MAS 500

MAS 500 Version 6.3

Release Guide

September 2003

best software

insights for the life of your business™

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Essential to our Customers for Life strategy are the improved features added to manufacturing, project accounting and distribution.

Overview

For years, customers have appreciated all of the detailed data that MAS 500 captures and stores to help them gain more insight into their business on a daily basis. With this release, MAS 500 provides a powerful, yet simple-to-use data querying tool, the Business Insights Analyzer. This tool makes using and interpreting MAS 500 data easier than ever before.

The previous release of MAS 500 was designed to underscore Best Software's ***Customers for Life*** commitment by making it easier than ever to upgrade MAS 90 and MAS 200 customers to MAS 500. To further expand this commitment, version 6.3 of MAS 500 contains additional data migration utilities to help streamline conversions from MAS 90 and MAS 200.

Also essential to our ***Customers for Life*** strategy are the improved usability features added to the key areas of manufacturing, project accounting and distribution. Global usability enhancements that make it easier to look up information throughout the system have been added, as well as enhancements to the core accounting modules of General Ledger, Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable. Additionally, several features that have been requested by our existing and migrating customers have been included. Finally, maintenance fixes to previous releases are included in this release to provide ongoing benefits to Best Software's ClientCare Subscription Plan holders.

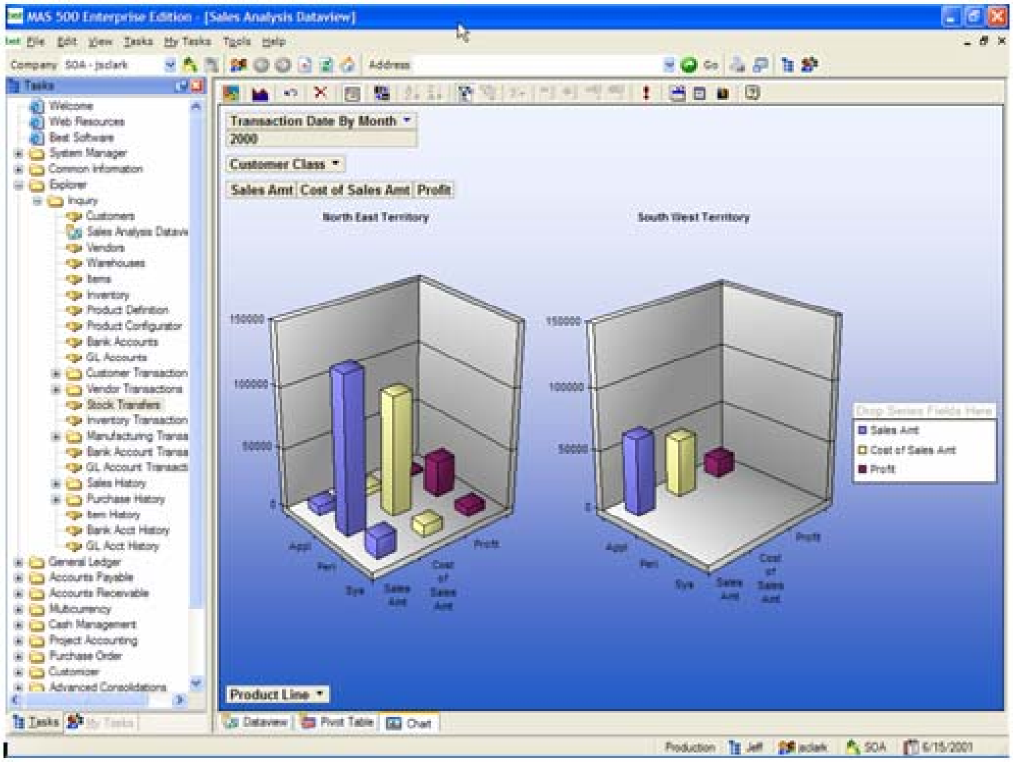
Availability

MAS 500 version 6.3 was released in ***September 2003.***

Business Insights Analyzer

With the Business Insights Analyzer, non-technical financial and line managers can extract and analyze information from the MAS 500 system with ease. Pre-defined data views that join all of the logically related data into one grid are key to the Analyzer's simplicity. From there, pivot tables are directly available that enable the user to "slice and dice" the information by useful parameters such as product line, department or customer class. The data can also be viewed optionally as a chart and displayed right inside the MAS 500 Business Desktop as shown on the next page.

