

P O Box 421
515 Private Road 3001
Big Sandy, Texas 75755
Phone: (903) 636-5200
Support: (800) 452-2502
Fax: (903) 636-4605
newsletter@abcsinc.com

June 2007

ADVANTAGE

BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEMS, INC.

NEWSLETTER

Inside News.....

Automatic End-Of-Month Is Here...

Announcing the new Advantage 0706 release

More Innovative Tools In The New Release...

Managing your business with new tools

Downloading The New Release...

Downloading instructions

Building On Our Advantage...

Continuing to be a leader in our industry

Advantage Academy Classes...

Getting the training you need during the June 18 to June 22 Session

Automatic End-Of-Month Is Here

Automatic end-of-month, multi-store price changes and many more business-efficient tools are only a download away. Advantage is proud and excited to announce the immediate availability of our Version 0706 release. As usual, our development team has been collaborating over the past year to search out and bring you new tools for your business. We've made broad strides to present a wide array of tools that utilize modern technology combined with Advantage flare. In this package, you will find more automated functions, unprecedented applications for the growing business environment, and enhancements to the features you already use and trust.

Be sure to read the download instructions article, on page 7, to find out how to download this new version.

Automatic End-of-Month

We've taken automation to a higher level in order to create a tool that gives you more time, flexibility and, most of all, peace of mind in knowing your business close will all happen without personal intervention. Version 0706 gives you the option to configure EOM options once and never have to do it again. Simply tell the system which days to close AR, Inventory and GL, then let the Advantage system do the rest. By verifying the dates against your settings, EOM will execute after EOD has completed, whether EOD is run manually or via CRON. No more late nights to close AR and another late night to close out Inventory.

Another exciting addition is automated EOY that comes with the auto EOM. With each EOM, the Advantage software validates the configurations whether your company runs on a calendar or fiscal year. By design, the system starts the year-end procedures for you, leaving you more time to enjoy the New Year.

Schedule Auto EOM Configuration

The new auto EOM feature requires special configuration which can only be done by appointment with an Advantage Technician. Customers that complete the 0706 update early will be the first ones on the auto EOM schedule!

Multi-Store Price Changes With EDI

Are you spending too much time updating prices for all locations, one at a time? With Version 0706, you can download, make changes and upload to all locations at one time. This function is available for any vendor set up for electronic communications that makes a price change file available. These vendors include Ace, Orgill, Handy, ABS, Do It Best, True Value, Moore-Handley, and many more.

More Innovative Tools In The New Release

New POS Password Configurations

We've added even more control to Point-of-Sale by password-protecting particular features that may benefit many users. With new passwords to control the selling of generic items and to replace an item on a ticket, you can better manage the inventory that leaves the store. Requiring a password for the sale of generic items ensures that a manager knows when, where, and who is selling these items and can validate the sale to guarantee accuracy.

You can also put an end to a clerk ringing up one item, and replacing it with an item of lesser value, thus making sure that what is on the ticket is what the customer has when leaving the store. Cut down on shrinkage and allow the system to secure your inventory.

Credit Card Number Storage

Keep the customer's credit card number in an additional database that securely stores this sensitive information while offering this convenience to your customers. Quit storing personal data in note fields that can be accessed or viewed by anyone. Use this option to set up the credit card information, link it to only the specified customer, and have it automatically populate the credit card field in POS for you. Not sure if you want to automate the credit card number? No problem. This is a flag-controlled feature. If turned off, the clerk has the information at the touch of a button, giving your customer more payment flexibility. A clerk never has to fumble through note fields or a book of credit card numbers again. More importantly, once you have saved credit card data, it is encrypted on the screen giving your customers confidence that their payment information is more secure now than ever before.

Manufactured BOM Committing Application

Adwin 2.2

Designed with mouse users in mind, you can click on new F1-F12 keys at the bottom of the screen instead of pressing hot keys on the keyboard to execute commands. Forty-eight additional programmable buttons were added to enable you to travel through the menus using only the mouse. Once you have the custom buttons set up, you are able to quickly navigate from the main menu to the Item entry screen and back, all with the click of the mouse.

