

The Advantage of Partnership



Thank you! Competition is the basis of our economy and supports the freedoms we all value, to make our own decisions in how, where and with whom we do business. Your choice of Advantage as a partner in running your business effectively and efficiently is a great compliment to us.

We know that our competition surrounds our customers daily with emails, phone calls, mailings, recommendations, presentations, and some have even resorted to mandates. We are proud that our customers continue to trust and depend on the sound industry knowledge, software, support and services that Advantage offers. We will continue to work hard to ensure that your loyalty is not misplaced by striving daily to provide the best possible service to ensure your satisfaction with your choice in software.

This year, as we begin rolling-out the first modules of our new software product line, ExecuPro, we are confident that you will like what you see. Our mutual partnership has yielded a new software product line that already has heads turning. As one customer stated, "You have thought of things that just make sense, yet no one else is doing them." ExecuPro and its features are the result of 27 years of listening to our partners and designing software that solves their problems. ExecuPro raises the bar to a new standard, guaranteed to empower your enterprise.

As legacy owners of Advantage software in good standing, this means that a move to the ExecuPro products will provide an opportunity to choose from the modules you are already using from Advantage. Those modules will be offered to you at no additional charge. Your future with Advantage is secure and guaranteed your ROI will continue to turn over again and again as you move forward with the new products and services you will need to keep pace in this competitive environment.

We look forward to seeing you at the trade shows over the next months and at the upcoming Advantage Academy. We appreciate the opportunities these events provide us to meet with our partners.



- The Advantage of Partnership
- Offsite Data Storage
- ExecuPro Conversion
- Password Maintenance
- E-mail Address Update
- Hard Drive Space Management
- New Customer Welcome
- Trade Show Schedule
- Advantage Academy Schedule And Registration Form
- EOY Reminders

* * * **End-Of-Year Reminders** * *

On the last page of the newsletter is a list of reminders for End-Of-Year closing. Take a few minutes to review the list before beginning the End-Of-Year procedure.

Offsite Data Storage



When the unthinkable happens, are you going to be prepared? We all hope that it doesn't happen to us, but unfortunately fires and floods do occur. Several of our customers were totally wiped out by fires and floodwaters from hurricanes this year. In

most of these cases the customers had their data backed up and stored off site. That enabled us to build and ship machines to them quickly to get their businesses back up and running. Having current data allows them to service their customers and to support their employees. If your business suffers a loss of this type, it is important that your data is secure.

One of our Advantage customers learned this lesson the hard way this year. Normally this customer does a great job at maintaining the system and doing backups. Unfortunately, all of their tapes were kept in a briefcase that was carried offsite daily except for that one night when the business caught on fire. The store was a total loss and so was the data.

This illustrates why backup media should be permanently stored offsite. It is hard enough to recover from a disaster of this nature without trying to reconstruct your Accounts Receivable and Inventory from thin air. It is going to be an uphill battle but they will make it.

Make the most of your data storage options. CD or DVD backups can be stored indefinitely. They take up very little space and the cost is minimal. Create your offsite storage locations based on security and accessibility. Multiple storage locations may be the solution that you need. Advantage can store your data using our offsite data storage service. See the June 2004 Newsletter for complete information about the offsite data storage. If you are interested in pricing on this service, contact the Sales Department at extension 206.

EXECUPRO™ CONVERSION

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.

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

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

Password Maintenance

Along with the normal cleaning and blowing dust out from our CPU's, there is a new chore, passwords. With Internet connections and "having nothing better to do," there is a whole world of "hackers" out there trying to get into your system. This can



be devastating not only to your data but also to the core of the operating system. Some of them are trying to get credit card information. Others just want to use your system to bounce to another so they can exploit that system.

The first line of defense is to make sure everyone has a password after the initial login. Yes, this makes for more typing. But it's better than having to write hand tickets all day while we reload your operating system, and then keying in two or more days of work.

Passwords need to be complex also. The days when the user login and password could be the same or almost the same no longer exist. Passwords need to have letters, both upper and lower case, and numbers.

BAD EXAMPLE: login = bobg
password = bobg1

GOOD EXAMPLE: login = bObG or BoBg
password = g1bOB

In addition, the root password needs to be changed at least twice a year. This should only be done with the help of Advantage support so that we know when you change it and what it is. Care needs to be taken because if no one knows the root password, it can be just as bad as getting hacked.