The Business Insights Analyzer is included with the MAS 500 System Manager module, so it is free to all current Subscription Plan holders. The initial offering includes several of the most important data views, the ability to define additional views and the ability to create a Crystal Report based on a view. Subsequent releases will add more views and additional capabilities such as drill down.



Non-technical financial and line managers can extract and analyze information from MAS 500 with ease, and optionally view the data as a chart.

Additional Data Migrator APIs

To complete the Data Migrator functionality originally introduced with version 6.2, this release contains additional Data Migrator APIs (application program interfaces) that are exposed through Assisted Company Setup. These new APIs will assist in converting MAS 90 and MAS 200 customers to MAS 500, as well as other competitive conversions. The new utilities will migrate the following data items into MAS 500:

- Vendor Items
- General Ledger Transactions
- Manufacturing Employees
- Manufacturing Tools
- Manufacturing Routings
- Manufacturing Work Centers
- Manufacturing Operations
- Inventory History
- Open Accounts Payable Invoices
- Closed Accounts Payable Invoices
- Open Sales Orders

To assist migration, a new step called Reconcile Inventory History has been added to Assisted Company Setup. This task should be performed after the Inventory History migration to reconcile history with MAS 500 cost tiers.

Global Usability Enhancements

Customers will experience improved searching capabilities throughout MAS 500.

Improved Search Window Capabilities

Finding the data you want will be easier than ever with the enhanced search window. Customers can resize, reposition, remove, add and sort each data column in the search window. Additionally, each customer can save their personal settings so that they appear as the default when the search window is called again. Fewer keystrokes will be necessary to initiate the search, thus saving time and streamlining daily procedures. And, once a selection has been made and saved, users can use the VCR button on the main panel to scroll through the selected records, providing instant access to the selected data records.

Reporting Output

One of our most frequently requested cost-saving enhancements has been to suppress the blue bar on the top of each report to help conserve printer toner. This enhancement has been added to MAS 500 version 6.3, along with the ability to save report header, detail and footer configuration options.

Improved Lot, Serial and Bin Navigators

Lot, serial and bin navigation has been improved throughout the Distribution, Project Accounting and Manufacturing modules, making the distribution process easier, faster and more accurate.

Core Module Enhancements

Accounts Receivable Customer Status Inquiry

To help MAS 500 customers more readily respond to client inquiries and perform collection tasks, an Accounts Receivable (AR) customer status inquiry has been added that lists open and current period customer transactions. Further, the relationships between those transactions, including those that are parent-child relationships, have been added to the inquiry. The customer statement inquiry can be accessed through the Explorer module and from drill-arounds in Customer Maintenance.

Accounts Payable Vendor Status Inquiry

Similar to the AR customer status inquiry outlined above, an Accounts Payable (AP) vendor status inquiry that lists related vendor transactions, including applicable parent-child relationships, has also been inserted in this release. It is also available through the Explorer module and from drill-arounds in Vendor Maintenance.

Sort and Select General Ledger Reports by Reference Codes

Customers will have the ability to sort and select General Ledger (GL) reports by reference code where applicable — providing even greater reporting flexibility and power.

Inquiry and Transaction Selection by Customer PO Number

Now customer service personnel can use inquiries to find transactions and documents in the Project Accounting, Accounts Receivable and Sales Order modules by keying in the customer's purchase order (PO) number. Since the PO number is frequently the only information that your customer has when they call customer service, now your staff can be extremely responsive by using the PO number for their information searches.