Committing a manufactured kit keeps track of all components needed in order to manufacture a product without removing quantities from the on-hand inventory. Committing these kits will move quantities for each component to the MFG Commit field within the inventory record. Keep

accurate counts and know what needs to be ordered so that you can properly requisition the correct quantities.

Once you choose to manufacture these kits, the components used will be moved to the W/O field within the F3 sales history function. This will enable the tracking of component sales in addition to the kit sales as a whole in the master kit item record.

Multiple E-mail Addresses for Customers and Vendors

Do your customers need orders, quotes, and estimates to go to more than one person? Now you can have unlimited e-mail addresses in the customer record. With each e-mail address stored, you have the option to e-mail orders, quotes, and estimates per address. E-mail to several addresses at once, or use it for storage purposes of important addresses need for later. Once configured, Point-of-Sale automatically sends e-mail to those you have selected with the option to change the e-mail address on the fly as needed.

This feature has been extended into the vendor record as well. Store as many vendor e-mail addresses as needed and individually select those who should receive your purchase orders automatically from purchase order entry.

Having e-mail addresses readily available allows you to quickly send data, invoices, orders, or purchase orders directly from your Advantage system via the web, saving time and money.

Cash Drawer Save Application

Counting cash registers late at night after the close of business can be time consuming and sometimes dangerous task for your clerks. This cash drawer application enables clerks to count their drawer the next day. Once the day has been counted, it will be removed from the drawer selection list. By keeping all menu options the same, you can begin using this feature immediately without training on a completely new application.

Serial Number Entry With AML Hand-Held Scanners

Have you ever received serialized items, only to have to finish the receiver on a regular terminal just to enter in all those serial numbers? Now you can enter or scan serial numbers in real time through the receiving module of the AML. Once a serialized item has been scanned for receiving, the user will be prompted for the serial number. With more vendors placing a bar code on items for the serial number, you can quickly scan this number and ensure accuracy as well.

Forms

A supplementary standard form has been added to the Advantage system. This form shows your customers how much value they are truly receiving. The column for Discount Price allows the customer to view per line item the price he is receiving, either via price levels, promotions, or line item discounts. He can then compare that price to the retail price level one. In addition, we have added a "You Saved" total at the bottom of the ticket, so the customer can see how much you appreciate his business.

Daily, Weekly and Quarterly Sales Movement

Get a more detailed look at sales history. Clearly see how items are moving. Now instead of viewing the existing monthly sales history, you can see daily, weekly and quarterly movement with only one keystroke.

Keep track of the daily movement of items, promos, and the rate at which they are moving when they are on sale. Quickly compare the current week's units sold to the previous week's. Utilizing the 12 weeks display will enable you get a more accurate measure of inventory.

Sophisticated Item Drill-Down Capabilities

In the past, searching for an inventory item anywhere in the system was limited to department/class, description or keyword in description. Depending on how well item descriptions were entered, this can sometimes be time consuming and slow down Point-of-Sale. No longer do you have to look through 100 ladder types to find one item. Our search capabilities have been greatly enhanced so the keyword search looks not only at the item description but first the department and then the class, and even further into the Subclass, Fineline, and sequence code requested by your query.

Additional keyword search fields have been added to Inventory, Point-of-Sale, and Purchasing. Utilizing these fields within the inventory record makes searching for a particular item quick and easy. The Department, Class, Subclass, and Fineline codes enable you to begin with the most common name and drill down into more specific types until you successfully narrow your search. Do you carry dozens of ladder types? No problem, the system will explore through each level based on your keyword until the item is found. No longer do you need to try to put keywords into the description to help your employees find items. Leave your descriptions as normal and set up common sense codes, so your employees can instantly find the items for which they are searching, reducing your learning curves for new employees at POS.

Promotion Codes

Key advancements have been added to the promotion codes. With the latest promo code calculation, you can offer loyal customers better pricing, based on their pricing levels. By putting items on promotion for customers on specific pricing levels you can make your loyal customers feel appreciated while preserving margins for walk-ins and retail customers. Loyalty programs such as these keeps your customers coming back.

