order Menu Stats options. When we service systems, we would like to see (instantly) lists of open orders, on-hold orders ---sometimes by warehouse or someone's initials. We can find this stuff, eventually, by running the open order list, but we don't want to wait that long. Neither should you.
- 10) Fast BOL search. You have a utility at 2, 20, 11 that will methodically look through PDSTRAN looking for a bill of lading match on things like Blends or Invoices. This takes fricking forever and you have to run it over and over to find something that's spread across multiple types. Phooey on that! The fast BOL search scans all types of transactions at once and is instantaneous. A must for the impatient people we know.
- 11) Price table maintenance via Excel. We get a lot of requests to try to import price changes, and if we aren't doing it, you are likely spending WAY too much time in hand-keying these in. This is a matched pair of programs, one to spit out present Prodware to Excel, and the other to import your reply. Excellent.
- 12) Printers description. We, and maybe you, have little idea what all your printers are. What the heck is printer 5? Is it even in the same building as you? The same city? We have a means of storing and recalling names and descriptions of these things so everybody can share in this. Please have us install that and put it to use.
- 13) Prodware O screen. We occasionally have the need to know what orders a product is sitting on, or why Available is lower than On Hand. We also like to be able to see, quickly of course, where a product has most recently been invoiced to. Don't you? The Prodware O screen provides this instantly, saving us all the need to launch long reports.
- 14) Cardlock Posting Codes Conflict utility. This system allows you to point a site-pump at a product that is not even contained in the PCAT used by the site posting codes. This is bad for you, and nasty for us to detect. Let us install this utility to make it a snap to expose such conflicts.

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- 15) Dumps to Excel. We get a lot of service requests to find data that is deeply buried in the files and that doesn't come out easily via your standard reports. We've gotten around a lot of that by providing data dumps suitable for opening in Excel. We have about 18 of these, but let's install and train on these seven: G/L report, Prod-Pak Sales Analysis, customer addresses, Customer Product Sales Analysis, inventory transactions (PDSTRAN), sales transactions, and cardlock transactions.
- 16) Wildcard search in the Vendor file. We have a hard time looking up vendors because we don't know your alpha schemes. Let's put in wildcard support so we can all find a vendor with just a piece of the name, address, or phone.
- 17) Staff maintenance. It can be useful to be able to connect a user's login name to that person's initials, and to that person's email address. This let's us know who you are and how to email something to you. It also allows us to configure the system to email things automatically to people on your staff. Most useful.
- 18) A/R to G/L variance tracking. We are always installing this on systems after it was needed, placed there for "next time". This thing periodically takes a snapshot of the A/R subledger total and the balance in G/L at the same moment. Should a variance exist, or should it change, this feature gives us a trail of clues to work with.
- 19) A/R Position utility with filtering. This one allows us to sum open A/R almost instantly, while also allowing us to filter it by things like salesman or warehouse, or by source, such as payments, Cardlock, late charges and so forth. We like the speed and flexibility of this; you will too.
- 20) Customer Taxes Paid Report. You have some cumbersome tax recaps by customer that are bucket-based and unreliable. This is a better tool, based on transactions, and better organized for your customer to read. It's part of what we post to WebRx, but even if you aren't to that level, it's a nice report to be able to provide your customers. We like having it around because it's a fast way to review a customer's taxes, and the invoices they were on, all while trusting that it's accurate. But that's us; we're picky that way.
- 21) Finally, let us install the Summary Sales Analysis and make that a daily auto-mailer to top management. This is the grand summation of sales, broken out by sales rep, by warehouse, by profit center, and by product category --- all in a concise report of about one and a half pages. It's probably the best report of the dozen or so you are missing, and it's a perfect way to introduce the concept of emailing vital data to staff members, a concept that is heavily used elsewhere.