

September, 1999

ADVANTAGE

BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEMS

(903) 636-5200 Fax (903) 636-4674

featuring: *Barr Lumber Company*

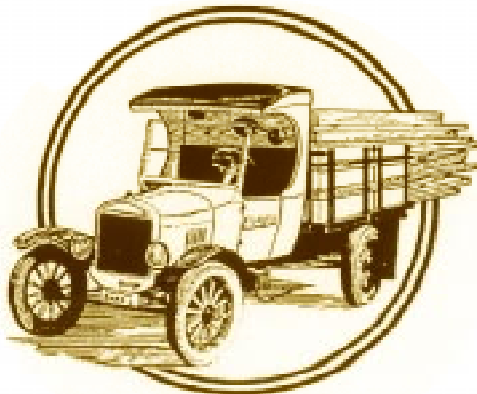
Warm and sunny southern California is home to Barr Lumber Company. Barr was first established in 1903 by O. H. Barr. Since that time Barr Lumber has been on the move. They have purchased more than 20 lumber yards over the years. Selling or consolidating these yards, their current seven locations represent almost 40 acres of lumber yards and 85,000 square feet of store space.



While more than 55 of their competitors have not survived the last 7 years, Barr Lumber's adaptive responses to the extreme changes in the market conditions of the Los Angeles basin have allowed them to thrive in an otherwise hostile environment. As a result, they have established a well-known and respected reputation in the lumber and hardware industry.

Knowing their target markets and deliberately servicing their needs has built their success story. They serve four separate market segments: (1) sales to contractors who build new homes, condominiums and commercial buildings, (2) sales to "repair and remodel" contractors, (3) sales to homeowners and other consumers, and (4) sales to commercial and industrial accounts. "If we do not satisfy the customer, we have failed," is the message sent to all of the Barr employees. Barr Lumber is a selling organization where all employees must be salespeople. Not only do they sell their various product lines, but they sell themselves and their ability to service the customer.

In 1995, the search began for a software package that would combine the three different packages they were using. Their continuing growth demanded more efficiency, and Advantage became the package of choice. The ability to use a fully-integrated package,



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Newsletter

P O Box 421
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that flowed from the beginning of the transaction through to the General Ledger, enabled them to eliminate many labor hours of redundant work. Initially, they used that labor toward internal audits and were able to isolate procedural issues that had gone undetected. As those areas were resolved, they were able to reduce their supporting staff. Since they use nearly every module of the Advantage package, they top the charts in the demand they place on the Advantage system and have been a driving force in software's development in past years.

The forecast is bright and sunny in California for Barr Lumber company, their new store locations, new president John Shirley, his team and their partnership with Advantage.

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Basic to Database Conversions

Due to the holidays, we will not do conversions during the months of November and December. If you are planning a conversion, make arrangements to have it completed before November 1, 1999. Any conversions that do not happen prior to that time will be delayed until after the first of January, which may put you at risk with regard to "Year 2000 Preparedness."

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1999 IRS TAX FORMS

It's time to think about W-2 and 1099 Miscellaneous forms.

Our forms are:

- **IRS authorized and approved**
- **GUARANTEED 100% compatible with your accounting software**
- **Save time with compatible envelopes.**

WATCH FOR THE ORDER FORM IN THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER.

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Timely Connections

from Herb Matatall

Since this is the year that many customers are converting to Database, there is no need to tell you how busy we are. For non-emergency hardware help, please make the appropriate scheduling arrangements. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!** For those of you wanting after-hours support for changing a drive, putting in a tape drive, etc., remember that ABCS has allocated Tuesdays and Wednesdays for those applications.

MONTHLY Root-n-Boot Process

Consider the following scenario....

You come to work one day and your main computer system is locked up. None of your monitors are working. You hear the approaching footsteps of disgruntled employees whose terminals and printers are not responding. Quickly you call the technicians at Advantage Business Computer Systems. As you hear the ring and that familiar recording, you are thinking, "Great, my problems will be solved." A smile crosses your face as you hear the polite response of the ABCS technician on the other end of the line. Again you are thinking, "Man, help is on its way." After several trying minutes of troubleshooting, checking your connections, cables, etc., we have NO success. Without skipping a beat the ABCS technician tells you to pull out your current set of Root-n-Boot / Rootbackup Floppy Media. You are saying to yourself, "NO! NO!" This is not what you want to hear.

This can be a heart-stopping moment for some folks. For those of you who do not have a current backup or have never made a Root-n-Boot /Rootbackup, you are taking needless risk. (For those of you who have your media, test and keep those copies in the appropriate place. You may need them someday.) Having a current set of Root-n-Boot backup media can bring a happy ending to the above scenario. (See the "Doing a Root Backup" article in August, 1999 Newsletter.)

SERVICE CALL SURVEY

In the August, 1999 Newsletter, we asked your opinion about "on-site" service calls. We need feedback from our customers before we make any decisions about implementing this program. If you need another copy of the survey, call Carolyn at ext. 213.

ARE YOU GOING TO BE PREPARED FOR THE YEAR-END?