Multiple GL Accounts for Landed Costs

Landed cost capabilities have been enhanced to allow for multiple General Ledger postings. This will enable you to enter and track different categories of landed costs, thus capturing more accurate costs.

Persistent Cash Receipts, Apply Payments and Memos Settings

Version 6.3 provides setting persistence during each session of Apply Cash Receipts and Apply Payments and Memos, which enhances customer usability. Cash receipt payments are currently entered in transaction batches. Within each batch, each payment re-accesses the Cash Receipts Application screen, which previously required extra keystrokes for each cash-receipt application. In this release, the three payment selection settings listed below are saved from the prior cash receipt application in the same batch to speed data entry and streamline the workflow:

- Show Open Invoices
- Display Customer ID (for national accounts)
- Display Customer Name (for national accounts)

Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable Purge

Occasionally it becomes necessary to purge data from the Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable modules. Since these modules are so tightly integrated with other modules in the MAS 500 system, it is important that the purge functions maintain database integrity, especially in related modules. The purge functions have been enhanced to assist customers in this routine housekeeping task.

Project Accounting Enhancements

Project Accounting enhancements in version 6.3 are widely anticipated as one of the most significant advances in MAS 500.

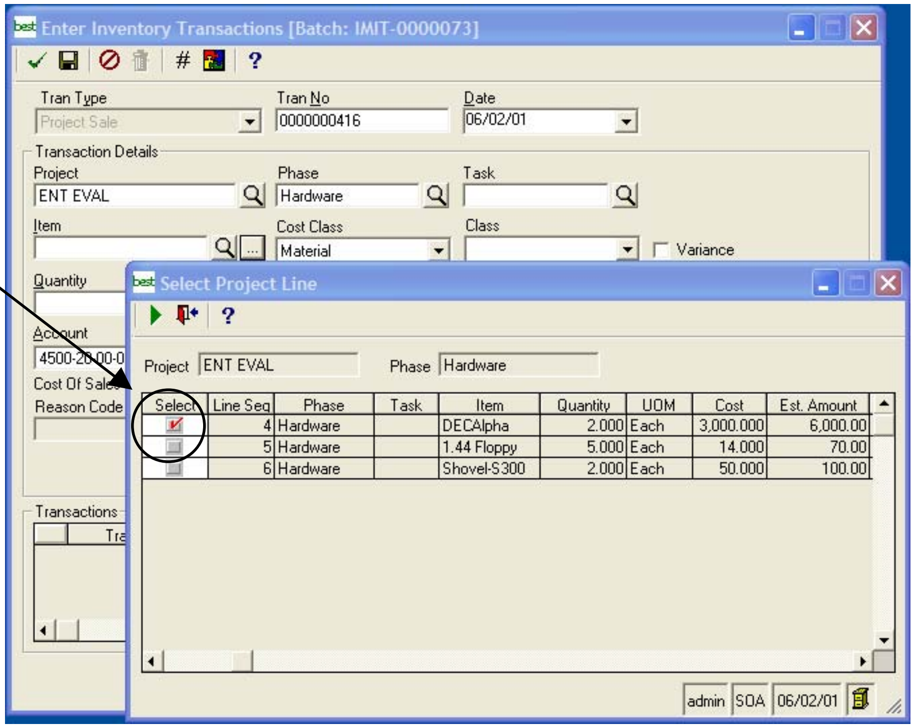
Enhanced GL Detail Postings Report

This enhancement to the General Ledger Detail Postings Report allows customers to match actual postings in the Project Accounting module with the transactions posted to the General Ledger module for more efficient reconciliation. The detailed version now includes the transaction date, posting date and General Ledger journal number. In addition, the project division was included to improve visibility of transactions across multiple divisions within the organization. The summary version includes the project name and is grouped by project.

View Budgeted Parts When Issuing Inventory

To help streamline the process of issuing inventory to specific projects, users can now view the list of budgeted parts as they issue inventory. When projects require inventory items as part of their estimate, it's essential to know basic information about the part at the time of issuing the transfer to ensure accuracy. This usability enhancement eliminates the need for users to view printed estimates during the issue process.

