Help Articles and Questions Archive

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

The following pages are a collection of articles and emails that were previously posted in support of Publishers' Assistant software products. Most of these articles are obsolete, but remain helpful to users of our legacy products. The concepts implemented in these products are not obsolete.

Please note that several of these articles refer to web site addresses that no longer exist.

We have a long-standing tradition, however, of crediting the authors and origins of the information we reference.

It is hoped that preserving these articles and concepts will be useful for both existing and future users and independent publishers.

The very creation of this archive is an indication that *new things are happening*. Please stay tuned for new developments.

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Want Your Part of $400M in Additional Book Sales?

...or Why you need *Couplet*™

By Bob Maurer
March 5, 2008

You can only sell your books when your client, usually a major book handler or distributor, knows your books are available to sell. *Couplet* is the tool that will allow you to make sure that every major client always has the most up-to-date, accurate and complete information on your titles and promotions.

Consider the following information provided at the April Book Industry Study Group's (BISG) meeting by a senior executive of a major book retailer[1] — in 2004, this retailer sold over 260 thousand titles, representing 54 million units, or $400 million in new books that have since been declared out-of-print (OP/OSI). When a copy is not present in their supply chain, this retailer must direct their customer to the used and out-of-print books. You the publisher don't receive any money for used book sales. You want consumers to buy new books, not books you've already sold.

This retailer has 11 thousand titles, representing over 350 thousand units and worth over $6 million, with a status of "Open PO's on OSN" (Out of Stock with No due date). They also have over 9 thousand titles, representing over 192 thousand units and worth over $5 million of "Open PO's of titles past their publication date". How many of these books are really out of publication, and how many are just old data in the retailer's system because the publisher has not provided up-to-date information?

This retailer has almost 6 million titles in their database. Of these, 63.7% are missing commentary. Commentary information is very useful in their sales efforts. Even more importantly, their sales have been shown to increase by 60.5% for books with cover images available, as compared to sales of those same books without cover images available. Of the 6 million titles in the database, 67.6% are currently missing a cover image.

How many of your books, sitting on your or your distributors' shelves right now, is this retailer not selling because they have incorrect, incomplete, out-of-date or missing information on

1 Presentation given at the BISG "Making Information Pay 2005" Seminar on April 7, 2005. Presentation given by Joseph Gonnella, Vice President of Inventory Management and Vendor Relations, Barnes and Noble.
To see the actual presentation given by Mr. Gonnella, please go to http://www.bisg.org/docs/MIP05_Gonnella2.ppt

your titles? How many sales to this retailer are you missing? How much of that $400M belongs to you?

If this retailer is missing opportunities to sell your books, then what about other major book handlers? What about your distributors? What about your other clients? Doesn't it make sense to have a tool, specifically designed for your needs, that allows you to easily, quickly and accurately transmit current title and promotional information to your major clients so that they can sell more of your books?

Couplet is that tool. Designed to support the BISG's ONIX standards for bibliographic information, Couplet will allow you to easily manage all your title and promotional information and transmit it electronically to anyone you wish. Because Couplet is standards driven, that means that any client whose systems comply with the standard will be able to quickly and easily incorporate your information into their title database. They will have accurate and up-to-date information and will be able to sell more of your books.

Couplet does not stop at the ONIX standard. At Publishers' Assistant, we reviewed the specific requirements of the ONIX implementations at Barnes & Noble, Baker & Taylor and Amazon, and have built features into Couplet to align with each of those implementations. We are currently working on similar requirements for other major book handlers.

At a price of $99.00, Couplet is also a fantastic value. Purchase[2] your own copy of this fantastic publishing industry communication and title management tool and start selling more books today.

2 Couplet is now packaged with the Epic Edition of Publishers' Assistant.

Screen Freezes and Abnormal Shutdowns

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

Sometimes when you are using Publishers' Assistant, you may experience a freeze-up (the program stops responding), or Windows may boot you out of the program unexpectedly. There are many possible causes for this. This article attempts to highlight a few of the most likely causes, and give you some guidelines on how to address this problem.

Contents

1. How to deal with Screen Freezes and Abnormal Shutdowns
2. Cause
3. Solutions

Cause

There are three main types of problems that can cause this type of behavior with Publishers' Assistant. These are possible program errors, damaged index files, a problem with hardware or resources on your computing system.

This article is general in nature, and can't cover all the possible causes. However, a little better understanding of the troubleshooting techniques that we use may help you to fix a problem on your own and perhaps to avoid some problems in the future.

Solutions

Program Errors

Frankly, we think that this is the least likely error condition that you will run into. We do everything in our power to make sure that this is the case. However, this is generally the first thing that comes to most users' minds when things aren't going right. So, let's address it right up front.

If you have a situation where every time you perform a specific function, you receive an error message, or you are booted out of the application, that may be an indication of a program error. Unfortunately, it's generally not quite that simple, because damaged indices and system problems can often cause a failure with specific areas of the application.

To verify a program error, we generally test the same function on another system with different data. If you are a user of the Epic Edition, you can simply try the same function on another machine. You can point that system to the "Sample Data" folder to try it with a different set of data. If you are running the Lyric or Sonnet Edition, you can try installing on another machine and using the sample data for testing.

If the behavior is the same, it is almost certainly a problem with the program. When this happens, we try to make a correction immediately. In general, these corrections will become available in the next maintenance release.

If, however, a problem is keeping you from being able to use Publishers' Assistant for your business practices, we will make a point of sending you an upgrade as soon as the correction has been made and tested. There will be no charge for any programming to correct a bug in our software.

If this condition occurs and you have eliminated the possibility of an index or system problem, please don't hesitate to call us.

Damaged Index Files

The database indices are stored in files with the ".CDX" extension. Publishers' Assistant is developed using Microsoft Visual Foxpro, and the specific structure (and failure) of the index files is a proprietary feature of Foxpro. However, damaged index files can cause Foxpro, and therefore Publishers' Assistant, to act erratically. Often this results in the error message:

This program has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down.

Another symptom of possible problems with your indices are records that seem to be missing, or don't show up in reports, but you can still navigate to them in a data entry screen.

Yet another symptom is a function that worked fine yesterday, but causes a problem today.

Fortunately, we've provided an easy fix for damaged indices. Publishers' Assistant comes with a utility to regenerate your database index files.

1. Within the application, you can run this utility from the *Tools* menu: select "System Maintenance" -> "Indices" -> "Regenerate Database Indices".

2. If a bad index is keeping you from getting into Publishers' Assistant, you can run this utility from the Windows *Start* menu: select "Programs" -> "Publishers Assistant" -> "Regenerate Database Indices".

Quite frequently, running this utility will eliminate an unexplained problem. Running this utility won't hurt and will often help, so there is very little reason not to try it. However, if you find that you need to regenerate CDX files frequently, it is generally an indication of a system or network configuration problem of some sort.

One thing to keep in mind is that Foxpro doesn't like to be shut down abnormally. Often this can actually cause damage to the index files. *If you have experienced an abnormal shutdown for any reason, you should regenerate your CDX files immediately upon reentering the application.*

System problems

Foxpro is a relatively resource hungry program. If resources are tight on a system, Windows doesn't seem to handle it very well. Often a conflict over resources will either result in the program not responding, or the *"program has performed an illegal operation"* error message.

It is worth saying that system configuration issues are the number one cause of failures with Publishers' Assistant on our users' machines. *Most problems are fixed by eliminating unnecessary programs running in memory.*

If you are experiencing a recurring problem and regenerating CDX files doesn't take care of it:

1. Try eliminating all unnecessary programs that are running in memory. For a more detailed discussion of how to do this, please see "Dealing with Lost Data". It discusses how to look for conflicts between programs running on your system.
2. If eliminating other programs doesn't alleviate the problem, check your available disk space. There is an old rule of thumb that you don't want to run anything at more than about 70% of its capacity. This applies to your hard drive as well. If your disk is nearly full, it causes problems with both Windows and Foxpro. Windows may be attempting to use your hard drive for virtual memory. Foxpro opens and maintains many temporary files, particularly when you are running reports.
3. If it seems like you have adequate space on your disk, check your RAM. These days, Windows XP likes a minimum of 256Mb of RAM. You can run Publishers' Assistant on that, but this is definitely a case of the more the merrier.
4. If both your disk and RAM seem adequate, you may be experiencing a problem with your system. The best test for this is to install Publishers' Assistant on another system to test it.

There is an excellent article on the Microsoft Website that lists potential causes to data corruption in Foxpro applications. These are all hardware and configuration issues.

How to Pay your Authors, Suppliers and Sales Reps Automatically

Contents

1. How to Pay your Authors, Suppliers and Sales Reps Automatically
2. The Basic Procedure
3. Using Automatic Payments to Begin Using Automatic Payments
4. Dealing with Advances or Other Account Charges
5. Transferring Payments to Quickbooks
6. Conclusion

In my regular conversations with PubAssist users, I hear about people who do not use the payment system--even though they are running Lyric or Epic. "We use Quickbooks to write all of our checks" is a phrase that I hear frequently. Since the task is rather tedious, people certainly don't want to do it twice. I don't blame them. Yet if you choose to enter your payments only into Quickbooks, you will lose out on huge benefits associated with up-to-date accounting in Publishers' Assistant. What's more, you will lose out on an opportunity to nearly eliminate this tedious task altogether!

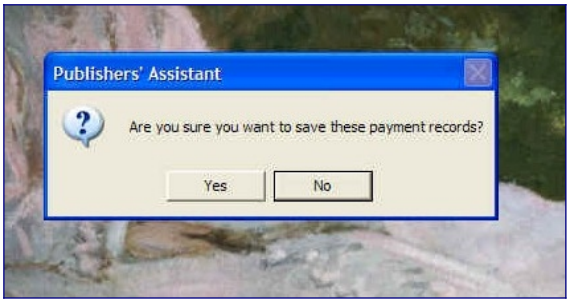
Quickbooks check writing and bank account reconciliation features are great, but you still have to enter these payments by hand. What people are missing is that **Publishers' Assistant will generate these payments for you automatically!** *Instead of spending time on the mundane task of entering each payment by hand, you can truly spend your time on exceptions. The regular royalty, consignment, and commission payments will be generated based on the account balance as of the specific date you choose. Once these payments are generated, you can edit them like any other payment. You can also transfer these payments to Quickbooks (if you desire) and reap the benefits of maintaining those payments in Quickbooks; but, by using this method, you will have greatly reduced, if not eliminated, a tedious task and greatly improved the accuracy and usefulness of your data in the process.*

The Basic Procedure

So, here's how to do it.

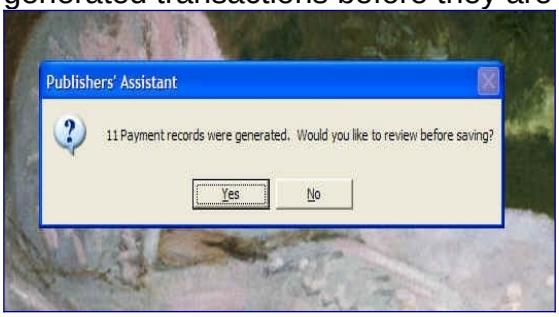
The Automatic Payments feature is on the Finance Payables menu. You can see that you can process royalties, consignment costs, commissions, and purchase order payments separately.

The next step in the process will ask you for an "As Of Date". This is the date on which you will be checking account balances and generating payments for those balances. Generally, this is the last day of your reporting period. For example, if you normally pay royalties on a quarterly basis, this would be March 31st.**Note that this date is not the date of the payments that are generated.** The date of the generated payments will be your current system date. PubAssist allows you to easily set the current system date. So, you can use that capability to set the dates of the generated payments to whatever is appropriate. We'll use this information later to create a starting point for your payables accounting.

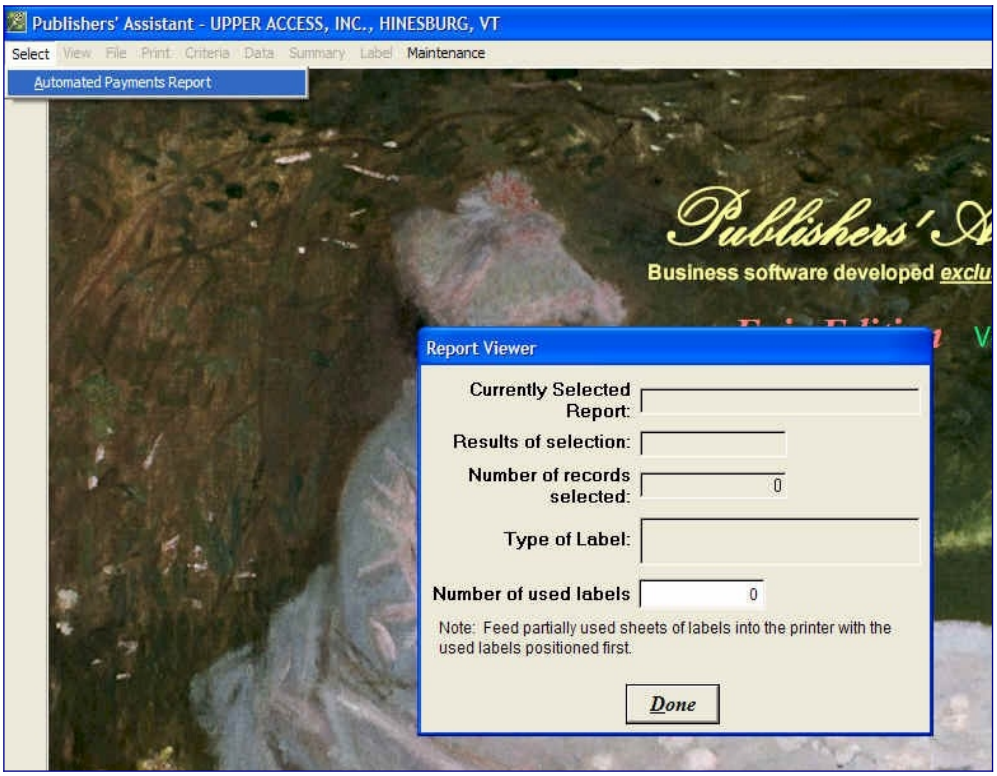


After selecting an "As of Date", PubAssist will give you a chance to bail out before saving the payments. This is a process of automatically generating transactions that you would normally enter by hand. Generating these transactions is going to be easy. Deleting dozens of incorrect

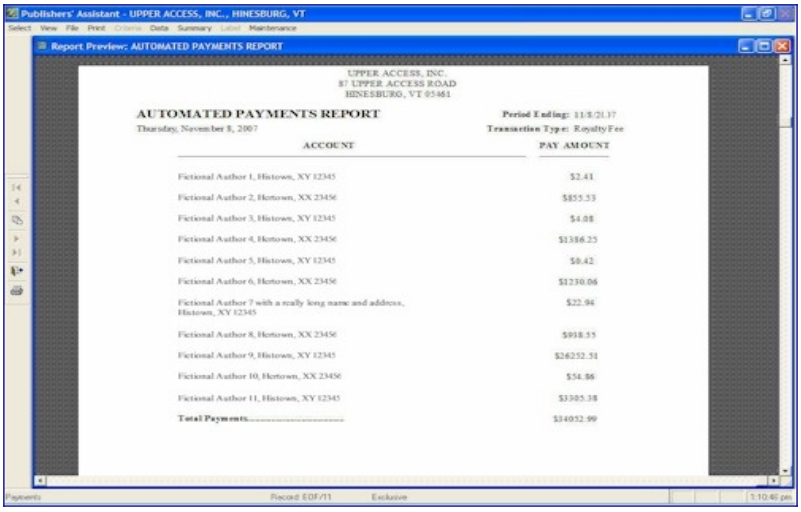
transactions is a bit tedious. Don't worry too much though. You'll have a chance to review the generated transactions before they are permanently saved.



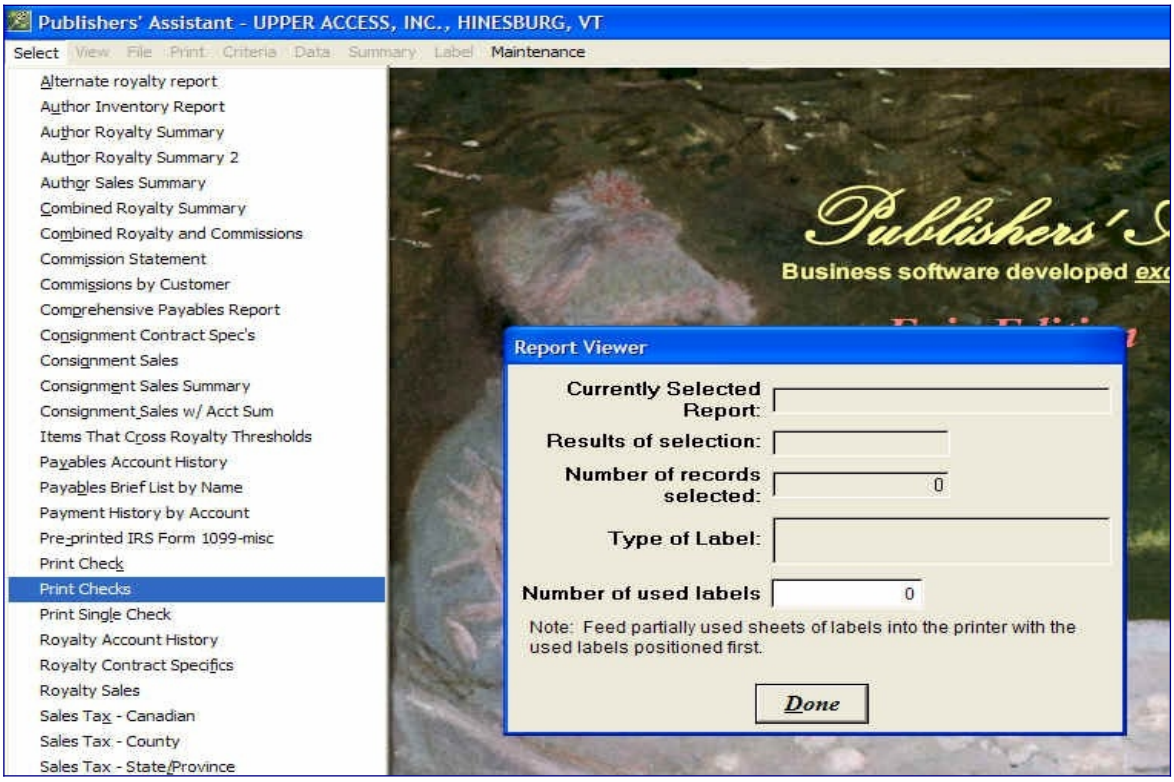
Now, the procedure will then tell you how many transactions were generated and ask you if you want to generate a report of them. This is a good idea. For example, if you have already generated your royalty reports for the period, you'll be able to compare the payment amounts with the royalties due. Click on "Yes" to proceed to the report viewer.



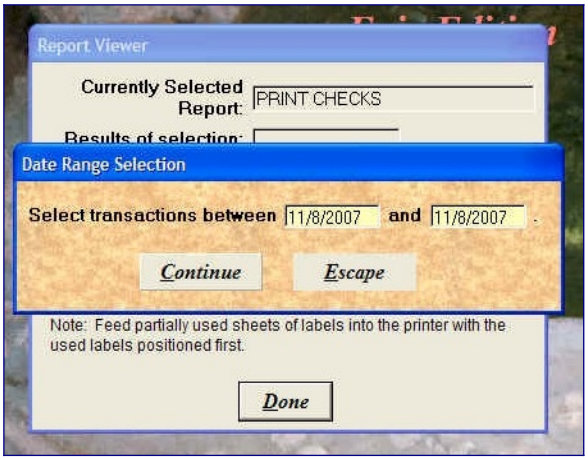
Now you're in the Report Viewer. You'll have all of the power and options that are available in the Report Viewer--including the ability to export data. There's only one report in this menu (by default), so select the "Automated Payments Report". Click on "View" to look at it.



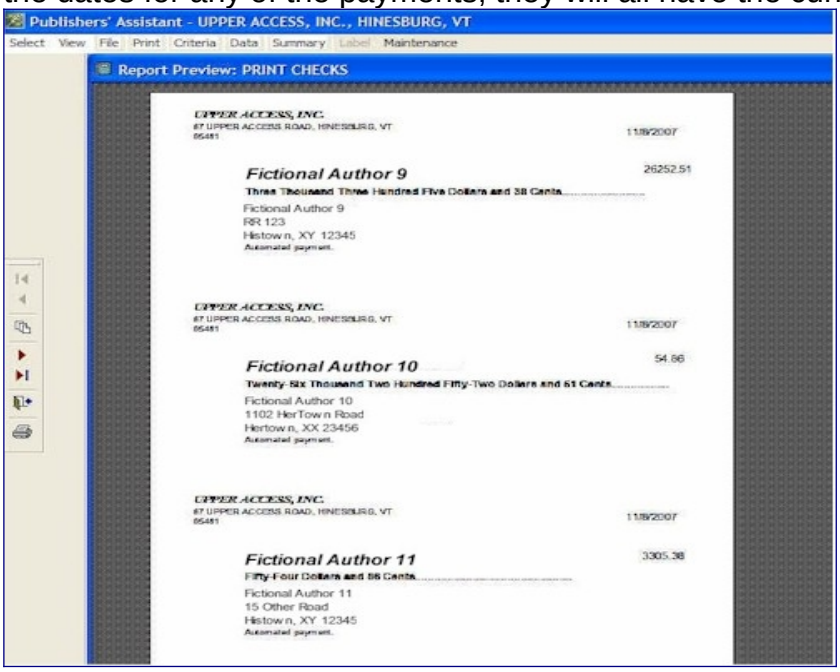
As you can see, the report gives you a list of all of the payee's and amounts for easy comparison to your royalty reports. If you have an exception that wasn't accounted for in the automatic payment process, you'll be able to go back and edit or delete the payment for that account.



Many do not realize that you can actually print checks directly from Publishers' Assistant. If you wish to do so, you will find this report on the Payables Reports menu in PubAssist.



The easiest way to select these transactions is by the current date. Unless you have edited the dates for any of the payments, they will all have the current system date.



The "Print Checks" report that ships with PubAssist is for a three-up format. Other check formats can be accomodated by creating a new report form for the report. Other typical check formats have a stub page for each check. There are*endless*possibilities for how your checks can be formatted and what information can be presented on the stub. Think of the "Print Checks" report as a template to get you started.

Using Automatic Payments to Begin Using Automatic Payments

I can hear the collective, "Huh?", from here! Publishers' Assistant is an accounting system. It accumulates financial transactions in your liability accounts. The account balances are the

sum of these transactions at any given date. Of course, if you have not been entering any **payments** into PubAssist, then you have been accumulating royalties, consignment costs, etc in your liability accounts. You will undoubtedly have some very high balances. You've been paying these accounts, but you never entered those payments into PubAssist.

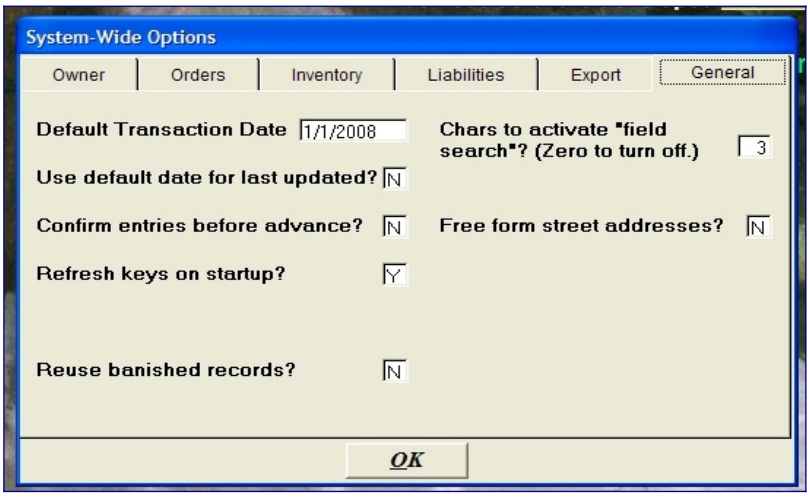
I don't recommend that you go back and try to re-create all of your payments from past years. What you need is a clean starting point. You'll likely want to pick a starting date, like the beginning of the year, after which you expect to log all payments to your accounts. So, how do we pay off those previous balances? Well, why not use the Automatic Payment function?

Let's say that you want to start with a clean slate on January 1st, 2007. That means you'll want to pay off all of your accounts as of December 31, 2006. You can accomplish this by logging automatic payments. Here's a critical point:

> **You'll want these payments to be for account balances as of December 31, 2006, but you'll also want them dated December 31, 2006.**

Normally, you'll report royalties, for example, for a given period. Your payments, however, will typically be dated for sometime in the **next** reporting period. Most publishers will pay royalties sometime during the month following the reporting period. These payments will show up in the summary information at the bottom of the royalty reports.

When you are starting off, however, you don't want to show a previous balance and a payment for $150,000 on January 1, 2007. So, you pay the account off with a payment dated December 31, 2006 so that January 1 will show a previous balance of zero and no payments during that first reporting period. You can get more sophisticated than this if you want to, but the concepts will be the same.



So, the first thing you should do is set your system date to December 31, 2006. You can do this either by setting the date when you get into Publishers' Assistant, or you can change the current date on the system-wide options screen.

Now you can follow the steps outlined above to automatically generate payment transactions for all of your account balances as of December 31, 2006. The payment amounts might be very large and won't reflect anything real, but they will be obvious in your accounting history, so you'll always know exactly when your true liability accounting was actually started. Be sure to reset your system date back to the current date after you have completed this initial automatic payment process.

Dealing with Advances or Other Account Charges

So, what if you don't want your account balance to be zero on January 1st? Perhaps, you have given an author an advance on their book. I would recommend that you manually enter that payment prior to generating automatic payments. Even if you didn't think of that, you can always edit the payments that were generated to adjust the account balance to what you think it should be. The transactions that are generated are just like any other transaction you could enter through the payment screen.

Transferring Payments to Quickbooks

Please refer to HelpArticles/ExportToQuickbooks to see how to move your payment transactions into Quickbooks.

Conclusion

This article has taken far longer to write than it will take you to get started using Automatic Payments. I've walked people through this process on the phone in about a half hour--including explanations and answers to questions. That also includes the intial zero-balance payments as well as the automatic payments for the current reporting period. Once you know what you are doing, automatic payments will take mere minutes. Once you've smoothed the process, transporting your payments to Quickbooks and generating the actual checks will happen in minutes as well. You'll also have much more reliable and useful data at both levels of accounting as a result.

Good luck, and may you **never** have to enter payments by hand again!

How to Back Up Your Publishers' Assistant Data

By Ron Lawrence April 12, 2010

Contents

How to Back Up Your Publishers' Assistant Data
1. I can not over emphasize how important it is to make regular backups of your data.
2. Know Where Your Data is Located
3. Use Windows Explorer to Navigate to Your Data Folder
4. Copy Your Data to a Removeable Medium
5. Verify Your Backup
6. Use Publishers' Assistant to Verify Your Restored Backup
7. Closing Thoughts

I wish it never happened, but sometimes users incur a problem with their database and the only recourse is to restore from backup. This is not only true for Publishers' Assistant, but for virtually any database application. Usually this happens because a hard drive has failed, or data has been irreversibly corrupted. The specific cause of corruption may be unknown, but corruption can generally be attibuted to problems that are specific to the configuration (software and hardware) of the user's machine. Frequently, such a conflict will manifest itself in a bad index, and a bad index will cause bad references to the actual data file(s). Over the years there have been more than a few heartbreaking situations where this has happened to a user's data, only to find that they didn't have a recent or reliable backup. The results are usually devastating and costly--both in terms of time and money if they need help attempting to rebuild their history.

I can not over emphasize how important it is to make regular backups of your data.

That may sound obvious, but the advise is all too frequently unheeded or not implemented effectively. For example, sometimes a problem with data doesn't show up for days. If you are backing your data up to the same medium, like a flash drive, then you could easily be overwriting good data with bad. Effectively, you have no backup. In other situations, people may be using very sophisticated backup tools, but they don't know how to restore the data when the need arises. Worse yet, others have found that they were backing up the wrong data! So, I'll try to discuss here the considerations and a simple procedure for backing up your data.

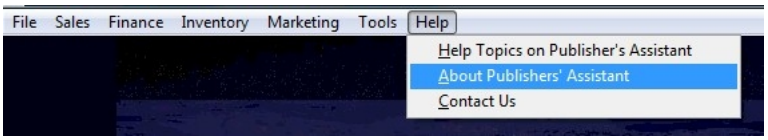
Know Where Your Data is Located

This is first and foremost. As I just mentioned, if you are backing up the wrong thing, it won't do you much good if you lose your data. There is no shortcut or workaround. As a computer

user for any application, *I strongly advocate that you know where your data is located and what it looks like.* For most applications you use, word processing, or a spreadsheet, your data are the documents you create. When you use a database product, like Publishers' Assistant, your database is generally created for you. So you may not be involved in the decision about where to locate your data. You still need to know where it is--particularly so you can back it up.

I've just updated another article that discusses cleaning up your data folder. It lists the files in your actual data folder. It also tells you what files don't need to be there. So, I'm not going into those details in this article. In Version 5, by default, your data is located in your Documents\PubAssist Data\Data folder. Note that your "Documents" folder is different for every recent version of Windows! Note as well that, starting with Windows ME, your "Documents" folder is part of your personal profile and is generally not accessible to other users on your computer or your network. That means that the actual path for the documents folder is different for every user. For example, in Windows Vista, your personal "Documents" folder is actually in C:\Users\<*your user name*>\Documents\.

Publishers' Assistant will tell you where your data is located. To see the path, go to "Help" and then "About Publishers' Assistant" on the menu.

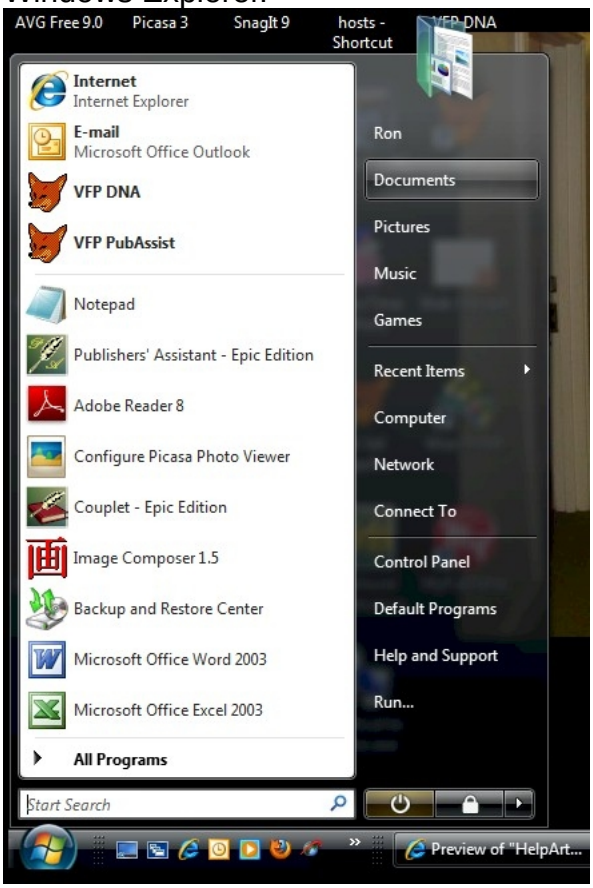


This screen will display a count of the major entities in your database. Your data path will be at the bottom.

Couplet may be pointed to a different database. That data should be backed up as well. Couplet will display your data path on the title bar of the window.

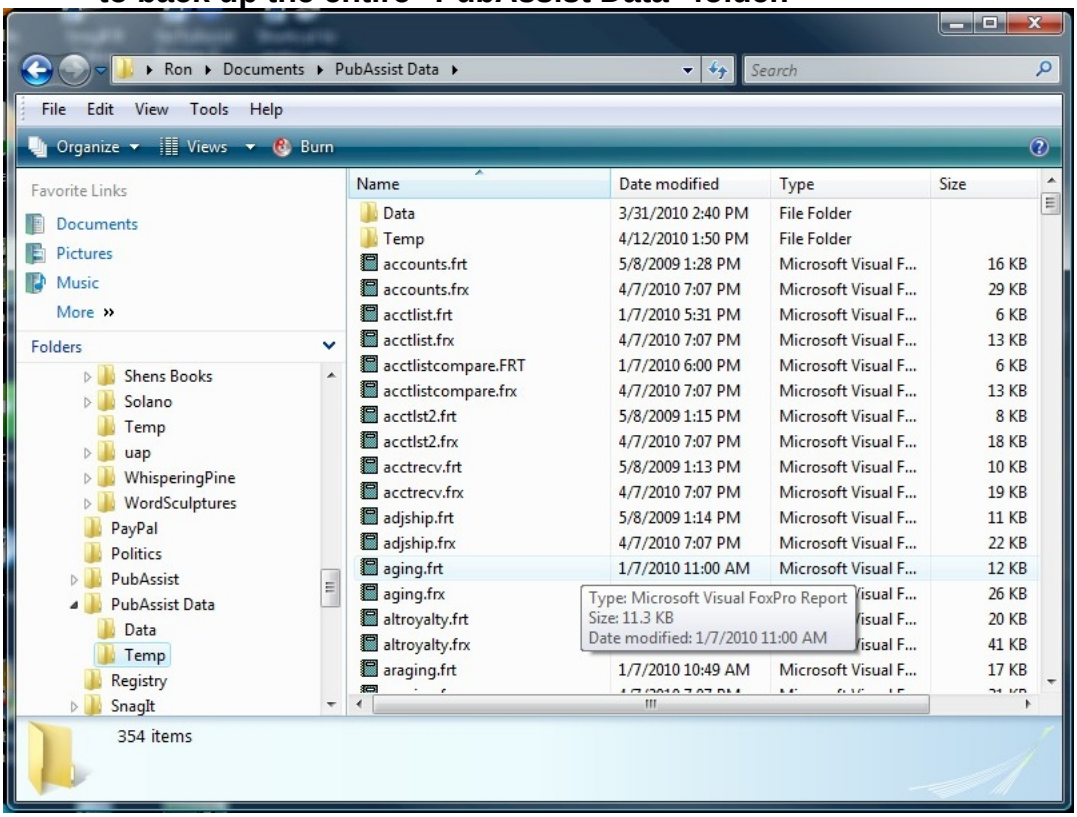
Use Windows Explorer to Navigate to Your Data Folder

Now that you know where your data is located, use Windows Explorer to navigate to that location. Many of our users are not that familiar with computers and don't know what Windows Explorer is. Windows Explorer is the tool that you use to navigate and manipulate the files on your computer. If you click on the "My Documents" or "My Computer" icons (Vista Users will click on "Documents" or "Computer" options on the Windows Start menu) you will be running Windows Explorer.



Since Windows seems to encourage you to store your personal files in the "Documents" folder, we decided that this was the best default location for the "PubAssist Data" folder.

Although the data folder is generally within the "PubAssist Data" folder, the contents of the "PubAssist Data" folder can change as well. So, it's a good idea to back up the entire "PubAssist Data" folder.