Inventory keyword search on dept						
Enter primary search key.: LADDER_						
Enter secondary search key:						
Dp	Cl	Sub	Fin	Name		
01	32	001		Aluminum		
01	32	002		FiberGlass		
Dp	Cl	Sub	Fin	Name		
01	32	001	001	Utility		
01	32	001	002	Extension		
0132	001	001		LADDER ALUM STEP TYPE II 8"		13979
0132	001	001		LADDER UTIL 2STEP 20"H WHITE		18359
0132	001	001		LADDER ALUM EURO PLATF 566-04		7762
---End of list---						

In addition, making the most of these fields will also group your items together for easy viewing within the Inventory Gross Valuation report and the Stock Status report.

Continued from page 3

More Innovative Tools In The New Release

Existing Report Modifications

The "Missing Image Listing" has been updated with a bonus parameter to search for missing images by tickets only. In addition to the existing option of invoice number, you can now limit the search to tickets only or search by all. Easily find which images need to be updated without going through all missing images at once.

The "Inventory Tracking Summary Report" has been modified to recognize out-of-balance conditions and print the GL summary for the batch that caused the irregularity. You no longer have to print multiple reports in order to see the out-of-balance. This report will do it all for you automatically. If no discrepancies are found, the report will print as normal.

Run the "Monthly Purchases and Sales" report by UPC. This new sort order option asks for a range of UPC numbers to limit the search to only these records.

An additional report, "Inventory Track Balance Rpt-Order Entry", has been added to the system for balancing inventory more accurately. Print in the transactions in order-of-entry so that you can quickly compare to the GL batch archive reprint. With this option, you can quickly scan and compare inventory to GL and easily detect any inconsistencies.

The *Bank Valuation Report* has been updated to include (or exclude) the item status field.

Payroll

The following reports within the payroll module have been updated to include PTO, or paid time off hours. This feature was included in the previous release.

- Dollar Summary
- Hour Summary
- Check Listing
- MTD/QTD/YTD wage report
- Wage and Tax report
- Federal/State tax report
- IRS W-2 forms
- Quarterly Federal/State unemployment report

Payroll

Texas Electronic Unemployment Filing

Effective July 1, 2007, all employers who have to file a report on more than nine employees in any calendar quarter will be required to electronically file TWC unemployment wages instead of using paper forms. We have been working with the TWC to ensure all requirements have been met. You can now generate the file and upload it to the TWC web site for prompt, more accurate reporting resulting in faster returns for your business. For more information on these new requirements, please visit the www.twc.state.tx.us web site.

Alabama W-2 Electronic File Exchange

The state of Alabama is phasing in an electronic filing (e-file) option. With the Version 0706 release a new option has been added that meets state requirements and allows you to quickly generate this file and upload to the state's web site. This mandated regulation ensures more accurate data and a timely response for returns. For more information on the new requirements, please visit the www.ador.state.al.us web site.

Millwork

Unique alterations in Bill of Materials are geared directly to door and window manufacturers. By aiding in the production and labor costs of the manufacturing process, we've given you the ability to keep track of all costs. Some of these enhancements include:

- Enabling the user to exclude item availability during interactive kit selection based on kit/item defaults.
- Optimizing production planning by assigning assembly time on a per kit basis.
- Using the setup time fields for manufacturing plant scheduling.
- Creating and assigning manufacturing plans and available time per day.
- Assigning minimum, desired, and maximum time available for each BOM kit.

These features, along with many more, are all accessible in the Version 0706 release that is available now. You can download the release via the Internet or contact Software Support to schedule your upgrade to version 0706. As always, once you receive your release, read the Systems Administration-> Preview new release notes before activating the release. There are several new features that need to be addressed before going live with the release. Take time to review these items and your configurations to ensure a smooth transition to the new release.

Downloading The New Release

Advantage customers have the ability to download the new software release themselves via the Internet. The system requirements are a working Internet connection and software version 0607.001 or higher, or 060701BETA or above.

