

****Forward to your Advantage System Administrator****

November 2004



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

Bar Code Compliance 2005 Sunrise Announcement

The Uniform Code Council, Inc. (UCC) has announced that by January 1, 2005 all U.S. and Canadian companies must be capable of scanning and processing the EAN 8 and EAN 13 bar code symbols, in addition to the 12-digit Universal Product Code (UPC). The change means that beginning in 2005, all products being imported into the US are no longer required to have a UPC code added to their packaging. You will begin to receive products that have the EAN 8 (8-digits) and EAN 13 (13-digits) codes on them instead. This step is all a part of a bigger plan to introduce GTIN (Global Trade Item numbers) standardization throughout the world. GTIN numbers are 14-digit bar codes and although are not yet required, the industry is preparing for that eventuality. The Advantage system has always had the ability to store up to 16 digits for bar codes, so we are prepared for storing the longer bar codes.

Current Issues:

1. The Advantage software already had the capability of storing up to 16-digit bar codes. The various lengths and our ability to store and process them is not an issue.
2. Bar code scanners: The scanners we have tested all have the ability to either read EAN 8, EAN 13 and UPC codes, or can be programmed to do so. We know that Symbol-brand scanners will need some additional programming. For bar code programming sheets contact the Hardware Department. We are recommending that you test each type of scanner you have to ensure its ability to scan the EAN bar codes. You may print bar codes to test from the following site: <http://www.gtin.info>. At the # sign (command prompt) on a terminal, scan the bar code. If it displays the full digits you see on the EAN bar code, it has read it properly.
3. Bar code labels: Currently the standard ABCS bar code labels "h" and "i" print EAN 13 bar codes. All other standard labels are printing UPC 12-digit bar codes.



Upcoming issues:

1. The UCC has stated that no one is to calculate check digits for bar codes any longer. This means that 10-digit, 11-digit UPC's must now be stored with a minimum of 12 digits. Since the future GTIN compliance requires that all bar codes go to 14 digits, we are recommending that an update be run against all UPC bar codes to populate the check digits (when missing) and to pad them as

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**P. O. Box 421
Big Sandy, TX 75755-0421**

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required to the full 14 digits. Advantage will provide this update program on a menu to be run when desired. It is recommended that you run it in a play area first to allow you to see the results, test your scanners, etc. Watch for more news regarding this.

2. EDI vendors: All supported EDI vendors are now changing or will be changing their data in the near future to support the full 14-digit GTIN bar codes. This will mean that all of our download routines from these vendors will have to be changed to parse a larger bar code. Additionally, Do It Best and TruServe have notified us that they are totally changing all of their download file structures. All of these changes will mean that those doing EDI will be required to go on a new version as soon as these changes are implemented. We will keep you informed as to the status of these changes as they become available.
3. Bar code scanners: Bar code scanners cannot be programmed to scan both 10-digit UPC codes and 12-digit UPC codes. They can only be programmed to do one or the other. This has been a non-issue until now because we have always stored just 10 digits. However the UCC changes state we must store all digits. As stated, we cannot have some as 10 and others as 12. The ABCS recommended solution to update all your existing UPC's to the GTIN 14-digit length solves this issue for scanners and printers.
4. Bar code printers: All bar code printers we have sold calculate check digits on UPC symbology bar codes if they are less than 14 digits. By following the ABCS and UCC recommended solution to update to 14 digits, this issue is solved.

Non-issues:

1. All existing stored bar codes and any labeling you have done in your stores will continue to work.
2. When running the update to make your bar codes 14 digits, we will continue to store the original bar code. In doing so, the system will find either bar code, regardless of which style is scanned. This allows for the evolution to the new GTIN standards of 14 digits to occur gradually, as you begin to receive the new bar code styles on products or as you get downloads from vendors.

For more information about these new bar code standards, visit

http://www.uc-council.org/ean_ucc_system/stnds_and_tech/2005_Sunrise_Flyer1.pdf

If you need any assistance in programming your scanner or think you may need to replace existing equipment, please call the Hardware Department at extension 505.