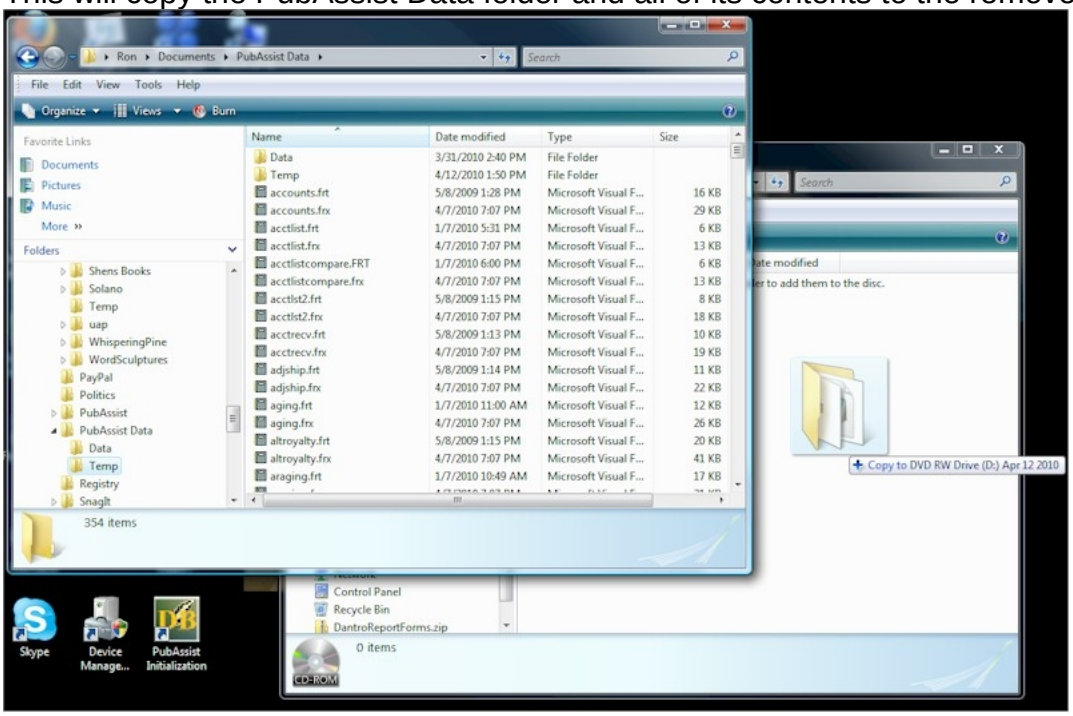
Copy Your Data to a Removeable Medium

An important part of your backup strategy is choosing the medium that you will use. Personally, I like to use CD's or DVD's. In fact, I use the regular format CD or DVD. I don't use the re-writable disks. This insures that I won't overwrite my old data. CD's are so widely supported that I can pop my backup into almost any machine and will be able to read it. If my computer melts into a puddle on the floor, I can fire up another machine, download and install PubAssist, pop in my last backup, and I'll be up and running again in minutes. You can't say that about MOST proprietary backup utilities. I don't even like to use Windows Backup. *Just let me copy my files in a useable format to a removeable medium.*

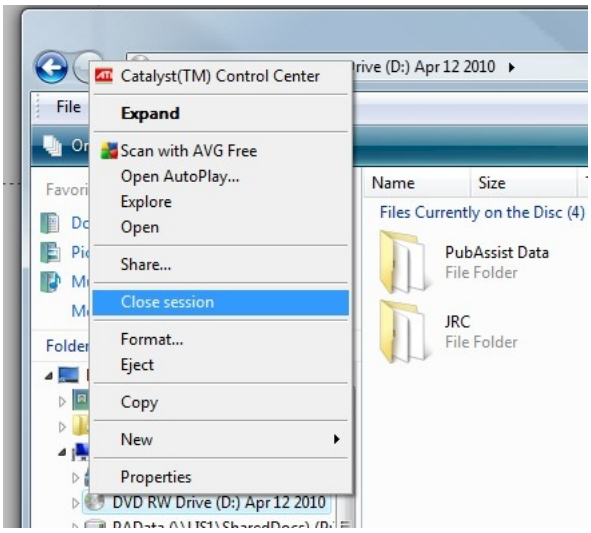
Older versions of Windows did not automatically support writing data to a CD or DVD. Beginning with Windows XP, however, Windows Explorer will generally allow you to simply copy your data to the CD or DVD drive. In XP, you may have to take another step to actually write your contents to the CD, but that is a visible option in the left-hand panel in Windows Explorer. If you have a blank CD or DVD in the drive, Windows Vista will simply start writing the data to the device.

Although you can select your PubAssist Data folder and then navigate to the CD or DVD drive, I find it easier to simply call up Windows Explorer again and navigate to the removable

drive. I then click and drag the PubAssist Data folder from the first window to the new one. This will copy the PubAssist Data folder and all of its contents to the removeable drive.



You may want to take the opportunity to back up other important files and folders to the CD or DVD. Since you won't be writing to it again, you may as well make the most of the space on the disk. Once your data is copied to the drive, make sure that you close the session so that the CD or DVD can be used on other computers. On Vista, you can right click on the drive to see this option.



That's it. My data is now written to CD. I typically buy a "cake plate" of 100 CD's. I back up my data to a CD and then put it on the top of a stack from an old cake plate. So, my most recent

backup is on top, and I have a running history of backups in a convenient location. If for some reason, my most recent backup has a problem, I can easily go to the previous backup.

Occasionally, you may want to store a backup somewhere off site to protect yourself in case of a fire.

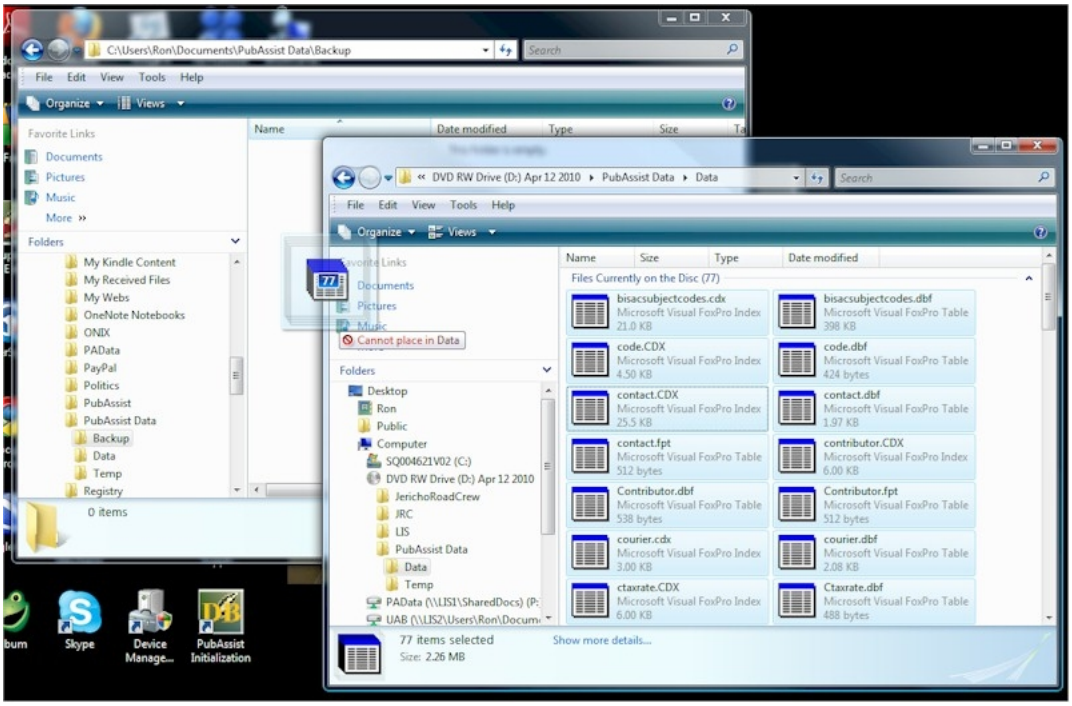
The process is similar for other removable drives. These days, "Flash" or "Thumb" drives are popular. These are great for making a quick copy of your data. However, please remember that *you don't want to simply copy to the same folder each time.* Remember my point above about overwriting good data with bad? If you are writing to an external hard drive or a flash drive, copy your data to a folder that is named for the date of the backup. Eventually, of course, your external drive will fill up. So, you'll either have to delete the oldest backup folder(s) or you'll have to copy the entire drive to a more permanent storage medium (like a CD or DVD).

Verify Your Backup

Thought we were done, huh? Well, there's one more step that you really want to do--especially if you have moved your data to a non-standard location. You need to verify that you have backed up the right set of data, and that you can restore it if you need to. A real verification entails copying your data from your backup medium back onto your hard drive. And then pointing Publishers' Assistant to that newly restored data folder. A good practice might be to set up a backup folder in the PubAssist Data folder. You can then copy just the database to the backup folder.

This is done in the same way that we copied the data from the data folder onto the removable disk above. Once again, I find it easiest to open two Windows Explorer windows. In the first, I have created a new backup folder in the PubAssist Data folder. Of course, when I navigate into that folder, it's empty. In the second window, I navigate to the PubAssist Data\Data folder on the DVD drive. This will be something like "D:\PubAssist Data\Data". Now instead of copying a folder, I want to copy the actual database files. That's because my destination folder is going to have a different name. If I simply click and drag the data *folder*, I would wind up with a "data" folder inside my "backup" folder.

To select all of the database files, I type CTRL+A. This will highlight all of the files. I can then click and drag any one of them to my first window (i.e. "C:\Users\Ron\Documents\PubAssist Data\Backup") and the entire group will be copied.



Use Publishers' Assistant to Verify Your Restored Backup

Finally, to make sure that your restored data is useable, you need to point Publishers' Assistant to the restored data. To do this, you get into Publishers' Assistant, and use the "File" and "Locate Database" option on the menu.

In step one of the Locate Database Wizard, choose "I want to access my data where it is." In step two, navigate to your restored data in the "backup" folder.

After you have completed the wizard, check around. Make sure that the last order you entered is there. Run a "Receivable Brief list by Name" report to check account balances. Run an "Available Inventory Status" report to check inventory. Assuming all looks right, you know that you have backed up and restored the right data.

> **After you have completed the verification, make sure you point PubAssist back to your regular data folder!**

You don't want to be using your backup folder. That would mess things up the next time you go to back up your data!

Once you are confident of your backup and restore processes, you won't have to verify every time you back up. But I'm a bit paranoid about this stuff. I don't trust that my DVD drive has properly written the data to the disk. (I think too many floppy drives have failed on me over the

years.) If it's an aging drive, there could be problems in writing out all of those little bits accurately. Or maybe the disk is defective in some way. Anyway, at the very least, I usually pop the disk back in and use Windows Explorer to check that all of the files are where I expect them to be.

Closing Thoughts

This probably seems like a lot of trouble, and something you may not want to take the time to do. All it takes, however, is one time when you can't restore your database. It could cost you days or even weeks of data entry time. Or it could cost hundreds of dollars to get yourself back into working order. Take the time.

As with so many things, it takes more effort to describe the procedure than it does to actually do it. Once you are familiar with the process, it won't take much time. You'll probably learn to start the backup before you go on break, or do something else that doesn't involve your computer. So your down time will be minimized.

Over the years, people have asked me why Publishers' Assistant doesn't have a built-in backup function. The reason is that this kind of function simply gives you a false sense of security. *All you Quickbooks users should pay attention.* No matter what program you are running, I've never seen one that was smart enough to know where to safely store your backed up data. A leading cause of the loss of data is a hard drive failure. If you simply make a copy of your data on your hard drive, that will give you some measure of protection. But, **if your hard drive goes, so does your backup.**

That's it for now. I think it's time to back up my development files.

How to Clean Up Your Data Folder

By Ron Lawrence

Updated 4/10/2010

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How to Clean Up Your Data Folder
1. **What should be in the data folder?**
2. **Files that can be Eliminated**
   a. **Database Updates**
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   c. **Other Common Files**
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Occasionally, users have problems that require looking at their data to solve. There are sometimes many files in the data that don't need to be there. This generally isn't a serious problem; but it can lengthen the time needed to back up your data. In cases where people FTP their data to Publishers' Assistant support, it can certainly place an added and unnecessary strain on the communication path to our FTP server. In drastic cases, too many files in a folder can impact system performance. This page documents what should and should not be in your PubAssist data folder.

The data folder is the place where your Publishers' Assistant database is located. As of Version 5, the default location for the Lyric edition is "Documents\Pubassist Data\data\". The default location for Version 4 users will be "c:\Program Files\Pubassist\data". Your data, however, can be locatedanywhereon your machine or on your network. To be sure of the location of your database, go to "Help" and then "About Publishers' Assistant" on the PubAssist menu.

What should be in the data folder?

The only files that should be in this folder are those that are associated with the Publishers' Assistant database. As most of our users know, PubAssist has been developed using Microsoft Visual Foxpro. There are potentially three different file types for each table in the Publishers' Assistant database: DBF, FPT, and CDX files. The DBF files are the main table file. The FPT file holds the contents of variable length fields (also called "memo" fields). The

CDX files are the "compound" index files associated with the table. So for example, the CONTACT table may actually be composed of three files: CONTACT.DBF, CONTACT.FPT, and CONTACT.CDX.

The following table lists the files associated with a "clean" PubAssist database, as of version 5:

Table Files	Memo Files	Index Files
bisacsubjectcodes.dbf		bisacsubjectcodes.cdx
code.dbf		code.cdx
contact.dbf	contact.fpt	contact.cdx
contributor.dbf	contributor.fpt	contributor.cdx
courier.dbf		courier.cdx
ctaxrate.dbf		ctaxrate.cdx
customer.dbf		customer.cdx
error.dbf	error.fpt	
inv_tran.dbf		inv_tran.cdx
itemrcpt.dbf		itemrcpt.cdx
key.dbf		
ldgrtran.dbf	ldgrtran.fpt	ldgrtran.cdx
mrktcode.dbf		mrktcode.cdx
onixcodes.dbf	onixcodes.fpt	onixcodes.cdx
ordercpt.dbf		ordercpt.cdx
orderpay.dbf		orderpay.cdx
orders.dbf	orders.fpt	orders.cdx
ordritem.dbf	ordritem.fpt	ordritem.cdx
pa_user.dbf	pa_user.fpt	
promotion.dbf	promotion.fpt	promotion.cdx
receipt.dbf	receipt.fpt	receipt.cdx
recptype.dbf		recptype.cdx
repeatable.dbf		

reports.dbf	reports.fpt	reports.cdx
ryltyspc.dbf		ryltyspc.cdx
srcomspc.dbf		srcomspc.cdx
staxrate.dbf		staxrate.cdx
subject.dbf	subject.fpt	subject.cdx
supplier.dbf		supplier.cdx
titlcost.dbf		titlcost.cdx
title.dbf	title.fpt	title.cdx
tpaccount.dbf	tpaccount.fpt	
wh_fees.dbf		wh_fees.cdx
wh_spec.dbf		wh_spec.cdx

As of this writing, there should be a total of 77 files in a perfectly clean data folder.

NOTE: Some who are familiar with Foxpro may note the absense of a "database container" file, like PUBASSIST.DBC. So far, the costs associated with introducing the database container seem to outweigh the benefits, so there is no database container associated with the *PubAssist* database. The above tables are all "free" tables.

Files that can be Eliminated

Database Updates

Publishers' Assistant automatically checks for changes in the database structure due to an update. When the update is performed, the original DBF and FPT files are renamed with BAK and TBK extensions, respectively. So, when you check this folder, you are likely to see a CONTACT.BAK and CONTACT.TBK files in addition to those listed in the table above. These files could be renamed back to their original extensions and used in a crisis situation.

However, after you have performed a backup and are committed to using the new version of **PubAssist**, these files are extraneous and should be removed from the directory. There are likely to be MANY BAK and TBK files in the data folder. This is by far the largest contributor to extra data that should not be maintained in the data folder. These files can nearly double the size of your data folder. If your database is large, this can have a significant impact on performance in several ways.

Archival Tables

When you perform an archival, the archived data is moved to tables with the same first six characters as the original table name. For example, archived contacts would reside in a table files, CONTACHS.DBF and CONTACTHS.FPT. These tables could be used in reports for old data. This was the intent when the archival routines were developed. However, to date, no reports have been developed that make use of these archival tables. Thus, all tables ending in "HS" can be safely removed from the data folder.

Other Common Files

Older installation procedures required that at least one file be in a folder for the folder to be created in the installation. Thus there is a README.TXT file that appears in the data folder. This file can be removed. Older installations may also have included FOXUSER.DBF and FOXUSER.FPT in the data folder. These can be removed. Similarly, a copy of PA_USER.DBF and PA_USER.FPT has been included in the data folder. However, your installation should have made a copy of these files in your home (or default) folder (i.e. ...\Documents\ **PubAssist**Data), and those will be used by the application. So, strictly speaking, the PA_USER files in the data folder are extraneous and could be removed as well.

I often find that users have the results of report exports or even report form files in their data folders. Report forms are actually Foxpro tables. They have file extensions FRX and FRT. These files should reside in your home folder PubAssist folder if they are actively being used. If a duplicate is saved to the data folder, the file in the PubAssist folder will be the ONLY one used! So, save your report changes to the PubAssist folder. Also, you should be saving customized report forms to a unique file name so they don't get overwritten when you reinstall PubAssist.

Other export files will often have .TXT, .DLM, .CSV, or .XLS extensions.

In General

Any files that do not appear in the table above should probably not be in the data folder. If you are unsure of a file or set of files, it's a good policy to move it into another folder temporarily. Run PubAssist to see if application searches for the missing file(s). If not, you can safely discard them. And, as always, its a good idea to back up your data folder before making a lot of changes.

Converting from Quickbooks to Publishers' Assistant

Submitted by Ron Lawrence February 4, 2011

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    6. **Conclusion**

Many new publishers start out choosing Quickbooks for their accounting software. They generally don't realize the accounting challenges that they are likely to face as their publishing business grows. When a publisher begins to pay royalties, many resort to using Excel to run the calculations and then load the results back into Quickbooks. It doesn't take too many books, however, before the publisher is pulling their hair out and wondering whether there must be a better solution. The problem at this point is that they are so busy trying to keep up with their business that switching to something else can seem like an overwhelming task. Hopefully, this article will help to take some of the stress out of making the switch.

When switching to PubAssist, most new users are concerned with three things:

1.their mailing list,
2.their title information, and
3.their sales history.

Right off the bat, I'm going to try to convince you to forget about your sales history. The reason is that each accounting system has it's own idiosyncrasies. PubAssist is no exception. So, the pain of getting your entire sales history into PubAssist is going to far outweigh any benefit. Instead, I would recommend that you choose a cut-off date. If you have to look up anything prior to that date, simply use your old accounting system. After that date, your data will generally be in PubAssist.

Not quite convinced? Ask yourself, how many times over the last year have you really looked back over your sales history for analysis? Hmmmm? Other than running reports for taxes, have there been any? Even if you were engaged in some analysis, wasn't that a one-time process? Your old accounting software isn't going to disappear. If you need to look back three years from now, your data and software will still be there. What's more, if you are a Quickbooks user, you will quickly discover thatthere is no export tool for your invoices. You can export your titles (items) and your contacts (customer and vendors), but not your invoices. It's a messy business and Intuit doesn't want to help. So, even if you find a tool to export your sales history directly from your Quickbooks database, you could easily spend days or weeks trying to get your entire sales history converted. Will it have been worth it? I doubt it.

Still not convinced? Well, youcanget your sales history into Publishers' Assistant. The most straight forward method will entail getting your sales history into XML format and using Couplet to import; but that is outside the scope of this article.

So, with this realization, we can immediately focus on transferring the list of contacts and titles. There, don't you feel better already? Both of these sets of data are handled by Couplet.

Export your data from Quickbooks

Different versions of Quickbooks may vary, but you should find on the menu the ability to export your customers and your vendors. Here's quick "How To" article on exporting data from Quickbooks:

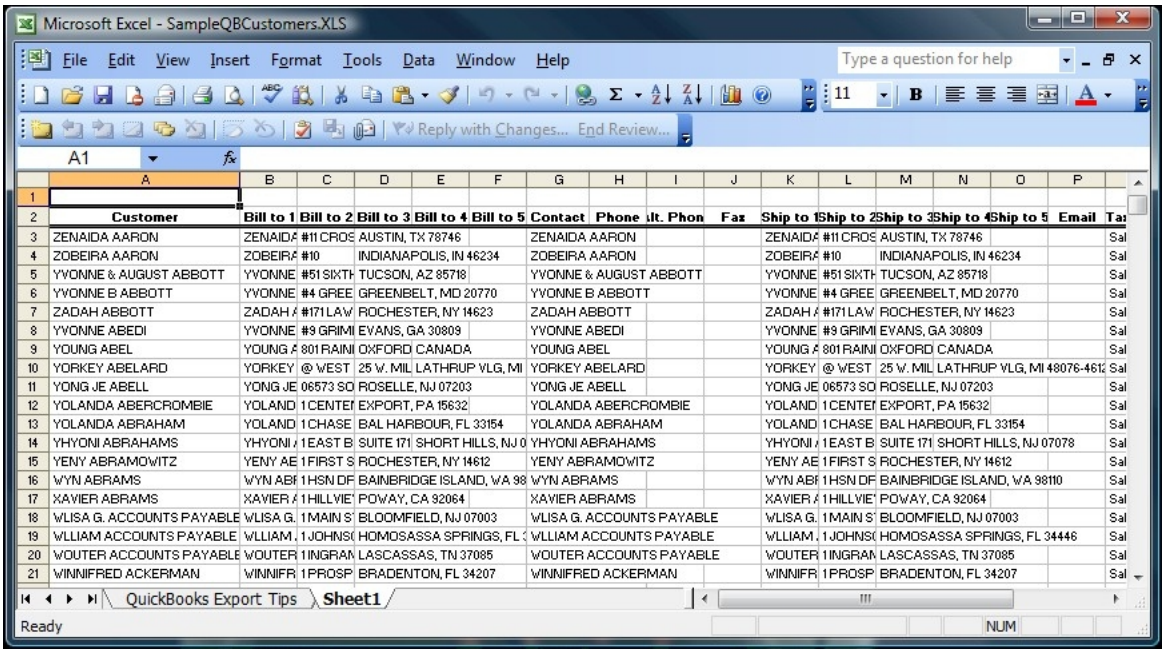
How to Export Data from Quickbooks to Excel

Older versions of Quickbooks will export records to an IIS file. This file is a tab-delimited text file that can be imported directly into Microsoft Excel. As mentioned above, you'll want to export your customers, vendors, and items.

Use Excel to Prepare Your Data for Import

Looking at your records in Excel will allow you to scan through the list of contacts all at once. You may see some anomalies in your data entry methods. It would be a good idea to take some time to fix some of those anomalies in Excel. You'll find it easier to compare content among several records. If you have a lot of names, this can be overwhelming. Don't fret too much about it; you will always be able to edit your contact records as you refer to them in PubAssist. You don't have to make everything perfect up front. Nonetheless, if you are adept at using Excel, you can straighten out many things with relatively few key strokes. Prettying up your data is actually the least of your concerns. The real challenge is coming up.

Let's start with your customer contacts. The following illustration shows a sample Quickbooks customer export that has been loaded into Excel.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	
1																	
2	Customer	Bill to 1	Bill to 2	Bill to 3	Bill to 4	Bill to 5	Contact	Phone	lt. Phon	Fax	Ship to 1	Ship to 2	Ship to 3	Ship to 4	Ship to 5	Email	Ta
3	ZENAIDA AARON	ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 78746			ZENAIDA AARON				ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 78746				Sal
4	ZOBEIRA AARON	ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234			ZOBEIRA AARON				ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234				Sal
5	YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT	YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 85718			YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT				YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 85718				Sal
6	YVONNE B ABBOTT	YVONNE	#4 GREE	GREENBELT, MD 20770			YVONNE B ABBOTT				YVONNE	#4 GREE	GREENBELT, MD 20770				Sal
7	ZADAH ABBOTT	ZADAH A	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, NY 14623			ZADAH ABBOTT				ZADAH A	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, NY 14623				Sal
8	YVONNE ABEDI	YVONNE	#9 GRIMI	EVANS, GA 30809			YVONNE ABEDI				YVONNE	#9 GRIMI	EVANS, GA 30809				Sal
9	YOUNG ABEL	YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD CANADA			YOUNG ABEL				YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD CANADA				Sal
10	YORKEY ABELARD	YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATHRUP VLG, MI		YORKEY ABELARD				YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATHRUP VLG, MI	48076-461		Sal
11	YONG JE ABELL	YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07203			YONG JE ABELL				YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07203				Sal
12	YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE	YOLAND	1 CENTEI	EXPORT, PA 15632			YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE				YOLAND	1 CENTEI	EXPORT, PA 15632				Sal
13	YOLANDA ABRAHAM	YOLAND	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR, FL 33154			YOLANDA ABRAHAM				YOLAND	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR, FL 33154				Sal
14	YHYONI ABRAHAMS	YHYONI A	1 EAST B	SUITE 171	SHORT HILLS, NJ 0		YHYONI ABRAHAMS				YHYONI A	1 EAST B	SUITE 171	SHORT HILLS, NJ 07078			Sal
15	YENY ABRAMOWITZ	YENY AE	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, NY 14612			YENY ABRAMOWITZ				YENY AE	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, NY 14612				Sal
16	WYN ABRAMS	WYN ABI	1 HSN DF	BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 98			WYN ABRAMS				WYN ABI	1 HSN DF	BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 98110				Sal
17	XAVIER ABRAMS	XAVIER A	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92064			XAVIER ABRAMS				XAVIER A	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92064				Sal
18	WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WLISA G.	1 MAIN S	BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003			WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE				WLISA G.	1 MAIN S	BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003				Sal
19	WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WLLIAM	1 JOHNS	HOMOSASSA SPRINGS, FL			WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE				WLLIAM	1 JOHNS	HOMOSASSA SPRINGS, FL 34446				Sal
20	WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WOUTER	1 INGRAN	LASCASSAS, TN 37085			WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE				WOUTER	1 INGRAN	LASCASSAS, TN 37085				Sal
21	WINNIFRED ACKERMAN	WINNIFR	1 PROSP	BRADENTON, FL 34207			WINNIFRED ACKERMAN				WINNIFR	1 PROSP	BRADENTON, FL 34207				Sal

In order for your data to make sense to PubAssist,you must map an import field to the appropriate field in PubAssist.That can be a fairly complicated process. But...we'll take it one step at a time. The concepts that we discuss here may be helpful if you are importing data from sources other than Quickbooks.

The major obstacle is that similar database systems structure their data differently. For example, when you look at your Quickbooks data in Excel, you will see that the address data is collected in general purpose address fields. (e.g. "Bill To 1" through "Bill To 5") Publishers'

Assistant keeps address information in discrete fields. (i.e. first_name, last_name, company, po_addr, city, state_abbr, zip_code, and country) Getting data from one form to the other is a challenge to say the least.

When dealing with a Quickbooks Customer export, you'll run into the following issues:

1.The billing and shipping addresses are not in discrete fields.
2.Billing and Shipping addresses are likely to be duplicates.
3.Quickbooks has three phone number fields, PubAssist has only two.

4.There are other miscellaneous fields in your Quickbooks export that are not directly used by PubAssist.

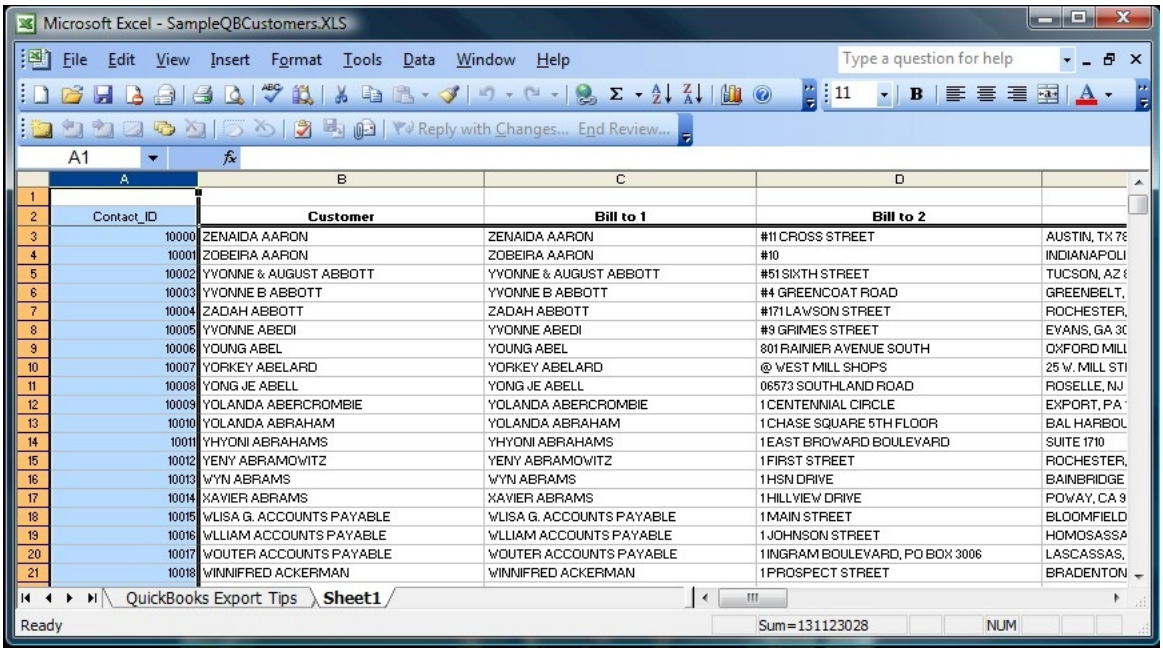
5.Still other fields, such as "Customer Type" are potentially used in separate tables in PubAssist.

Add a Contact_ID field

PubAssist allows you to enter a unique identifier for each contact. While this field is not essential, it turns out to be very useful when importing data. The reasons why will become more clear later in this article; but for now, take my word for it and add a new column in Excel and label it "CONTACT_ID". (The use of capitals is not important.) You can use anything you like for an identifier, but it must be unique for each contact. If you already have contacts in your PubAssist database, these new contact_id's must also be distinguished from anything you've already used.

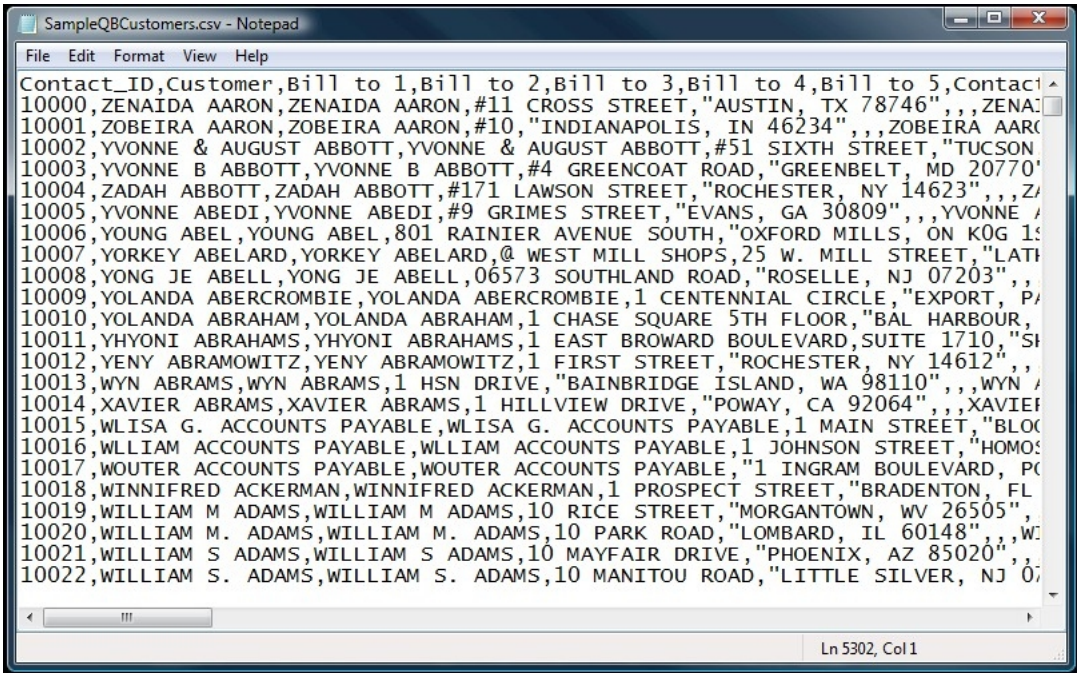
The reason for this is that the import routines will use the Contact_ID as apreferred method for identifying an existing contact.By sharing this, I am also pointing out that the import routines will check to see if each imported contact already exists in the database. The intent is to minimize duplicate contacts. Having said this, it must also be said that the import routines are pretty conservative. The routine will err on the side of storing a duplicate contact, rather than running the risk of losing or inappropriately overwriting an existing contact. So, if you have two records that are really for the same address, but there is a slight difference in, say, the name or the street addres, you will wind up with two seperate contacts. Specifying the Contact_ID is one way of telling the import routine that you definitely want to overwrite the existing contact with new data.

For my sample, I simply chose a starting number and assigned a unique number to each contact to be imported. Using a formula to do this is quick and easy. Once you have assigned contact ID's you may want to save your worksheet. Keeping a copy of your original exported data along with these newly assigned contact ID's will allow you to refine your import later on.