E-mail Addresses



Have you changed your e-mail address lately? Are you not yet receiving the newsletter in your e-mail? We are verifying user e-mail addresses to be sure we have your correct address.

To change your address or be added to the mailing list, send an e-mail to:
newsletter@abcsinc.com

We would love to hear from you if you have any comments regarding the newsletter. Send them to the above address.

HARD DRIVE SPACE MANAGEMENT

On the older SCO systems, hard drive space is always an issue. The newer Linux systems have larger hard drives and do not have the constant space problems. The tools to be more self-sufficient in controlling hard drive space can be found on System Administration-> Hard drive space management. Several of these options are available to Linux systems only on Patch Level 177 or higher. The options are designed for use by system administrators and several require a "root" login. Also see the End-of-month/year-> How to reference files document on "Hard drive space management."

⇒ **Examine disk space** - (functional on Linux at Patch Level 177 or higher)

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** - (functional on Linux at Patch Level 177 or higher)

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 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 same purge option can be configured to run as part of the EOY procedure or can be run anytime your system is 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** - (functional on Linux at Patch Level 177 or higher)

This option automatically reads a tape into a "recover" area on any non-root file system with adequate available space. It has the option to erase an existing "recover" area to free up space (for use only on systems with tape drives).

⇒ **Remove end-of-day log files**

You can delete End-of-day log directories for all but the current month with this option. Once the log file for a period has been removed, reprinting the EOD report will not be possible. 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 up this information 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" upgraded software**

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" file systems 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.

⇒ **Remove old (ABCSCCVS) server logs** - (functional on Linux at Patch Level 177 or higher)

This application allows the selective removal of log files from the ABCSCCVS system. The menu presented is in date order from oldest to newest entries. The ABCSCCVS logs are used for technical support only and should be "pared down" from time to time to prevent the disk storage used by these files from becoming too great. Please note that this procedure does not remove any historical records stored in the "ccd_det1" database in the Advantage software. You must be logged in as root to be able to run this application. On a standard Advantage System these logs are stored in the root file system which is normally a fairly small file system; therefore, this will need to be done periodically to prevent the root file system from filling up and causing operating system related failures.

```
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"
Remove old (ABCSCCVS) server logs

Quit/exit
```



Quality Millwork
Rip's Farm Supply
Tuggle Lumber
Davenport Building Supply, Inc.
Valley Springs Home Center
Huber Lumber Company, Inc.
A. G. Electric



Trade Show Schedule

*Look for the Advantage booth at the following trade shows.
 We always enjoy seeing our customers and having some time to visit with them.*

Show	City/State	Show Dates	Booth	Show Location
Allied Building Stores	Arlington, Tx	Jan 21		Arlington Convention Center
House Hasson	Nashville, Tn	Jan 28-29		Opryland Hotel
Illinois Lumber	Peoria, Il	Feb 8-9	416	Peoria Civic Center
Handy Hardware	Houston, Tx	Feb 17-19	1153	George R. Brown Convention Center
Orgill Spring Dealer Market	Orlando, Fl	Feb 17-19	1774 & 1875	Orange County Convention Center
Moore-Handley, Inc.	Birmingham, Al	Feb 18-20		Birmingham Jefferson Convention Complex
Mid-South Building Materials Dealers Assn.	Gulfport, Ms	Feb 24-26		Oasis/Grand Casino Resort

ADVANTAGE ACADEMY

FREE CLASSES For All Advantage Users

Classes will be held at:
 Ramada Ltd. Suites
 419 N. Spur 63
 Longview, TX
 (903)757-0500

**Monday, March 14 Through
 Thursday, March 17, 2005**

TAPE RECORDERS ARE WELCOME

REPORT GENERATOR CLASS:

This class is designed for System Administrators and other knowledgeable computer staff. *Report Generator is not recommended for new or inexperienced users.* This class is truly for the experienced user. You *must* have a good working knowledge of the COMPLETE Advantage System.