Simply select the item you wish to issue from the estimates list to streamline issuing inventory to your projects.



Print Timesheet Comments

MAS 500 customers have requested the ability to print timesheet comments on the Project Transaction Ledger Report and the Invoice to provide more complete information for their staff and/or customers. Including timesheet comments on a customer's invoice is an option that each company can activate if desired. The timesheet comments are now included with the Project Transaction detailed report.

Timesheet Inquiries and Reports

A new Missing Timesheet Report and an option to include posted timesheets on the Timesheet Report have been added to Project Accounting. These reports make it easy to determine if time entries have been posted incorrectly or if they have not been entered at all. In addition, posting date information has been added to all timesheet inquiries and reports to facilitate identification of records at a glance.

Distribution Enhancements

Receipt of Goods Preferred Bin Put Away

In distribution companies, it is easy for the receipt of goods process to become a bottleneck, with goods piling up on the receiving dock waiting until receipts have been entered into the system before moving them to their respective storage bins or to a quality control staging area. To help prevent bottlenecks, we have added ***preferred bin put away*** capabilities to receipt of goods. In preferred bin put away:

Preferred Bin Put Away increases accuracy and saves time during receipt of goods.

- One checkbox at the receipt header will send all goods on that receipt to their respective preferred bins.
- One checkbox at the receipt header will direct the entire receipt to a quality control staging area or overflow location.
- In Receipt of Goods Lines Tab, the preferred bin checkboxes and bin location selections allow overrides, so users can send only the necessary lines to quality control or preferred bins.
- During automated preferred bin put away that sends the goods to the first preferred bin for that inventory item, only lot and serial item information needs to be entered in the inventory distribution form during receipt of goods. This increases accuracy and saves time.
- A subsequent release of MAS 500 will include assigning goods to bins based on quantity, weight and capacity requirements.

Receipt of Goods Capture of Vendor Metrics

During receipt of goods, your staff uncovers vital information about the shipment that is not otherwise available in MAS 500. Using this new feature, you can now enter information that records whether goods were shipped with improper labeling or packaging, if the vendor sent an unauthorized substitute item, or if the goods were damaged in shipping. This information is then combined with information already available in MAS 500 and printed on the Vendor Performance Report.

Capture vendor performance statistics during receipt of goods to create virtual report cards of each vendor's performance.

Purchase Order Vendor Performance Report

A new Vendor Performance Report combines system-calculated metrics, such as on-time delivery, accurate order fulfillment quantities and cost variances. With the additional vendor metrics captured during receipt of goods, you can provide a virtual "report card" of each vendor's performance. This frequently requested report is a valuable tool for distribution and manufacturing customers to accurately identify vendors that perform well and those that do not

Automatic Sales Order Closure Business Rules

In fast-paced distribution environments, keeping on top of orders and backorders can be a daunting task. How well a company performs this job could be the determining factor when their potential customers are deciding where to purchase goods. Failure to execute efficiently could result in lost sales. To streamline order management, three new business rules have been established for MAS 500.

The first rule closes the entire sales order after the first shipment of goods for that order when a corresponding flag is set in the customer's record. This is useful for customers who order the same items each day and want what you can fulfill on today's order, without backordering anything because they will just order the same items on tomorrow's order.

The second rule closes individual lines on a sales order after the first shipment of that line item has been made if the customer flag governing this business rule is set. This is useful to companies that provide goods to customers in a high-volume manufacturing environment. Those customers typically will say, "Give me all of Item X that you have today, and I'll get the rest somewhere else. Don't backorder the item for me." In this rule, only line items on the order that have a partial shipment against them will be closed. Items without shipments against them will not be closed.