	A	B	C	D	
1					
2	Contact_ID	Customer	Bill to 1	Bill to 2	
3	10000	ZENAIDA AARON	ZENAIDA AARON	#11 CROSS STREET	AUSTIN, TX 78
4	10001	ZOBEIRA AARON	ZOBEIRA AARON	#10	INDIANAPOLI
5	10002	YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT	YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT	#51 SIXTH STREET	TUCSON, AZ 8
6	10003	YVONNE B ABBOTT	YVONNE B ABBOTT	#4 GREENCOAT ROAD	GREENBELT,
7	10004	ZADAH ABBOTT	ZADAH ABBOTT	#171 LAWSON STREET	ROCHESTER,
8	10005	YVONNE ABEDI	YVONNE ABEDI	#9 GRIMES STREET	EVANS, GA 30
9	10006	YOUNG ABEL	YOUNG ABEL	801 RAINIER AVENUE SOUTH	OXFORD MILL
10	10007	YORKEY ABELARD	YORKEY ABELARD	@ WEST MILL SHOPS	25 W. MILL ST
11	10008	YONG JE ABELL	YONG JE ABELL	06573 SOUTHLAND ROAD	ROSELLE, NJ
12	10009	YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE	YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE	1 CENTENNIAL CIRCLE	EXPORT, PA
13	10010	YOLANDA ABRAHAM	YOLANDA ABRAHAM	1 CHASE SQUARE 5TH FLOOR	BAL HARBOU
14	10011	YHYONI ABRAHAMS	YHYONI ABRAHAMS	1 EAST BROWARD BOULEVARD	SUITE 1710
15	10012	YENY ABRAMOWITZ	YENY ABRAMOWITZ	1 FIRST STREET	ROCHESTER,
16	10013	WYN ABRAMS	WYN ABRAMS	1 HSN DRIVE	BAINBRIDGE
17	10014	XAVIER ABRAMS	XAVIER ABRAMS	1 HILLVIEW DRIVE	POWAY, CA 9
18	10015	WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	1 MAIN STREET	BLOOMFIELD
19	10016	WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	1 JOHNSON STREET	HOMOSASSA
20	10017	WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	1 INGRAM BOULEVARD, PO BOX 3006	LASCASSAS,
21	10018	WINNIFRED ACKERMAN	WINNIFRED ACKERMAN	1 PROSPECT STREET	BRADENTON

In the interest of not losing any data, you should save the edited spreadsheet to a new file. As long as we are saving, you should know that Couplet will not import directly from Excel. It will import data from a "comma separated values" (.CSV) file format. So, it makes sense to save to that format now. If you open the resulting CSV file with NotePad, you should see something like this:



```
SampleQBCustomers.csv - Notepad
File  Edit  Format  View  Help
Contact_ID,Customer,Bill to 1,Bill to 2,Bill to 3,Bill to 4,Bill to 5,Contact
10000,ZENAIDA AARON,ZENAIDA AARON,#11 CROSS STREET,"AUSTIN, TX 78746",,,ZENA
10001,ZOBEIRA AARON,ZOBEIRA AARON,#10,"INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234",,,ZOBEIRA AAR
10002,YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT,YVONNE & AUGUST ABBOTT,#51 SIXTH STREET,"TUCSON
10003,YVONNE B ABBOTT,YVONNE B ABBOTT,#4 GREENCOAT ROAD,"GREENBELT, MD 20770
10004,ZADAH ABBOTT,ZADAH ABBOTT,#171 LAWSON STREET,"ROCHESTER, NY 14623",,,Z
10005,YVONNE ABEDI,YVONNE ABEDI,#9 GRIMES STREET,"EVANS, GA 30809",,,YVONNE
10006,YOUNG ABEL,YOUNG ABEL,801 RAINIER AVENUE SOUTH,"OXFORD MILLS, ON K0G 1
10007,YORKEY ABELARD,YORKEY ABELARD,@ WEST MILL SHOPS,25 W. MILL STREET,"LAT
10008,YONG JE ABELL,YONG JE ABELL,06573 SOUTHLAND ROAD,"ROSELLE, NJ 07203",,
10009,YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE,YOLANDA ABERCROMBIE,1 CENTENNIAL CIRCLE,"EXPORT, P
10010,YOLANDA ABRAHAM,YOLANDA ABRAHAM,1 CHASE SQUARE 5TH FLOOR,"BAL HARBOUR,
10011,YHYONI ABRAHAMS,YHYONI ABRAHAMS,1 EAST BROWARD BOULEVARD,SUITE 1710,"S
10012,YENY ABRAMOWITZ,YENY ABRAMOWITZ,1 FIRST STREET,"ROCHESTER, NY 14612",,
10013,WYN ABRAMS,WYN ABRAMS,1 HSN DRIVE,"BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 98110",,,WYN
10014,XAVIER ABRAMS,XAVIER ABRAMS,1 HILLVIEW DRIVE,"POWAY, CA 92064",,,XAVIE
10015,WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,1 MAIN STREET,"BLO
10016,WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,WLLIAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,1 JOHNSON STREET,"HOMO
10017,WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,WOUTER ACCOUNTS PAYABLE,"1 INGRAM BOULEVARD, P
10018,WINNIFRED ACKERMAN,WINNIFRED ACKERMAN,1 PROSPECT STREET,"BRADENTON, FL
10019,WILLIAM M ADAMS,WILLIAM M ADAMS,10 RICE STREET,"MORGANTOWN, WV 26505",
10020,WILLIAM M. ADAMS,WILLIAM M. ADAMS,10 PARK ROAD,"LOMBARD, IL 60148",,,W
10021,WILLIAM S ADAMS,WILLIAM S ADAMS,10 MAYFAIR DRIVE,"PHOENIX, AZ 85020",,
10022,WILLIAM S. ADAMS,WILLIAM S. ADAMS,10 MANITOU ROAD,"LITTLE SILVER, NJ 0
Ln 5302, Col 1
```

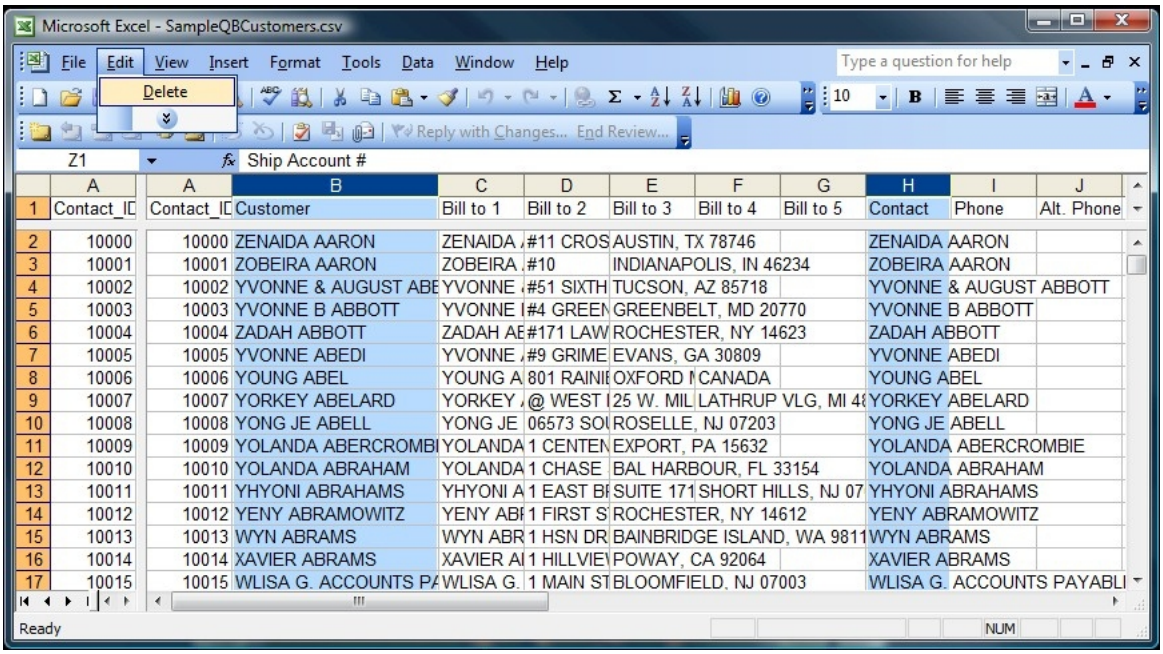
Eliminate some columns right away

The following is a list of fields that you may be able to eliminate. It will depend, of course, on exactly how you have entered data into Quickbooks. I offer here my justification for eliminating each of these columns. Your situation may vary, so use your judgement. If a piece of data seems unique and important, then hang onto it. Eliminating as many columns as you can will help to remove the clutter when mapping the remaining fields to fields in Publishers' Assistant:

- Customer- This is generally either the the personal name or the company name. Both of these are generally found in the Bill To fields. If not, you may want to retain this field and rename it when you handle the billing addresses in the steps below.
- Contact- Frequently, this is the same as the personal name found in the Bill To fields.
- Tax Item- Publishers' Assistant accounts for sales taxes quite differently from Quickbooks. This column refers to an Item that is used to accumulate your sales tax liabilities. In PubAssist, all customers are assumed to be taxable--unless you specifically mark an invoice as NOT taxable. Should you do so, the tax exempt status is automatically saved to the customer's profile. So, like other fields below, trying to import this field here is more trouble than it is worth.
- Customer Type- This equates most closely to customer codes in Publishers' Assistant. While you can import customer codes, it is not likely that there will be a direct match from one to the other. If you have actively used the customer type field, you may want to sort your contacts by customer type and break your data into separate files. The Contact Import Wizard will allow you to specify customer codes for the entire import. So, for example, you can import all retailers at once and identify them with a single code. That would negate the need for this column of data in the import. You can also import these Customer Types as customer codes in a completely separate step. If you plan to do so, hang on to the copy of your data with the Contact_Id's assigned.
- Rep- This equates most closely to the Sales Representatives in Publishers' Assistant. Samples I have seen often use the initials or the name of an employee that handles the customer's account. In other cases, it could very well be a third party that has represented your products to the customer. In Publishers' Assistant, Sales Representatives are contacts, like any other contact. So, there is not likely to be enough information in this field to be useful anyway. Furthermore, a Sales Representative is saved to the customer's profile automatically, when you specify one in an invoice. So trying to import them here is really more trouble than it is worth.
- Terms- Like the sales representative, the terms you assign to a customer in an invoice will be saved to their profile. So, attempting to import it here is probably more trouble than it is worth.
- Vendor- I'm not really sure why this vendor field is in the customer export from Quickbooks. In most samples I have seen, the field has been left blank. However, like the Rep field, it is likely to contain a name that should be expanded to a completely separate contact. These names may very well appear in your Quickbooks Vendor export. So, you need not worry about them here.

- Buyer- Very similar to the Contact field above. If this is the same as the personal name in the address, then it is extraneous. If it really is a unique name, then perhaps it should be saved as a completely separate contact. You can certainly have multiple contacts at the same business address.
- Ship Method,Ship Account #- The shipment method and account number are generally not associated with a customer contact in Publishers' Assistant. Perhaps they should be. But for now, if this information is important to you, you should move it to the NOTE column, which will be mapped to the Comment field in Publishers' Assistant.

Eliminating these columns will make it easier to compare your billing and shipping addresses in the next steps.

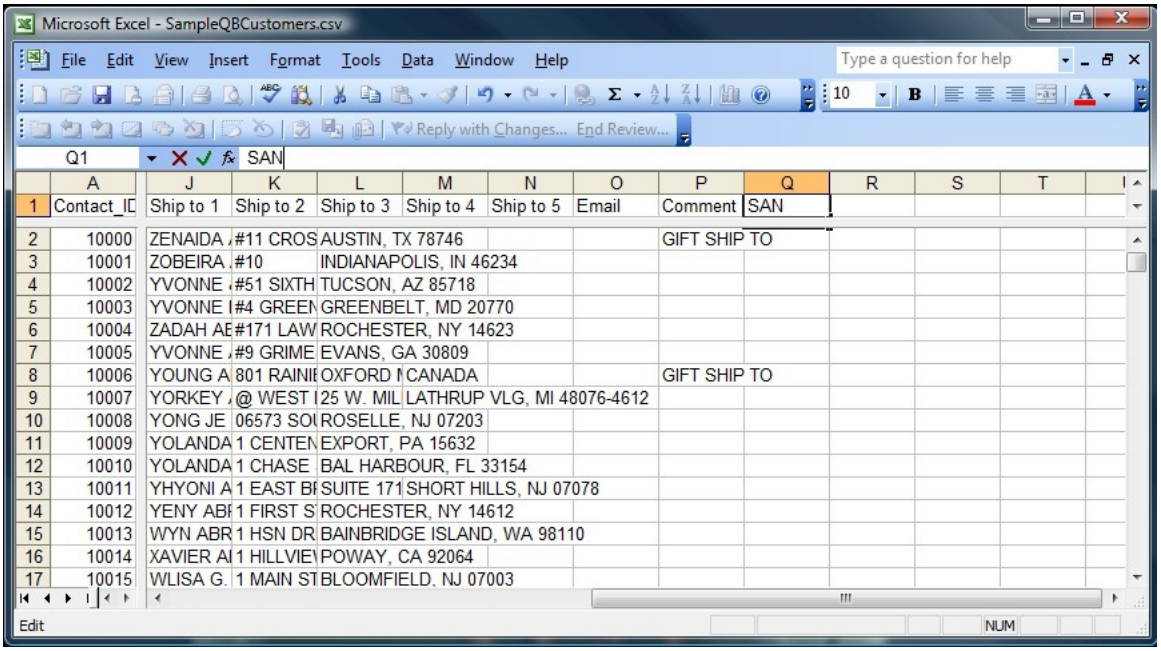


	A	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Contact_ID	Contact_ID	Customer	Bill to 1	Bill to 2	Bill to 3	Bill to 4	Bill to 5	Contact	Phone	Alt. Phone
2	10000	10000	ZENAIDA AARON	ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 78746			ZENAIDA	AARON	
3	10001	10001	ZOBEIRA AARON	ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234			ZOBEIRA	AARON	
4	10002	10002	YVONNE & AUGUST ABE	YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 85718			YVONNE	& AUGUST ABBOTT	
5	10003	10003	YVONNE B ABBOTT	YVONNE	#4 GREEN	GREENBELT, MD 20770			YVONNE	B ABBOTT	
6	10004	10004	ZADAH ABBOTT	ZADAH AE	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, NY 14623			ZADAH	ABBOTT	
7	10005	10005	YVONNE ABEDI	YVONNE	#9 GRIME	EVANS, GA 30809			YVONNE	ABEDI	
8	10006	10006	YOUNG ABEL	YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD N	CANADA		YOUNG	ABEL	
9	10007	10007	YORKEY ABELARD	YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATHRUP VLG, MI 4		YORKEY	ABELARD	
10	10008	10008	YONG JE ABELL	YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07203			YONG JE	ABELL	
11	10009	10009	YOLANDA ABERCROMBI	YOLANDA	1 CENTEN	EXPORT, PA 15632			YOLANDA	ABERCROMBIE	
12	10010	10010	YOLANDA ABRAHAM	YOLANDA	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR, FL 33154			YOLANDA	ABRAHAM	
13	10011	10011	YHYONI ABRAHAMS	YHYONI A	1 EAST BI	SUITE 171	SHORT HILLS, NJ 07		YHYONI	ABRAHAMS	
14	10012	10012	YENY ABRAMOWITZ	YENY ABI	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, NY 14612			YENY	ABRAMOWITZ	
15	10013	10013	WYN ABRAMS	WYN ABR	1 HSN DR	BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 9811			WYN	ABRAMS	
16	10014	10014	XAVIER ABRAMS	XAVIER AI	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92064			XAVIER	ABRAMS	
17	10015	10015	WLISA G. ACCOUNTS PA	WLISA G.	1 MAIN ST	BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003			WLISA G.	ACCOUNTS PAYABLI	

Rename other columns to their Pub``Assist counterparts

Some columns, like PHONE and EMAIL have exactly the same names as their PubAssist counterparts. The following columns have a direct corresponding field in Publishers' Assistant, but should be renamed to match up:

- Noteshould be renamed to "Comment".
- SAN:should be renamed to "SAN". (Remove the colon.)



	A	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1	Contact_ID	Ship to 1	Ship to 2	Ship to 3	Ship to 4	Ship to 5	Email	Comment	SAN			
2	10000	ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 78746				GIFT SHIP TO				
3	10001	ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234								
4	10002	YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 85718								
5	10003	YVONNE	#4 GREEN	GREENBELT, MD 20770								
6	10004	ZADAH AE	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, NY 14623								
7	10005	YVONNE	#9 GRIME	EVANS, GA 30809								
8	10006	YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD N	CANADA			GIFT SHIP TO				
9	10007	YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATHRUP VLG, MI 48076-4612							
10	10008	YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07203								
11	10009	YOLANDA	1 CENTEN	EXPORT, PA 15632								
12	10010	YOLANDA	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR, FL 33154								
13	10011	YHYONI A	1 EAST BI	SUITE 171	SHORT HILLS, NJ 07078							
14	10012	YENY ABI	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, NY 14612								
15	10013	WYN ABR	1 HSN DR	BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 98110								
16	10014	XAVIER AI	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92064								
17	10015	WLISA G.	1 MAIN ST	BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003								

Converting the "Bill To" fields

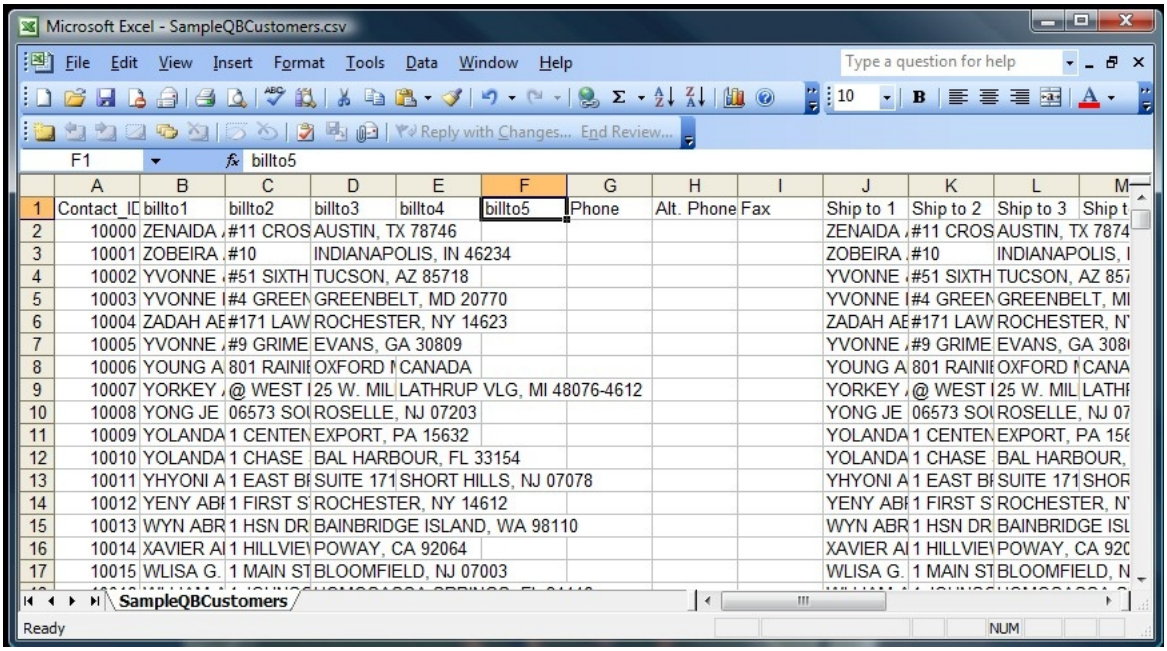
As mentioned above, the billing address is stored in general fields in Quickbooks. One thing you can always do is to create the necessary discrete columns in Excel and move your address data by hand into the proper columns.Ugh!

...But take heart! because...

- Couplet contains a heuristic import function that will attempt to do this for you!

Here's how it works with our sample data from above. Remember, our primary objective is to map our import data fields into PubAssist fields. The Contact Import Wizard will accept generic address fields: BillTo1 through BillTo<n>. It will actually go through the process of trying to identify the personal names, the company name, the street address, city, state, zip code, and country. Is this process perfect? No. But it will work pretty well. As mentioned above, things do not have to be perfect in order to be useful. Later on, when you run into a contact record that doesn't look right, you'll be able to fix it. That, however, will only need to happen on an exception basis. It shouldn't be necessary for the vast majority of your imported records.

So, mapping these fields for the purposes of the import is simply a matter of removing the spaces from the "Bill To" column headings. So, replace "Bill to 1" with "Billto1" and so forth.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Contact_ID	billto1	billto2	billto3	billto4	billto5	Phone	Alt. Phone	Fax	Ship to 1	Ship to 2	Ship to 3	Ship t
2	10000	ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 78746						ZENAIDA	#11 CROS	AUSTIN, TX 7874	
3	10001	ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46234						ZOBEIRA	#10	INDIANAPOLIS, I	
4	10002	YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 85718						YVONNE	#51 SIXTH	TUCSON, AZ 857	
5	10003	YVONNE	#4 GREEN	GREENBELT, MD 20770						YVONNE	#4 GREEN	GREENBELT, MI	
6	10004	ZADAH AE	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, NY 14623						ZADAH AE	#171 LAW	ROCHESTER, N	
7	10005	YVONNE	#9 GRIME	EVANS, GA 30809						YVONNE	#9 GRIME	EVANS, GA 308	
8	10006	YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD	CANADA					YOUNG A	801 RAINI	OXFORD	CANA
9	10007	YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATHRUP VLG, MI 48076-4612					YORKEY	@ WEST	25 W. MIL	LATH
10	10008	YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07203						YONG JE	06573 SO	ROSELLE, NJ 07	
11	10009	YOLANDA	1 CENTEN	EXPORT, PA 15632						YOLANDA	1 CENTEN	EXPORT, PA 15	
12	10010	YOLANDA	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR, FL 33154						YOLANDA	1 CHASE	BAL HARBOUR,	
13	10011	YHYONI A	1 EAST B	SUITE 171	SHORT HILLS, NJ 07078					YHYONI A	1 EAST B	SUITE 171	SHOR
14	10012	YENY AB	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, NY 14612						YENY AB	1 FIRST S	ROCHESTER, N	
15	10013	WYN ABR	1 HSN DR	BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA 98110						WYN ABR	1 HSN DR	BAINBRIDGE IS	
16	10014	XAVIER A	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92064						XAVIER A	1 HILLVIE	POWAY, CA 92	
17	10015	WLISA G.	1 MAIN ST	BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003						WLISA G.	1 MAIN ST	BLOOMFIELD, N	

One final note on handling these generic address fields:

- The original address fields will be copied to the comment field in the resulting contact record. So, if you find that the imported data doesn't look quite right, check the comment for the original address.

Converting the "Ship To" fields

The Shipping address fields are quite similar to the billing address fields. In fact, it's not unusual for them to be a duplication of the billing address fields. How you handle the shipping addresses will depend heavily on how you have used those fields in Quickbooks. Before diving in, let me share a little background about how shipping addresses are handled in PubAssist.

- Quickbooks makes the assumption that every contact has a billing and a shipping address.
- 'PubAssist, by contrast, assumes that the billing and shipping addresses are the same--unless you tell it otherwise.

We took this approach early on as a way to minimize the amount of data that must be entered and stored. When you see how many of your contacts have duplicate billing and shipping addresses, I think you will agree with our approach.

In PubAssist, if a contact has a p.o. box for a street address, a seperate street address can be entered into the courier address field (COUR_ADDR). In such a case, these addresses are for the same physical location; but if a courier service such as UPS or FedEx is used to ship books to them, then the courier address will be presented rather than the postal address.

- NOTE: If the shipping address is really a completely different location, then you should import it as a separate contact.

With these things in mind, you might be justified in simply removing the shipping address fields altogether--at least for the first pass of importing your customer contacts. Since we've preserved the originally exported data, you could always go back to it to capture the shipping addresses that you want to import separately. If you have saved your data with the Contact_ID field, importing only the shipping address fields for the assigned contact ID will be made easier. The hard part is deleting all of the duplicate shipping addresses.

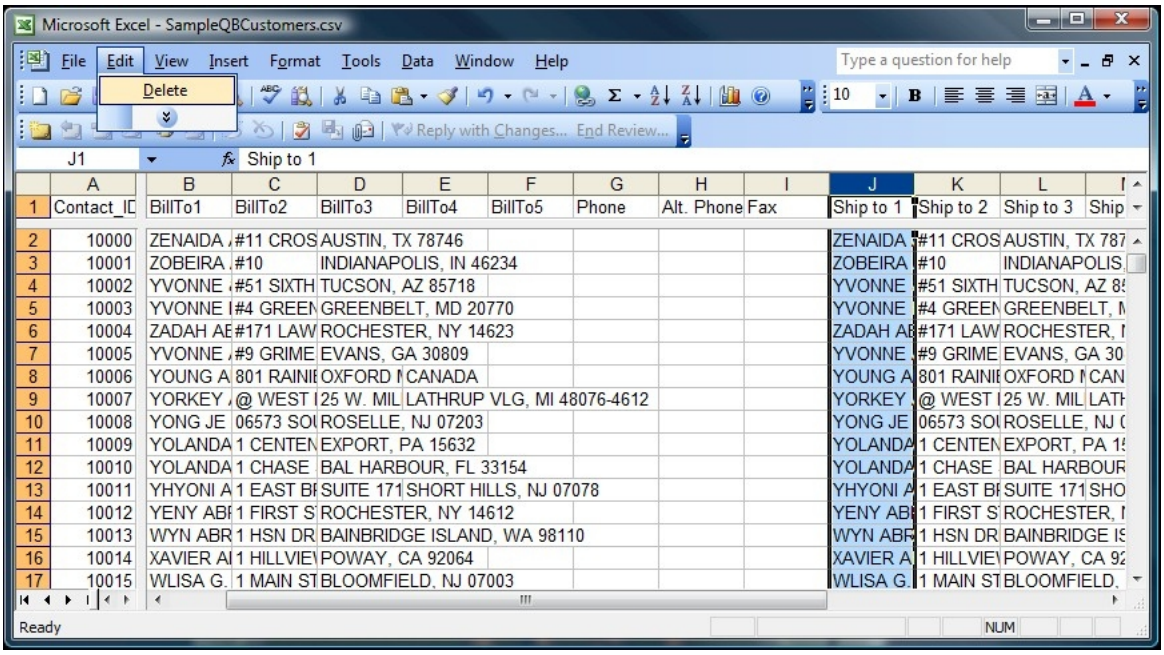
Should you decide to keep the shipping address fields, the import routine will collect them into the COUR_ADDR field. You won't want to duplicate the billing address, so your next step should be to eliminate any shipping addresses that are the same as the billing addresses. Where duplicates appear, simply select the cells in the ship to columns for multiple rows, and hit the delete key.

In my sample data, this was made easier by sorting my contacts by street address. That has the effect of collecting all of the P.O. Box addresses together. These P.O. Box addresses are the most likely to contain a different street address for shipping. Using this technique, I was able to select a large blocks of shipping addresses that could be eliminated all at once. If the shipping address is the same P.O. box as the billing address, it should be deleted as well.

- The only shipping addresses you want to keep are entries that have a different street address from the billing address.

It is recommended that you remove the company name and personal contact from the shipping address fields. If a courier address is specified, Publishers' Assistant will assume that the street, city, state, and zip code will appear in the courier address field. These are the attributes you'll want to keep in the Ship To fields.

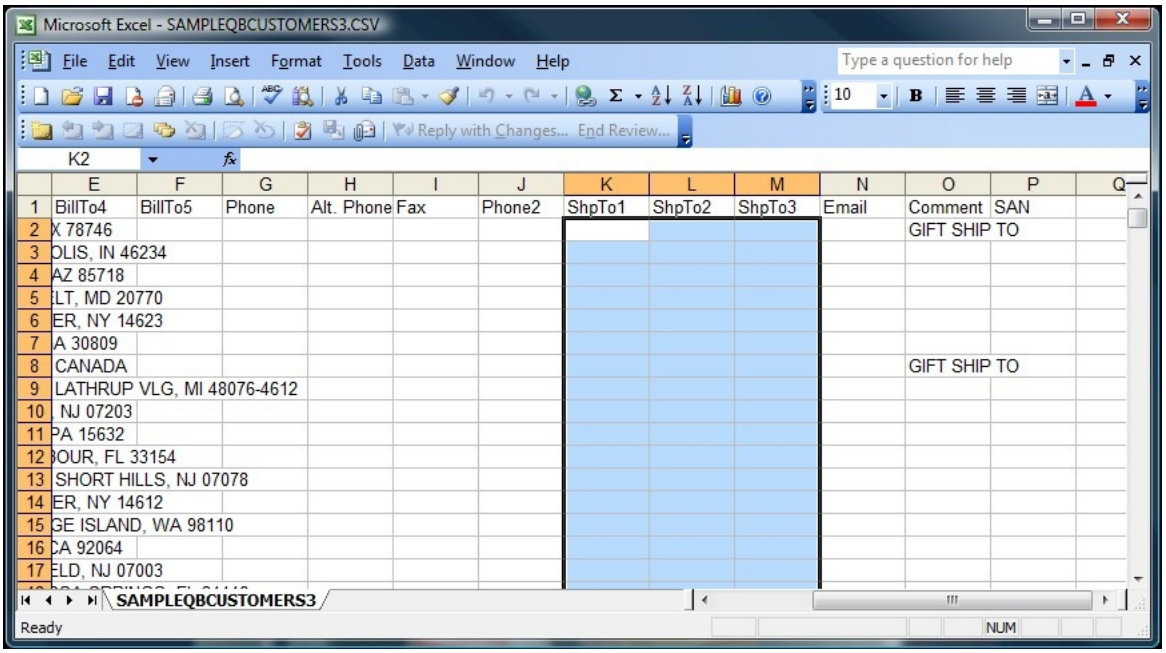
So, in our sample, "Ship to 1" should be eliminated to remove the company and/or contact names.



If both were specified, then the "Ship To 2" column may contain data you will want to eliminate as well. That's a bit more cumbersome. You'll have to search down through the column to remove those names where they appear.

You may find that the "Ship To 5" column contains nothing but the country, if it contains anything at all. The country is not needed for the courier address field. Check down through the contents. If you do have other address attributes, see if you can rearrange the address for that contact in order to empty "Ship to 5". Assuming you succeed in doing this, you can delete the column labeled, "Ship to 5".

As with the Bill To address fields, the spaces should be removed from the field names. So, rename the columns: "Ship to 2" will be renamed to "ShipTo1", "Ship to 3" should be renamed to "ShipTo2", and so on.



Combining phone number fields

The phone number fields in the Quickbooks export are called: "phone", "Alt. Phone", and "FAX". The corresponding fields in Publishers' Assistant are: "phone" and "phone2". Thus, the PHONE field will import into PubAssist without any changes. It's the alternate phone numbers that we'll be concerned with.

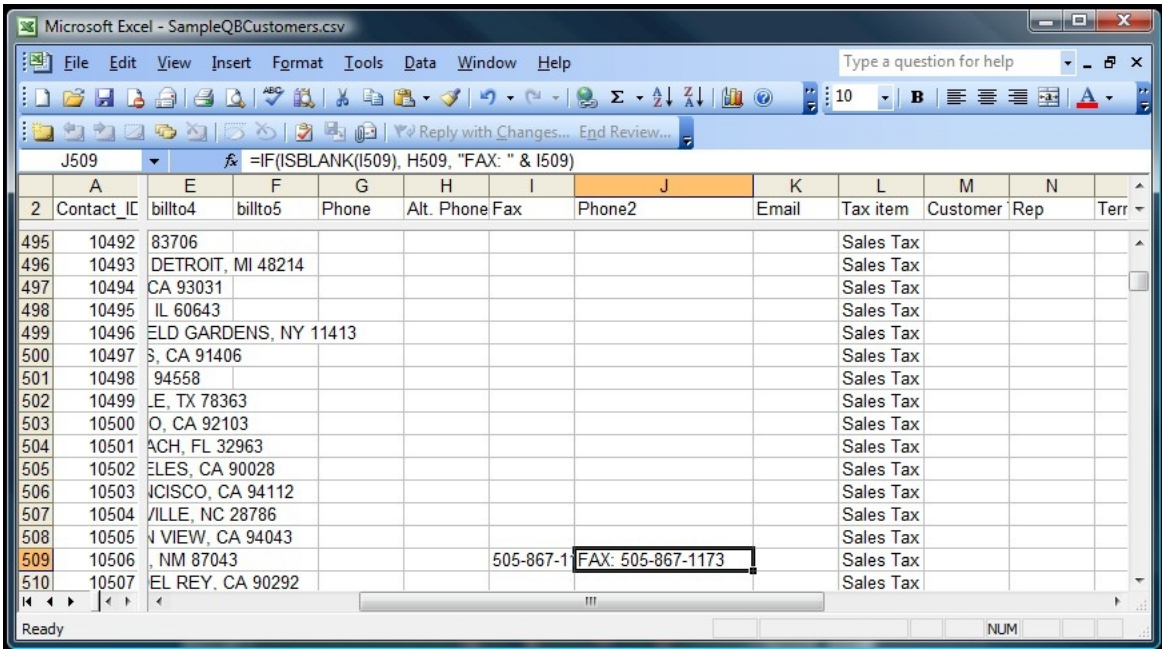
If you look through your Quickbooks data, you are likely to see that many of the ALT. PHONE and FAX fields are empty. Rarely are they both filled in. In PubAssist, the PHONE2 field is generally used to store a FAX number. Enough space is available to allow you to prefix the fax number with "FAX:". Similarly, you could prefix the phone number with "CELL:" or "LOCAL:". These are not necessary, but may be helpful in distinguishing why you might use the alternate phone number. So, here's what I do to pull these phone numbers into a single field:

1. First, create a new column and label it, "PHONE2".
2. Next, enter the following formula into the first available cell (row 3) in the new column:

```
=IF(ISBLANK(I3), H3, "FAX: " & I3)
```

1. Now, copy this cell to all of the others in the new column.

If you set your cursor on an entry where there is a Fax number, you'll see something like this:



The result will be that if a Fax number exists, it will appear in the Phone2 column prefixed by "FAX:". If no Fax number exists, then the contents of the Alt. Phone columnn will appear in the Phone 2 column. If both are blank, then of course no phone2 entry will appear. If you do have entries with both, you'll want to move one or the other to the Notes column. As you can tell, the Comment column is the catch all.

Note that you can't eliminate the ALT. PHONE and FAX columns just yet. Your formula in the PHONE2 column depends on the contents of these columns. However, if you save your spreadsheet to a CSV and then recall it into Excel, those formulas will be replaced with the resulting values. You could then delete the ALT. PHONE and FAX columns. It turns out that Couplet will ignore any fields that are not in the PubAssist database. So, you really don't need to worry about the ALT. PHONE and FAX columns after all.

Congratulations!You've just prepared your Quickbooks customer data for importing into Publishers' Assistant. The hard work is done!

Summary Field Mapping for Customer Fields

Here's a summary of the procedure outlined above. The following table lists the original fields mapped to the imported fields, and finally to the PubAssist fields that will ultimately hold the data after the import:

Original	**Imported**	**Comment**		**PubAssist Field**
	Contact_ID	Add Contact ID field and assign unique ID's		Contact_ID
Customer		Delete		
				First_Name
Bill to 1	BillTo1	Remove spaces. Converted upon import.		Last_Name
Bill to 2	BillTo2	Remove spaces. Converted upon import.		Company
Bill to 3	BillTo3	Remove spaces. Converted upon import.	{	PO_Addr
Bill to 4	BillTo4	Remove spaces. Converted upon import.		City
Bill to 5	BillTo5	Remove spaces. Converted upon import.		State_Abbr
				Zip_Code
				Country
Contact		Delete if already specified in BillTo address.		
Phone	Phone	No change		Phone
Alt. Phone	Alt. Phone	Not used.		
Fax	Fax	Not used.		
	Phone2	Add Phone2. Use formulas to derive from Alt. Phone and FAX.		Phone2
Ship to 1		Delete (Same as customer)		
Ship to 2	ShipTo1	Eliminate duplicates to bill to address.	}	
Ship to 3	ShipTo2	Eliminate duplicates to bill to address.		Cour_Addr

Ship to 4	ShipTo3	Eliminate duplicates to bill to address.		
Ship to 5		Checkbefore deleting. This is generally just the Country.		
Email	Email	No change		Email
Tax item		Not used.		
Customer Type		Not used.		
Rep		Not used.		
Terms		Not used.		
Note	Comment	Just change field name.		Comment
VENDOR		Not used.		
BUYER		Not used.		
SHIP METHOD		Add to Comment (Note) if important.		
Ship Account #		Add to Comment (Note) if important.		
SAN:	SAN	Get rid of the colon.		SAN

Importing Your Data Using Couplet

Back Up Your Data

This is really important!

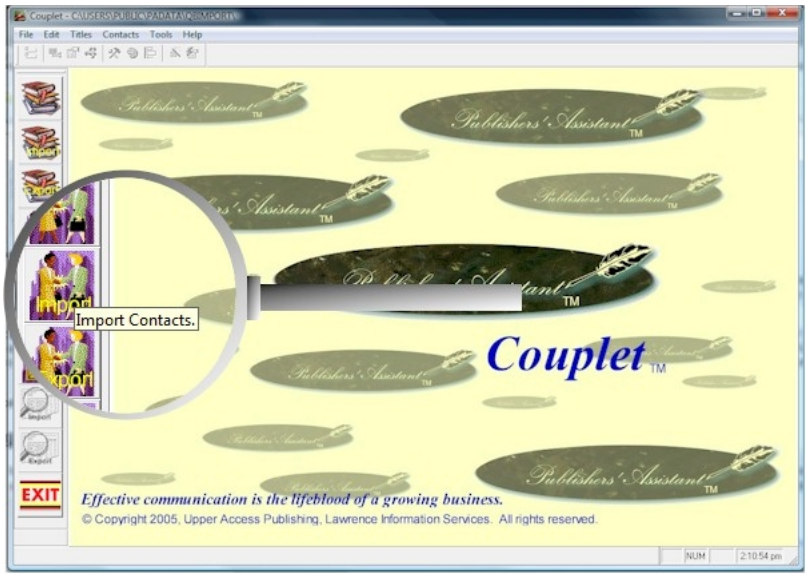
- The import process can potentially add a whole bunch of new records to your database all at once. In the case of my sample, I'm adding over 4700 new contacts. If something doesn't work as expected, you'll have a whole lot of garbage in your database. If you don't have a backup, your only recourse is to delete all of those records one at a time.

If you are unsure how to back up your data, check out this article: **Back Up Your Data**

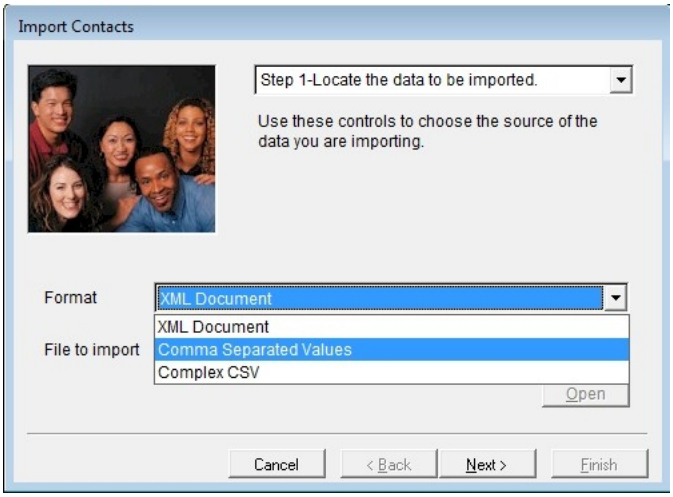
Run the Contact Import Wizard

Couplet, if you haven't already learned, is a companion product to Publishers' Assistant. You can think of it as an import and export tool for PubAssist. The implications of importing from and exporting to different formats are numerous and powerful; but we'll leave those for other articles. We're focused here on getting your Quickbooks data into PubAssist.