**Free****NOW IS THE TIME!
9904 Version Users****Free**

If you have not yet updated to a newer version of the software, now is the time! Since updates for new versions of the software are free, there is nothing to hold you back. Newer versions of the software continue to automate processes making the user-experience more successful. End-of-year is one of those processes that became significantly more automated on the version after 9904. If you have not taken advantage of these new enhancements by updating, it could be costing you time, stress, data integrity, and some unneeded frustration if a mistake or omission is made in the year-end steps. Jump on board and enjoy the enhancements designed to make you more successful. Contact ABCS today and request a free update tape.



0310 Version Patches Via Internet

Keeping current with patches ensures that your system is at the peak of its performance and allows you to have confidence that your business will run without complication on a daily basis. Is your company running on the latest version and patch level of the Advantage software? If not, you could be missing out on time and money saving features. Utilizing Internet technology, you can now update your system to the latest patch level at your convenience right over the Internet. It eliminates having to send media through the mail or to wait for an appointment to get patches installed on your machine.

```
Patch software via internet connection
Activate update (update must already be loaded)
Reorganize datasets or history
Configure access to system utility menus and procedures
Dataset access initialization (restrict users from no companies)
Dataset access maintenance (restrict users to certain companies)
Dataset query mode configuration (query by company name/company number)
Dataset maintenance
quit/exit
```

With the simple steps explained in the document, "Patching via internet", found on the Main Menu -> System Administration-> Operating System Utilities -> ABCS Software, you can have your patches installed in no time. PLEASE NOTE: The How To Reference document for patching has been updated as of 10/21/04. Contact Software Support for an updated version first before patching.

In order to use this feature, your software version must be at least 0310 and be on the Linux operating system. Those on lower versions should first contact Software support to update to the 0310 version. After this initial update, you can then employ the Internet to keep your software current with the latest patches and experience the most from your Advantage software.



PREPARING FOR CONVERSION TO EXECUPRO™

As a user of our current software who would like to convert to our new ExecuPro software when it is ready, you must be archiving your General Ledger posting batches if you are posting batches in summary. We will have data conversions available, but we must have the General Ledger batch detail to successfully complete the conversion.

If you are not currently archiving the unposted batches, switch the option on now. Go to General Ledger-> Administrative menu-> G/L header configuration-> Screen 1. Set the flag to archive posted and cleared batches as shown below:

```
Archive posted/cleared batches (y/n)?...: Y
```

Leave this option turned on and do not purge the General Ledger archives.

End Of Year - 61 Days And Counting.....

It's never too early to prepare for the end of the year. It's just around the corner and time is getting short. The September newsletter reminded you of "What you should be doing" in the software to prepare for year end. Now is also the best time to check your system for any hardware restrictions that may create a problem for you at year-end.

√ System Administration-> Hard drive space management-> Size of current area

Do you have adequate space for all year-end datasets? Check the size of each dataset you will be creating to see how much space you will need. Note the "Path" for each dataset and common area and how much space is needed. Repeat the procedure in each dataset until you have a complete list.

√ System Administration-> Hard drive space management-> Examine disk space

Note the space available on each hard drive. The first number is the available space.

```
/work : Disk space: 1684.38 MB of 7326.76 MB available
```

√ End of month/year-> Administrative menu-> EOM header configuration-> Screen 1

Go to each dataset and note the path to where the EOY dataset will be created for each dataset. If no path is entered in either of these fields, the dataset will be created on the same drive as the current dataset's live area. If an alternate path is configured, it will write to that path instead. This is where you will change the path to point to a hard drive that does have the needed space.

Create monthend area

Enter the full path where the NON-default monthend area will exist:

Enter the full path where the monthend common area (monthcmn) will exist:

√ Compare the space needed with the space available on each drive.

If you will have less than 50 MB left on any drive, you would be outside a reasonable safety zone for your year-end procedures. If you have space available on a drive, but not the right drive, then go back to the End of month/year-> Administrative menu-> EOM header configuration-> Screen 1 for the required dataset and enter the new path. Review the [F1] help for instructions on how to configure the path.

If you are unable to find enough space to successfully complete the year-end procedures, review the Other options-> How To Reference files-> End-of-month-> Hard drive space management document for a variety of methods you can run to purge data from your hard drives.

THANKSGIVING SUPPORT HOURS

Advantage will be observing the Thanksgiving holiday, Thursday, November 25. Emergency support will be available for those with an inoperable system.



