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Inside this issue:

Letter from the President	1
Industry Issues	1
Inventory Pro Q&A	2
Technology Notes	2
What's New?	2

Contest!

ENTER TO WIN!

Just log on to:
cissltd.com/contest.asp
and enter your name to win \$100 worth of CISS apparel from Lands' End!

One click from you. One hundred dollars from us!

Letter from the President



Spring is finally here, or at least we hope it is! Winter in the Lehigh Valley seemed like it would never end this year. The change of seasons brings with it some changes at CISS, Ltd. CISS has recently refocused its efforts on our customers through product standardization and a focus on new technologies.

We have integrated our web-based iRater Transportation Management System (TMS) with our standard Inventory Pro Online (IPOL) Warehouse Management System (WMS) to provide one application with both WMS and TMS integrated functionality. We are also almost ready to release a new version of IPOL based on the Microsoft .Net technology, which will be a major

improvement for our web-based product. .Net provides a nicer graphical user interface (GUI) for the end user and allows the application to run at greater speeds. We have also made language-based improvements to our IPOL system that allows for multiple languages. We currently support English and Spanish, with French language support on the horizon.

Last October we added a sales manager, Rick Moyer, and we now have four people dedicated to customer service, support, and sales. Our new sales force will allow improved customer service and a better overall product and purchasing experience. CISS has also become more active with associations

(CSMCP, WERC, and APICS, amongst others) that will help us to better understand the industry's and our customers' interests. One of our new sales members, Andy Toth, specializes in graphics, web site development, and search engine optimization. Andy continues to make improvements to the cissltd.com web site as well as web sites we have developed and host for clients. A lot of good things are happening at CISS, and we hope you will contact us with any questions or suggestions on how we can improve our products and services.

**Thank you for your business--
it is greatly appreciated.**
Ben

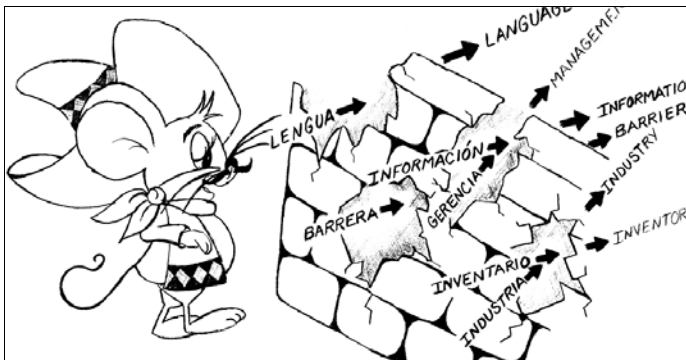
Industry Issues

Breaking Through the Language Barrier

The explosive growth worldwide in the amount of electronic and online information over the past few years has introduced businesses to a new problem--the language barrier. The importance of overcoming this barrier has grown as rapidly as the amount of non-English resources and the number of non-English-speaking employees. The increase of global awareness,

multinational collaboration, and the interest in foreign media sources has driven a need for Cross-Language Information Retrieval (CLIR) systems that hurdle these language walls.

CISS has created a *barrier breaker* into the Spanish language with **Inventory Pro Online Spanish edition**. This edition will allow users to view their Inventory Pro system in Spanish or in English. All of the headings and subheadings are viewable in both languages. Please contact CISS or log onto our web site for more information.



Inventory Pro Q&A

Getting the Report You Need

CISS's most requested customization involves reports or printed documents. Our clients have varied needs such as industry-specific requirements, management requirements, and customer-driven requests. If we were to include five hundred reports in Inventory Pro our clients would wonder, "Which one do I need?" CISS realizes that retrieving the data from Inventory Pro is critical. To help bridge this gap, we offer add-ins--reports, screens, and queries that can be added to your Inventory Pro without requiring a customized system.