The final rule is similar to the second, except that the flag governing this rule is set on the inventory item instead of at the customer level. In this instance, all lines of a particular item will be closed once the first shipment for that item has been made. This rule is useful when you have seasonal items or special purchases in your inventory that will not be replenished. By setting this business rule, these items cannot inadvertently be placed on backorder by your warehouse staff.

Landed Cost Offset Posting

To provide more flexibility when capturing and tracking landed costs, each freight, tax or other entry can now have its own General Ledger account number.

Inquiry and Transaction Selection by Customer PO Number

To assist your customer service personnel to rapidly find records they need, Customer Purchase Order Numbers can now be used to locate transactions.

Drill Down to GL Journals from Transaction Inquiries

A MAS 90 feature that has long been popular with accountants is now available in MAS 500. When performing transaction entries, users can drill directly into the original general ledger journal to see all offsetting postings for that transaction.

Manufacturing Enhancements

Bill of Materials Report

The Bill of Materials Report has been enhanced to allow additional selection criteria, by warehouse and by routing ID. In previous versions of the report, the sort order was fixed and no sort criteria were available for the customer. The ability to choose the sort for the report has been added with the following sort criteria available: MF Item Class, Warehouse, Routing Code and Item. While all customers can use this enhancement, customers with multiple locations will find it especially beneficial.

Consolidated Purchase Order Option in MRP

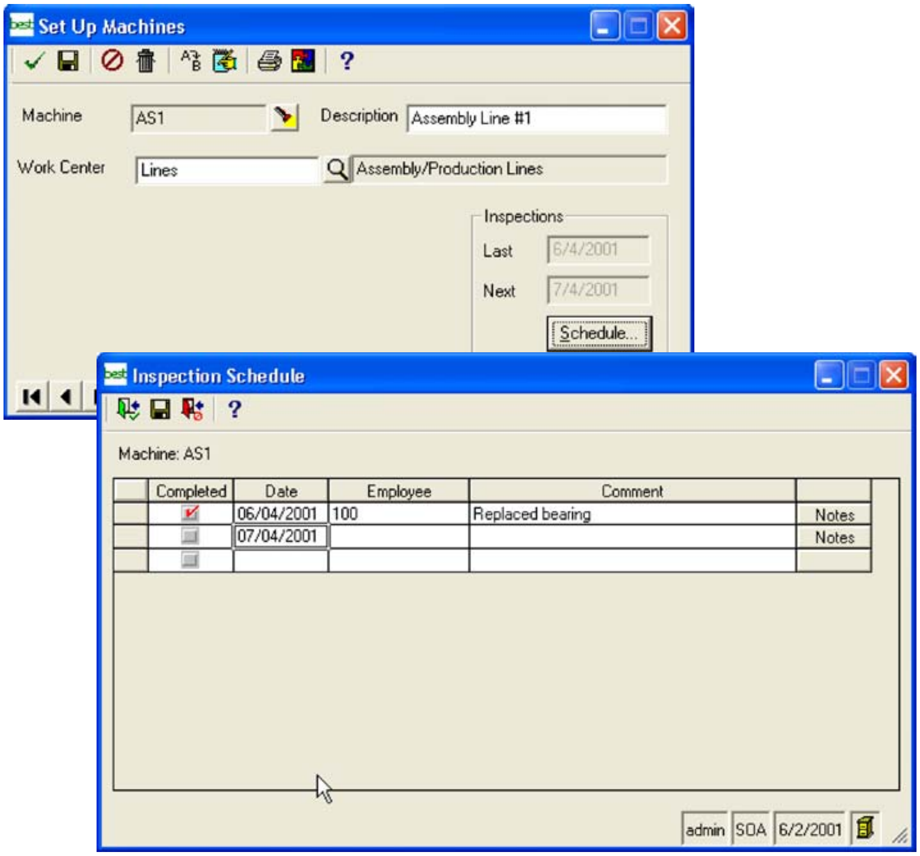
Consolidating multiple planned POs into a single order from MRP means fewer POs to track and monitor.