****If your version is not higher stop and please contact software support.****

1. Download the software. People may be on the system during this process. Perform all steps from the main console as the root user. Login as root. Run the download at least 4 hours prior to activating the release to insure ample time for the procedure to complete. From Main Menu-> System administration-> Operating system utilities, choose ABCS software menu-> Patch software via internet connection.

The first message to display will be:

```
Current version of software: 0607
Proceed (y/n)?.....: N
Patch software via internet connectivity
Answer Y.
```

The screen may blink repeatedly or stay blue, either way is normal. This application will run for several minutes to several hours depending on the connection speed.

When software download is complete, the screen below will appear.

```
The new software is ready to be activated now.
Get everyone logged out of the system, then go
to the following menu option while logged in as
"root" to activate the new software....

System utilities-> ABCS Software Menu->
Activate update (update must already be loaded)
```

Press [space/esc] to clear this message.

2. Print the release notes. At this point, the new release notes are ready to be printed. Go to the System Administration menu and choose Preview New Release Notes. The document displays on your screen with the option to print by pressing the [P] key. Press [escape] and verify [escape] to close display. The release notes detail each new option available in the new 0706 release.

3. Perform a backup. Go to Main Menu-> System administration-> Operating System Utilities-> Tape and Cdrom options-> Data backup options tape and cdrom-> Perform daily data backup on cdrom. This will backup your daily data to CD. Companies using using DVD's for daily backups will need to manually run "dvdbackd" from command prompt.

4. Check disk space. Once the backup is complete, a space check should be performed. Go back to the System Administrative menu and choose Hard drive space management menu-> Examine disk space. A screen will appear with disk space information similar to this:

Filesystem	Size	Used	Avail	Use%	Mounted on
/dev/sda2	7.9G	6.6G	955M	88%	/
/dev/sda1	84M	15M	65M	19%	/boot
none	503M	0	503M	0%	/dev/shm
/dev/sda14	44G	20G	21G	49%	/work
/dev/sda5	44G	29G	13G	70%	/work10
/dev/sda13	44G	28G	13G	69%	/work2
Press enter to continue...					

The column to be concerned about is the "Avail" column. To ensure that all update applications will complete properly, this column should have a minimum of 1G or 1 GIG (1 G = 1000M) in each of the drives labeled as work (work2, work3, etc). In this example, the /dev/sda2 area is 955, which is less than 1G. If the report shows less than 1G, please contact software support before proceeding.

5. Activate the release. Once disc space test is performed, the release is ready to be activated. At this point **EVERYONE IS OFF THE SYSTEM AND NO PROCESSES SHOULD BE RUNNING.** To activate, go to System Administration-> Operating System Utilities-> ABCS Software-> Activate update (update must already be loaded). You will be required to enter your Advantage customer number, telephone number, and validate the machine you are updating, either primary or backup. The activation process will take about 5 minutes at the most.

6. Reorg the databases. Once update is activated, a reorg will be required. Go to System Administration-> Operating System Utilities-> ABCS Software-> Reorganize datasets and history and press [Enter]. A list of all datasets will appear on the screen. To start the reorganization, press [F10]. The question "Ok to reorganize?" appears. Answer [Y]es and press [enter]. All company datasets. live and history, will reorganize. As processing begins, each dataset name appears in the top middle of the screen.

7. Test POS transaction. Once all "live" datasets have completed and "history" datasets reorganizing has started, Point-of-Sale should be tested by running a mock cash ticket and printing. After successfully testing Point-of-Sale, the end-of-day can be executed as the history reorg completes. **Depending on the size of your data, the history reorganizing can take several hours to complete. However, it can run while users are logged in.**

Congratulations!
The 0706 installation is now complete.



Building On Our Advantage

There's no question; the robust feature sets of Advantage's software products offer a true competitive advantage for your business. Now, as part of the ECI² family of companies, we will be building on that advantage to provide you with even more tools to manage operations and improve profitability.

But before discussing some of the things you will be seeing in the future, there is one change that you *won't* be seeing; despite the wishful thinking of some competitors. Neither our company nor our software will be going away.

Neither our company nor our software will be going away.

