

January, 2000

# ADVANTAGE

BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEMS

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

featuring: *Whelan's Lumber Company*

Founded in 1908 in the days of square nails and mule-drawn delivery carts, Whelan's has been providing quality building materials for over 90 years to Northeast Kansas. Catering to the building needs of home builders, contractors, remodelers, and the do-it-yourselfer, Whelan's quality in service and product has made them a leader in the local building market. They presently have three retail locations, two in Topeka, Kansas and one in Lawrence, Kansas, plus a door/window manufacturing plant.

Whelan's original location in downtown Topeka is the largest lumberyard in the area, exceeding fourteen acres of quality lumber and building materials. Free delivery, installed sales services, the door and window plant, house plan design service, installed insulation, lawn equipment sales and service, pre-built headers, and their new Do-it-Best Rental Center are only a few of the many quality services offered by Whelan's and its knowledgeable sales personnel.

Whelan's began looking for a replacement computer system in 1995. After a great deal of time and research, Advantage was chosen because of its solid relational database format and its very competitive price on both the system and support fees. The Advantage System is designed to give the user the ability to increase productivity, and Whelan's strives to utilize the full potential of the Advantage System. Bryan Gauntt, System Coordinator, says, "With the report generator and some custom programming that we've done, we're able to do everything on our system that we want."

Electronic commerce has also become a part of Whelan's. Their website at [www.whelans.doitbest.com](http://www.whelans.doitbest.com) includes "in-store" specials, access to the Do-it-Best How To Encyclopedia, and even a map showing their downtown Topeka location. From square nails to a website, Whelan's has come a long way in 91 years.



# Newsletter

P O Box 421  
Big Sandy, Tx 75755-0421

## *Inside News.....*

*Hard Drive Space  
Management...*

*End of Year Balancing  
Report...*

*Timely Connections...*

*State Payroll Tax  
Changes...*

*Federal Income Tax  
and FICA  
Changes...*

*Other Program  
Updates...*

*Special Offer on  
Envelopes...*

## System Administration

### Hard drive space management

```
Examine disk space
Size of current area
_____ Space reclamation _____
Archived history paths
Company dataset maintenance
Erase end-of-month area
Purge customer sales history
Purge inventory purchase history
Purge inventory sales history
Recover tape to a "/work*/recover*" path
Remove end-of-day log files
Remove end-of-month log files
Remove "old" upgraded software
Remove "temp" files from "./userdata"
_____
Quit/exit
```

In an effort to give you the tools to be a more self-sufficient user, we have created the “Hard drive space management” menu. This menu can be loaded from the diskette enclosed with this newsletter by following the steps on the instruction sheet.

Several of these options are available elsewhere in the software, but we have now consolidated them into one place for your convenience. A number of the options require that you be logged in as “root” before you can use them.

- **Examine disk space:** This option shows you the space available on each drive configured in your system. The most important figures are the first ones after the drive name. These represent the unused space in each area.
- **Size of current area:** This option calculates the size of the current dataset and compares it to the space available. You can determine beforehand if you have sufficient space to run an EOM/EOY procedure.
- **Archived history paths:** This is a sub-menu with options to build a list of history archives to delete. Once this list has been built, the first option is used to backup the selected history archives on tape before permanently removing them from the system.
- **Company dataset maintenance:** This option allows you to maintain the entries in your system-wide company dataset list. The delete function allows full removal of any dataset in the list after a new backup copy is made.
- **Erase end-of-month area:** This option is a “last resort” option that will free hard drive space by reducing the number of “file” entries for that directory tree. NOTE: this option does not backup the dataset before erasing it, so make sure it will not be needed again until the next month-end procedure creates a new month-end area.
- **Purge customer sales history:** This application will remove records from customer sales database. This is the customer sales history found when the [F9] key is pressed on the “Sales” field on screen 3 in A/R Customer maintenance. You enter the date of the oldest record to keep and all records that are older will be purged. This is the same purge option that should be run at EOY or anytime your are getting low on space.
- **Purge inventory purchase history:** This application will remove records from the purchase history database which is accessed by pressing [F2] in Inventory item maintenance. Again, enter the date of the oldest record to keep and all older records will be purged. These “purge” options should be considered by all users who have been on the system more than two years.
- **Purge inventory sales history:** This final “purge” application removes records from the inventory sales database which is accessed by pressing [F3] in Inventory item maintenance. The Over/Understock report uses sales history to generate suggested order quantities. Before purging data, consider how many years to keep for this report.
- **Recover tape to a "/work\*/recover\*" path:** This option automatically reads a tape into a "recover" area on any non-root filesystem with adequate available space. It has the option to erase an existing "recover" area to free up space.
- **Remove end-of-day log files:** You can delete End-of-day log directories for all but the current month with this option. However, reprinting EOD reports will not be possible for any period whose log files have been removed. This option provides no backup prior to the deletion of files.
- **Remove end-of-month log files:** This program allows end-of-month log files to be removed. There is no option to back this information up on tape before the removal is performed. The last daily backup prior to using either of these “remove log” options should be clearly labeled and kept as part of your permanent backup library.
- **Remove "old" software program files:** This program selectively removes files from the system with the option to perform a backup to tape of any information prior to removal. This is useful for recovering space from your "root" and "/work" filesystems after upgrading the software. It is recommended that this be done within 30 days of the upgrade.
- **Remove "temp" files from "./userdata":** This program removes unneeded, miscellaneous, temporary files and directories in the current "userdata" area. A tape backup of any information is not needed before removal. This option will only be allowed when no one else is logged into the system since these “temp” files are needed during regular operations.