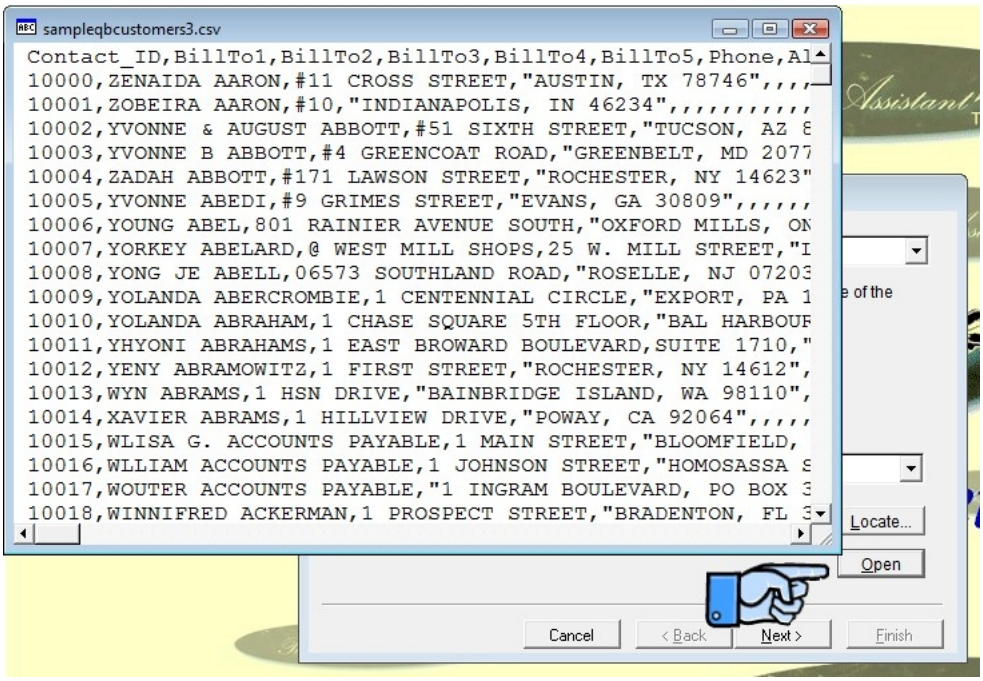
To begin the process, click on the Import Contacts tool on the Couplet toolbar.



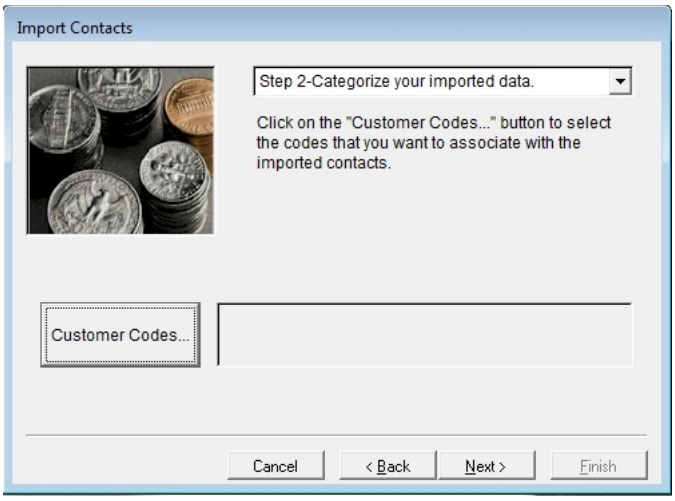
Now you are presented with the Contact Import Wizard. Choose the Comma Separated Values option on the Format option.



Click on the "Locate" button to navigate to the location of your edited Quickbooks export. (It should be a CSV file.) Once you locate it, you can verify that this is the correct file by clicking on the "Open" button.



Close the CSV file and click on "Next" to move to Step 2 of the Wizard.



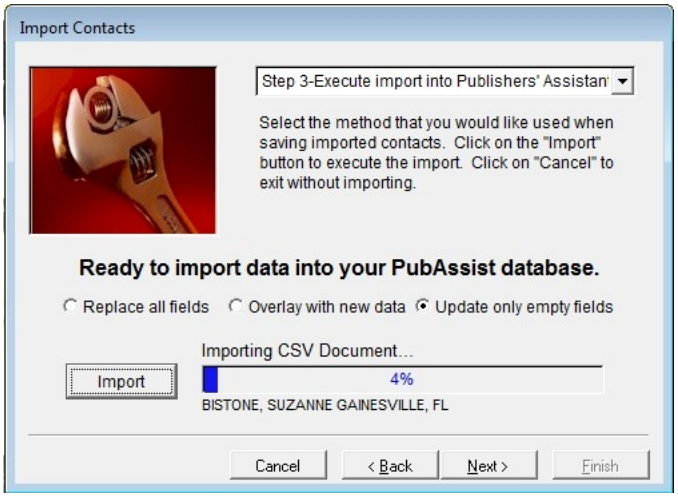
I mentioned above, that you can associate customer codes with the contacts you are importing. This is the step where you can do this. The customer codes must already be loaded in order to select them here. In my example, we're importing to a brand new database. So, no customer codes are available right now. Click on "Next". Step 3 is where all the work takes place.

- Notice that there are three modes of updating records.

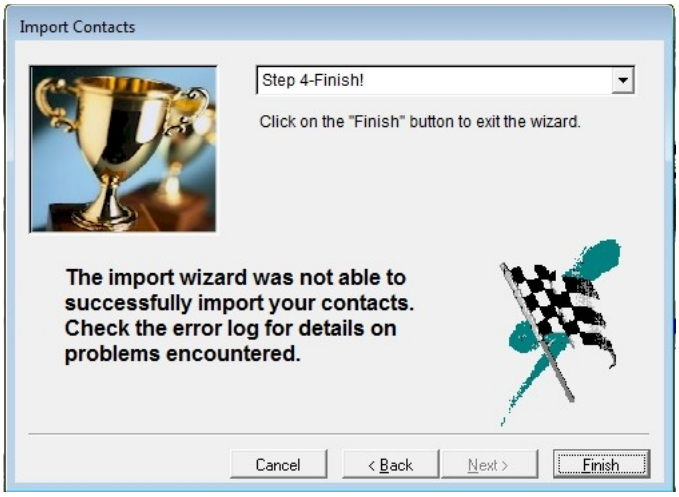
If you are importing a new contact, it won't matter which mode you choose. I mentioned above, however, that there may be cause to revisit your import data and import perhaps just a portion of it again.

- The update mode is set to "Update only empty fields" by default. This prevents the import from overwriting data already in the record. Only if a field is blank will it be filled in with the imported data.
- By contrast, "Overlay with new data" will overwrite an existing contact with the data being imported. If there is an existing value in a field, and the imported data for that field is blank, then the existing data is retained.
- Finally, "Replace all fields" does just what is says. The entire record is overwritten with the imported data--whether the imported fields have values or not.

Click on the "Import" button to begin the process. You should see contact names presented beneath the progress bar.



This procedure takes a while. So, you might want to take a break, or plan your import at the end of the day. When completed, click next to finish the wizard.



That's it! You can navigate through your newly imported contacts using the Contact screen. If for some reason things haven't turned out as you expected, you can restore your backup, revisit your CSV file, and try the import again.

Now let's work on the Vendors

By now, you should get the idea that you are creating a one-to-one mapping of fields in the import file to the resulting fields in Publishers' Assistant. To convert vendors, you will use the same kind of procedure outlined above. The field mapping is a little different, however.

It turns out that Quickbooks keeps more discrete fields for vendors. Go figure. But, they still combine name fields. They also separate the street address fields. So, depending on how you have collected your vendor data, you will have a choice:

1. You can separate names and combine street addresses manually to map them directly to their PubAssist counterparts. Since you probably have a lot fewer vendors than customers, this may well be feasible andit will always be more reliable.

2. You can use the BillTo fields to allow the import procedure to split your names for you. Even so, the City, State, Zip Code, and Country fields should be mapped to their PubAssist counterparts.

Here's a summary of the field mapping:

Original	Imported	Comment	PubAssist Field

	Contact_ID	Add unique identifiers. See Account # below.	Contact_ID
Vendor	Company	If not always a company, use BillTo1	Company
Street1	BillTo3	Combine or use BillTo to convert on import.	PO_Addr
Street2	BillTo4	Combine or use BillTo to convert on import.	
City	City		City
State	State_Abbr		State_Abbr
Zip	Zip_Code		Zip_Code
Country	Country		Country
Print on Check as	Not Used		
Email	Email		Email
Account No.		If used, could be Contact ID	
Alt. Contact		If used, copy to a separate record.	
Contact	First_Name	Split manually, or use BillTo to convert on import.	First_Name
	Last_Name	Split manually, or use BillTo to convert on import.	Last_Name
Phone	Phone		Phone
Alt. Phone		Not used.	
Fax		Not used.	
	Phone2	Use formula to derive from Alt. Phone and FAX.	Phone2
Vendor Type		Not used.	
Tax ID	Fed_Tax_ID		Fed_Tax_ID

Eligible for 1099		Not used.	
Note	Comment		Comment

Conclusion

Whew! Now you know why there aren't more articles and tutorials on importing. It's not so much that it is hard.It's just tedious.Describing it is tedious. The procedure for importing titles is very similar. Of course, you will use theTitle Import Wizard, rather than theContact Import Wizard.

While this article may seem like a lot to get through, the concepts apply to importing data from pretty much any source. The name of the game is to get your import data fields to line up with the fields in Publishers' Assistant. The Field Map utility in Couplet can be helpful, but it still requires that you have a one-to-one relationship between the imported fields and the fields in PubAssist. More detail on the Field Map utility will have to wait for another article. For now, I hope we've helped you over the hurdle in moving data from Quickbooks to Publishers' Assistant. Good luck!

Converting to ISBN-13

Need a fast track to converting your ISBN's to ISBN-13? Here's how you can do it with Couplet and Publishers' Assistant.

Contents

1. Using Couplet's conversion tool
2. Using ISBN-13's in Reports

Using Couplet's conversion tool

Starting with V4.2v, Couplet contains a new ISBN conversion tool. It will process through all of your titles and convert the ISBN's for you. Even if you are not a current PubAssist user, you can download Couplet to try it out. You'll be able to import your titles from a .CSV file. You might want to try out the ONIX export while you are at it!
Here are the steps for current PubAssist users:

1.Download a copy of Couplet:Click here to download Couplet now.

2.Install Couplet on your machine.

3.Run Couplet. Go to "File", "Locate Database" on the menu. You'll be presented with a Database Update window. This will add many new fields to your title table. Click on Continue.

4.You'll also be asked to identify your owner contact in the next screen.

5.Use the navigation tools to find or move to your owner contact. Usually, the owner contact is contact number 1. The contact number appears in the upper, right-hand corner of the screen. When you have identified the owner contact, Click on the "X" or hit "ESC" to exit the screen without saving changes.

6.On the "Tools" menu, select "Convert ISBN-10 to ISBN-13".

7.Select the hyphenation you want and click on "Convert".

8.When completed, you will now have an ISBN-13 field in your PubAssist database, and your valid ISBN-10's will have been converted and saved as ISBN13. They will also be saved in the EAN13 field. You can use the Title option on the toolbar (the top icon) to navigate through your titles, see the new fields that are available, and verify that you now have ISBN13's.

Using ISBN-13's in Reports

This article was originally written when PubAssist reports did not include support for the ISBN-13 field. It does now. If you are running a version of PubAssist that does not, it's time to upgrade.

What are you waiting for? ***The Lyric Edition is FREE!***

Your invoices, packing slips, and customer return memos should now print out both the ISBN-10 and ISBN-13 digit identifiers if they are available. This should get you through the transitional period when some of your trading partners still need the ISBN-10.

Handling Credits for Large Buyers

Contents

Handling Credits for Large Buyers
1. Work as if you were using a paper ledger
2. Applying the credits
    a. Method 1: Change the customer associated with the return
    b. Method 2: Use a negative receipt
3. Conclusion

A number of customers have asked if there is some way they can better control how credits are applied to an account in Publishers' Assistant. It turns out that this question is driven by big book retailers like Barnes and Noble. Apparently Barnes and Noble communicates the details of their payments by referencing specific returns as "credits", and requesting that these credits be applied to specific unpaid invoices. The problem is that when you log a return or a payment with Publishers' Assistant, the customer's account is automatically credited. The account balance is correct, but you can't match up with Barnes and Noble's accounting procedures. This page describes a procedure you can use to manage this system.

Work as if you were using a paper ledger

If you were to manage this system on paper, you would probably set credits from returns aside in a separate account until you wanted to apply them to your normal payables account. So, why not do this with Publishers' Assistant as well?

The basic process:

1. **Create a new "Credit" account** by entering a new contact. If you're dealing with Barnes and Noble, all of the address information can be the same as their central billing address. Use something like "Account Credits" in the name somewhere so you can clearly distinguish this account from other Barnes and Noble accounts.

2. **When you get a return** from a Barnes and Noble store, apply that return to the "Credit" account. Enter Barnes and Noble's credit identifier in the "Customer Return No." field. These returns are the transactions you will use to reconcile with your statements from Barnes and Noble.

Applying the credits

When you receive a statement with payment from Barnes and Noble, you will need to move the credit from the "Credit" account to the normal payables account. You can do this in two ways.

Method 1: Change the customer associated with the return

One way would be to actually change the customer for the return from the "Credit" account to the "Payables" account. To do this, you simply answer "Y" to the "Change Billing Address" prompt on the Customer Return screen, and select the accounts payable contact in the contact screen. The credit from this return will then be moved to the payables account. The nice thing about this method is that the returns or credits literally disappear from the "Credit" account when you reassign them. So, understanding which credits have not yet been used is a matter of looking at an account history for the "Credit" account. Any returns that remain are credits that have not yet been used. (Simple huh?)
After you transfer the return to the payables account, you will need to apply the credit to the specific invoice or invoices desired. The amount of the return should show up as Unapplied funds, *so you will be entering a receipt with an amount of zero.* Make sure to identify the receipt in either the "comment" or the "check number" field to associate it with the credit number of the return.

Method 2: Use a negative receipt

Another way to move the credit would be to log a negative receipt to the "Credit" account. The advantage here is that you can deduct any amount from the "Credit" account. This would be useful if only a portion of a return credit is being used. If you log a return credit, make sure you identify it either in the "comment" or in the "check number" field to associate it with the credit number of the return.
The disadvantage of this method is that you wind up maintaining a long history for the "Credit" account. Reconciling means making sure that each credit is eventually consumed. (Not so simple.)
After you deduct the credit from the "Credit" account, you need to add it to the normal payables account. You do this by logging another receipt. Using this method, you can either log a receipt for each specific credit in your statement, or you can log a single receipt for the total amount and apply it to the invoices listed in your statement. Either way, you'll want to identify each receipt with either the original return(s) or an identifier for the payment you received.

Conclusion

This system will require that you look at the balance for both the "Payables" and "Credit" accounts in order to understand your customer's true balance. If you send these customers a billing statement, you may want to send a "Statement of Unpaid Invoices" from the payables account, and a normal "Billing Statement" or an "Account History" from the "credit" account. This is obviously more work than sending a single statement; but since these customers seem to track their accounts this way, this is probably a better representation of their account status anyway.

How To Set the Currency Symbol

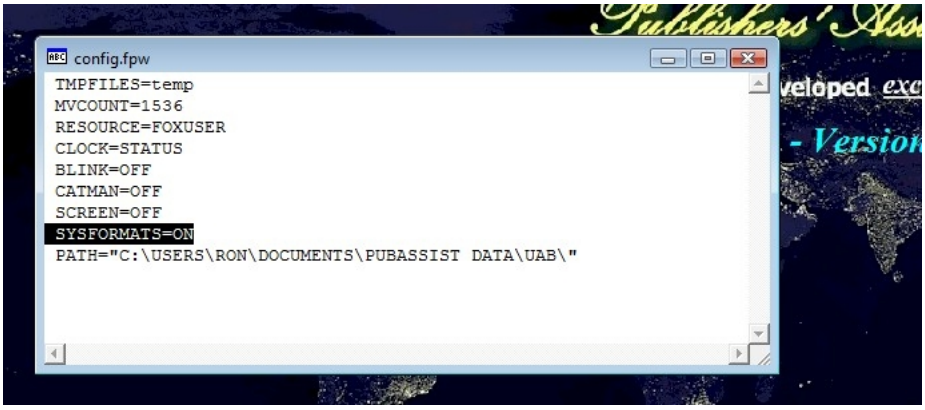
Last edited 2009-09-14

Some time ago, I had a request from one of our international users about how to set the currency used by PubAssist to Euros. First, I should explain that Publishers' Assistant is not designed to handle multiple currencies. However, when I have received questions about handling other currencies, I have recommended that you run the application using your local currency. If you have a need to produce reports--an invoice for example--in another currency, I suggest that you do so using a customized report.
We do have a growing number of international users. And the question still remains: How can I set the currency symbols to indicate my domesic currency? Well, you may not have to do anything. Publishers' Assistant has been developed to use your regional Windows settings. If you find, however, that you are still seeing the U.S. dollar symbol, "$", here is how to change your settings.

1.Make sure that your have the following command in your CONFIG.FPW file for Publishers' Assistant:

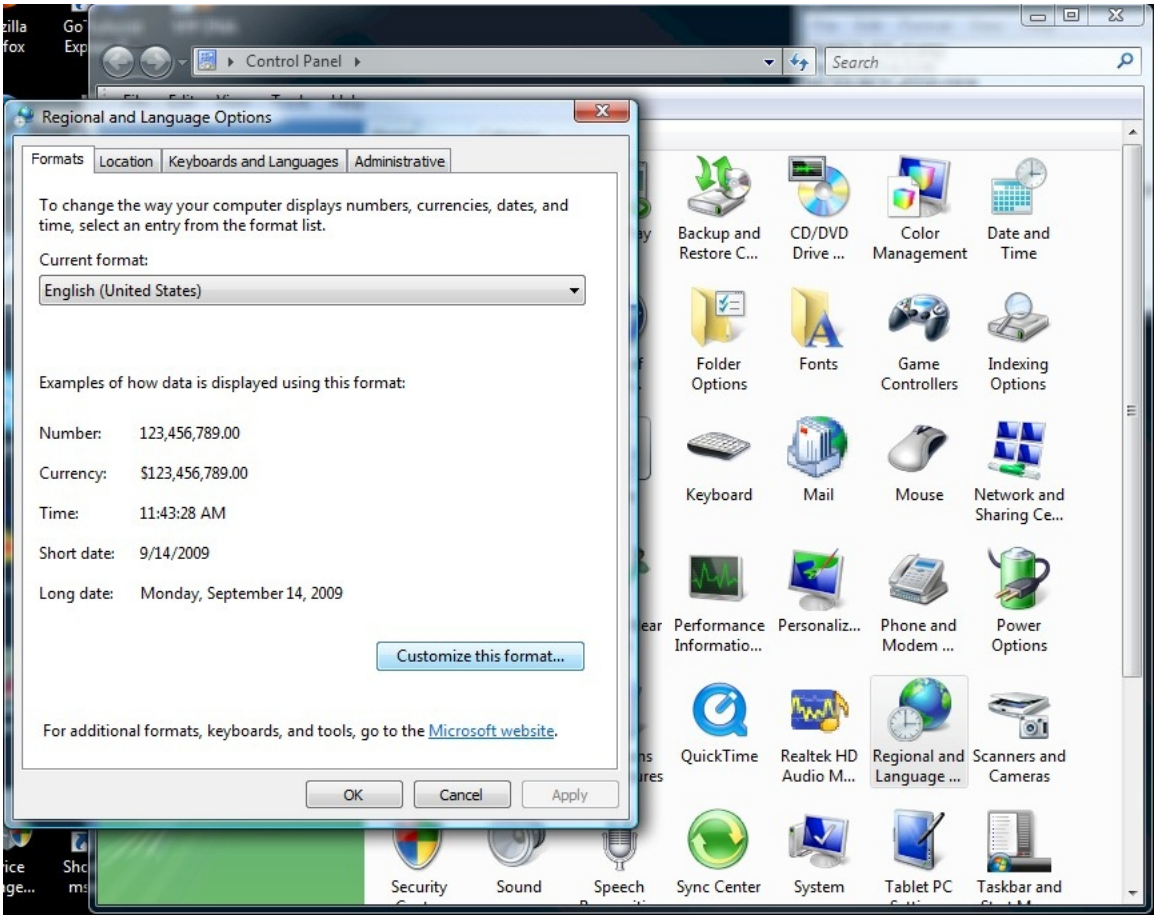
```
SYSFORMATS=ON
```

You will find an option to open this file on the "File" menu in PubAssist.



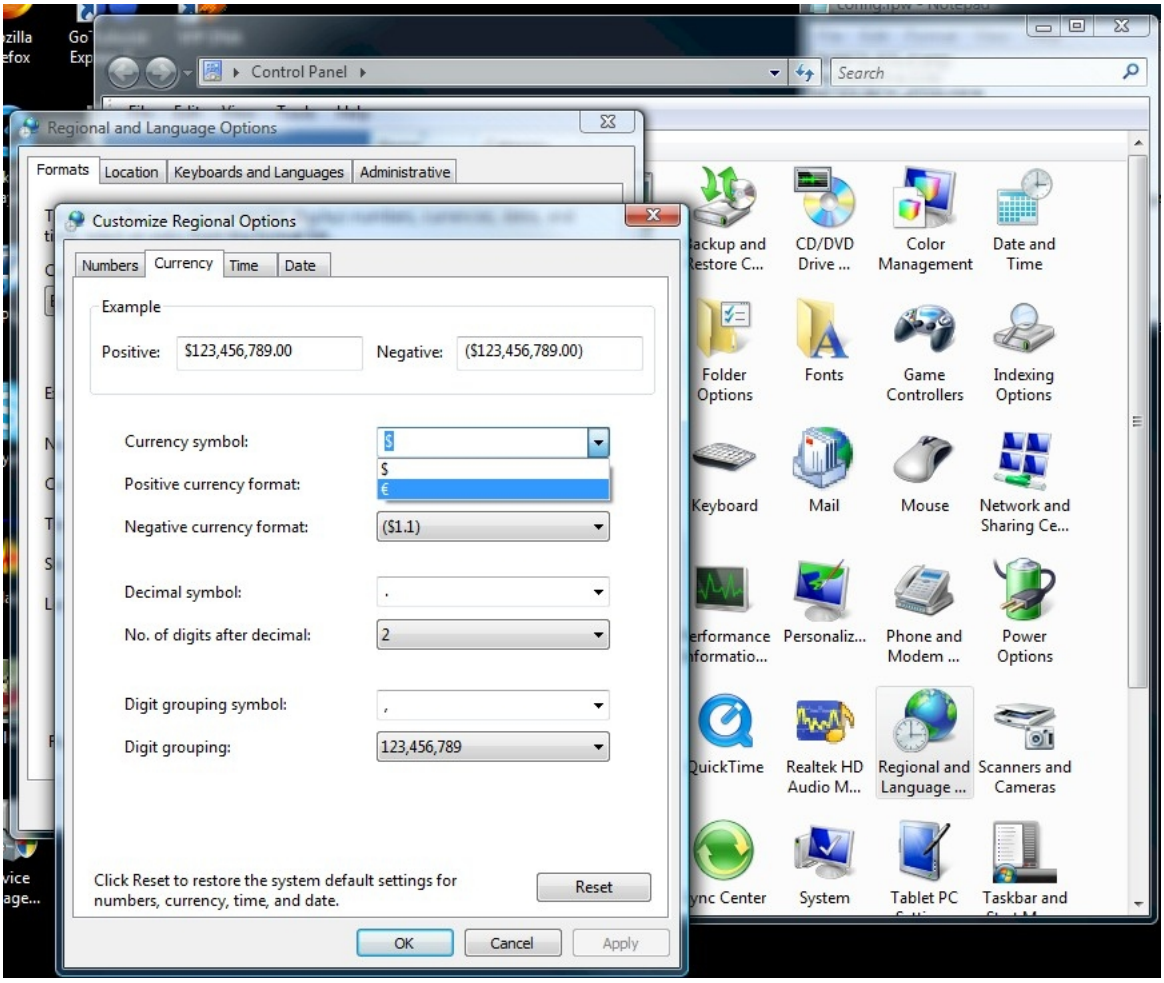
2.Go to the Windows Control Panel and select the "Regional and Language Options" tool.

3.On the "Formats" page of the "Regional and Language Options" window, select "Customize ths format".

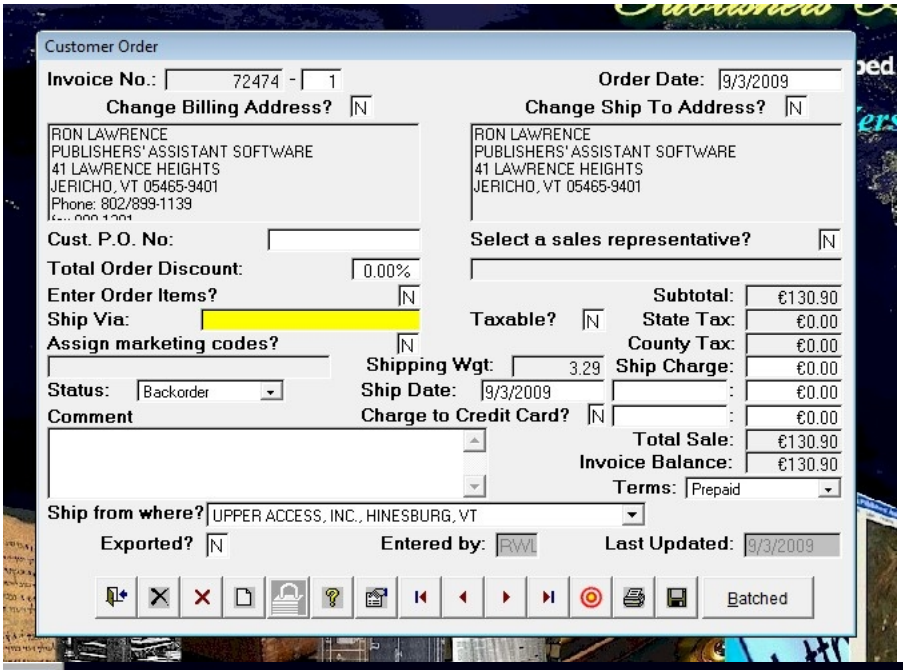


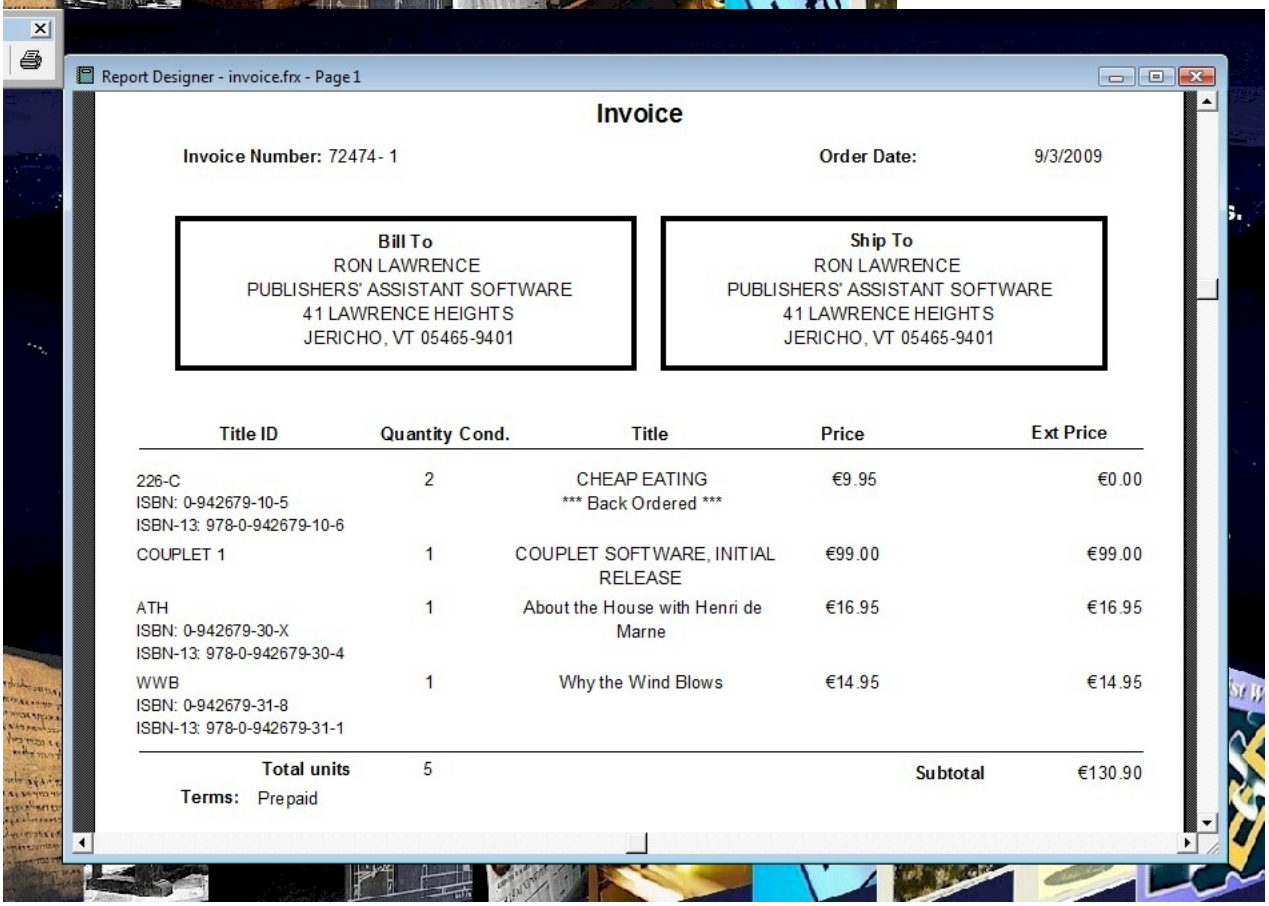
4.Select the "Currency" tab on the "Customize Regional Options" window.

5.Change the currency symbol to the symbol of your choice. (You may find that your local currency is not available. If that's the case, go back to the "Regional and Language Options" window and select the appropriate format for your region. Then repeat this step.)



6.Restart Publishers' Assistant. You should see your selected currency symbol in the screens and reports.


Customer Order
Invoice No.: 72474 - 1
Order Date: 9/3/2009
Change Billing Address? N
Change Ship To Address? N
RON LAWRENCE
PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE
41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS
JERICHO, VT 05465-9401
Phone: 802/899-1139
RON LAWRENCE
PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE
41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS
JERICHO, VT 05465-9401
Cust. P.O. No:
Select a sales representative? N
Total Order Discount: 0.00%
Enter Order Items? N
Subtotal: €130.90
Ship Via:
Taxable? N
State Tax: €0.00
Assign marketing codes? N
County Tax: €0.00
Shipping Wgt: 3.29
Ship Charge: €0.00
Status: Backorder
Ship Date: 9/3/2009
€0.00
Comment
Charge to Credit Card? N
€0.00
Total Sale: €130.90
Invoice Balance: €130.90
Terms: Prepaid
Ship from where? UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG, VT
Exported? N
Entered by: RWL
Last Updated: 9/3/2009
Batched

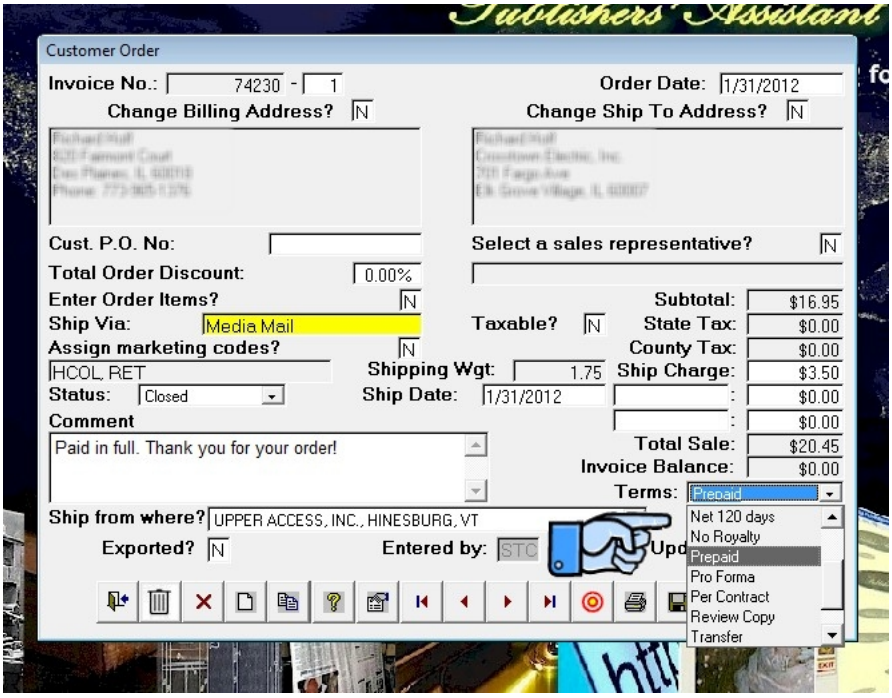

Report Designer - invoice.frx - Page 1
Invoice
Invoice Number: 72474- 1
Order Date: 9/3/2009
Bill To
RON LAWRENCE
PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE
41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS
JERICHO, VT 05465-9401
Ship To
RON LAWRENCE
PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE
41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS
JERICHO, VT 05465-9401
Title ID | Quantity Cond. | Title | Price | Ext Price
226-C
ISBN: 0-942679-10-5
ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-10-6
2
CHEAP EATING
*** Back Ordered ***
€9.95
€0.00
COUPLET 1
1
COUPLET SOFTWARE, INITIAL RELEASE
€99.00
€99.00
ATH
ISBN: 0-942679-30-X
ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-30-4
1
About the House with Henri de Marne
€16.95
€16.95
WWB
ISBN: 0-942679-31-8
ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-31-1
1
Why the Wind Blows
€14.95
€14.95
Total units 5
Subtotal €130.90
Terms: Prepaid

Understanding Customer Order Terms

By Ron Lawrence May 1, 2012

There is a lot that happens behind the scenes when you log a customer order. Most of these things, however, can be categorized as financial transactions or inventory transactions. Understanding how the terms affect your finances and your inventory can be helpful in deciding the terms you offer to your customers. More importantly, it gives you a better idea of what to expect based on the terms you have entered.

The available terms of sale listed on the customer order screen has grown over the years. So, it seems appropriate to document the current list of terms and what they do in the way of posting financial and inventory transactions. The following table summarizes the terms and actions taken for a customer order based on the terms selected.



Terms	Finance Post Total	Post Liabilities1	Inventory Move From	Move To
Consignment	Yes	No	Local	Consignment
Net30	Yes	Yes	Local	Released
Net60	Yes	Yes	Local	Released
Net90	Yes	Yes	Local	Released
Net120	Yes	Yes	Local	Released
No Royalty	Yes	Yes2	Local	Released

Prepaid	Yes	Yes	Local	Released
Pro Forma	No	No	N/A	N/A
Review Copy	No	No	Local	Free
Transfer	No	No	Local	Ship To Location

1. Note that while the action of the customer order screen may be to post liabilities, those liabilities will be posted *only if* the specific liability contracts (royalty, consignment, or commission) specify that the liability is due “when shipped”.

2. Liabilities are posted for "No Royalty" terms but the royalty calculation will be skipped.

As you can see, most terms move inventory from the available local inventory to a released state—which means that the system no longer tracks that inventory. This is the most common treatment of inventory for ordinary sales. You may specify terms of Prepaid, Net30, 60, 90, or 120 days, but PubAssist essentially treats these terms the same way. A receivable transaction is logged and the inventory is released. These terms are used for most typical sales. Retail sales are generally prepaid. The Net terms are generally used when selling to a retailer, library, or other organization for which you have a prior agreement about when you can expect payment.