Unlike some companies in this industry, ECI² does not acquire businesses with the goal of slashing staffs and forcing customers to another software platform. Just the opposite, ECI² has a demonstrated history of making substantial investments in the companies it acquires and working with the existing employees to expand the operations.

When it comes to this industry, Advantage *is* ECI²'s platform. That's why the future is so exciting, both for us and for you, our customers.

So what can you look forward to? While Advantage's day-to-day operations are virtually unchanged, we are now part of a larger company. Listed below are just a few of the benefits that will accrue to both Advantage and our customers thanks to our ability to draw on ECI²'s resources and expertise.

A Marketing Advantage

One of the first changes you will be seeing now that we have joined the ECI² family of companies — and one that demonstrates ECI²'s commitment to the Advantage brand — is a higher profile in the marketplace. Thanks to the support of our customers and the commitment of our outstanding staff, Advantage is the second largest software provider for LBM and adjacent vertical industries. We're also one of the industry's best-kept secrets;

many dealers don't even know about Advantage or the benefits the software offers.

ECI² will be providing marketing resources to help us change this situation. This summer, we will begin advertising

Advantage is the second largest software provider for LBM and adjacent vertical industries.

Advantage for the first time in over a decade. We will also begin marketing Advantage to the industry through other channels, and you will begin seeing more references to us in industry publications over the coming months.

ECI² will also be providing additional support for our sales efforts as we move aggressively to grow our customer base. Why is this important? Obviously, as Advantage continues to grow, the security of your software investment increases.

Software by Dealers, for Dealers

Very soon you will be seeing other changes as well, changes that reflect ECI²'s product philosophy: software by dealers for dealers. What does this mean for you? We have always been responsive to our customers; the new Advantage Version 0706 is a perfect example. Enhancements like automated end-of-month and multi-store price changes are a direct result of customer requests. For more information on Version 0706, see "Automatic End-Of-Month Is Here" on page 1 and "More Innovative Tools In The New Release" starting on page 2. But now, with the support of ECI², we will be taking customer involvement to a new level as we adopt practices already in place at other ECI² companies.

ECI² prides itself on the fact that many of the best ideas in its various software products have come directly from its customers. Not only do customers suggest product enhancements, but through advisory groups and task forces they also help prioritize development efforts and design new applications. After all, who knows more about what you need to manage your business than you do?

Executive Advisory Committee

Customer advisory groups play a critical role in ECI²'s customer-driven design philosophy. These groups are responsible for representing the needs of a specific company or product's customer base. They work closely with product managers and developers to communicate customer needs, suggest new enhancements to the software, and help set development priorities.

Customer advisory groups play a critical role in ECI²'s customer-driven design philosophy.

Each ECI² company has at least one advisory group for its products. In the coming months we will be forming a similar group for Advantage. Dealers will be selected for this group based on factors such as size, industry segment, geographic

location, business model and supplier affiliation to create a committee that reflects the Advantage customer base as a whole. Watch for more information about this advisory group in the near future.

Users Meetings

User meetings are another way that ECI² connects with its customers. These meetings bring dealers together for software training, seminars and the opportunity to see our latest software, along with previews of forthcoming products. Attendees also have the opportunity to provide feedback on products currently in development, as well as submit their own ideas for enhancements.

User meetings are another way that ECI² connects with its customers.

Equally important is the opportunity to meet and share ideas with dealers from across the country. Attendees learn how other companies are using our software to compete more effectively and add efficiencies to their operations. ECI² hosts both regional users meetings and larger national meetings for customers of its various divisions and subsidiaries. In the future, we will be looking into hosting similar events specifically for Advantage customers.

Shared Expertise

Through its various divisions and subsidiaries, ECI² provides business system software, e-commerce solutions, and other technology designed to automate supply chains in numerous vertical industries. Our developers will be able to leverage this experience in developing innovative new features for our own software products. We will also have access to additional development resources and product management expertise to help us bring these new products to market more quickly. We will be taking advantage of these resources to accelerate the release of ExecuPro, Advantage's next generation Java-based system.