In version 6.3, material planners have the option of consolidating multiple ***planned*** purchase orders into single, multi-line purchase orders when they convert the planned purchase orders into actual purchase orders. This is useful when more than one planned purchase order exists in the same time bucket for the same vendor.

Inspection Dates/Preventative Maintenance

It is essential for virtually any manufacturing company to track machinery and tools inspections to ensure safe operations and quality products. To provide that information, two fields have been added to work center, machine, and tool maintenance for the date of last inspection and date of next inspection. A new form allows manufacturing supervisors to set preventative maintenance schedule dates, optionally assign inspections to personnel and record comments. An e-mail field has been added to manufacturing employee maintenance that can be used by the Business Alerts module to send e-mail alerts to employees assigned to perform inspections.

Manage processes and workflow easily by setting preventative maintenance schedules for tools, machines and work centers, then sending e-mail alerts to employees assigned to perform inspections.



Inspection Alerts

Two new alerts are available for each of the following: tools, machines and work centers. Alerts can be set to automatically e-mail inspectors prior to scheduled inspection dates and to notify employees or management when inspections are past due. To facilitate this, a new Inspector Role has been established in the Business Alerts module, which provides an efficient and easy way for manufacturing companies to keep on top of their machine and tool inspection tasks.

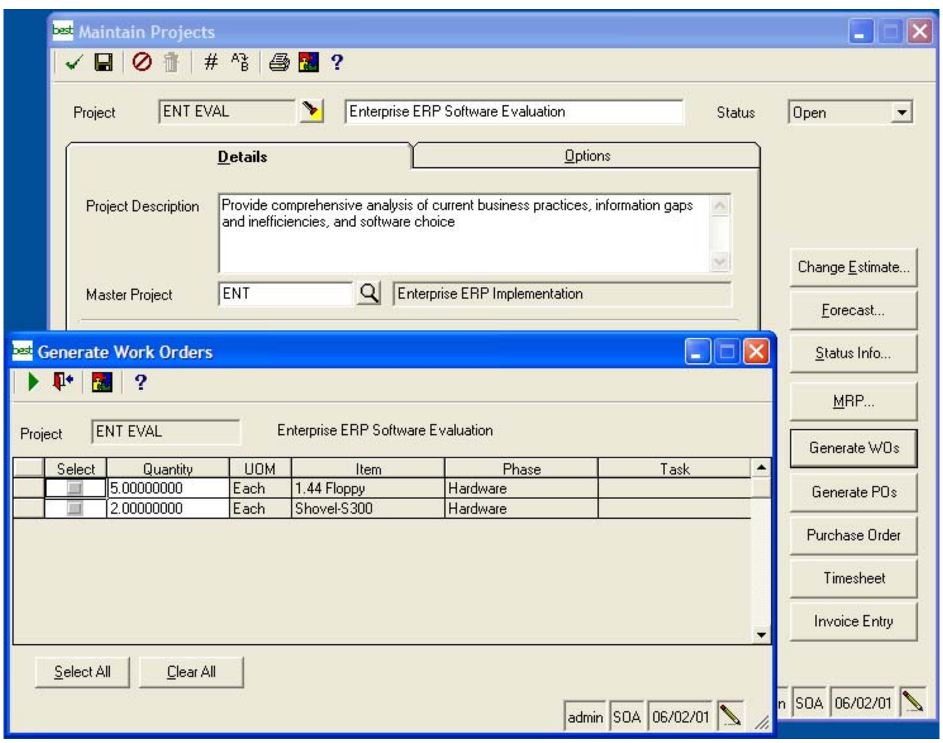
Inventory Management and Manufacturing Cost Tiers

In previous releases of MAS 500, the cost tiers used by the manufacturing suite were separate from the ones used in the Inventory Management module. With this release, the two divergent sets of cost tiers have been merged into one, thereby allowing access to manufacturing cost breakouts from inventory cost tier inquiries, inventory maintenance and the cost tier adjustment entry task. More accurate recording of inventory costs will result for manufactured items.