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION AND DATABASE MAINTENANCE:

History archiving, setting up terminals, printers, users, forms, reorganizing data and other routine maintenance procedures will be discussed. A must for all new users. End-of-Month and End-of-Year procedures will also be fully covered.

ACCOUNTING APPLICATIONS:

Designed for bookkeepers, owners and system administrators, these accounting classes will provide additional insight into routine procedures. New users and existing users should plan on attending these in-depth classes to gain a well-rounded understanding of the system as a whole. These classes will assist in implementing new applications of the system and to improve the accuracy and efficiency of routinely used applications.

INVENTORY, PURCHASING AND SALES:

Purchasing agents, receiving clerks, inventory control managers, bookkeepers and store managers are all excellent candidates for this session. You're using these applications now, but learn how you can utilize these applications more effectively. Accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness are the reasons most companies computerize. Learn about tools that will allow you to get the most usage of the Advantage System.

Learn what these applications are about, how they are used, and what you can hope to gain from them. These issues will all be addressed throughout the classes. The more you use the Advantage System, the more benefit you will receive from your investment.

For more information about class schedules and one-on-one training, call extension 273 or 225.

One-On-One Training Sessions

Do you have specific issues that need one-on-one help? Let us know in advance that you need additional assistance and what the issues are. We will then schedule instructors and training time on Friday morning, March 18.

Also send us a data tape or data CD along with a document explaining in detail the issues on which you need help in advance of the classes. We will have your data pre-loaded on the class machine so that you can use your own data during the classes and during the individual training sessions. We would appreciate having your data before classes begin.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Monday – March 14

8:00 - 12:00 PM Basic Report Generator
 1:00 - 5:00 PM Database Maintenance, End of Day/Month/Year & System Maintenance
 5:15 - 6:00 PM Users/Printer/Terminals

Tuesday – March 15

8:00 - 12:00 PM General Ledger
 1:00 - 4:00 PM Accounts Receivable
 4:15 - 6:00 PM Payroll

Wednesday- March 16

8:00 - 11:00 AM Accounts Payable
 11:00 - 12:00 PM Inventory
 1:00 - 2:30 PM Inventory
 2:45 - 6:00 PM Inventory Counts

Thursday- March 17

8:00 - 12:00 PM Purchasing
 1:00 - 2:30 PM Electronic Purchasing
 2:45 - 6:00 PM Point-of-Sale Quotes & Estimates

Friday- March 18

8:00 - 11:30 AM Open for one-on-one training.
NOTE: All one-on-one must be agreed to prior to the school to make sure that the instructors or training is available for that time frame.

ADVANTAGE ACADEMY REGISTRATION FORM

March 14 - 17, 2005

Class will be held at: Ramada Limited Suites
419 N. Spur 63
Longview, TX
(903)757-0500

While the seating capacity of the class is limited, we must have at least 35 reservations to schedule a class. If we do not receive enough reservations, the class will not be held. You will be notified in advance if the class is scheduled or cancelled. Please do not make travel or hotel arrangements or send your deposit until the class is confirmed.

Fax completed form to 903-636-4605 as soon as possible.

For questions about registration, call 903-636-5200, extension 216 or 242.

Company Name: _____

City: _____

Contact: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Names of individuals attending: _____

Number of people attending each day: March 14 March 15 March 16 March 17

Extra one-on-one training: March 18

Those desiring one-on-one training must send us a data CD or tape along with a detailed explanation of issues for which they need help prior to the beginning of classes.

**\$250 (PER PERSON) DEPOSIT REQUIRED
after class is confirmed.
Make checks payable to
Advantage Business Computer Systems, Inc.**

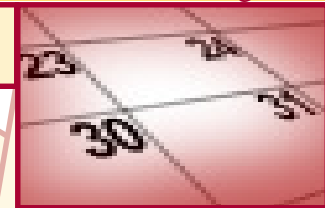
When class is confirmed, mail deposits to:
**Advantage Business Computers Systems, Inc.
Attn: J. Matatall
PO Box 421
Big Sandy, TX 75755-0421**

Persons attending Advantage Academy classes are responsible for their own room reservations and expenses. Be sure to mention that you are with the Advantage group to receive a room discount. There are airports in Longview and Tyler for those who will be making flight arrangements. Shuttle service is available from the Longview airport to the Ramada Inn.