# *End of Year Balancing Report:*

The End-of-period balancing report generated by the End-of-month/year procedure serves a twofold purpose: 1) YTD balances in an easy to read 1-page report, and 2) verification that all databases have been cleared. The first copy of the report is calculated before the EOM procedure begins closing or clearing any databases. The second copy of the report is calculated after the EOM procedure is complete. Comparing the two reports will confirm that the configured databases were closed during the EOY closing.

In addition to the "Year-to-date Totals" there are also "Master Totals" for Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, and Inventory. These are the balances of the subledgers and can be used to balance to the General Ledger.

This report is automatically configured to print with the EOM procedure. You do not have to configure the EOM header to print the report. If you want to print the End-of-period balance report at another time, you will find it on the End-of-month/year > Year-end procedures menu.

## *TIMELY CONNECTIONS*

*From Herb Matatall*

The year-end is here, and the new year is beginning. I want to remind you again of the little things that will make your system operation better. Start Y2K right!

- Perform monthly Boot 'n Root procedures from "single user mode" ONLY.
- Keep at least one set of your monthly Boot 'n Root media off the premises in a safe place. Making two sets of Boot 'n Root media is even better. Always use new media for Boot 'n Root.
- Test the monthly Boot 'n Root media periodically. (See the March, 1999 Newsletter for testing procedures.)
- Perform a weekly shutdown procedure on your system. (See the June, 1999 Newsletter for instructions.)
- Clean your system, at least, monthly. Shut down your system properly first and use canned air to blow out the dust. (See the June, 1999 Newsletter for more on cleaning your system.)
- While your system is down for cleaning, don't forget to check the fans in the CPU. Typically, there are at least four. If all of the fans are not working properly, your system can overheat.
- Test your battery backup at least once a month. (See the August, 1999 Newsletter for the complete testing procedure).
- Periodically test some of your daily data backup tapes. With the tape in the drive, from the # prompt type:

`tar tv8`

This command will scroll the names of the files on the tape across the screen. (See the March, 1999 Newsletter for more information.)

- Create an equipment list of all devices, i.e. workstations, printers, etc., in your company. Indicate manufacturer, model and serial number for each item. Also indicate from whom you purchased each item. Make sure a copy of this list is available to all employees who are responsible for trouble shooting problems on your system.
- If you have Ethernet devices, please DO NOT add devices unless you know precisely how to do it. You can literally shut down your whole system by entering the wrong information.
- Always schedule equipment upgrades with the Advantage Hardware Department. (See the August, 1999 Newsletter.)
- Create a Hardware Documentation folder. Print out all pertinent documents for your operation from the documents found in Other Options > How to reference files > Hardware. If your system is down, you will not have access to the documents you might need if you do not have a hard copy.

These are the basic hardware procedures that you need to perform regularly. There can be other things that you need to do in your particular system, so start with this list and add to it. Regular maintenance will keep your system in top shape and make your computer system the useful tool that it was intended to be.

# 2

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

# 0

*The Advantage Offices will observe New Year's Holiday on the following schedule:*

# 0

*December 31st - closing at 10:00 pm*

*January 1st - Open at 6:00 am for support only*

# 0

*Emergency support only available during closed hours.*

## STATE PAYROLL TAX CHANGES:

If your state payroll taxes are changing as of the January 1, you need to send us your annualized tax rates so that we can update the system to accommodate the changes. Check your state tax tables anytime you receive an update from your state. If you are in doubt about whether there are changes, contact your CPA or your state payroll tax department.

We are depending on you to fax us the state documentation for any changes in payroll taxes. We will not change tax tables or any taxing information without the official documentation from the state. We need only the annualized percentage tables, not the detailed tax tables.

Fax them to Advantage to the attention of Payroll Programming. We have a turn around time of 48 hours during the business week (Monday through Friday). But please don't wait until the last minute. Find out if there are any changes and notify us as soon as possible.

## FEDERAL INCOME TAX AND FICA CHANGES:

Updated federal income tax tables for 2000 are included on the enclosed diskette. Installation instructions are also included. Any changes to FICA and Medicare rates and limits can be made on the "Payroll header configuration" Screen 1. Federal unemployment rates may also be changed there.

## OTHER PROGRAM UPDATES:

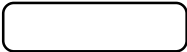
The new "Hard drive space management" menu and a patch for End-of-month are also included on the enclosed diskette. Please load this diskette following the instructions as soon as possible. It needs to be loaded before you close your year.

## SPECIAL OFFER ON ENVELOPES FROM THE FORMS DEPARTMENT

If you are using *STATEMENT FORMAT #6* or any of our *STANDARD SHORT FORM INVOICES* and you are tired of folding statements and invoices twice instead of once, we have the solution to your problem.

We have designed a custom single window envelope that will fit your #6 statement and your short form invoice with only one fold.

YOUR FIRM NAME  
Address  
Your City, State, & Zipcode



9 1/4 x 4 1/2

**Contact the Forms Department at 1-800-991-7283 EXT: 204 or 246, and we will be happy to answer your questions or take your order.**

**NEXT ORDER WILL BE TAKEN in July 2000.**

### BLACK IMPRINT

QTY	Price per M
2,500	\$68.00
5,000	\$56.00

### ONE PMS COLOR

### Envelope Price per Thousand

Prices above are valid until January 31, 2000. This is a special order item. Production time 4-6 weeks.