Manufacturing and Project Accounting Integration

In a continuing effort to streamline workflow throughout the system and provide enhancements that can be used by both existing and prospective customers, MAS 500 Manufacturing is now more closely integrated with Project Accounting. This integration is useful for material-intensive, project-driven companies as well as many manufacturers who want to group work orders together into a project for costing purposes. The points of integration are:

- A new Generate WO button is available on the Maintain Project screen to create work orders for manufactured items that are part of the project. This button is available once the project has been posted. It operates in a similar fashion as the existing Create PO button. Work orders are tagged to the corresponding project.
- The project ID is now available as a navigator option from Work Order Inquiry.
- A Material Requirements Planning (MRP) button has been added to the project estimate header to allow project managers to run a mini-MRP for only those items on the project. This will allow more accurate project estimates when manufactured goods are required for the project. The MRP button is also available on the Master Projects task for all projects on that master project.



Material-intensive, project-driven companies will find integration between manufacturing and project accounting extremely valuable in capturing accurate costs.

Create work orders instantly while maintaining projects – automatically tagging the work order to a specific project.

Manufacturing Inquiries

Having key information at the fingertips of every staff member is a fundamental aspect of customer satisfaction. To help your production staff provide greater customer service and have all of the information they need to perform daily tasks, the following new inquires are available from Manufacturing:

- Shipping Inquiry
- Job Ticket Inquiry
- Estimate Inquiry

Additionally, a standardized inquiry format has been applied to the following existing inquiries in this release to provide a consistent experience when using inquiries throughout the system:

- Routing Inquiry
- Lot/Serial Inquiry (existing tree-structure inquiries include enhanced navigators that are now integrated with lot/serial summary in the Inventory Management module)
- Transaction Inquiry

Further, the item ID has been added to sort/select criteria for the Work Order Completion Report and work order printing to provide existing customers even more reporting flexibility.

Improved Integration with Sales Order

Customers have frequently requested the optional ability to print a complete list of the first-level components (i.e., bill of material) on a sales order, acknowledgement and/or a quote. This feature has been added to version 6.3 for both simple and configured bills of material.

Additionally, you can create a new work order from the Out of Stock Manager pop-up window in the Sales Order module. This feature provides technical sales and customer service personnel with the ability to create a work order for out-of-stock materials. The production supervisor on the shop floor can then schedule the work order, thus getting the order into production more rapidly than ever before.

Save and Reprint Work Order Pick Lists

Another customer request, to save work order pick lists, has been added to this release in order to streamline efficiencies within your plant. A reprint work order task has also been added.

License and Registration Enhancements

The MAS 500 licensing system now restricts users to one production server. If a production license is already in use and a second production server is requested, the customer will receive a limited use Production License instead, along with a message explaining the change. The customer will be instructed to call Best Software to rectify the issue. In order to successfully register a ***new*** production server, the current production server must be disabled or it must be the first production server request.

The system will, however, provide SQL Server failover support. The application will recognize when a system is failing over from one SQL Server instance to another without requiring the customer to register the failover instance.

You can find out more about SalesLogix integration by accessing the <u>CRM Integration Details White Paper</u> document on the Partner File Center.

SalesLogix Integration

To ensure compatibility between front and back office applications, SalesLogix version 6.1 will be supported with MAS 500 version 6.3.

Technology Features

Crystal and Crystal Web Reports

- The Crystal runtime engine and Crystal designer shipped with MAS 500 version 6.3 will be updated to Crystal 8.5.
- Crystal Web Reports will now be supported for use with MAS 500.
- Crystal Web Reports will also support Crystal 8.5 server software and the Crystal 8.5 viewer.
- Crystal Web Reports licensing will be invoked. Existing MAS 500 systems currently have five (5) concurrent Web Reports user licenses, and new systems will be shipped with five concurrent Web Reports licenses included as part of their original purchase. Additional Web Reports user licenses are available for purchase for customers who require them.
- Some original MAS 500 reports written in Crystal will be updated to the current Crystal format to refresh their look and allow them to conform to current reporting standards.