During the Advantage Academy class sessions we would like to address the issues/questions that are of the most concern to you and your company. Please submit five (5) areas you would like to see discussed. If you would like to schedule more specific help, see "One-On-One Training Sessions" on the previous page for more information about one-on-one help.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

END-OF-YEAR REMINDERS



BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Run End-of-day and the backup routine.
- Create a second backup media:
 - Tape:** Main menu-> Other option-> Operating system utilities-> Tape-> Perform daily data backup
 - Linux:** Main menu-> Other options-> Operating system utilities-> Tape and CDROM-> Data backup options tape and cdrom-> Perform daily data backup on XXX
- Verify backup media: (See article in October Newsletter, page 3.)
- Check for adequate hard drive space. (See article on Hard drive Space Management and the November Newsletter, page 4.)
- Print End-of-year documents: Main menu-> General Ledger-> How to Reference files-> Year-end procedures and Year-end frequently asked questions
- Confirm your end-of-year configuration: Check all configurations for end-of-year procedures, using the Frequently Asked Questions document's "Clearing YTD totals and databases" and "General Ledger Closing" chapters. Multi-locations confirm that only the first dataset to close is closing or clearing any common databases (G/L, A/P, A/R, Payroll).
- General Ledger Closing:** If this is your fiscal year-end, do *NOT* close the G/L prior to running the EOM/EOY procedure. (See the Frequently Asked Questions document, "General Ledger Closing" chapter.)
- Payroll Employee Maintenance:** Mark all terminated employees, "Delete at end of year:Y", if you wish to auto-clear them before next year.

WHEN YOU BEGIN:

The End of Year procedure is the End of Month procedure, with the answer to one question different.

- For a December closing, choose a "C"alendar, when prompted: Run which EOM/EOY procedure [N, C, or F]? (The only exception to this is those not using Accounts Payable and Payroll AND it is not your fiscal year-end. See the End of Year procedures document for clarification, if needed.)
- IF using LIFO and this is your fiscal year-end; Answer "Update inventory LIFO: Y" in all datasets.

AFTER YEAR-END:

- Remove all backup media from these procedures offsite for permanent storage (EOD backups and EOM history backups).
- Update the G/L header configuration for the new year: If this was the end of your fiscal year, or if you do not use the General Ledger, go to screen 2 of the G/L header configuration and enter the new fiscal periods and ending dates for the next year.
- Setup "User Access to Datasets" for all who need access to the new End-of-year dataset. (See the End-of-year procedures document for details.)
- Confirm A/R, G/L, INV, and A/P closed as scheduled: Print the Main menu-> End of Month/year-> End-of-year procedures-> End-of-year balance report, if not printed already in your EOM reports. Confirm that each balance that you configured to clear is reporting zero. This must be run in each location, to confirm non-common balances, such as Inventory. Any mistakes must be cleared manually and the configuration corrected for next year. See the "Year-end frequently asked questions" document on how to proceed.
- Running purge applications is recommended if this is your fiscal year-end or if you choose to keep YTD figures based on the calendar year. Purges will clear up more space and can be found on the Main menu-> End of Month/year-> End-of-year procedures menu.

9904 USERS:

- Reset "Run which EOM/EOY procedure [N, C, or F]?" back to "N" for next month's end of month.
- If you have cleared your A/P YTD totals, change "Calendar year for YTD vendor totals" to 2005 on Main menu-> Accounts Payable-> Administration menu-> A/P header configuration, screen 1.

IF YOU FORGOT TO CHOOSE "CALENDAR" and this is your fiscal year-end, or you wanted your A/P and payroll to close for the calendar year, you will have to clear all necessary databases manually before you begin business in the new year. See the "Year-end procedures" and "Year-end frequently asked questions" documents, chapter "Manually Clearing Databases" for instructions on how to do this.

ALSO, YOUR MONTH-END AREA will have to be renamed before the next end of month. Call ABCS software support within the next week or so to arrange for this to be done.

PAYROLL 2005:

W-2's have changed again: You must be on release 0310.183 or higher to receive the new format for printing W-2's. (Always do a test run on plain paper for enough W-2's to print several pages to test the form alignment, before printing on the forms.)