Microsoft's Add-In Manager is utilized in the Inventory Pro System menu. Using this screen, you can click on the "Add New" button and browse for a file we have given you. Once the file is selected, it is a part of your Inventory Pro system. Based on the type of add-in you are installing, you might need to use the "Documents Assignment" screen. This screen, found under System/Administrative Tools, allows you to select documents like your pick list, packing slip, printed purchase order, and more. If you have installed a packing slip, for example, to the Add-In Manager, you will then need to select this add-in as the document to be printed in the "Documents Assignment" screen for the packing slip. Then you are ready to work with your new document. It is that easy!

Over the years, CISS has compiled a library of add-ins that we often find are similar to requests we receive on a daily basis. They can be re-licensed and sent to you at a lower cost than if a programmer were to customize an add-in. Please visit our new add-in page on our web site by going to www.cissltd.com and selecting the "Add-Ins" link to view the available add-ins. **Submit your questions to be reviewed for next issue's Inventory Pro Q&A!**

Technology Notes

Why XP Professional Is the Right OS for Small Business

Below find just three of the reasons why XP Professional is the most reliable Windows operating system available to date and the right choice for small businesses.

1. Recovery Tools

With System Restore and Device Driver Rollback, you can undo harmful changes quickly and easily. For example, if you install hardware drivers or software ap-

plications and then discover a problem resulting from the change, you can easily reverse and "undo" the change, returning your PC to its previous working state.

2. Advanced Security Technologies to Keep Your PC Running Smoothly

The powerful, built-in Windows firewall offers additional protection against viruses and hackers by extending Windows firewall protection from the moment you turn on your PC to the moment you turn it off.

3. Share Computers and Resources on Your Network

Easily share documents, faxes, printers, and even an Internet connection with a small office network. Connect multiple computers to the Internet through your Windows XP Professional PC and a single Internet connection.



What's New

Is RFID Right for Your Business?

RFID, or radio frequency identification, is a topic of discussion wherever you go. So what is it and should you be considering it for your business?

RFID is similar to bar code identification in that it is an automated means by which to capture data. Commonly this is information about goods or the flow of goods through a process or supply chain. The RFID tags are integrated circuits containing information about the items you wish to track and can be passive or active depending upon your needs. A passive tag (read only) needs to have the information read from it via a reader or transceiver while an active tag (read/write) is constantly transmitting the information and therefore requires a power source.

In either case it is important to have an RFID system properly engineered by someone familiar with the characteristics of a radio frequency (RF) environment. Since the effective range of different readers can vary from 1 inch to 100 feet, proper placement is important in accurate and relevant data capture as well as overall system performance.

The primary components of a system are the transponder (tag), the antenna, and the transceiver (reader). The antenna emits a radio signal to activate the tag and works with a transceiver and decoder to act as a reader. This reader decodes the data encoded in the tag's integrated circuit and passes the data to a host system for processing. Although this is a technology with which you should be familiar there are still



some barriers to entry that need to be considered. Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, requires its top 100 suppliers to use this new logistical initiative. Despite being one of the first companies to use this technology, Wal-Mart still only implements RFID at the pallet level because of the barriers that remain.

Several obstacles are currently preventing wider RFID

acceptance. An investment in this technology is risky because there is still no standard for the tags and readers. The cost and time investment in redesigning processes to accommodate RFID is also slowing the move toward industry acceptance. Since RF technology is not an exact science it sometimes requires significant testing to determine optimum performance. Implementation of an RF solution is further complicated by the dynamic manufacturing, warehousing, and shipping environments.

These factors alone point to the fact that companies aren't realizing a return on investment from RFID at this point and therefore a strong business case for RFID has yet to be made. Higher margin products and assets are normally considered first for this technology simply because they can bear the implementation costs more easily. If point-of-sale demand information can be provided from the implementation of an RFID system a better case can be made for its use.

Although it is likely years away from industry acceptance, RFID implementation will eventually show bottom-line benefits, and companies like Wal-Mart are moving the industry forward. When your company is ready to investigate incorporating new technologies into your processes, CISS is prepared to assist you with the proper implementation and integration.