Microsoft Office Compatibility

Microsoft Office Web Components (OWC) are used by the Business Insights Analyzer for chart control and editing of pivot tables. OWC will only be interactive on desktops running Office XP or Office 2003. Users with earlier versions of Office will be able to view Business Insights Analyzer data in read-only format.

eTimesheet Packaging and Delivery

With MAS 500 version 6.3, some significant changes were introduced in how the application is packaged and distributed for Windows users to address Java runtime compatibility and performance issues.

In the previous model for eTimesheets, the user would access a specific Web URL on their intranet or extranet to load the eTimesheets home page. This page would identify them as a Windows user and automatically launch eTimesheets within the Sun Java 1.3 Plug-In for Internet Explorer as a Java applet. In this model, the user may have downloaded as much as 30 megabytes in Java runtime and eTimesheets application files. Many of the newer Java applications require the Java 1.4 Plug-in, which created issues within eTimesheets.

In addition, this model stores the eTimesheets application in the user's Internet Explorer cache. Depending on the size of the user's cache, the eTimesheets application could be removed regularly to make room for other Web sites the user is viewing, which would force the user to download the entire eTimesheets application the next time it was accessed. This ultimately would lead to performance complaints related to the load time within eTimesheets.

The new method for packaging and delivering eTimesheets circumvents the Java compatibility and load time issues. To accomplish this, eTimesheets is compiled as a Java application (*.EXE) instead of a Java applet (*.JAR). This enables it to run as a local application on the user's workstation instead of being hosted within the browser's cache and ultimately removed when the cache is full. Additionally, to minimize Java runtime version issues, the appropriate Java 1.3 Runtime Environment is distributed with the eTimesheets installation. It sits in a subdirectory to the application executable. eTimesheets is linked to this specific runtime regardless of what else is on the workstation.

All of the eTimesheets components install from a single self-contained Windows installation package called ***MAS500eTimesheets.exe***. This new file can either be downloaded via a link on the eTimesheets for Windows home page or installed from the MAS 500 product CD.

Deployment on the Mac remains the same as before.

Platform Support

The following are general platform support guidelines for this release. Please refer to the ***Current Compatibility and Resource Guide*** found on Best Online Support and Services (BOSS) for detailed compatibility requirements.

- ***SQL Server 2000:*** Version 6.5 compatibility mode with Service Pack 3
- ***Accounting Server OS:*** Windows 2000 Server and Windows 2003 Server
- ***Thin-Client Configurations:*** Terminal Services on Windows 2000 Server and Windows 2003 Server and Citrix Metaframe
- ***Accounting Client OS:*** Windows 2000 Professional, Windows XP

- ***Web Server OS:*** Windows 2000 server
- ***Browser:*** Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 on a Windows 32-bit platform
- ***Microsoft Office:*** Office 2000 and Office XP
- ***Microsoft Project:*** Project 2000 and Project 2002

Minimum System Requirements

Server for Standard or Advanced Editions

Dual Intel Pentium III, 450 MHz or better, 512 MB RAM, 1 GB free disk space

Server for Small Business Edition

Single Intel Pentium III, 450 MHz or better, 512 MB RAM, 1 GB free disk space

Client

Pentium II processor with 128 MB RAM

Hosting

MAS 500 version 6.3 will support the IBM hosting certification program requirements.

Retirements

Version 5.0e

As previously announced, monthly updates and code fixes for version 5.0e ended in June 2003. Best Software customer support services (CSS) support for version 5.0e ended in August 2003, except for 1099 support, which will end in January 2004 after 1099s for calendar year 2003 have been released.

Closely monitor retirement dates and check your records for customers that will be affected by this schedule.

Version 6.0

Monthly updates and code fixes will end in December 2003 with 1099 support through January 2004 as listed above. CSS support for Version 6.0 will end in March 2004.

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