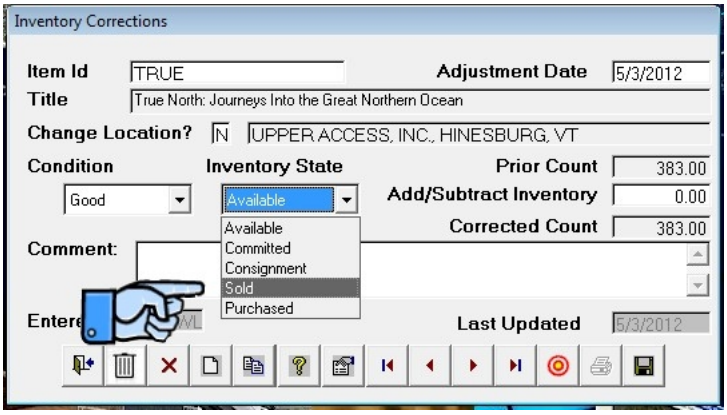
“No Royalty” is treated pretty much the same way too, *but the royalty calculation is skipped*—even if the royalty is not due until the items are paid for.

“Pro Forma” terms *will NOT produce a receivable, and will NOT ship any inventory*. It’s an invoice “in form” only. Pro Forma invoices are useful for producing an invoice that represents a commitment to sell at a given price; but for which you don’t want to take any action yet. When the customer commits to the sale, you can change the terms to something else, and the invoice will then be processed according to the new terms.

“Review Copy” is generally used when you send out review copies. Generally, these invoices show a discount of 100%; however, there is nothing stopping you from charging something for a review copy.

By the way, any item that is sold at 100% discount is moved into a special released state called “Free”. It doesn’t matter what the terms are. This is done because *the normal released state is used to calculate royalties that are based on the number of a title that has been previously sold.*

If you are just starting out with PubAssist, and you have previous sales for a title, you can enter an inventory correction for those prior sales by using the “Sold” inventory state.



"Consignment" and "Transfer" terms are the most interesting and complex. These are used for handling consignment customers and distributors. In both cases, the expectation is that *you will not be paid until your customer has resold your books.* There is an overlap in function but there are subtle differences between these two cases. It's worth sharing that the "Consignment" terms were implemented in the early days of PubAssist, whereas the "Transfer" terms are a fairly recent development.

In the case of "Consignment" terms, PubAssist actually logs the receivable. Inventory is moved into a special "Consignment" state at the ship to contact's location. You can then run a Consignment Inventory Status report to see the quantity and location of your inventory that has been shipped out on consignment. When a receipt is logged against these invoices, the inventory is *released* from that consignment state and location. Amazon.com has traditionally been a classic consignment customer. Their terms have been straight forward and so tracking consignment sales to Amazon has worked quite well for many years.

Distributors, like Midpoint and NBN, however, are another matter. The terms they offer are typically payment 120 days AFTER they have sold your books, but they take immediate credit for returns. They also frequently charge for other services and hold some of what they owe you in reserve as a further hedge against returns. This makes tracking what they owe you difficult. The solution lies in treating them like a warehouse. That's where the "Transfer" terms are used.

A "Transfer" invoice *will NOT create a receivable.* It also *doesn't release the inventory.* It simply transfers it from your local inventory to the ship to contact's location—where it remains as "available" inventory. When you generate an "Available Inventory Status" report, you will see your available inventory in multiple locations. You would use this same function if you have a multi-warehouse operation.
Later on, when your distributor tells you that they have sold some of the books you sent them, you will log another invoice with "Net120" terms. That invoice should specify the distributor's location in the "Ship From" field. That will release the inventory from the distributor's location —rather than your local warehouse. It will also create a receivable for what they have sold. So, this is a real receivable. Even if they underpay you for those sales, you will have an accurate accounting of what they owe you. You will also know exactly what they still have in inventory.

This brief explanation is covered in more detail in the article, Working with Distributors.
If you think about it, you can use the same treatment for Amazon that you use for your distributor. The Consignment invoice is not as flexible, but is perhaps easier to use. The use of separate Transfer and Net invoices provides the flexibility needed to handle your distributors. It will accomplish the same thing for a consignment customer, but requires more steps to complete. Still, you may decide that it is better to handle your major customers in the same way.

Well, I think that pretty much covers the terms on the customer order screen. I hope this explanation helps you to better understand these terms, and which to apply in a given situation.

How to Create a Custom Page Size for Labels

This article is written for Microsoft Windows**XP**. Other versions of Windows may require different procedures.

I placed a request out on one of the Foxpro developer forums, and got the answer to the custom paper size problem. Apparently, in XP, paper sizes are defined in what are called "forms", which are independent from the printer drivers.

You can define a new form by selecting the "Printers & Faxes" option on the "Start" menu. From there, click on the "File" menu at the very top. Select the "Server Properties" option. On the Properties dialog, you'll see the "Forms" tab. Check the "Creat New Form" box and you will be able to update the form name and size fields. Click on "Save Form" to save your new form.

In my testing, I created a new form for a 3 inch high by 4 inch wide label, and named the form, "1Up Shipping Labels".

Now you can select your custom paper size "form" from the properties dialog for your printer driver. The specifics on how to do this varies with each printer, though I believe the paper size can generally be found under the "Printing Preferences" option. I set up a printer driver for an Okidata ML393. I right-clicked on the printer icon and selected "Printing Preferences". (You can get to "Printing Preferences" from the "Properties" dialog as well.) To get to the custom paper size I created, I had to click on the "Advanced" button beneath the "Layout" tab. There I could select the paper size, and sure enough, my "1Up Shipping Labels" custom form was available for selection. This is not the case for all printer drivers! I tried to select the custom page on my Deskjet printer, and found that it wasn't available. Apparently, the driver has the intelligence to know what paper sizes won't work!

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You can define a new form by selecting the "Printers & Faxes" option on the "Start" menu. From there, click on the "File" menu at the very top. Select the "Server Properties" option. On the Properties dialog, you'll see the "Forms" tab. Check the "Creat New Form" box and you will be able to update the form name and size fields. Click on "Save Form" to save your new form.

In my testing, I created a new form for a 3 inch high by 4 inch wide label, and named the form, "1Up Shipping Labels".

Now you can select your custom paper size "form" from the properties dialog for your printer driver. The specifics on how to do this varies with each printer, though I believe the paper size can generally be found under the "Printing Preferences" option. I set up a printer driver for an Okidata ML393. I right-clicked on the printer icon and selected "Printing Preferences". (You can get to "Printing Preferences" from the "Properties" dialog as well.) To get to the custom paper size I created, I had to click on the "Advanced" button beneath the "Layout" tab. There I could select the paper size, and sure enough, my "1Up Shipping Labels" custom form was available for selection. This is not the case for all printer drivers! I tried to select the custom page on my Deskjet printer, and found that it wasn't available. Apparently, the driver has the intelligence to know what paper sizes won't work!

Database Basics

I frequently get questions from new users who don't really understand what a database is, or where it is located. Here are some basic points about the Publishers' Assistant database:

•Your PubAssist (and Couplet) database is a Microsoft Foxpro (TM) database.

•A database is comprised of multiple files (about 75) which all reside in a single folder.

•When you install PubAssist and/or Couplet, your data is located in the "Pubassist Data\Data" located in your documents folder.

•There are 3 types of files in your database:

- <tablename>.DBF - These are the main table files. This is where most of your data is stored.
- <tablename>.FPT -- These are called "memo" files. They contain all of the variable length fields for the table. An example might be the COMMENT field.
- <tablename>.CDX - These are the index files for each table. They help Foxpro look up a record without having to search through each record in the table.

•As a general rule of thumb, these files must all be kept together as a unit, because the data in each file is related to data in the other files. So, you should not try to mix and match files from different databases, or even from a backup of the same database.

•You can move your data folder anywhere you like, but you have to tell PubAssist and/or Couplet where it is. You do this by using the FILE>LOCATE DATABASE function on the PubAssist or Couplet menu.

•You can have as many databases as you need. Several users have a separate database for each business they own. You may also want to maintain a database for your web site, separate from your normal accounting database.

•If you are sharing a database on the network, you will need to put the database folder in a location that can be shared (made visible) to all of the machines in the network. You'll need to be aware of some basic network management and security operations in order to do that.

•Once you have moved your data into a shared location, each machine must use the LOCATE DATABASE function to point to the new data location.

•While Couplet will allow multiple users to access the database simultaneously, the Lyric Edition of Publishers' Assistant will not. Only one Lyric user can access the data at any time. The Epic edition does allow multi-user access to the database.

Design Considerations

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    1. The Presentation Tier
        1. Exceptions
    2. The Business Tier
    3. The Data Tier
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        1. Differences
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2. Sub-pages and categories about Architecture
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1. Architecture

The development of Publishers' Assistant products will adhere to what has become a fairly traditional "n-tier" architecture. The major "tiers" or modules of this architecture are the presentation, business, and data tiers. Work done to date has shown the necessity for an additional sub-presentation tier. More about that later.

One common characteristic that defines each tier is that it has a well-defined interface that is interchangeable. For example, we should be able to replace the presentation tier, without effect to the business or data tiers. Likewise, we should be able to replace the data tier without effecting the business or presentation tiers.

It is generally accepted that these tiers will be implemented using an object-oriented-programming approach. In work done to date, this approach has worked well to clearly define the interfaces between tiers and components within those tiers.

1.1. The Presentation Tier

The presentation tier is concerned solely with the user interface. It presents data for the user's review and accepts user input for the processing of that data. Processing of data should be avoided in the presentation tier. In the n-tier development in Foxpro, the presentation tier consists of forms. A concerted effort has been made to minimize the logic in these forms to the presentation of data retrieved via the business tier. In PAWeb, the presentation layer is primarily implemented in ASP. Again, an effort has been made to minimize any logic in this layer. Some VBScript has been employed, but it is generally concerned with retrieving and sending data to the business tier for processing.

1.1.1. Exceptions

There are two notable exceptions which add logic to the presentation tier. The first has to do with a need to show the user progress while processing. For example, in the import and export wizards, the routines that process through a collection of titles or contacts will cycle through them using lower level logic in order to present progress on the screen.

The second exception is in the web development platform. In order to retain state, while minimizing logic from VBScripts and particularly to avoid supplying any sort of SQL at the ASP level, we found it advantageous to create a sub-presentation tier. This module groups business tier components into classes that are helpful in maintaining context in a web server environment. Some logic is provided in this module to facilitate common operations that take place in a web application. This development model may extend to other platforms as well.

1.2. The Business Tier

This module is where all of the business logic for the application resides. Assuming object-oriented programming, the business tier interface looks like a series of class definitions. These classes are, of course, instantiated by the presentation tier to execute the application. What is important is to make sure that the implementation we choose will work across platforms. Typically, these classes are implemented for each major transaction that is supported in the application. In **?**PubAssist, these transactions are invoices, returns, purchase orders, receipts, payments, title definitions, etc. Each of these major transactions may cause several lower-level transactions to be executed as well. For example, an Invoice transaction may save an order to the database, but that invoice may trigger a series of both inventory and financial transactions.

1.3. The Data Tier

The primary objective for separating the data tier is to allow the database to be implemented using any database product that works in the desired platform. The data tier also concerns itself with the location of the data.

Again, the interface for this tier is a set of classes. These classes tend to focus on typical database operations. Examples are:

- Add a new record

- Find a record
- Search for multiple records
- Update a record
- Update a collection of records
- Delete or recall a record
- Delete or recall multiple records

This is not a complete list, and there are many supporting functions or methods that are part of the data tier.

1.4. Moving Data Between Tiers

1.4.1. Resources

Some mechanism is needed to transport data between tiers. The current Foxpro implementation uses a class which is designed specifically to hold a record as well as other attributes that preserve the context of that record. This class is called a "Resource". The term comes from documentation on proposed n-tier implementations that was published by Flash Code. This has proven to be a very useful device which allows the business logic to be completely separated from both the database technology as well as it's location. (The data tier worries about the location and database product in use.) In the current implementation, the same physical image of the application (business and data tiers) will work in multiple threads to allow simultaneous access to multiple and separate databases. The context retained in the resource is what allows this to happen.

The resource is structured to hold a collection of records from a single database table or view. An ADO record set is similar in concept to a resource. An effort has been made to keep any logic out of the resource class. This makes the object extremely transportable.

1.4.2. Resource Clusters

Looking back at the transactions mentioned above, it's clear that each transaction requires interaction with multiple tables. For example, an invoice transaction will require data from the following tables at a minimum:

- Orders
- Contacts
- Ordered Items

Similarly, saving a title may effect the following tables:

- Title
- Contributors (Contacts)
- Promotions
- Subject Codes

In order to process a complete transaction, it makes sense to provide a mechanism to group resources together into a structure that represents that transaction. The current implementation refers to this mechanism as a "resource cluster" or "cluster" for short. Clusters are also implemented as class definitions and an effort has been made to avoid the introduction of any logic to these classes.

1.5. n-tier vs. MVC

Since we are considering re-implementing PubAssist software using Python and Django, and Django is considered by many to be a framework implementing the "model-view-controller" (**MVC**) pattern, it's worth sorting out the terminological and conceptual differences between an "n-tier" and "MVC" architecture.

First off, we should note that there are varying interpretations of MVC. Django employs one such interpretation (see their **FAQ**). In Django, MVC's "controllers" are called "views", and MVC's "views" are called "templates." (Rather confusing, but it's what they do, so I'm going to adhere to their convention here.) So you could call Django an "MTV" framework, if you're not afraid of the trademark police.

Anyway, the basics of MTV/MVC and Django are as follows:

1. Models are the "domain-specific representation of the information on which the application operates." In other words, they are a data abstraction layer. The database (or other data storage mechanism) is understood to be below the model layer. The same models may use different backends in different implementations. Like any data abstraction, models have contracts specifying how to interact with data; in an object-oriented setting like Django's, this means that data are objects with methods.

2. Views make up the application layer responsible for directly interacting with models, processing events from the user interface, executing business logic, and so on. In Django, views are Python functions which have a very specific interface: they accept an HttpRequest object, and return some sort of HttpResponse object. They can do anything else in between.

3. Templates are the user interface layer. Similar to the way that models are data abstractions, they are presentation abstractions; as their name indicates, they're forms that need to be filled in with actual data. In Django, templates are typically a mixture of HTML code and template-language directives. Views render templates with the data they get from models.

In both n-tier and MTV architectures, then, there are three layers, which correspond to the user interface, the application logic, and the data container. How do they differ?

1.5.1. Differences

Conceptually, I don't believe there are any large differences. MTV, as Django implements it, has strongly decoupled layers, communicates between those layers by passing data objects (model instances, **?**QuerySets, and others), permits swapping out one kind of presentation for another (e.g., one can have both HTML, XML, or any other plain text-based template), permits swapping out one database backend for another (e.g. MySQL vs. SQLite vs. PostgreSQL), and so on. On some interpretations of MVC, "views" (templates) can update models directly, making the interaction pattern triangular instead of linear (see **this Wikipedia article** on MVC vs. n-tier). This would constitute a major difference between the two architectures, but Django doesn't follow this interpretation: templates don't even contain executable code until they are rendered, and it is views which do the rendering. For all intents and purposes, then, the n-tier architecture of the current VFP application and a Django-based MTV application are equivalent on a conceptual level.

Practically, the differences between MTV and n-tier designs lie in the settings in which the two architectures are used, and thus in the domain-specific problems they are designed to solve. MVC/MTV is the darling child of the Web development world, and self-proclaiming MVC frameworks like Django or Ruby on Rails are often focused on making it easy to build dynamic Web applications. N-tier is a broader concept more frequently used in the realm of "enterprise" applications, and as such, its implementers are often more concerned with things like performance, physical separation of servers, "scalability," and so on. The languages and software used to implement non-Web n-tier systems emphasize solving these problems.

The VFP-based n-tier architecture of Publishers' Assistant occupies some middle ground here, since it is not specifically web-focused, but neither is it overly concerned about the problems present in an "enterprise" environment. This makes sense, since PubAssist's architecture is entirely the product of in-house development, and was designed to solve a subset of the problems in both worlds. As we choose a new framework, it is unlikely that anything readily available is going to provide all the same functions of the VFP code "out of the box." We're going to have to choose an architecture/framework that gets us most of the way, and makes it easy to make up the rest.

1.5.2. Why choose Django?

In my mind, the benefits to be gained from a high-level, dynamic language (Python) and Django's solid data abstraction layer far outweigh the costs of either needing to write a non-Web presentation layer for Django, on the one hand, or working with an "enterprise" n-tier framework that is not specifically Web-based (e.g., one written in Java or C++) on the other.

The Publishers' Assistant software is almost exclusively run today by small publishers on one or a few computers. It has no current need for the performance gains that a Java or C++ n-tier framework would lend us. And, if and when it is necessary to run Publishers' Assistant software in an "enterprise" environment, Django is up to the task. It's simply not worth the development pain and time to use C++, especially in a one- or two-man shop, and other languages and platforms which would give us similar benefits are nastily tied to proprietary systems (Java, C# and .NET, etc.), which would defeat the whole purpose of leaving VFP for a platform-independent language and tools.

Moreover, a Web-based platform is increasingly important for us to support, and Django (naturally) excels in this arena. Using Django will mean being able to offer people dynamic websites which are quick to set up, easy to customize, and easily maintained by their owners. MTV is the current architecture of choice here, and Django is an excellent choice among MTV frameworks because it is actively developed, has a lively community using it, and has excellent documentation.

Using Django does mean getting a bit creative when it comes to putting out a desktop product. I don't see this as a problem. There are a wide range of choices for GUI toolkits for Python, at least three of which are (or aim to be) fully platform-independent: **wxPython**, **PyQt**, and **TkInter**. A development plan which separates views into two layers — a general business logic later and an interface layer on top of it which contains modules specific to either Web-based or desktop-based user interfaces — would preserve the decoupling of the MTV layers, be **DRY**, and allow us to use Django to its full extent while adding the additional pieces we need rather quickly.

2. Sub-pages and categories about Architecture

The following pages contain discussions specific to the PubAssist application architecture:

2.1. Django-related

- **Django application tier**: how to implement the business logic tier of this architecture using Django

Did you know...

Here are some things that we think are really helpful but many users don't know about them.

...you can know, at any moment, exactly what **your distributor** has in inventory, what they owe you, and how to apply the payments you receive from them?

...you may **never have to write a check** or manually enter a payment for your authors, suppliers, and sales rep's again?

...you can **track any expense** with Publishers' Assistant?

...you can **convert to the new 13-digit ISBN** from 10-digit ISBN's using Couplet?

...you can modify any report in Publishers' Assistant?

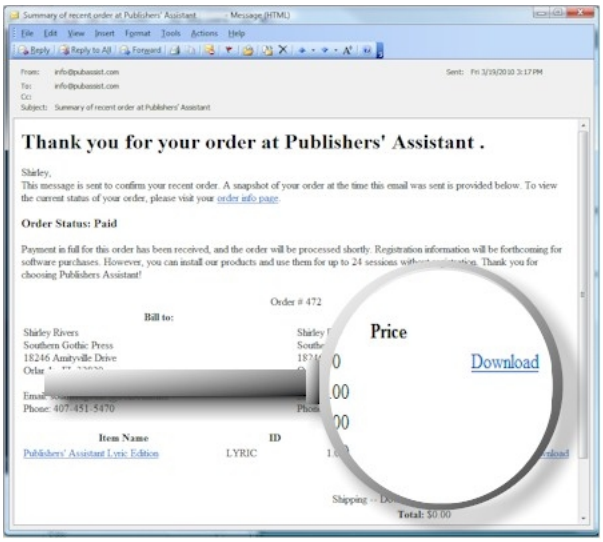
...you can **generate an ONIX document** to send title data electronically to your trading partners?

...you can **exchange EDI transactions** to accept and respond to orders electronically from your trading partners?

...Publishers' Assistant can **work in an integrated fashion with your Web site** using Couplet and PubAssist Web Services?

Downloading Your Software

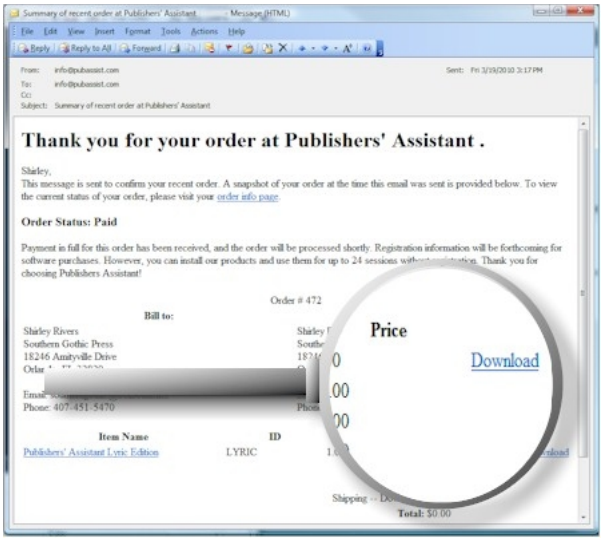
So, you placed your order for PubAssist on our web site. Now how do you get it? Well, the answer is in your confirmation email:



There should be a "Download" link to the right of the item you ordered. If not, call us at 800-310-8716, or email info (at) pubassist.com.

Downloading Your Software

So, you placed your order for PubAssist on our web site. Now how do you get it? Well, the answer is in your confirmation email:



There should be a "Download" link to the right of the item you ordered. If not, call us at 802-222-0112, or email us at: pahelp@pubassist.com.

Understanding and Using EDI with Publishers' Assistant

Submitted by Ron Lawrence, January 7th, 2011

Most of us have heard the abbreviation, "EDI" before. Some may know that it is a fairly generic term that stands for "Electronic Data Interchange". It's a term that has been around for a long time. It's the kind of term makes our eyes glaze over and our heads to spin. But generally, when people are talking about "EDI" they are talking about the exchange of order information between buyer and seller.

Some of the major players in the book industry have made noises about requiring the adoption of EDI standards for longer than I have been working on PubAssist. Fortunately, this has been a "requirement" that most independent publishers could ignore. Yet it is also one of those barriers that shut independents out of some major distribution channels, and therefore a significant sector of the market. If you are reading this article, you have probably recently run into this barrier. Perhaps your distributor or a major retailer has told you that they require that you accept and acknowledge orders through their EDI system in order to do business with them. We're all about removing those barriers--at least the technical ones. So, Couplet Version 5 now provides import and export formats for the most essential EDI transactions.

More specifically, EDI generally refers to the adoption of the ASC X12 standards. These are not for the faint of heart, but here's more information about the X12 standard on **Wikipedia**. Here is a link to the official **X12 standards web site**. The standard is huge and covers all aspects of trade between buyers and sellers. Fortunately, most of the buyers we have seen are really only concerned with a small subset of the standard. That subset concerns itself with the buyers ability to

1. place an order,
2. have that order acknowledged,
3. receive a detailed acknowledgment including updates in prices, availability, etc., and finally,
4. receive an invoice.

In the X12 standard, these actions are accomplished accepting the 850 transaction (a purchase order), and subsequently sending a 997 (transaction acknowledgement), an 855 (purchase order acknowledgment), and finally the 810 (invoice) transactions. Each of these

transactions have their own specifications for format and content. Here is a sample 850 transaction.

Sample 850 transaction

```
ISA*00*          *00*          *01*031595309      *ZZ*027148955      *091001*1538*X*00304*000000367*1*P*>
GS*PO*031595309*BTITG*091001*1538*000344909*X*003040
ST*850*000344910
BEG*00*DS*0000003857173**091001
N1*ST*American Wholesale Book Co.*15*1689223 0001
PO1*0000007189*1*EA*20.00*PE*IB*1416511946
PO1*0000007190*1*EA*17.99*PE*IB*0744008441
PO1*0000007191*1*EA*42.95*PE*IB*1844252779
PO1*0000007192*1*EA*7.99*PE*IB*0316016616
PO1*0000007193*50*EA*5.99*PE*IB*0786014407
PO1*0000007194*1*EA*19.99*PE*IB*156389999X
PO1*0000007195*1*EA*13.00*PE*IB*0922915660
PO1*0000007196*1*EA*15.95*PE*IB*0761456716
PO1*0000007197*1*EA*19.97*PE*IB*1602601801
CTT*9
SE*14*000344910
GE*1*000344909
IEA*1*000000367
```

Not much to look at is it? I don't want you to worry about the details of this transaction, (That's our job.), but there are some things that are worth taking a look at. First of all, notice that it is a text document. You can edit it with Notepad or a similar text editor. Each record, or "segment", has its own identifier (e.g. "ISA", "GS", "ST", etc.). That identifier dictates the content of the remainder of the record. Each field in the record is seperated by a delimiter. In this example, the delimiter is an asterisk ("*"). Other characters could be used as a delimiter.

So, EDI basically comes down to the exchange of documents like the one in this example. That leads us to the next EDI topic, EDI Services.

The Nature of EDI Services

When you are dealing with a large buyer, it is not unusual for them to require that you use an EDI service to exchange order information with them. They may not care which service you use, but they will insist that you use one of them. These services will accept documents from the buyer and format it into something that can be read and understood by a human being. They may deliver the information as an email, or they may present it through a web application and allow you to respond through the same application.

The first thing you must realize is that these sevices don't know anything about your accounting system, and so they can do nothing to get data into or out of your system. So, you must log these orders into PubAssist or whatever you are using for invoicing by hand. That's O.K. if your volume is low; but if you start to receive a lot of orders, it gets pretty cumbersome. In essence, the service is a glorified email system. They provide a delivery system that primarily benefits the buyer. Yet you will need to pay for the service.

These services can be quite expensive, so it pays to shop around. We haven't worked with a lot of services, but **PubNet**, which is a service owned by R. R. Bowker, seems to have reasonable rates. The coordinator we worked with was also quite helpful.

Some buyers may be willing deliver the documents directly to you if they know you can accept them. Usually, this will mean that you will receive the document in an email, or you will be provided an FTP address where you can pick up and deliver EDI documents. If you are working with one or two major buyers, it may be worth asking them if they are willing to do this. If they are, this arrangement will completely eliminate the cost of an EDI service.

Working with Publishers' Assistant

When communicating with a buyer via EDI, the process generally works something like this...

1. The buyer will issue an 850 transaction, like the sample document above. By the time the buyer can issue an 850 transaction, they know who you are, and they know how to identify your books so they can specify them in an order. The purchase order may also specify their terms and conditions for the sale. But basically, they are saying, "Hey, we want to order some quantity of your specific books and we expect them at these prices.

2. Now, you'll want to enter the order into your accounting system. PubAssist users can now use Couplet to import the order directly into the PubAssist database. Couplet Version 5 now sports new Invoice Import and Export wizards. Use the Invoice Import Wizard to locate and import your 850 document. The imported order will be placed on hold.

3. The import procedure will automatically generate a 997 transaction that you can send back to the buyer. Essentially, you are saying, "Thanks, we got your order!" The 997 transaction will also contain some summary information (like the number of segments) about the 850 transaction you received. That gives your buyer some comfort that you got the order and are going to act on it.

4. Back in PubAssist, you can review and edit the order, like any other customer order. If changes are needed, like a change in price, you can make those changes on the spot, via the Customer Order screen. The import procedure will have saved you from having to enter the order manually. You can focus on the exceptions--rather than having to enter everything from scratch.

> *It's worth highlighting here that the X12 standard allows the buyer to specify several conditions for the sale. For example, they may specify that an item must be shipped by a specific date, or it should be canceled. That particular condition will show up as an expiration date on the item in your imported customer order. The import process will attempt to interpret as many of these conditions as Publishers' Assistant can accommodate. Anything that can not be represented by the structure of the order will be stored in the Comment field for the order. So, you will be able to see those conditions in a format that you can understand.*

5. When you are satisfied with the details of the order, you can change the order status from "Hold" to "Shipped", and PubAssist will attempt to ship it. At this point, you will know whether any items have been back-ordered.

6. Back in Couplet, you can now use the Invoice Export Wizard to export the order as an 855 transaction. This is your detailed response to your buyer. "O.K. We looked at your order and plan to ship it, except for these items which have been backordered."

7. Finally, you pack and ship the order. Your paperwork may be included, but the EDI process allows you to send your invoice electronically with an 810 transaction. Again, you use the Invoice Export Wizard in Couplet to generate the 810 transaction. Fire this document off to your buyer, sit back and wait for the check to arrive.

All of the documents mentioned here, (i.e. the 850, 997, 855, and 810 transactions) will be sent or received using the service that you have agreed to with your buyer. So, of course the details of sending and receiving those documents will depend on the service you are using. (Hopefully it is email or FTP.)

Conclusion

So, the new feature to be aware of here is the Invoice Import and Export Wizards in Couplet. These wizards work quite similarly to the import and export wizards for titles and contacts. If you have used one, you won't have any trouble with the others. Check out the **Couplet Tutorials** for an introduction to Couplet and exporting.

Hopefully, this brief introduction to EDI and the new features in Publishers' Assistant will give you a new confidence in dealing with large buyers. Hopefully, as well, these features break down one more barrier between you and your market.

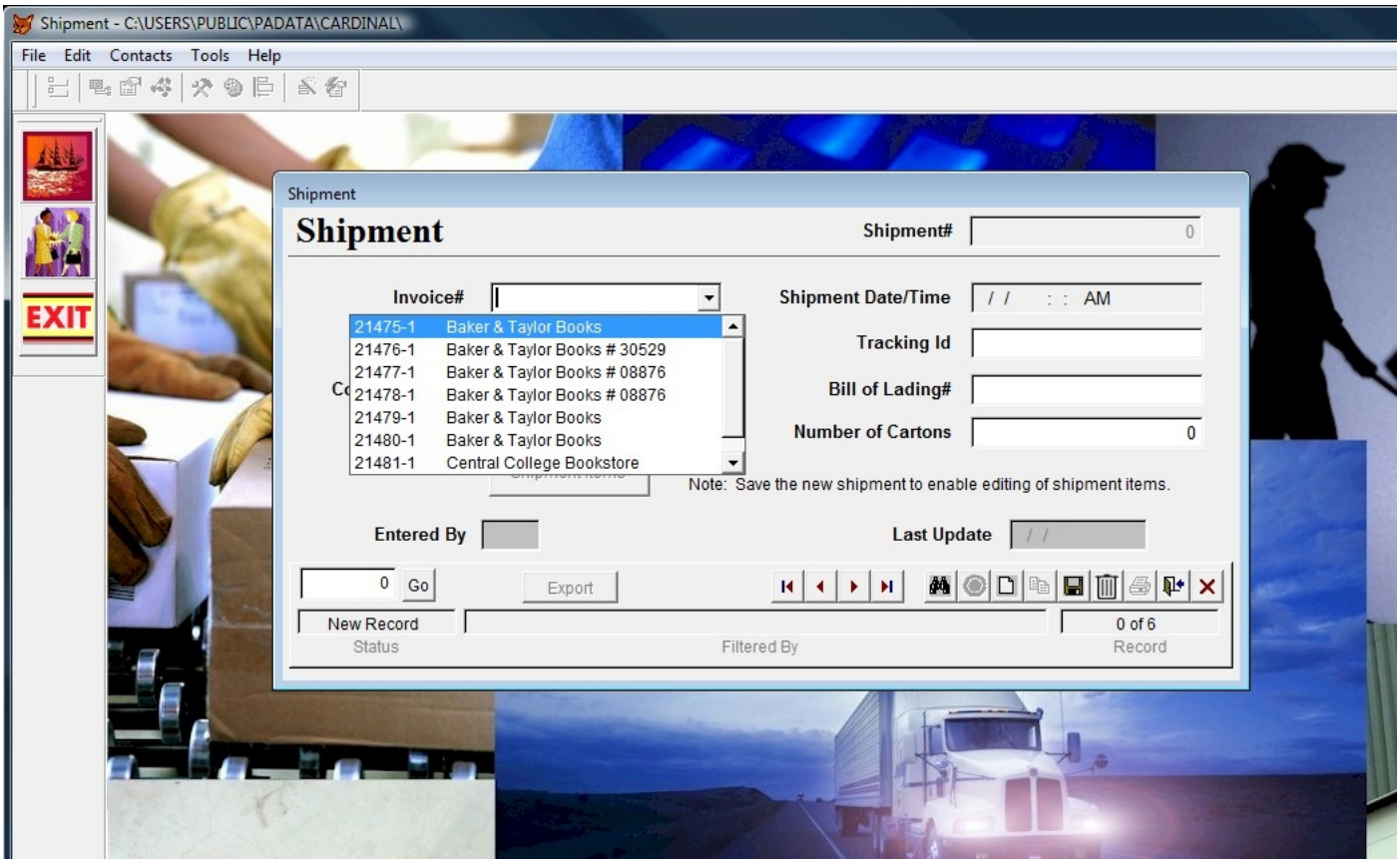
Advance Shipment Notification

Generating an EDI 856 Transaction

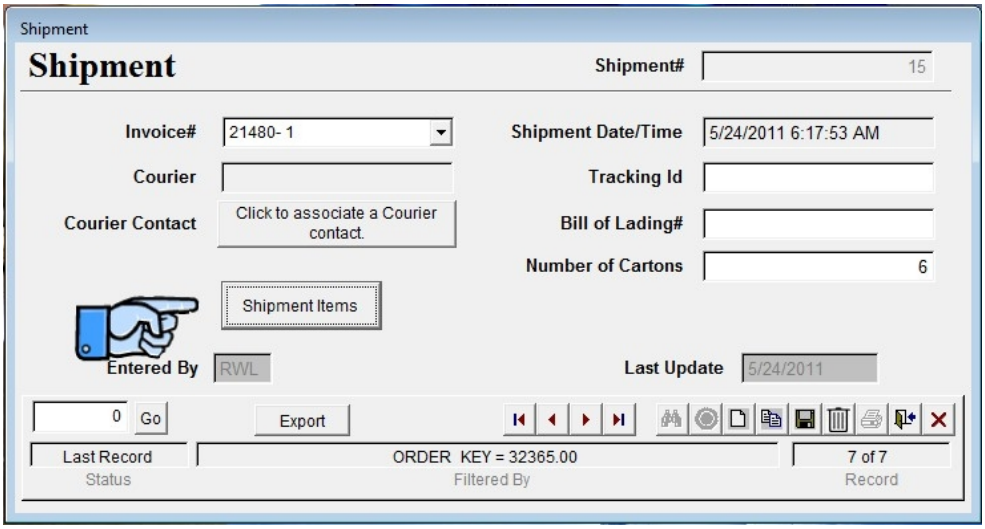
Submitted September 22, 2011

In order to satisfy your buyer's need for advanced shipping notifications (856 transactions) you will need to enter your shipment information into a system that can generate the transaction. The new shipment function within Publishers' Assistant uses your existing order information to smooth that process. This function is packaged in a new application called, "Voyager". You'll find that Voyager works very much like Couplet. Your shipment information is basically an assignment of items to cartons. The result of your work will be a shipping label for each carton and a record of what is in each box. Here's a quick run through of how the Voyager shipment application works.

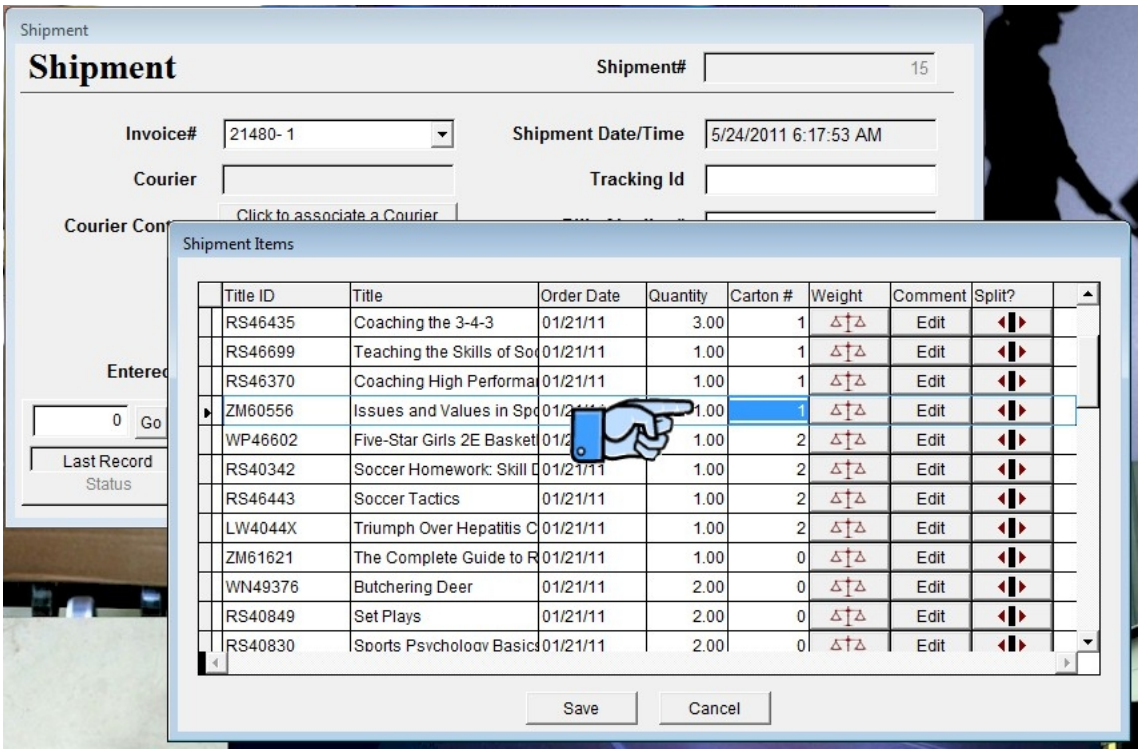
You begin by clicking on the shipment toolbar to the left to call up the shipment screen. You will be presented with the Shipment screen.