Once again it is time to remind you that the end of the calendar year is approaching and for many of you the calendar year-end also means the end of your fiscal year. Yes, we know it is “*only September,*” but if you have been letting things slide so far through the year, *NOW IS THE TIME TO GET CAUGHT UP.* A sure way to reduce stress at year-end is to have all of your data cleaned up and ready before the year-end arrives.




What should you be doing?

- 4 General Ledger users: Begin balancing each G/L account to its subledger (See the General Ledger->How to reference files->Balance to G/L section for documents on balancing.)
 - * Balance inventory value to inventory G/L account.
 - * Balance A/R Aging to Accounts Receivable G/L account.
 - * Balance A/P Aging to Accounts Payable G/L account.
- 4 Reconcile your bank statements to G/L.
- 4 Clean up customer accounts of unapplied payments and open credits.
- 4 Clean up vendor accounts of credits and proper distribution of expenses.
- 4 Clean up open Point-Of-Sale orders that will not be invoiced.
- 4 Clean up open Purchase Orders that will never be received.
- 4 Clean up inventory transfers that are not completed.
- 4 Confirm payroll tax liabilities and YTD information.

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The documents listed below are on the End-of-Month/Year->How to reference files menu. They can help you get prepared for the year-end.

-  Pre-“end of year” procedures
-  Year-end procedures
-  Year-end reminders

MANAGING YOUR HARD DRIVE SPACE

Month-end processes such as creation of EOM data areas and history archiving can only be done successfully if there is enough room for the system to create these additional files. Check your hard drives for space, by typing in “space” at a # sign on your system console. The system will display each hard drive and list the number of megabytes still available, and the total size of the hard drive. Because of individual differences, the space needed for a month-end dataset or a history archive file is relative to each store.

Below are files that become outdated and can be removed from your system using the menu options.

- **End-of-day log files:** The system creates monthly directories for the EOD files. These directories are considered out-of-date when there is little probability that you will ever want to reprint your EOD reports from them. The End-of-Day->Administrative menu->Remove EOD log files option will remove them.
- **End-of-month areas:** After you have run A/R statements and any other reports from the month-end area, it is out-of-date and can be deleted. Use the End-of-month/year->Administrative menu->Erase end-of-month area option to delete this area. The system will recreate a new month-end area with the close of the next month-end.
- **History archives:** History archive files can vary greatly in size depending on the data area being archived and its size. Point-of-Sale archives are usually the largest. Guidelines on how long to keep these archived files are listed in the document for End-of-month/year->How to reference files->Monthly History Archiving. The size of your hard drives will dictate how closely you can follow these guidelines. See the End-of-Month->How to reference files->Deleting history archives for step by step instructions on deleting history archives.

BASIC TO DATABASE CONVERSION

ADVANTAGE BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEMS ACADEMY ADVANCED TRAINING CLASSES

Wednesday, September 8, 1999 and Thursday, September 9, 1999.

If there is enough interest, we will hold the Basic to Database Conversion classes. We need to have a minimum of 15 enrolled. If you are interested, call Dian at extension 242 to register. The classes will begin at 8:00 AM daily and continue until 6:00 PM. Tape recorders are welcome. Bring a copy of your data so that we may actually convert it on Wednesday. You will then use your own converted data the balance of the class session. Once you have attended the conversion session of the Advantage Academy, you will be prepared for your live conversion from the Basic to the Database software. Take the time, under the guidance of our instructors, to configure and learn the database advantages for your business.

Basic to Database Conversion Class Schedule

Wednesday, Sept. 8, 1999

8:00 - 9:30 AM	Conversion process Being prepared, data integrity
9:45 - 10:30 AM	Security databases Configuration
10:45 - 12:00 PM	General Ledger Configuration, batch posting, and journal entries
1:00 - 2:45 PM	General Ledger Configuring headers
3:00 - 5:15 PM	Inventory Control Configuration, item setup, matrices, and vendor records
5:30 - 6:00 PM	Electronic Purchasing

Thursday, Sept. 9, 1999

8:00 - 9:15 AM	Purchasing Configuration, PO's and receiving
9:30 - 11:15 AM	Point-Of-Sale Configuration, Sales/quotes/estimat
11:30 - 12:00 PM	Payroll Configuration and checks
1:00 - 1:30 PM	Payroll
1:45 - 2:45 PM	End-of-Day/Month/Year Configuration and procedures
3:00 - 4:30 PM	Accounts Receivable Configuration, statements, and payments
4:45 - 6:00 PM	Accounts Payable Vouchers, checks, and voids

Database Classes - Fall Semester

*Have you registered for the Fall Semester Database Classes
Monday, September 20, 1999 through Thursday, September 23, 1999?*

Free to all Basic and Database users, the classes begin at 8:00 AM daily and continue until 6:00 PM. Students will have access to computer terminals for hands on experience during the classes. Tape recorders are welcome.

The complete schedule/registration form insert was in the August, 1999 Newsletter or call extension 216 or 242.

Session Schedule:

Monday, September 20, 1999

Session One: Miscellaneous Classes

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Session Two: Accounts Applications

Wednesday and Thursday, September 22 & 23, 1999

Session Three: Sales and Purchasing