New Technology

In addition to developing new technology, our association with ECI² will enable us to leverage their existing products for the benefit of Advantage customers. ECI² companies offer a number of products that could offer additional efficiencies to Advantage customers.

ECI² offers a number of mobile computing and delivery management solutions that are readily adaptable to Advantage customers.

For example, ecInteractive™ is ECI²'s state-of-the-art e-commerce platform. Developed using the latest Web technologies, ecInteractive™ was designed to provide a complete online service solution, enabling customers to search and view order history and access account and AR information as well as order products online. In the future, we will be integrating ecInteractive™ with the Advantage platform to provide a superior online experience for your customers.

ECI² will also introduce new efficiencies in electronic transactions with suppliers; the company operates its own private supply network (PSN), providing fast, reliable Internet-based purchasing with various wholesalers and manufacturers. The PSN offers significant improvements over Advantage's current technology and is capable of automating any purchasing-related transaction, including acknowledgments, advance shipping notices, invoices, or virtually any other transaction data specified by a supplier.

The PSN already processes over one billion dollars annually in transactions between ECI² customers and their suppliers. In the future we will be integrating the PSN with Advantage's platforms to provide you with the same purchasing capabilities enjoyed by other ECI² customers.

In addition, ECI² offers a number of mobile computing and delivery management solutions that are readily adaptable to Advantage customers. These products include software to help you reduce fuel costs and driver hours by automatically optimizing delivery routing, a handheld, signature-capture system for electronic delivery confirmation, and a hosted, GPS-based automatic vehicle locator. We intend to integrate these products with our Advantage software and provide additional management control for your delivery processes.

Additional Investments

ECI² has a demonstrated history of ongoing investment in the companies it acquires, adding development or support personnel when needed and making infrastructure improvements. As we move forward, we will be working with ECI² management to look for other ways to im-

prove Advantage products, improve service levels, and provide additional benefits to you.

Of course, there are also a lot of things that won't change; you will still be working with the same great staff that you have always counted on in the past. Also, as previously stated, the Advantage software will not be going away. Just the opposite; not only are we accelerating the release of ExecuPro but we will be introducing new technology solutions, all backed by outstanding service and support you have come to expect.

This is the beginning of a new chapter for Advantage. We hope you are as excited about these new opportunities as we are.

ECI² has a demonstrated history of ongoing investment in the companies it acquires.



eCommerce Industries, Inc.

ADVANTAGE ACADEMY

Training Classes for All Advantage Users

Monday, June 18 to Friday, June 22, 2007

Companies welcoming new employees will benefit greatly by learning directly from Advantage instructors. The Advantage Academy classes are designed to teach all users, both new and seasoned, how to use the software more efficiently and effectively. During each class learn how to implement features and functions of that application. Find out what you may be missing that would support your specific business needs.

For questions about registration, call the Sales Department at 903-636-5200 extension 216 or 242.

Please check the Press Release section at www.abcsinc.com for the registration form, complete class schedule, and list of motels and airports.

As always, one-on-one training is available. If you desire this kind of training or have specific issues that require extra attention, please contact the sales department in advance, so that individual training can be scheduled.

Class Descriptions

REPORT GENERATOR

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

ACCOUNTING APPLICATIONS

Designed for bookkeepers, owners and system administrators, these accounting classes will provide additional insight into routine procedures. New users as well as 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 users of the system and improving 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 these sessions. You're using these applications now, but learn how you can utilize them more effectively. Accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness are the reasons most companies computerize. Learn about tools that will allow you to utilize your Advantage system to the maximum.

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION AND DATABASE MAINTENANCE

History and Archiving, setting up terminals, printers, users, forms, reorganizing data and other routine maintenance procedures will be discussed. These sessions are a must for all new users. End of Month and End of Year procedures will also be fully covered.

RENTALS, DELIVERY TRACKING AND WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT

These additional applications are available to Advantage users. If you have a need for any of these modules, be sure to attend the session that covers their use. Find out how you can employ this additional functionality in your business.

ONE-ON-ONE TRAINING

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. ***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.***