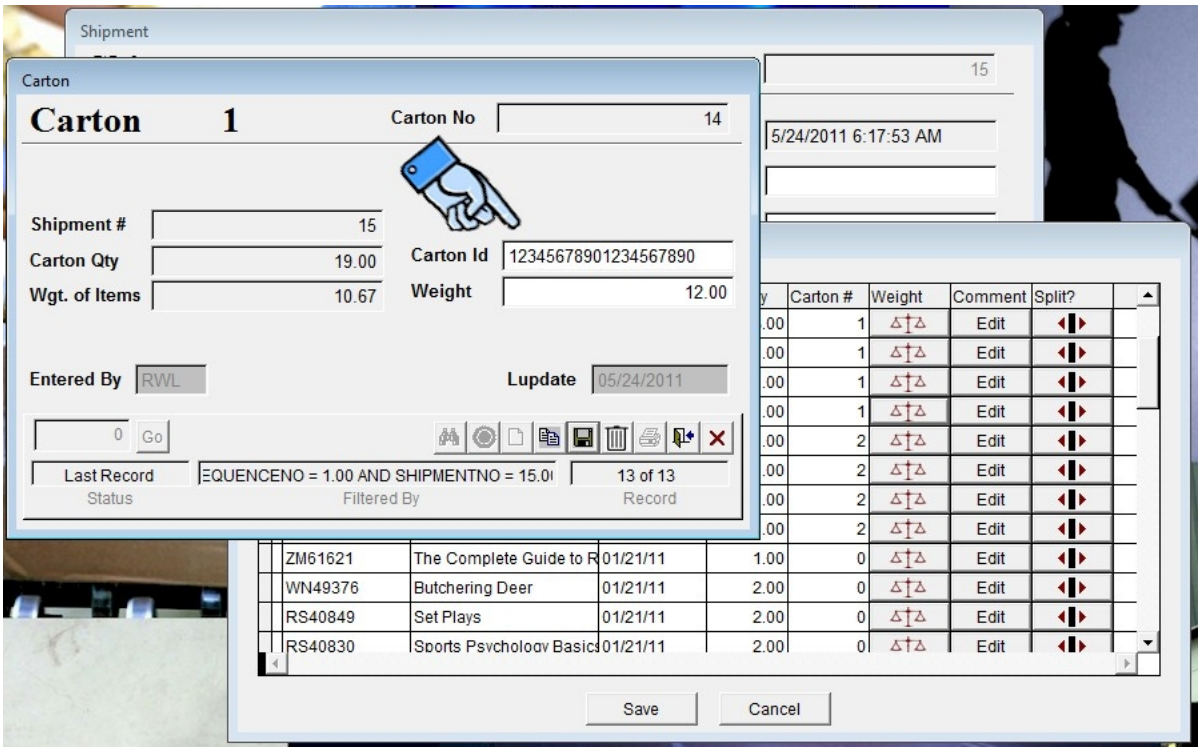
The drop-down menu on the invoice number field will present the invoices that are in the current print batch (by default); but you can actually type any invoice number into the field.



Once an invoice is selected, simply click on the Shipment Items button to start organizing items into cartons.

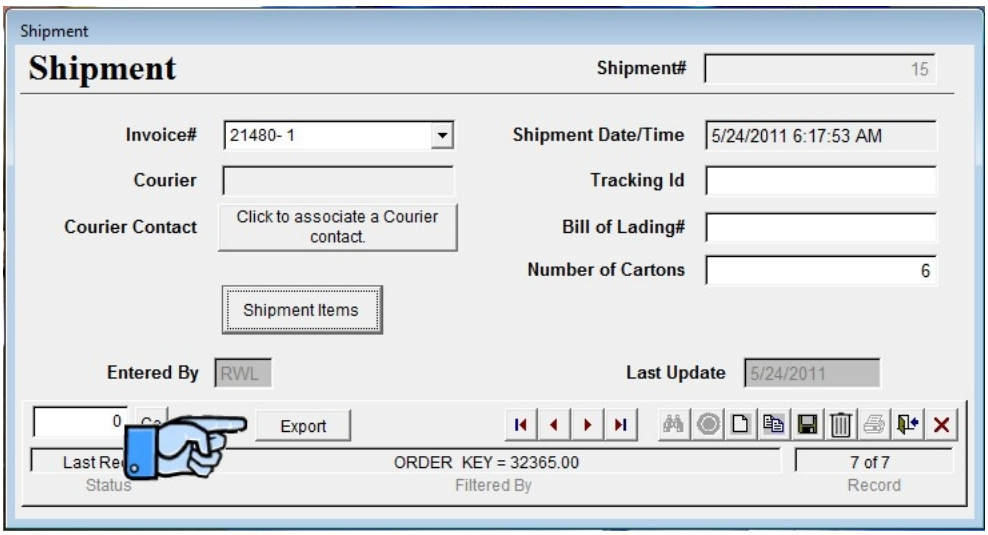


Organizing items into cartons is simply a matter of assigning a sequential carton number to each item.

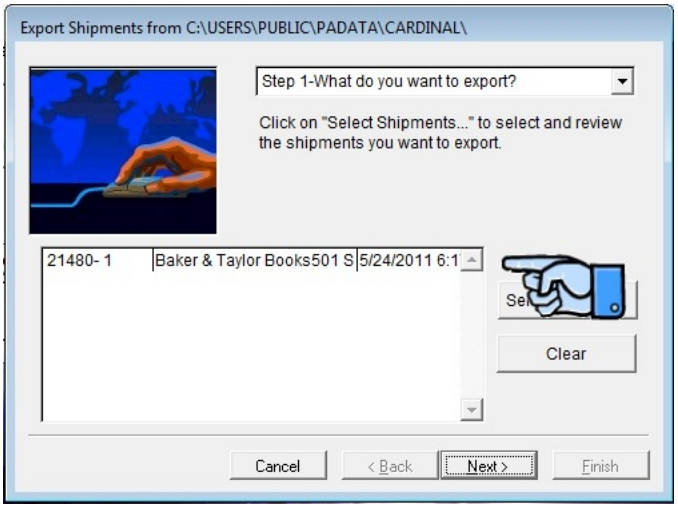


Once the carton is full, simply click on the “Weight” button for any item associated with that carton and you can enter the carton details. The total quantity and weight of the items that have been assigned will be displayed. You can weigh the entire carton and enter it here. If a unique identifier is needed (such as the SSCC-18 identifier specified in Baker & Taylor’s 856 transaction) you can enter it on this form. But each carton is assigned an internal unique identifier which can also be used for labeling purposes.

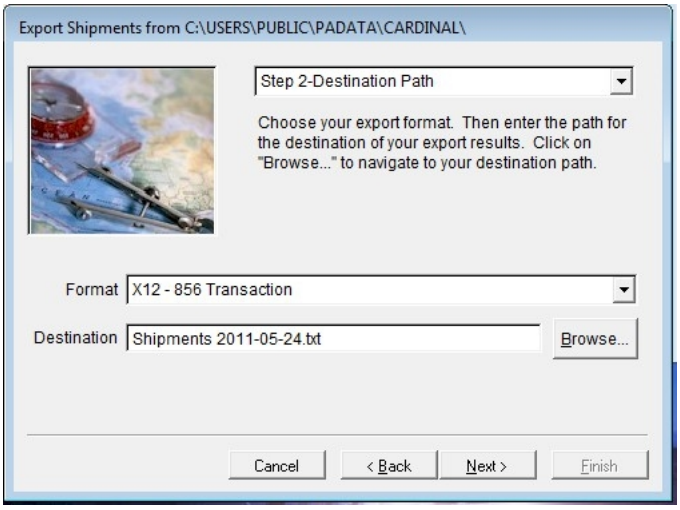
That’s pretty much it. After you have assigned all the items to cartons, you have all you need to generate your 856 transaction. That begins back on the Shipment screen.



Click on the “Export” button to begin the process.

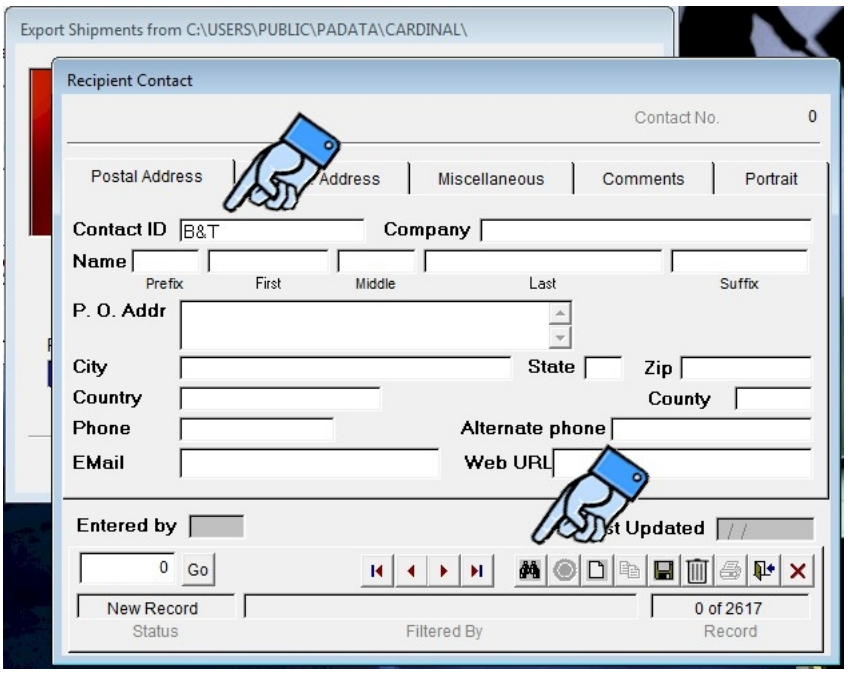


This will call up the shipment export wizard. This is the same wizard format that is used for other export wizards in Couplet. In this mode, the shipment you were editing will be pre-selected.

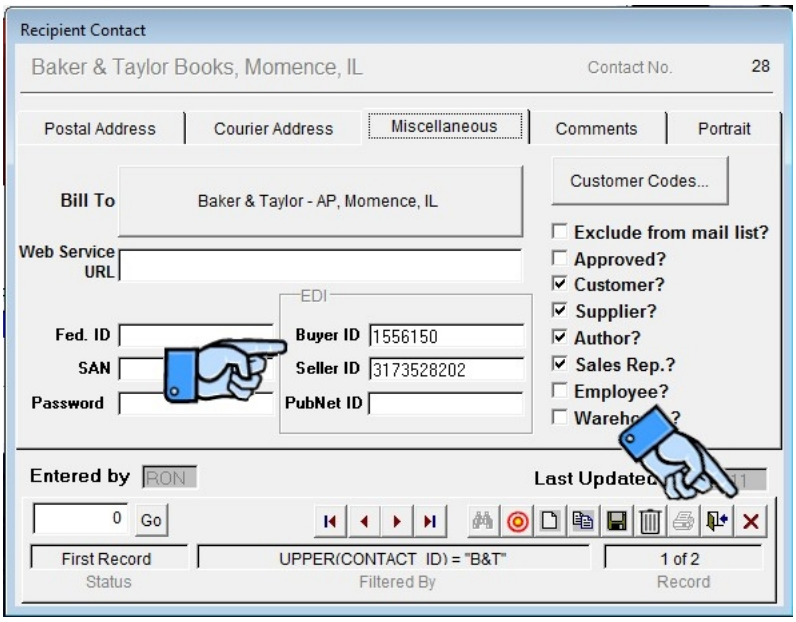


In the next step you can specify the type of export you want. (I've defaulted to the 856 transaction, but other exports—such as UPS—may be implemented later.) You can also specify the name and path of the output file.

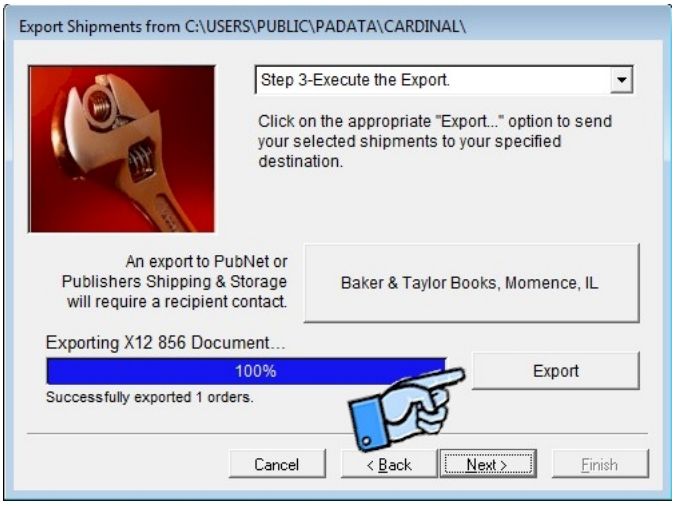
The trickiest part of the whole procedure is that you have to tell the export wizard who you want to send the transaction to. This "recipient" is a contact like any other contact, but it may or may not be the same as either the customer or the shipping contact for the order. Clicking on the recipient contact button will bring up the contact screen.



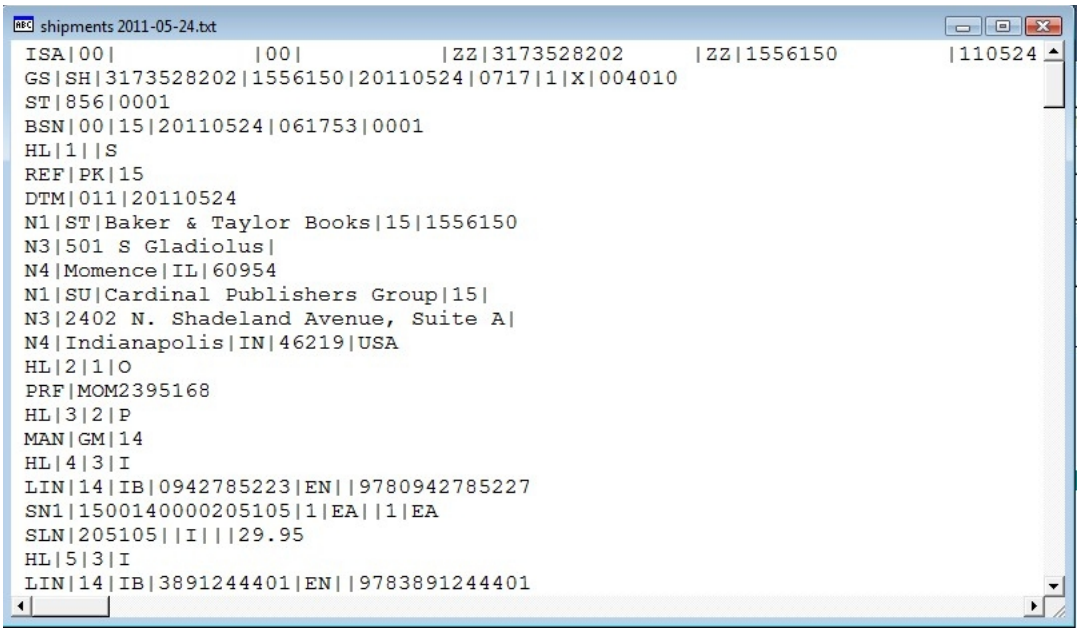
To make it easy to find your EDI recipient contact, I have used the contact ID “B&T” for Baker & Taylor. Enter that and click on the binoculars to find the right contact record.



The thing that makes this contact unique to the export process is that it contains the buyer and seller ID’s that Baker & Taylor expects you to use in the EDI transactions that you send to them. Entering these numbers is a one-shot-deal. From that point on, it’s just a matter of selecting the appropriate recipient contact. Since there are no changes to this record, we can click on the red “X” to return to the export wizard.

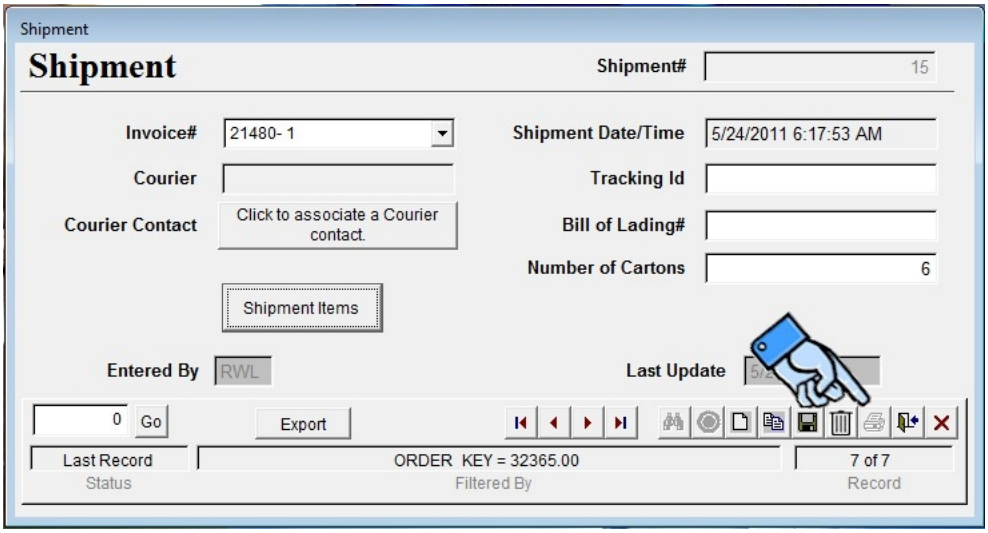


Back on the export wizard, click on the export button to perform the actual export. You can view the results on the last step in the wizard. The results will be presented in an editing window and will look something like this:



You can email, FTP, or transport this file however you wish. What you do will be dependent on what your buyer(s) expect.

The final step in the process is to generate your shipping labels. You do that simply by clicking on the printer icon on the shipment screen. View and print the resulting label report.



Hope this gives you some idea of how the process will work. It takes more effort to explain it than to actually do it. There will undoubtedly be further opportunities to streamline this process; but I think this gives us a flexible framework to work from.

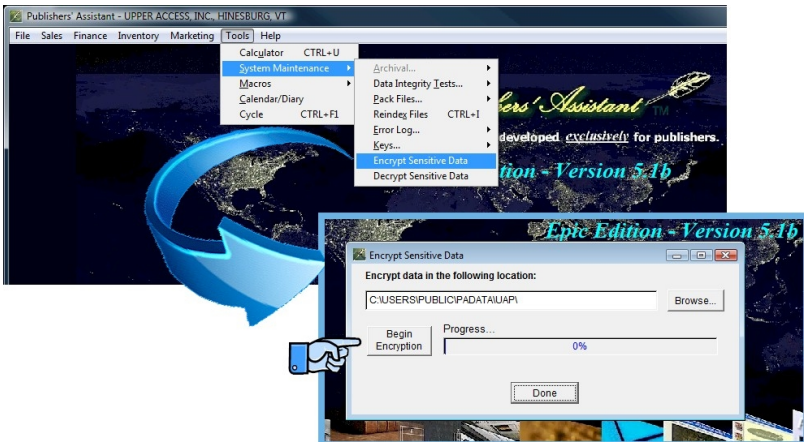
Understanding the Encryption of Sensitive Data

Posted: September 30, 2010

A new function was added to Publishers' Assistant Version 5.1 to encrypt sensitive data. This includes the credit card account number field in the receipt and customer profile screens, as well as the federal ID number in the contact screen. These fields are encrypted when you store the record to the database. The field on the screen actually presents the encrypted data until your cursor enters the field. That is intended to keep prying eyes away as well. This new function is a step toward better security for this sensitive data, should someone with malicious intent get a copy of your database.

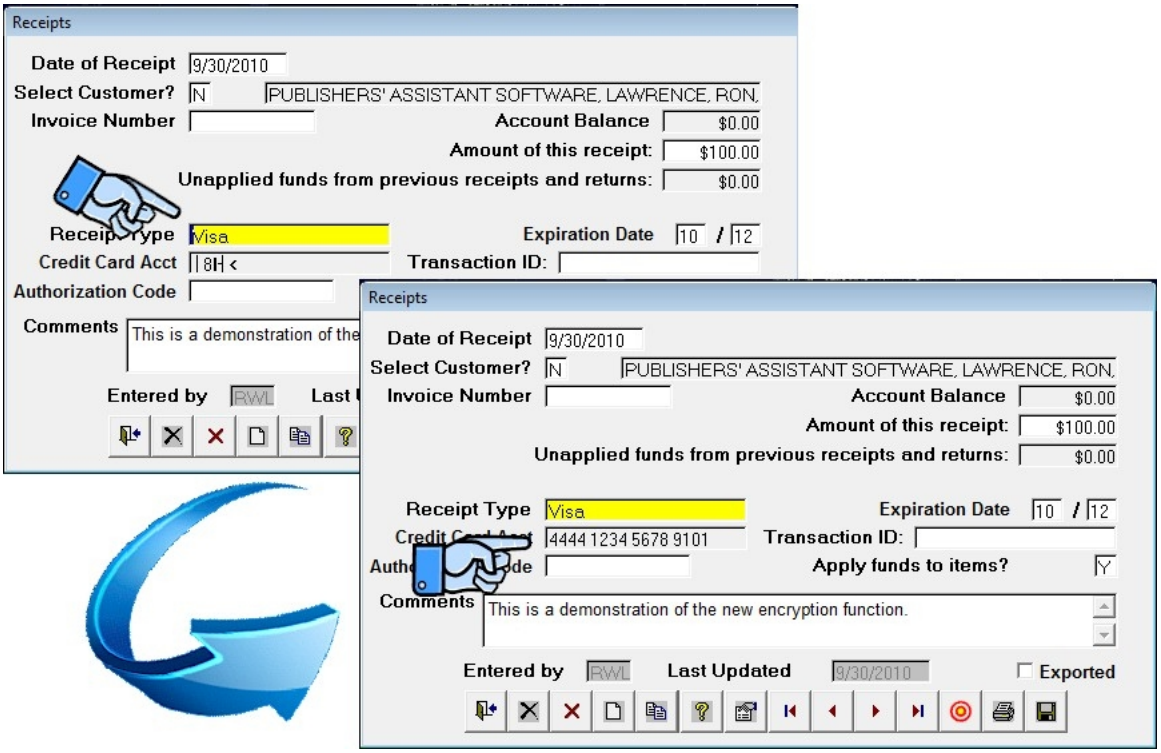
In order to use this new function, you need to take the step of encrypting your existing data. Make sure that you have registered your copy of Publishers' Assistant. An unregistered copy will not encrypt sensitive data. That, of course, should be a clue that your encryption is tied to your registration. Thus, one PubAssist user will not be able to decrypt another PubAssist database.

To begin the process, choose "Tools>System Maintenance>Encrypt Sensitive Data" on the PubAssist menu.



The Encryption screen will be launched. Click on the "Begin Encryption" button to begin the process. It will take a few minutes to run.

Now, when you enter a screen with sensitive data, like the receipt screen, the sensitive data will be encrypted.

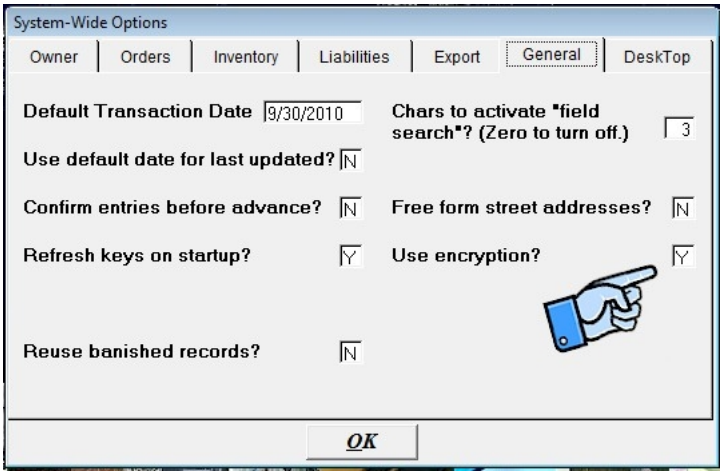


Note that when your cursor enters the credit card field, the account number is decrypted. You can edit the content as usual. When you exit the field, it will immediately be re-encrypted. Similar encryption fields have been implemented on the Customer Profile screen and on the Contact screen.

The Encryption function has no way of telling whether the value of a field has already been encrypted. So, you will want to take care not to use the Encrypt Sensitive Data function more than once. If this happens, you can run the "Decrypt Sensitive Data" to get back to the previous encryption.

This is a good time to stress the importance of backing up your data prior to running the Encryption or Decryption functions.

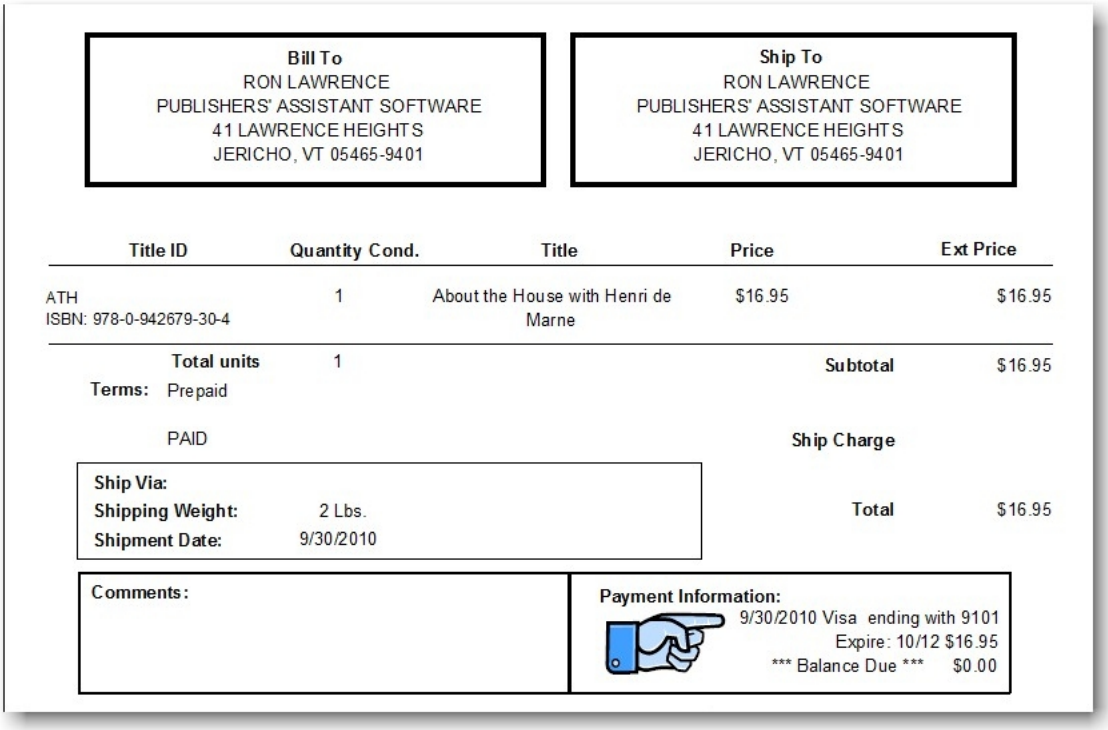
Since the encryption function can't tell whether the data has previously been encrypted, an external mechanism is needed to indicate the state of your encryption. So, a System-Wide Option has been added.



(Note: This option was not actually implemented until Version 5.1b.)

You may need to manually set this option on or off if your encryption state is out of synch'. This might happen, for example, if you restore a non-encrypted database after Encrypting Sensitive Data, or vise-versa.

Note as well that the Invoice report form has recently been updated to decrypt the "masked" credit card information in the payment information box. There are a couple of other reports that present credit card information. No change has been made to these reports as of this writing. It's not completely clear whether these reports are still in active use. It's also not completely clear how these situations should be handled. So, I'm taking a wait-and-see attitude.

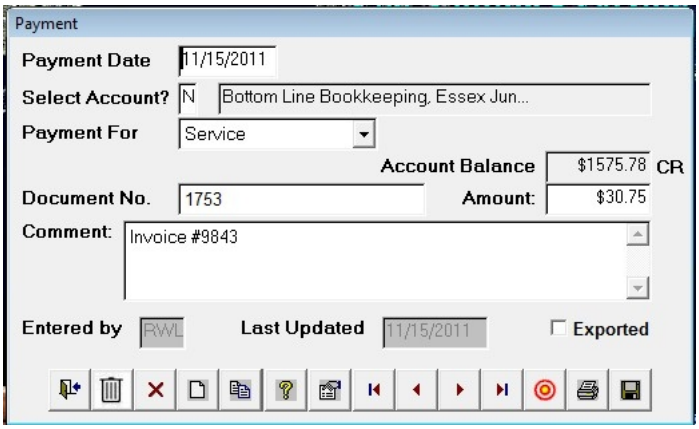


Well, that's about it. I hope this new function helps our users rest a little easier about the sensitive data you may have in your PubAssist database.

Enter Expenses for Anything

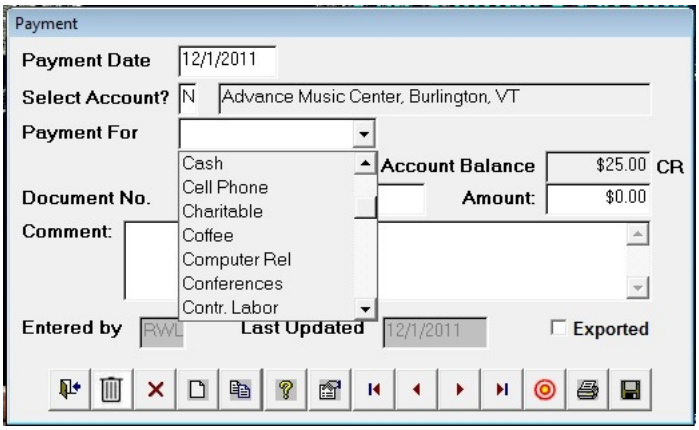
Submitted by Ron Lawrence
December 2, 2011

Frequently users ask me whether they can track expenses other than their royalties, consignment costs, and commissions with PubAssist. The answer is “Yes!” You can simply and easily track any expense using Publishers’ Assistant. You do so through the Payment Screen. Here’s a sample payment to my bookkeeping firm, whom I contract for payroll. Notice that the “Payment For” field has been filled in with “Service”. You can enter any category you like for this field.



By the way, the account balance is a credit because there is *no offsetting liability* for this payee.

Once you have entered a category, PubAssist will remember it the next time you enter a payment. In fact, the next time I specify “Bottom Line Bookkeeping” as my payee, the “Service” category will automatically show up in the “Payment For” field. But, if I enter a new payee, the categories I have previously used will appear in the drop down list like this…



When I am ready to prepare my income taxes, I run a “Payment History by Account” report. This report will group my expenses by the categories I have entered.

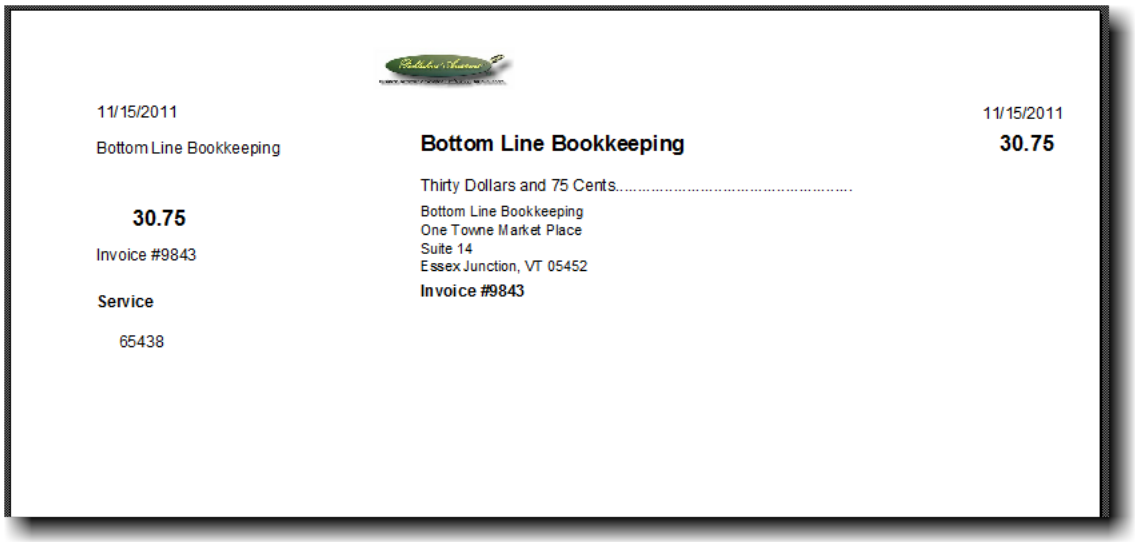
PAYMENT HISTORY BY ACCOUNT (Detail) From 1/1/2011 to 12/1/2011 .

Date	Payee	Detail	Amount
Account: Charitable			
2/26/2011	Covenant Community Church	General Fund	$150.00
2/26/2011	Bennet, Walker & Wurster	For LMNET	$10.00
5/24/2011	American Cancer Society		$50.00
7/26/2011	Covenant World Relief		$50.00
7/26/2011	Teen Challenge New England	July pledge drive.	$50.00
		Total for Charitable	$310.00
Account: Fees			
1/4/2011	Vermont Secretary of State	Trade Name Registration	$40.00
10/7/2011	Advance Music Center	Singer/Songwriter Contest Entry Fee.	$25.00
		Total for Fees	$65.00
Account: Office			
9/7/2011	Staples	Rebate on printer paper.	($10.98)
9/22/2011	Professional Printing Supplies	Invoice #1655	$76.50
		Total for Office	$65.52
Account: Service			
1/6/2011	Bottom Line Bookkeeping	Invoice # 8966	$10.00
2/26/2011	Bottom Line Bookkeeping	invoice#9125	$46.70
5/24/2011	Bottom Line Bookkeeping	Invoice #9400	$34.00
9/22/2011	Bottom Line Bookkeeping		$20.00

By making judicious choices for your payment categories, you can group expenses associated with specific titles. For example, if your title ID is “ABC”, you might specify your cover art expense as “ABC Cover Art”. Or you might preface it with an abbreviation for Contract Labor (e.g. “CL ABC Cover”). That way, all of your contract labor will be grouped together alphabetically in the report.

It’s a good idea to have a reasonable plan for your expense categories; but if you change your mind about a category, you *can* go back and modify the Payment For entries for those transactions.

Finally, you can print checks directly from PubAssist. To print a single check, simply click on the printer icon on the payment screen. Here’s a sample check for the payment to my bookkeeper.



You see, a check is nothing but a report. You simply order checks that you can feed into your printer. This check format happens to be compatible with one of the checks supported by Quickbooks® ; but, the report form can be modified to match any check. You can also print off several checks at once through the Payables Reports menu.

Some final points: If you or your accountant are still using Quickbooks, you can export your expenses to for use with Quickbooks. Also, since Publishers' Assistant knows about your royalty, consignment, and commission liabilities, it can automatically generate payments for those liabilities. That means that you don't have to enter those payments by hand! That's very handy if you pay royalties to several authors.

So, there you have it. Publishers' Assistant can be used to capture all of your expenses. It's simple, but elegant, and very effective. I hope your life just got simpler.