HARDWARE ACCESSORIES

AML M7100

AML Protective Boot

\$45.00

AML has released a new molded rubber boot to cover and protect your M7100. The boot slips easily over the easy-to-use M7100 wireless data collection unit. It is designed to protect your unit from damage if inadvertently bumped or dropped up to 4 foot onto concrete. Unmodified, this boot has an IP54 rating for protection from moisture or dust. The boot can be optionally modified to accommodate the removable pistol grip handle, battery door, serial or USB ports on the back and bottom end of the M7100 unit.

*Adapted For
Pistol
Grip*



Protective Boot Only

Top View

Battery Chargers

Keep your M7100's charged and ready to go by using a multi-position charger. They are designed with a rugged metal housing that includes an external power supply and line cord.

Four Position Battery Charger

\$495.00

This unit will simultaneously charge four (4) M7100 batteries within 2 hours.



Four Position Terminal Charger

\$595.00

This unit will simultaneously charge four (4) M7100 terminals within 4 hours.

DUPLIX PRINTING SAVES PAPER

Most of the "business class" laser printers offer an add-on hardware option for duplex printing (printing on both sides of the paper). This gives you the option to print on one side or both sides of the paper. Duplex printing not only reduces paper consumption, but also saves space when filing and storing documents. A duplexer can be added to most laser printers for about \$295. Call the Sales Department at extension 206 for additional information about this money saving add-on.

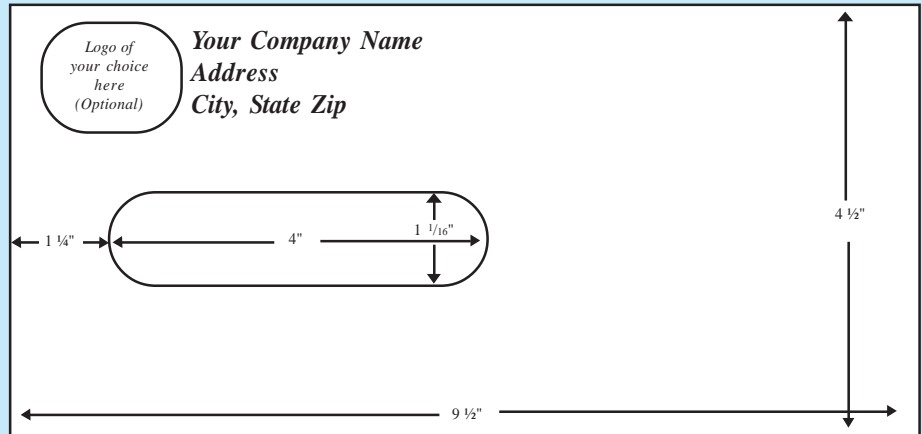


#6 STATEMENT ENVELOPES

TIME TO REORDER!

Please check your inventory to see if you need to place an order today.

Remember, you will not be able to order again until June, 2005.



Place your order today!

Call Tanya

1-800-452-2502 extension 246

or send an e-mail to
tanya@abcsinc.com

Self-Seal Envelopes (Shelf Life Of 6-9 Months)

1000	-	\$163.47 per M
2500	-	\$124.95 per M
5000	-	\$93.26 per M
10000	-	\$70.72 per M

Regular Gum Envelopes (Shelf Life Of 2 Years)

\$57.02 per M



2004 IRS TAX FORMS

CONTINUOUS OR LASER SHEETS

IRS authorized and approved!

GUARANTEED 100% compatible with Advantage software.

Save time with compatible envelopes.

Order before November 19 And Save!

Get ahead of the end-of-year shuffle by ordering your 2004 tax forms now and receive lower prices for your punctuality. Order your forms from now until November 19 to receive the lowest possible price. Orders placed after that will be subject to higher prices and minimum quantity orders.

2004 Tax Form Layouts Have Changed

We have modified the forms program to print on the new layouts. In order to receive the updated changes, your system must be on at least the 0310.186 version or higher. You may download the latest patch level on-line if you are on version 0310 or call Software Support to schedule an update.

ALL TAX FORMS WILL BE SHIPPED by the 1st week of December, 2004.

To order or for questions, call the Forms Department at 1-800-452-2502 ext. 246.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE UPON US

Due to the Holiday Season, please place all your orders for supplies early. Allow for an **extra 5 to 7 days** for all UPS, FedEx and US Mail shipments.