How to Export Credit Card Charges

Contents

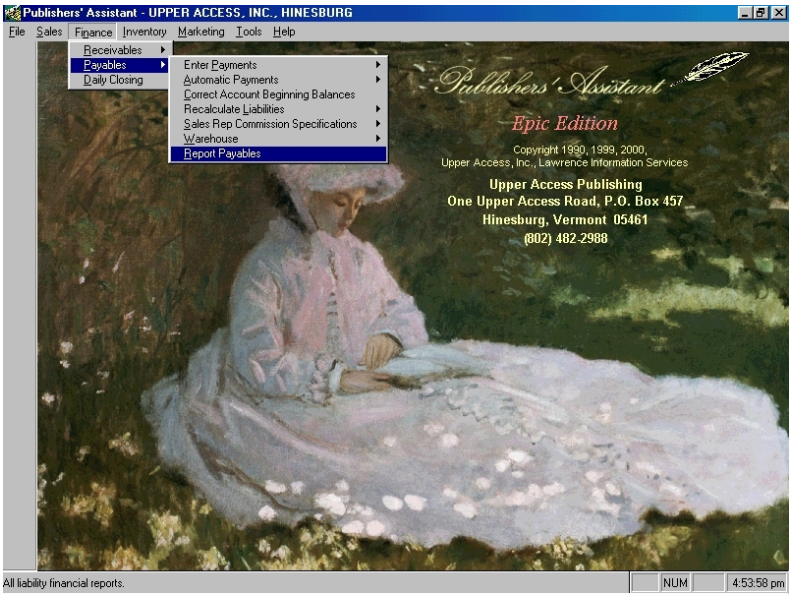
1. How to Export Credit Card Charges
2. Exporting from Publishers' Assistant
3. Importing into ICVerify
4. Importing into PCAuthorize
5. Other Considerations

There are several software packages available which allow you to submit credit card charges to for processing and approval. Two fairly popular programs are ICVerify and PC Authorize. This article will explain how you can export credit card charges from Publishers' Assistant and import them into ICVerify or PC Authorize. Given that these two programs work in a similar fashion, other credit card processing programs are likely to do the same.

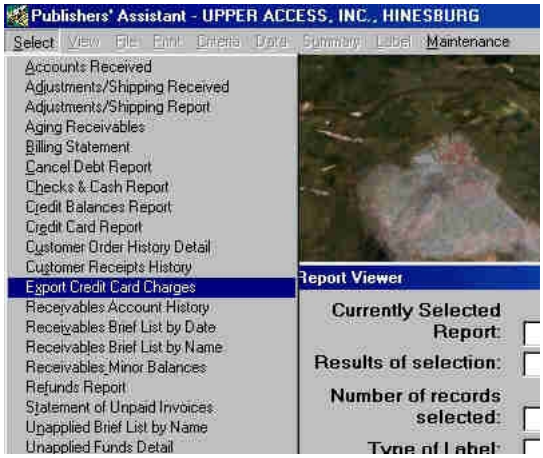
Exporting from Publishers' Assistant

This procedure makes use of a Publishers' Assistant report entitled, "Export Credit Card Charges." This report is located in the Receivables report menu. If you do not have this report, you may obtain it from the Downloads page of the Publishers' Assistant web site. Like all Publishers' Assistant reports, you can modify this report definition to tailor the output to meet your exact needs.

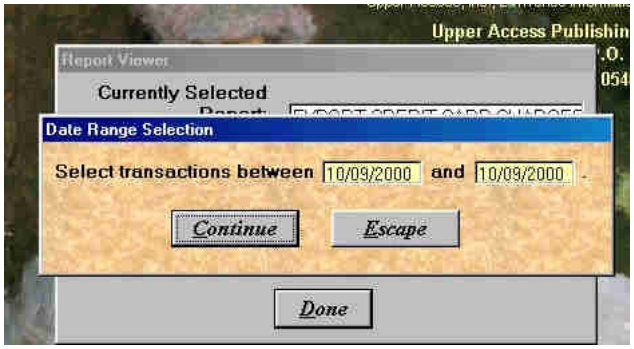
1. Once you have installed the "Export Credit Card Charges" report, you can call it up from the "Finance", "Receivables", "Report Receivables" option on the menu.



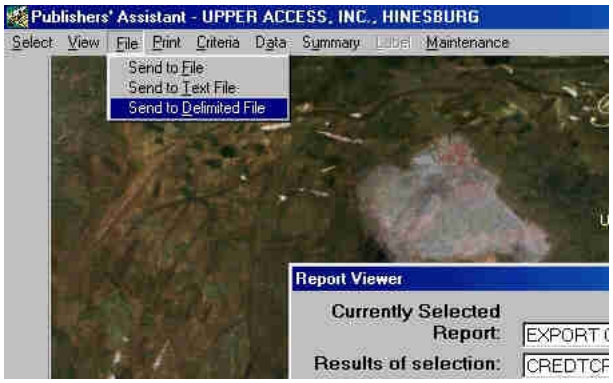
2. Next, select the "Export Credit Card Charges" report from the Report Receivables menu.



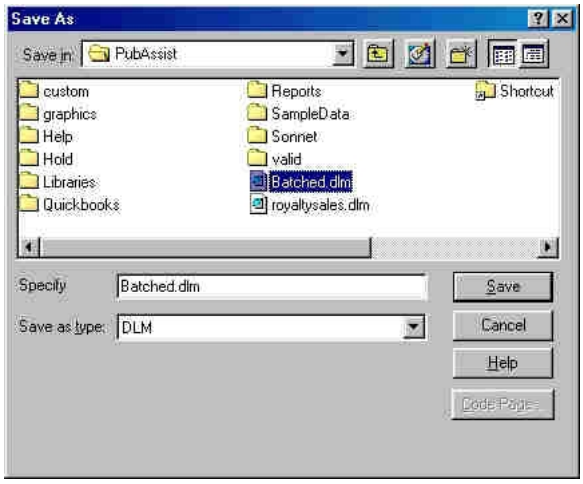
3. Enter the date range for the transactions you would like to export for processing. Click on the "Continue" button to begin the data selection process. Once your data is selected, the report viewer will show you how many records were selected.



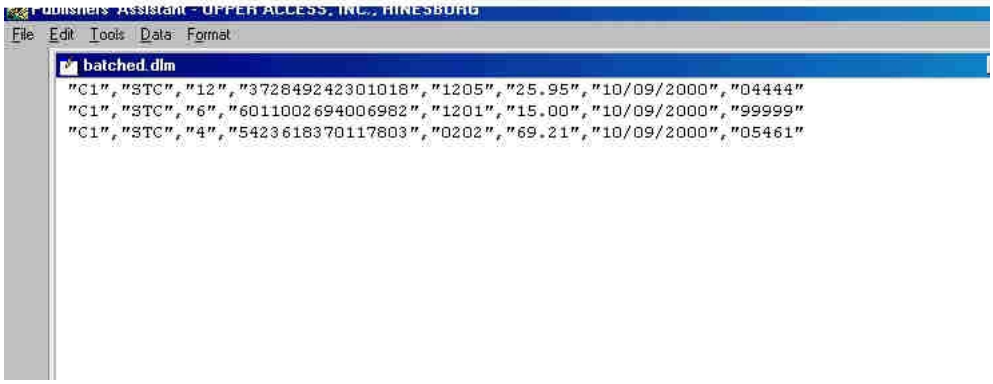
4. At this point, you can view, file, or print the results of the report. To export the data to a delimited file, select "Send to Delimited File" on the *File* menu.



5. You will be asked to supply a name for the delimited file. Navigate to a desired location and give the file a name.



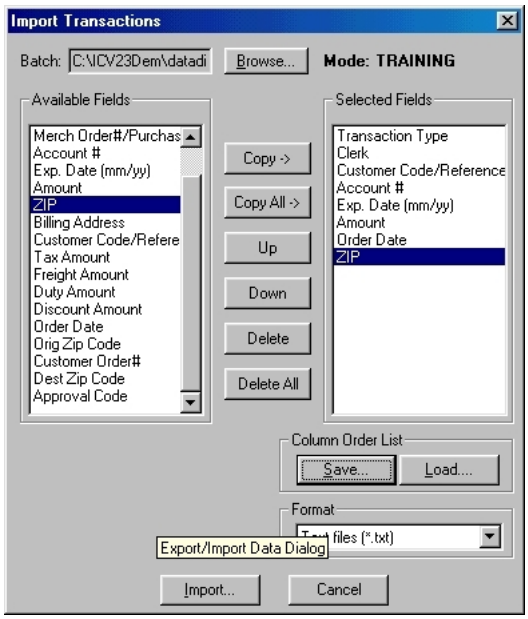
6. The results should look something like this. Type "CTRL+W" or click on the "X" in the upper right hand corner of the edit window to close the delimited file edit window.



Importing into ICVerify

1. Transactions imported into ICVerify are gathered into an "Off-line Group" for processing in batch. This seems to be an entity specifically designed to handle imported data. To begin the process, call up ICVerify and select "Import" from the *File* menu.

2. The specific fields that you are importing must be selected, in the order that they appear in the import file. Select the fields that appear in this screen in order to accept the standard fields produced by the "Export Credit Card Data" report. Note that if this set of fields does not meet your needs, you can modify the "Export Credit Card Data" report to save the particular fields that you need.



3. Once you have the correct fields listed, you can save the collection to an ICVerify Import file by clicking on the "Save..." button. Then the next you want to import data, simply click on the "Load..." button and select the import file you saved. The list of fields you selected above will be restored to the import screen.
4.Now, click on the "Import" button and navigate to the export file that you saved from Publishers' Assistant. Note that Publishers' Assistant exports delimited files to a file with a ".DLM" extension. Enter "*.DLM" in the file entry on the Open File dialog and it will display only ".DLM" files as opposed to ".TXT" files. Once you find your exported data, click on the "Open" button.

5. Assuming that your field selection is correct, you should receive a message box telling you how many transactions were successfully imported.

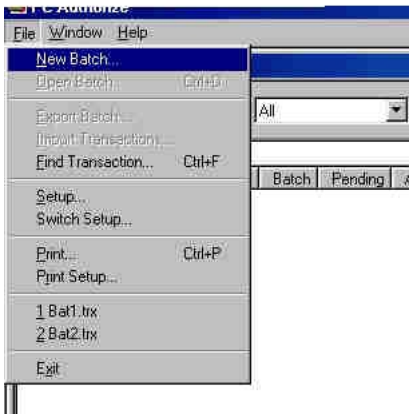
6. The next step is to submit the imported transactions for processing. As mentioned above, ICVerify imports transactions into an "Off-line Group". Aside from the success message above, there doesn't seem to be any other visible sign of the imported transactions on the screen. The transactions don't seem to show up until they are submitted as a group for processing. To do so, select "Transmit Off-line Group" on the "Function" menu.

7. An interim screen asks for the location of the file holding the off-line group records. Since we are using the default file, simply click on "OK" to continue.

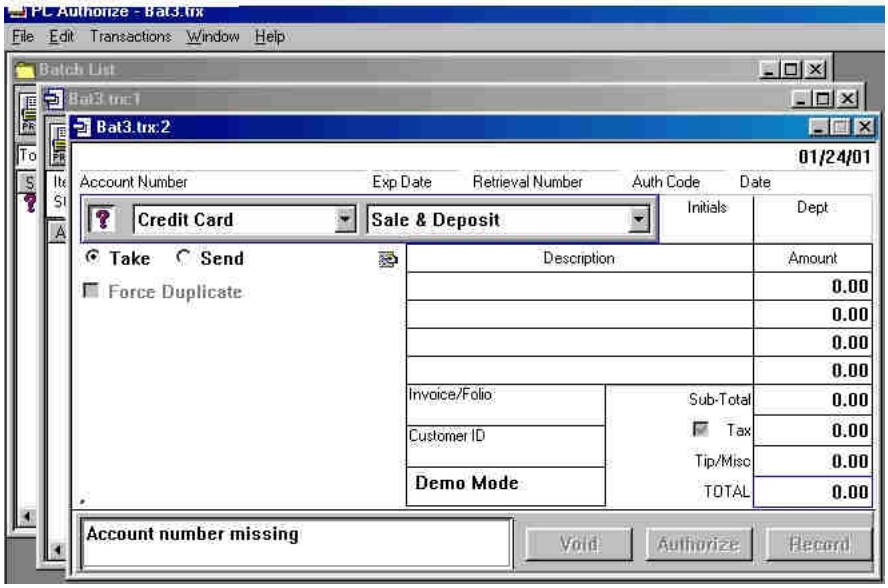
8.After the credit card transactions are submitted, you'll be able to view them in the main window.

Importing into PCAuthorize

1. The process for importing data to PC Authorize is very similar. Instead of using an "Off-line Group," PC Authorize allows you to import data to the current "batch." Start PC Authorize and open a new batch, by selecting "New Batch" from the "File" menu.

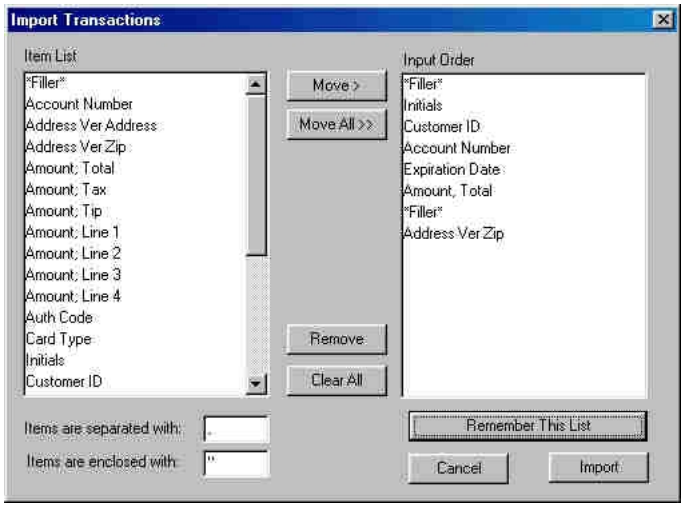


2. Two more windows will be opened. The top window is a data entry screen for transactions you want to enter by hand. Since we are not manually entering any transactions, close this window by clicking on the "X" in the upper right-hand corner. The second window, which is empty will be revealed. This window will eventually display the imported transactions.

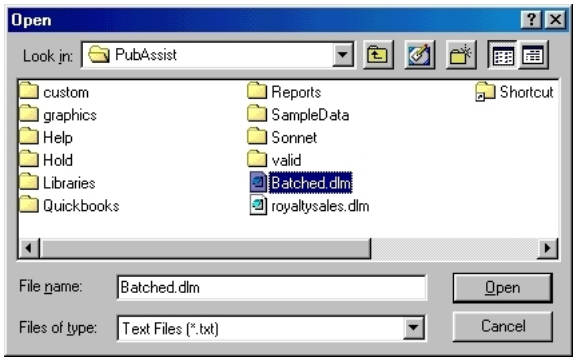


3. Next, begin the import process by selecting "Import Transactions..." from the "File" menu.

4. You will be presented with an import screen very much like the one that appears in ICVerify. The screen will allow you to select from the list of fields on the left into a collection on the right. This collection identifies the specific fields being imported. Note that the first field in our delimited file contains "C1". This is an identifier that is used by ICVerify. It is not used by PC Authorize, so the "*filler*" option is selected to cause that field to be ignored. The order date didn't seem to be available on the list of fields, so I made a "*filler*" entry for that field as well. Click on "Remember this List" to save your field selections. Then click on "Import" to begin the import process.

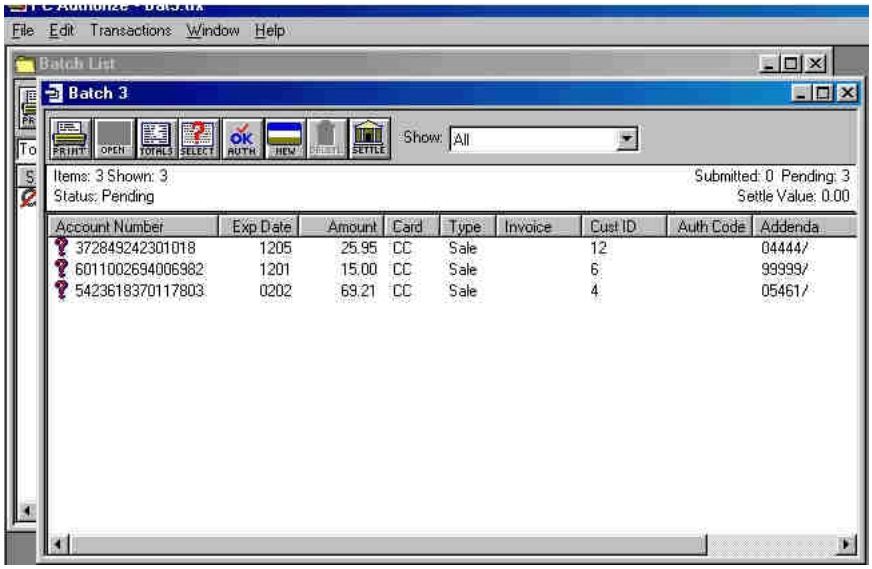


5. You will be asked to select the file to be imported. Navigate to the export file that you saved from Publishers' Assistant. Note that Publishers' Assistant exports delimited files to a file with a ".DLM" extension. Enter "*.DLM" in the file entry on the Open File dialog and it will display only ".DLM" files as opposed to ".TXT" files. Once you find your exported data, click on the "Open" button.



6. Your credit card transactions will be imported and displayed in the batch window. Question marks appear next to each transaction because they have not yet been submitted for processing. These transactions are now available for editing or

submission like any other transaction logged into PC Authorize.



Other Considerations

In my testing, I was using demo versions of ICVerify and PC Authorize. I don't have a merchant account, so I couldn't actually submit real charges for processing. However, both demos seemed to perform realistic checks on the transactions I submitted. Both rejected the same transaction when I submitted them for processing. You may find that some tweaking is necessary in order for this process to work exactly as you would like, but this testing was enough to tell us that exporting data to these applications seems to be a pretty straight forward process.

Exporting Invoices to UPS Online WorldShip

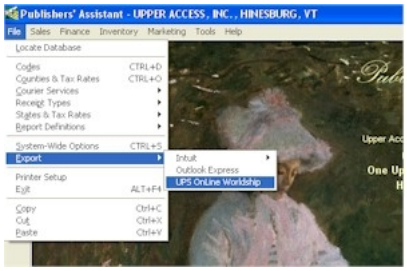
Some customers have a need to export invoices from Publishers' Assistant to the UPS WorldShip service. Right now, this process requires some effort to get set up. The setup, however, is a one-time procedure if you always save your PubAssist data to the same export file. This page documents that procedure.

To complete the connection between Publishers' Assistant and UPS Online WorldShip, you will need to execute three major steps:

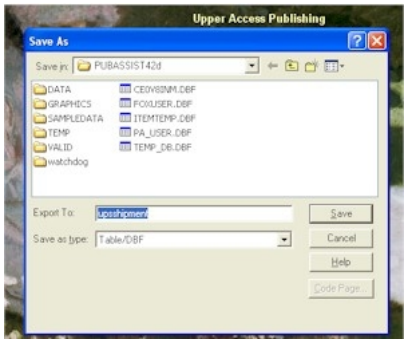
1. Export some data from Publishers' Assistant.
2. Describe that exported data to ODBC.
3. Map the exported data fields to fields that are within UPS Online Worldship.

Fear not! While the setup may seem a bit overwhelming, once you have it, exporting data to UPS will be a snap!

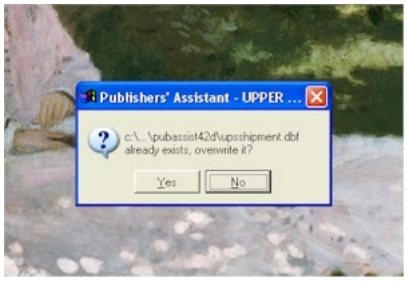
1. From within Publisher's Assistant, go to the *File* menu. Select "Export" and then "UPS Online Worldship".



2. You'll then be asked where you want to save your exported data. You can select the name and location of your export, but you should always save your data to the same file so that UPS Online WorldShip (and ODBC) will know where to find it.



3. Of course, if saving to an existing file, you will be asked whether to overwrite the existing file.

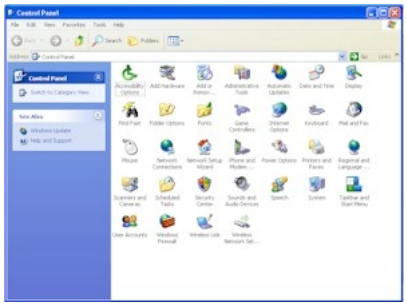


4. This process is very short, and the message presented is your only indication of success.

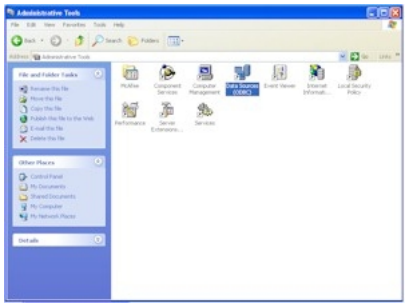
This actually completes the process for exporting data from Publishers' Assistant. This is all you will have to do on a regular basis after you've completed the setup.

In order for UPS Online WorldShip to be able to read your data, however, you will need to make it available via ODBC. This isn't as bad as it sounds. ODBC is Microsoft's tool for describing a variety of data sources so that they can be used by many Microsoft tools. For example, you can make text files and Excel file available to Access so it looks like another Access table. In our case, we are making a Visual Foxpro "Free Table" available through ODBC. **If you always save your export to the same file, you will only need to describe this file to ODBC one time.**

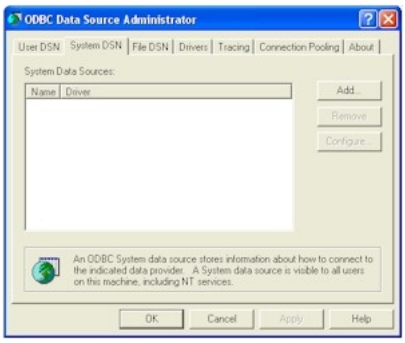
5. You begin by going to the Windows Control Panel and selecting Administrative Tools.



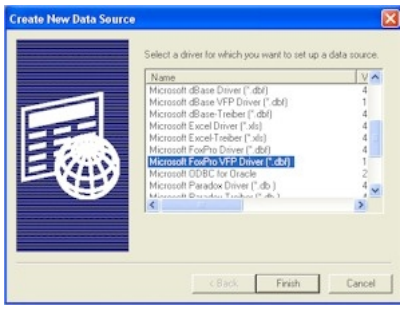
6. Under Administrative Tools, you can select the "Data Source (ODBC) utility.



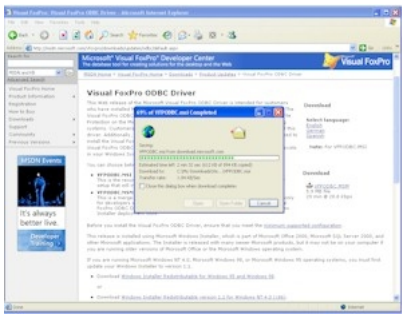
7. If you want all users and processes that run on this machine to be able to see the export file, you should select the System DSN tab on the Administrator. Click on the "Add..." button to add a new data source.



8. Select the "Microsoft Foxpro VFP Driver" for the new data source.

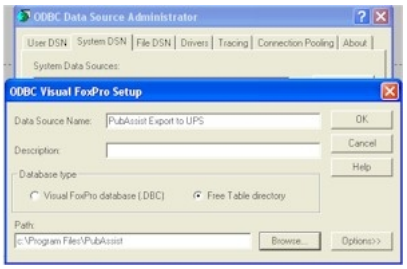


9. You may find that you don't have the correct driver installed on your system. You can download the driver from the Microsoft website. Download and install the driver if necessary.

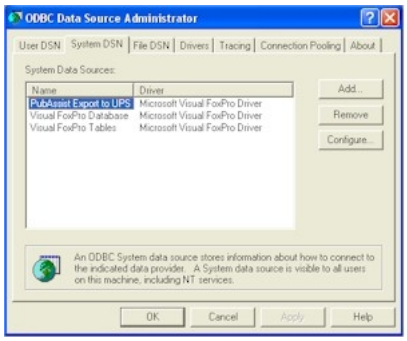


10. Back to our ODBC Administrator. Assuming you have the Foxpro driver installed, after selecting the driver, you will be asked to describe the data source. Give it a descriptive name of your choice. Here I've used "PubAssist Export to UPS". It's important to select "Free Table directory" as the Database type. You can then enter or "Browse" to the location where you saved your exported data above. In our example, we saved it to the normal PubAssist folder.

Important: Enter or select only the path to the *folder*, not to the table file itself. If you actually select the table file, you will receive an error when UPS Online Worldship attempts to access the data.
Click "OK" to complete this step.



11. You should see the new data source with the name you assigned it on the System DSN page of the ODBC Administrator. Your next steps will be to describe this new data source to UPS Online WorldShip. This process is within your UPS Online WorldShip application. We've made an attempt to name all exported fields according to the names used in UPS Online Worldship, so you should have an easy time matching up PubAssist fields with your UPS fields. Refer to your UPS documentation to complete this mapping process. Keep in mind that this is a one-time process. Once you are set up, as long as you export data to the same location from PubAssist, your UPS application will be able to import it.


ODBC Data Source Administrator
User DSN
System DSN
File DSN
Drivers
Tracing
Connection Pooling
About
System Data Sources:
Name
Driver
PubAssist Export to UPS
Microsoft Visual FoxPro Driver
Visual FoxPro Database
Microsoft Visual FoxPro Driver
Visual FoxPro Tables
Microsoft Visual FoxPro Driver
Add...
Remove
Configure...
An ODBC System data source stores information about how to connect to the indicated data provider. A System data source is visible to all users on this machine, including NT services.
OK
Cancel
Apply
Help

How to Export Title Information to Publishers' Assistant Web Services

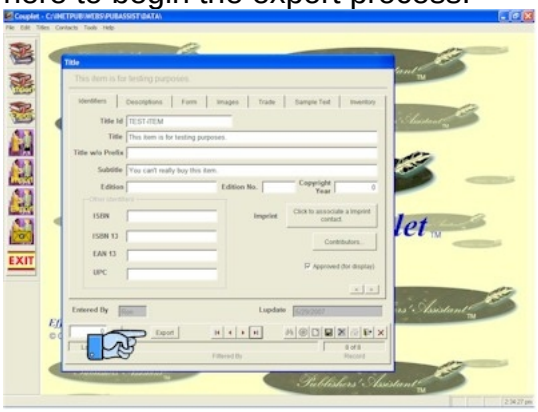
By Ron Lawrence
Friday, December 6, 2007

This article describes how to use the newest export function as of Couplet V4.2z to export your title data to your PubAssist Web Services-enabled web site. You can order the latest version of Couplet by clicking here. Save the installation procedure to your hard drive and then execute it to install the new copy of Couplet. This version of Couplet does require a database update, so be sure to execute the DBUpdate utility from the Tools menu before you call up any of the data entry screens.

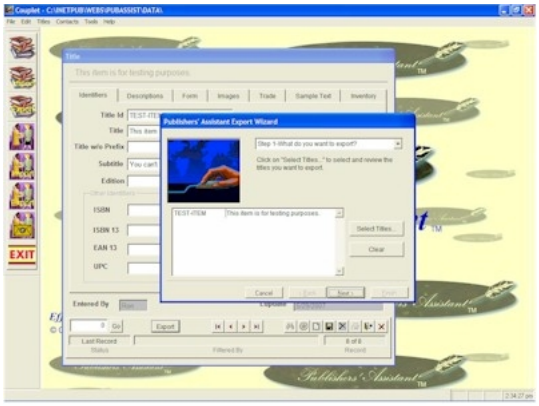
The ability to export title information is available, of course through the Title Export Wizard. You can use the wizard as you always have.

However, right now, I want to point out that you can now export title data directly from the Title screen. Click on this icon to bring up the title screen and navigate to a title to be updated and ultimately exported to your web site.

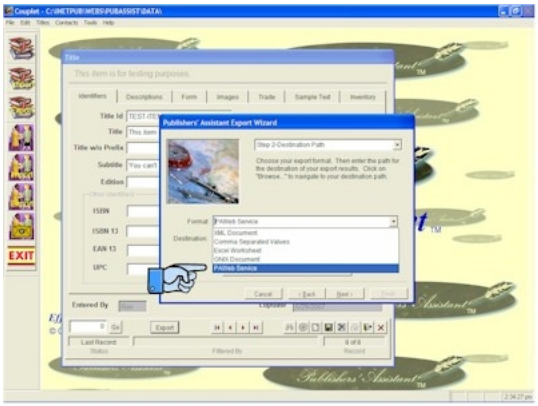
Notice the new "Export" command button on the navigation control for the title screen. Click here to begin the export process.



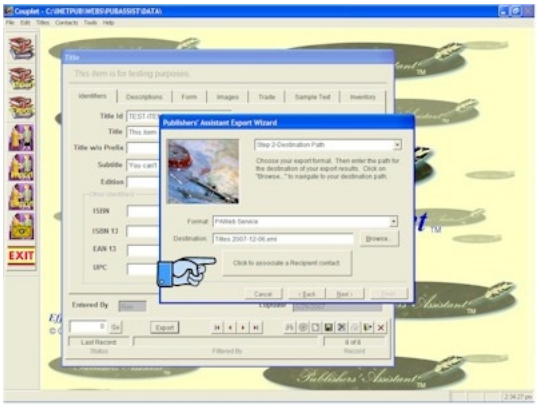
The Title Export Wizard will be started, but the title that you were working on is automatically selected. This bypasses the entire selection process. This is so easy, that you may find yourself exporting individual titles rather than using the Export Wizard to send several titles at once. Click on the "Next" button to continue.



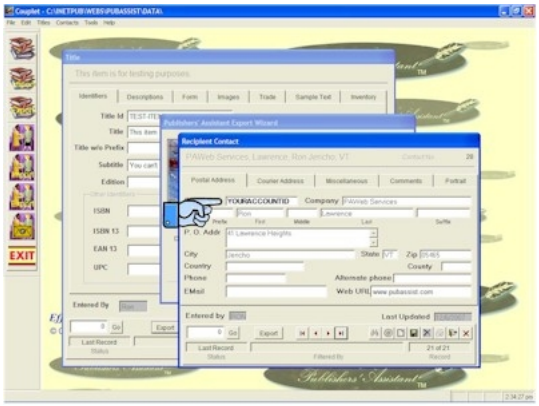
In step 2 of the Title Export Wizard, you will find a new option on the export format control. Select this new option entitled, "PAWeb Service".



Notice, as well, that a destination file has been provided for you. This is a convenience to streamline the export process. You can override this file by providing a new file path. Click on "Browse" button to use the file open dialog to navigate to a new destination file. But now, I really want to bring your attention to the "recipient contact" command button. It's the big button at the bottom. The recipient contact is where you will specify the details of the web service you are exporting to. Click on it to call up the contact screen.



Now you can enter or select a contact that is specifically designated for the web service. Note that the Contact ID must be your web site account ID. This is the same account that you use to FTP changes to your web site. The rest of the name and address are not that important, but you should clearly identify the contact as your PAWeb Service recipient. You also need to satisfy the validation requirements to save a contact. So, I suggest that you use your own name and address.

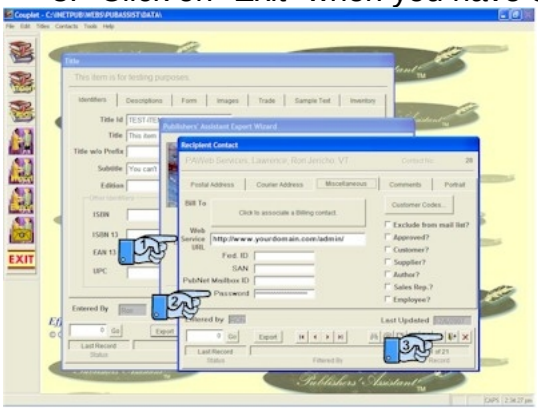


The rest of the critical information for the web service is located on the "Miscellaneous" tab.

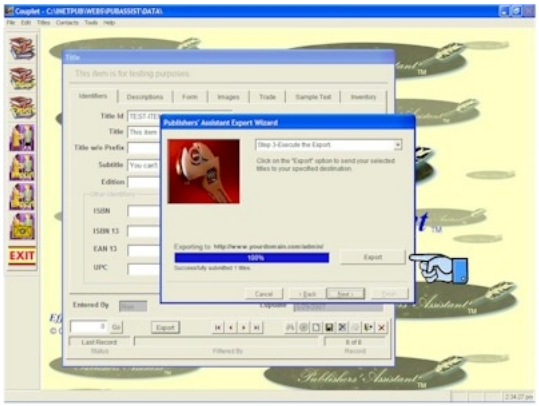
1. Fill in your web service URL. The services we offer are ASP pages that typically reside in your Admin folder. Make sure to specify the admin folder for the web service URL unless you have specifically moved it to another folder.

2. The /Admin folder is password protected. That's why it's important to provide the correct User ID (the Contact ID field) and password.

3. Click on "Exit" when you have completed your contact entry.



After selecting the recipient contact, click on "Next" to move to step 3 in the wizard. Click on "Export" to begin the export process. If all is correctly in place, then your title should be transmitted directly to your web site! You will be presented with any HTTP error that may have occurred if the export is not successful.



This new export function will not eliminate the need to FTP items to your web site. For example, the images that are associated with your title should be FTP'd to the /Uploads folder. This is where the web pages expect to find your book images. I toyed with uploading the images at the same time as transmitting your title data. In the end, I found that an HTTP Post was not terribly efficient, and would unnecessarily lengthen the amount of time needed to transmit changes. After you are up and running, I'd expect that you'll want to transmit small changes on a frequent basis. Your images will already be in place.

Well, there you have it. Life just got easier keeping your web site up to date. There are **HUGE** opportunities to use this capability to keep your web site always looking fresh. Here's a thought: Your home page could feature all of your active promotions! By creating an XSL style sheet to use your promotion data, your promotions can show up when they become active, and disappear when they expire! You don't have to do anything beyond specifying those promotions in Couplet.

Here's another thought: If your distributor is using PAWeb Services, here's an opportunity to automatically update your distributor's web site. And if you ARE a distributor, your publishers can feed you their title data electronically using nothing more than Couplet!

Exporting Data to Microsoft Excel via a Delimited File

Contents

Exporting Data to Microsoft Excel via a Delimited File
Example using the "Checks and Cash" report
1. Exporting from Publishers' Assistant
2. Importing into Microsoft Excel

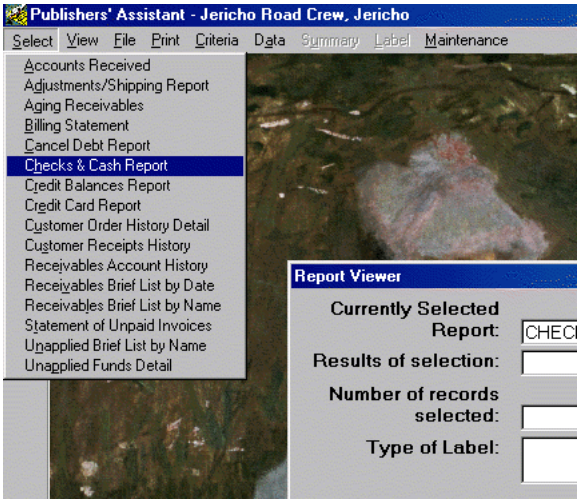
Publishers' Assistant allows you to export data from any report. To do this you simply select *File* -> "Send to Delimited File" on the report viewer menu. Furthermore, you can tailor the data that you export by altering the report definition. This page documents the procedure for exporting report data to a delimited file, which you can then import into Microsoft Excel or any other program that understands comma-separated values.

Example using the "Checks and Cash" report

The following procedure uses the "Checks and Cash" report as an example, but you can use any report.

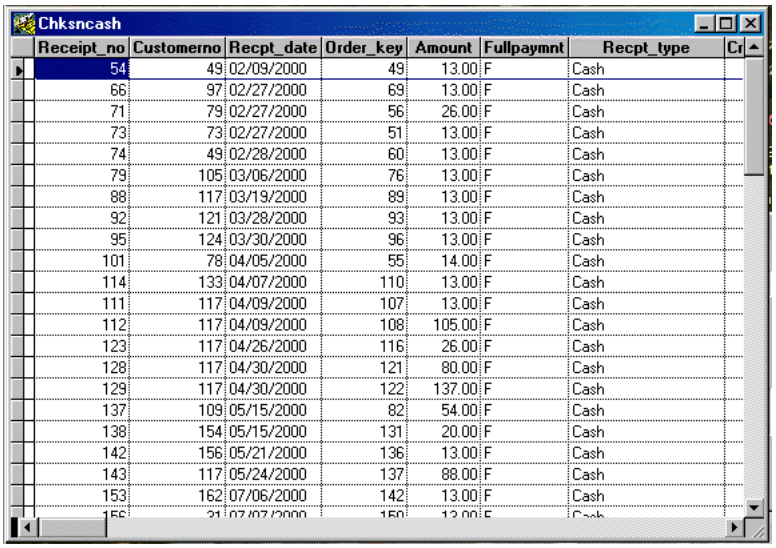
Exporting from Publishers' Assistant

First, select the "Checks and Cash" report from the Receivables Reports menu. Enter your selection criteria, just as if you were going to view or print the report.



If you want to see the names of the fields that are selected by the report, you can select the "Data" option on the report viewer menu. You will be presented with a browse window of the

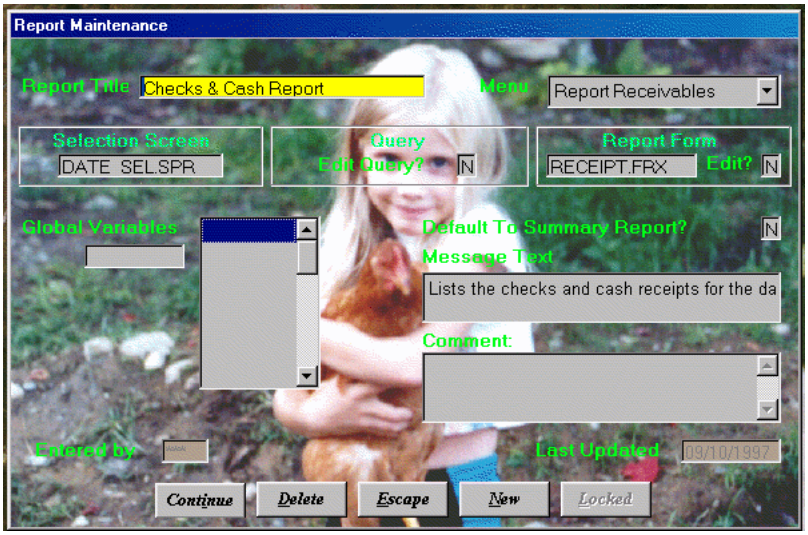
raw data selected by the report definition. Click on the "X" in the upper right hand corner, or hit "ESC" to exit from the data screen.



Chksncash

Receipt_no	Customerno	Recpt_date	Order_key	Amount	Fullpaymnt	Recpt_type	Cr
54	49	02/09/2000	49	13.00	F	Cash	
66	97	02/27/2000	69	13.00	F	Cash	
71	79	02/27/2000	56	26.00	F	Cash	
73	73	02/27/2000	51	13.00	F	Cash	
74	49	02/28/2000	60	13.00	F	Cash	
79	105	03/06/2000	76	13.00	F	Cash	
88	117	03/19/2000	89	13.00	F	Cash	
92	121	03/28/2000	93	13.00	F	Cash	
95	124	03/30/2000	96	13.00	F	Cash	
101	78	04/05/2000	55	14.00	F	Cash	
114	133	04/07/2000	110	13.00	F	Cash	
111	117	04/09/2000	107	13.00	F	Cash	
112	117	04/09/2000	108	105.00	F	Cash	
123	117	04/26/2000	116	26.00	F	Cash	
128	117	04/30/2000	121	80.00	F	Cash	
129	117	04/30/2000	122	137.00	F	Cash	
137	109	05/15/2000	82	54.00	F	Cash	
138	154	05/15/2000	131	20.00	F	Cash	
142	156	05/21/2000	136	13.00	F	Cash	
143	117	05/24/2000	137	88.00	F	Cash	
153	162	07/06/2000	142	13.00	F	Cash	

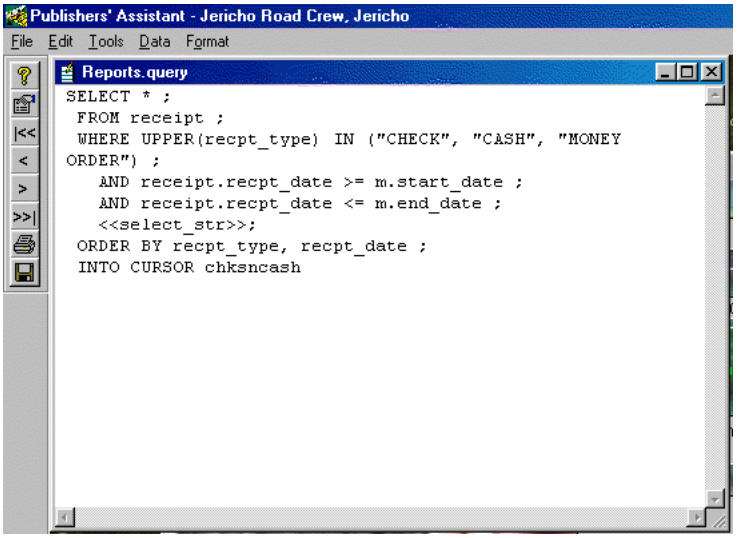
If you want to change the data that is to be exported, you can do so by changing the report definition. This step is not necessary if the data selected by a report is close to what you are looking for. However, as you begin to refine your reporting needs, you may want to set up a specific report with only the fields you want to export.
To change a report definition, you select the "Maintenance" option on the Report Viewer menu. You will then be presented with the Report Maintenance screen.



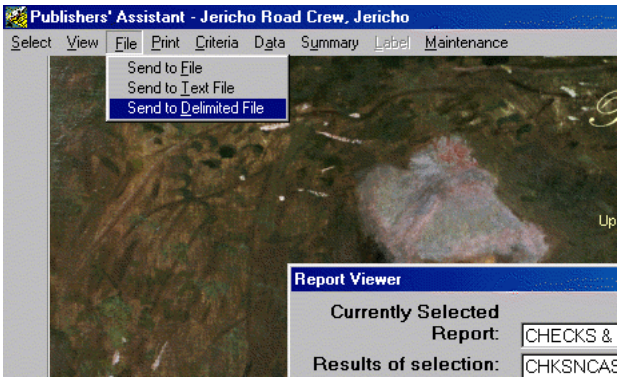
Note: We *strongly* recommend that you copy a report definition before making changes. Make changes to the copy, and leave the original report intact. This will keep you from overwriting your changes if you refresh your report definitions. You can copy a report definition by selecting the "Copy" option from the Report

Maintenance menu. You'll then be asked to give the new report definition a unique name.

Now, proceed to the "Edit Query?" prompt, and type "Y" in the field. You will be presented with an edit window showing the SQL query for the report. This query is how data is actually gathered for the report. In the example shown here, all fields from the "RECEIPT" table are selected. If you want to output only specific fields, you will have to list those fields individually in the query. Replace the asterisk "*" that follows the "SELECT" keyword with the list of fields separated by commas. You can click on the "Data" menu option to see the currently selected data and field names in the browse screen. You must end each line with a semi-colon (";"). When you have completed your changes, you can save the query by typing "CTRL+W", or by clicking on the "X" in the upper right hand corner.

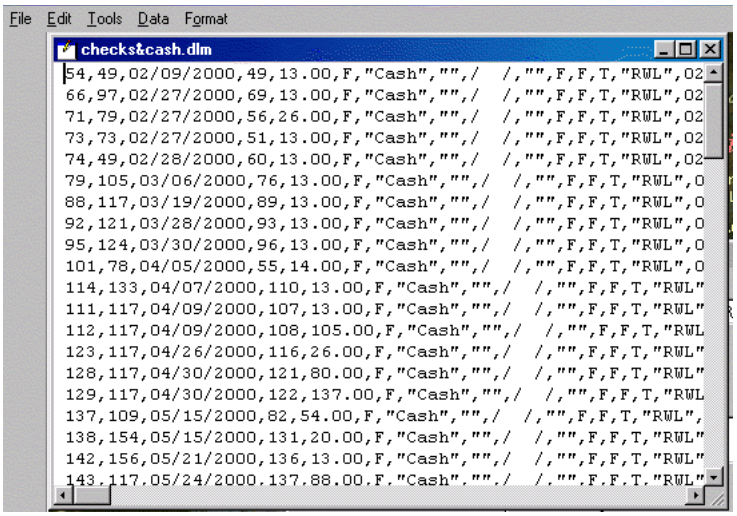


Once you are sure you have the specific fields that you want to export, select *File* -> "Send to Delimited File" on the report viewer menu. You will be asked to name the file to be saved. By default, the file will have a ".DLM" extension, and will be saved to the PubAssist program folder. You can navigate to a different location if you wish.



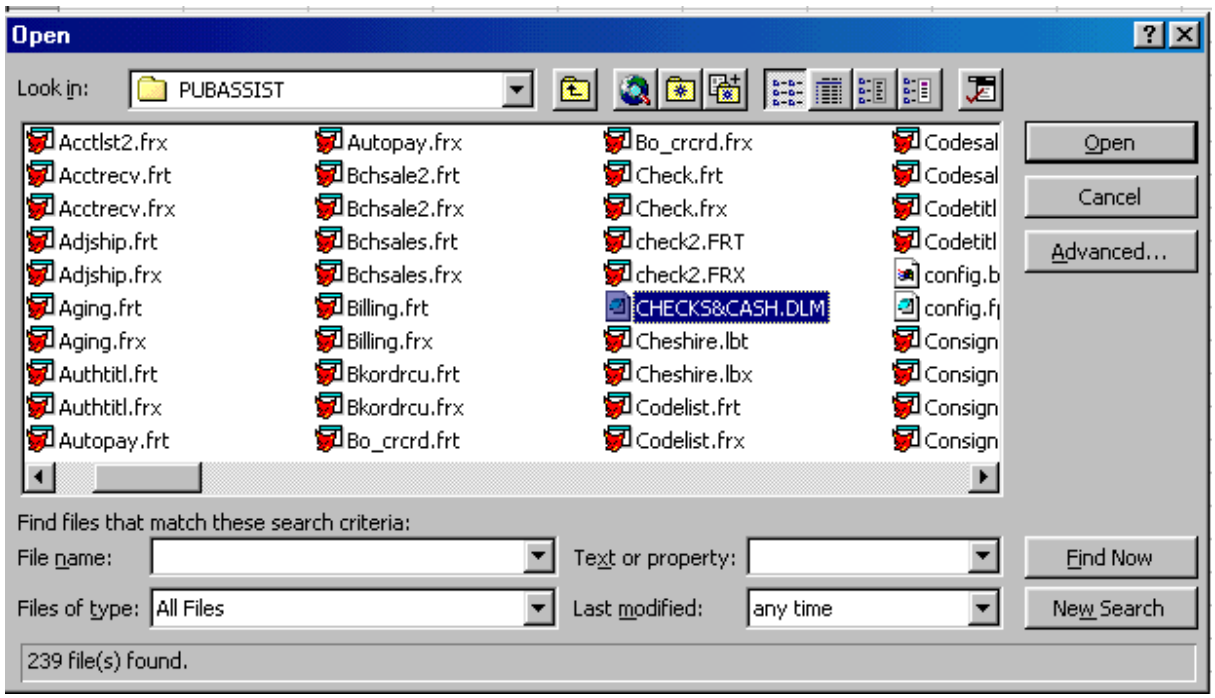
Once you have specified the name and location of the saved file, the delimited file will be saved. You will be presented with a text editing window which allows you to view the contents

of the delimited file you have generated. At this point, you can actually edit the contents of this file if you choose to do so. For example, you could decide to add headings for your data in the delimited format. At this point, you should close the delimited file and exit Publishers' Assistant.

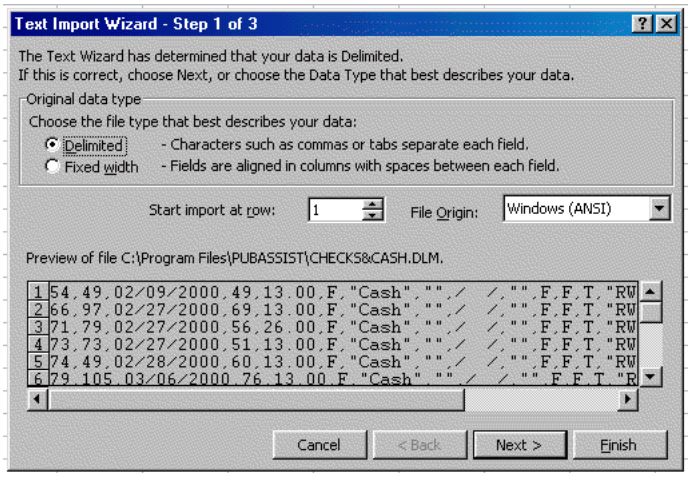


Importing into Microsoft Excel

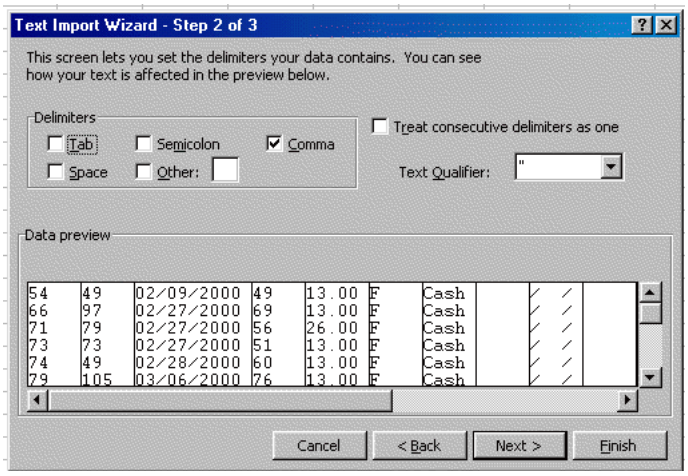
Your next step will be to call up Microsoft Excel. Select the *File* -> "Open" option from the menu. You should get the familiar Windows "Open File" dialog. You will need to select "All Files" from the "Files of Type" drop down menu on the dialog. In this example, I have selected a previously saved delimited file, "CHECKS&SUM.DLM", but you can enter a new file name. Click "Open" to continue.



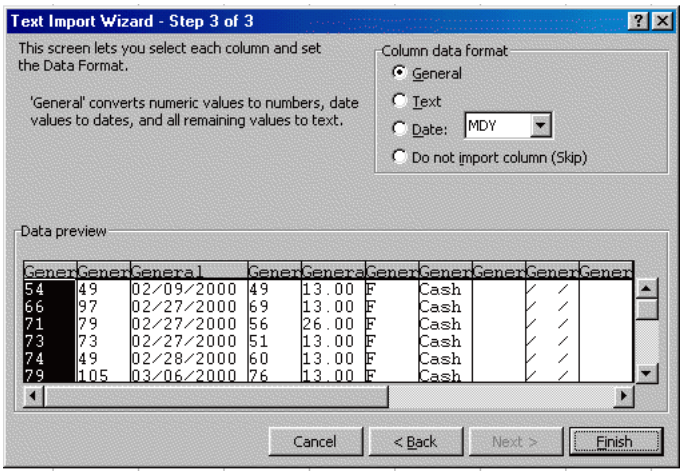
This should initiate the Import Wizard. The first screen of the wizard will ask you what type of file you are importing. Make sure that the "Delimited" option is selected in the "Original Data Type" field. Click "Next" to continue.



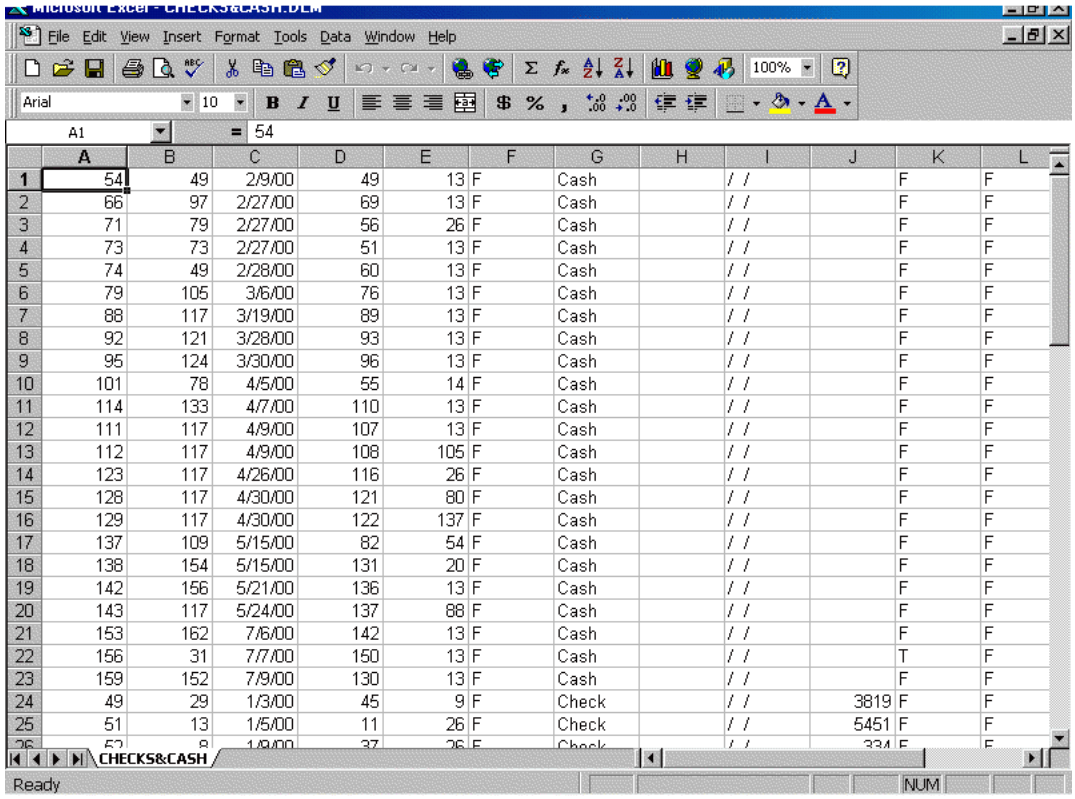
In the second screen of the Import Wizard, you will have an opportunity to select the delimiting character used. Publishers' Assistant currently exports only "comma" delimited files. This screen of the Import Wizard seems to default to TAB delimiters. Remove the check mark next to "Tab" by clicking on it. Add a check mark next to "Comma". Click "Next" to continue.



The third screen in the Wizard allows you to set the data format for each specific column that you are importing. Generally, the defaults are fine, but if you wish to change the format for a field, click on the column and then click on the data format desired. Click "Finish" to complete the import process.



The result should be the data from your Publishers' Assistant report in the spreadsheet you've just created. Each row in the spreadsheet represents a record from the selected data for the report. Each column represents a field from the report data. The data in this spreadsheet can now be manipulated like any other spreadsheet data. It can also be copied and pasted into another spreadsheet where you have prepared formulas to derive the information you are looking for.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	54	49	2/9/00	49	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
2	66	97	2/27/00	69	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
3	71	79	2/27/00	56	26	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
4	73	73	2/27/00	51	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
5	74	49	2/28/00	60	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
6	79	105	3/6/00	76	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
7	88	117	3/19/00	89	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
8	92	121	3/28/00	93	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
9	95	124	3/30/00	96	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
10	101	78	4/5/00	55	14	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
11	114	133	4/7/00	110	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
12	111	117	4/9/00	107	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
13	112	117	4/9/00	108	105	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
14	123	117	4/26/00	116	26	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
15	128	117	4/30/00	121	80	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
16	129	117	4/30/00	122	137	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
17	137	109	5/15/00	82	54	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
18	138	154	5/15/00	131	20	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
19	142	156	5/21/00	136	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
20	143	117	5/24/00	137	88	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
21	153	162	7/6/00	142	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
22	156	31	7/7/00	150	13	F	Cash		/ /		T	F
23	159	152	7/9/00	130	13	F	Cash		/ /		F	F
24	49	29	1/3/00	45	9	F	Check		/ /	3819	F	F
25	51	13	1/5/00	11	26	F	Check		/ /	5451	F	F

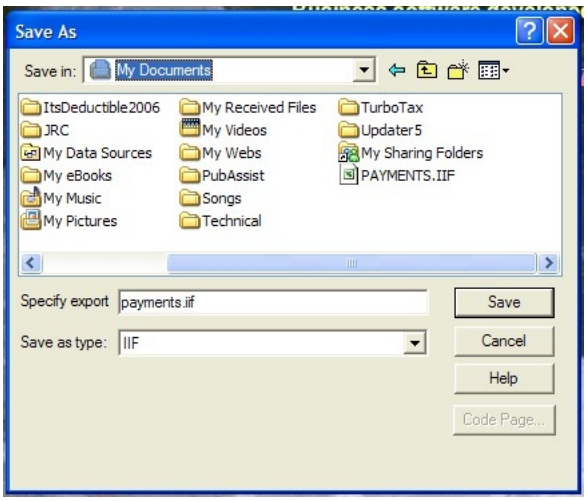
Exporting Transactions to Quickbooks

Does Publishers' Assistant work with Quickbooks?

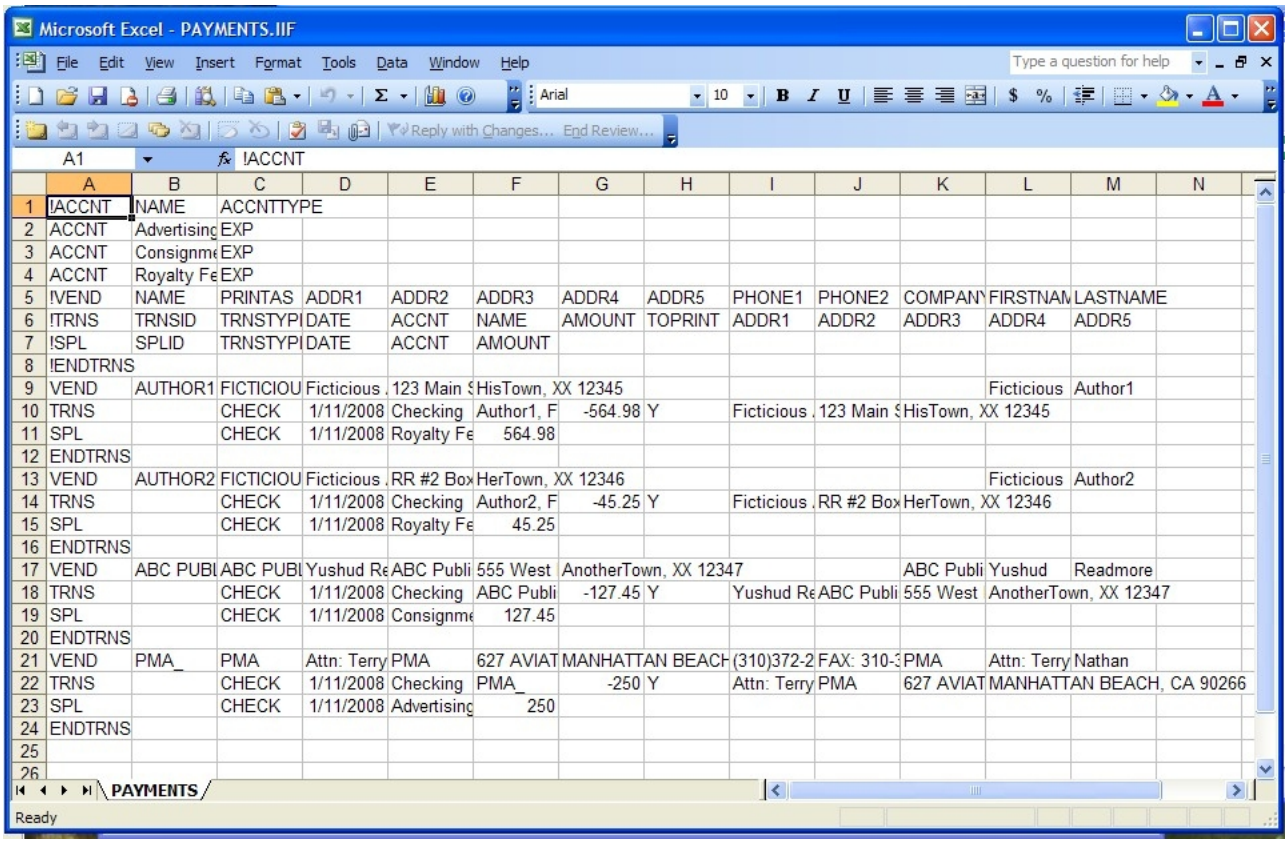
It does indeed. The level and detail that users choose to transfer varies widely. Some users have no need for Quickbooks at all, while others insist on moving as much detail as possible into Quickbooks. One common use of Quickbooks is to generate checks and to track the bank balance. This article will focus on exporting payments that have been logged in Publishers' Assistant to a form that can be imported by Quickbooks.

The File menu in Publishers' Assistant has an "Export" option that contains several application-specific export functions. We're going to choose the Intuit option. As you can see, you can export invoice totals, receipts, and payments to Quickbooks. In this example, we'll choose the Payment option.

You'll next be prompted for the date range of the transactions you want to export. Notice the "Ignore Previous Exports" checkbox. PubAssist marks each transaction as it is exported. By default, this export function will select only transactions that have *not been previously exported*. This is to reduce the possibility of importing duplicate transactions into Quickbooks. Consequently, if you are in the habit of transferring all of your payments to Quickbooks, then you need not specify a date range at all. PubAssist will select all of the un-exported payments. Should a problem arise, however, and you need to re-export a set of transactions, you may simply click on the "Ignore Previous Exports" option to override the default behavior.



Once you've selected the transactions to be exported, PubAssist will ask you where you want to store the results. When exporting payments, the open file dialog defaults to the filename, "payments.iif". You'll want to save the results to a place where you can easily find it to import it into Quickbooks. "My Documents" seems like a good possibility.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	!ACCNT	NAME	ACCNTTYPE											
2	ACCNT	Advertising	EXP											
3	ACCNT	Consignme	EXP											
4	ACCNT	Royalty Fe	EXP											
5	!VEND	NAME	PRINTAS	ADDR1	ADDR2	ADDR3	ADDR4	ADDR5	PHONE1	PHONE2	COMPANY	FIRSTNAM	LASTNAME	
6	!TRNS	TRNSID	TRNSTYPI	DATE	ACCNT	NAME	AMOUNT	TOPRINT	ADDR1	ADDR2	ADDR3	ADDR4	ADDR5	
7	!SPL	SPLID	TRNSTYPI	DATE	ACCNT	AMOUNT								
8	!ENDTRNS													
9	VEND	AUTHOR1	FICTICIOU	Ficticious .	123 Main S	HisTown, XX 12345						Ficticious	Author1	
10	TRNS		CHECK	1/11/2008	Checking	Author1, F	-564.98	Y	Ficticious .	123 Main S	HisTown, XX 12345			
11	SPL		CHECK	1/11/2008	Royalty Fe	564.98								
12	ENDTRNS													
13	VEND	AUTHOR2	FICTICIOU	Ficticious .	RR #2 Box	HerTown, XX 12346						Ficticious	Author2	
14	TRNS		CHECK	1/11/2008	Checking	Author2, F	-45.25	Y	Ficticious .	RR #2 Box	HerTown, XX 12346			
15	SPL		CHECK	1/11/2008	Royalty Fe	45.25								
16	ENDTRNS													
17	VEND	ABC PUBL	ABC PUBL	Yushud Re	ABC Publi	555 West	AnotherTown, XX 12347				ABC Publi	Yushud	Readmore	
18	TRNS		CHECK	1/11/2008	Checking	ABC Publi	-127.45	Y	Yushud Re	ABC Publi	555 West	AnotherTown, XX 12347		
19	SPL		CHECK	1/11/2008	Consignme	127.45								
20	ENDTRNS													
21	VEND	PMA_	PMA	Attn: Terry	PMA	627 AVIAT	MANHATTAN BEACH		(310)372-2	FAX: 310-3	PMA	Attn: Terry	Nathan	
22	TRNS		CHECK	1/11/2008	Checking	PMA_	-250	Y	Attn: Terry	PMA	627 AVIAT	MANHATTAN BEACH, CA 90266		
23	SPL		CHECK	1/11/2008	Advertising	250								
24	ENDTRNS													
25														
26														

There's not much that's very exciting that happens once you've saved the results; however, you can navigate to the file path and open it using Microsoft Excel. The IIF format is a proprietary format specified by Intuit for imports. It's a tab-delimited format which Excel can read. The Intuit import specifications detail both the transaction and the field headings. The

above sample shows expense account definitions for the payments we exported. This insures that whatever types of expenses you entered in PubAssist will have a corresponding account in Quickbooks. The export file then details each payment transaction. Notice that each payment debits the checking account while crediting the expense account.

Your next step will be to import this file into Quickbooks. Quickbooks will provide documentation on this process. Generally, however, the Quickbooks import function is on its "File" menu option. After importing these payment transactions, you'll be able to use Quickbooks' check printing function to print out the checks. Using Automatic Payment function in Publishers' Assistant could save you lots of time! Check out the AutomaticPayments article for more details on that.

Using Publishers' Assistant to Prepare my Income Tax Return

Submitted by Ron Lawrence
January 5, 2012

Well, it's that time of year again. Are you ready to do your income taxes? I think for most of us, it's a chore that we'd rather put off as long as we can. I thought it might be helpful to tell you how I use PubAssist to prepare the business portion of my tax return. I'm a sole propietor, so I report my business income and expenses on Schedule C of my 1040 Tax Return. I have owned a corporation in the past, however, and prepared my own tax returns. The process for preparing the 1120 return is basically the same with a few added hoops to get the Balance Sheet to, well... balance.

I'm going to cover the basics here. Before I dive in, it's important that I tell you that I am NOT a certified accountant. I have worked with accountants and bookkeepers over many years now and have tried the make the things that were requested by these professionals available in PubAssist. I will also share with you that for many years now, I have used TurboTax to prepare my taxes. I don't know if you can call that an endorsement, but I feel comfortable that it is fairly thorough in its process of leading me through all the considerations for my taxes. Finally, one thing you should know up front is that I use the “Cash” method of accounting for preparing my tax return. Your accountant may advise you to use the “Accrual” method. There may be some advantage to the latter, but I like to keep things simple. I don’t report income until I have received it; and I don’t report an expense until I have paid it.
One of the things I found to be helpful is a checklist. It's a list of all of the things that are specific to my family's finances that I will need to prepare my tax return. There are generic checklists available. I think TurboTax may have one; but I would encourage you to develop your own that is specific to your own situation. I developed mine after several years of preparing my books for my tax preparer. Once you pull the necessary information together, doing your taxes is actually pretty straight forward. This is what my list looks like:

Income Tax Check List

Business Income & Expenses (Schedule C)

- Business Income from PubAssist “Accounts Received” report
- 1099-Misc from Upper Access Publishing
- Business Expenses from PubAssist “Payment History by Account” report
  - Import Credit Card charges into PubAssist
  - Check for cash receipts or expenses paid with personal credit card
  - Back out personal expenses from Sprint, Comcast
  - Payroll expenses from Bookkeeper

Personal Income

- Kath's W2 or December pay stub.
- Interest income from 1099-INT or December Credit Union statements.
- Dividends, Stock sales
- State income tax refund from 1099 or previous year's return.
- Other income

Personal Deductions (Schedule A)

- Medical deductions rarely work out, but it's worth a quick review.
- Taxes Paid
  - State Taxes from previous year's return
  - Property Tax from Essex bill
  - Property Tax from Jericho bill
  - Water Tax from Village of Jericho tax bill
  - Vehicle registration fees
  - License renewals
- Charitable contributions.
  - Charity from PubAssist "Payment History by Account" report
  - Charity from Covenant Church statement
- Mortgage interest paid from Bank
- Mortgage interest paid from CU December statement

Education Credits (form 8863)

- From college bills or 1098-T statements

Other

- Student Loan Interest from VSAC
- Half of Self Employment Tax
- IRA deductions

If you are like me, you might be a little overwhelmed by this list. Keep in mind, that this is something I developed for myself over several years. When I ran into a new situation that required new information, I simply added it to the list—which turns out to be really helpful in the next year.

Most of these things are personal and have nothing to do with Publishers' Assistant. Thus, this article is going to focus on the first section entitled, "Business Income & Expenses (Schedule C)". Let's walk through each item in the list.

Business Income from PubAssist "Accounts Received" report

This is pretty straight forward. To get a complete picture of the cash that I have received over the year, I run the "Accounts Received" report from January 1st through December 31st. This is essentially a dump of all of the receipts I have logged over the year. The report will organize and subtotal your receipts by the receipt type.

Publishers' Assistant
41 Lawrence Heights
Jericho, VT 05465
Phone: (802) 899-2276
FAX (802) 899-1291

ACCOUNTS RECEIVED (Detail) **From** 1/1/2011 **to** 12/31/2011 .

Customer	Date	Invoice	Amount	Receipt Type
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	1/18/2011	62652- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	2/7/2011	62655- 1	[illegible]	Check
Cardinal Publishers Group, Doherty, Tom, Indianapolis, IN	2/15/2011	62653- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	3/9/2011	62656- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	4/5/2011	62657- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	5/6/2011	62658- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	6/7/2011	62659- 1	[illegible]	Check
Cardinal Publishers Group, Doherty, Tom, Indianapolis, IN	6/7/2011	62643- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson, Steve, Hinesburg, VT	7/8/2011	62660- 1	[illegible]	Check
Upper Access Publishing, Inc., Carlson,	8/8/2011	62661- 1	[illegible]	Check

Important! Make sure you do NOT include "Cancel Debt" receipts when reporting your business income for the year.

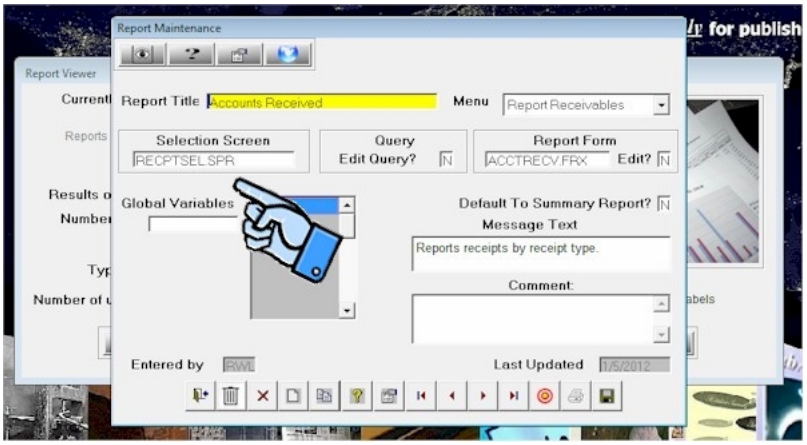
Sorry if that seems a bit obvious, but it would be easy to take the bottom line and not check back to make sure you are not including receipts that you never actually received.

1099-Misc from Upper Access Publishing

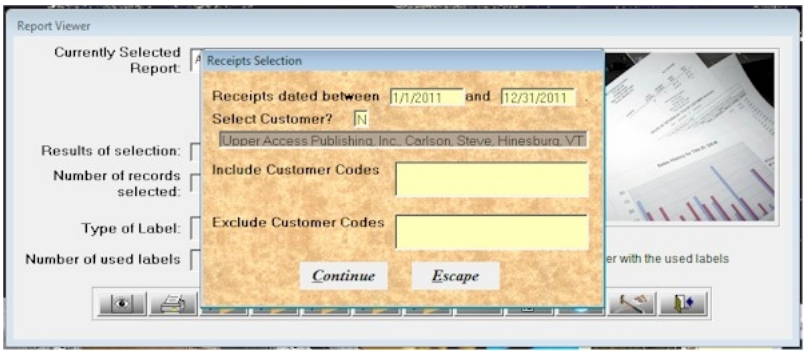
The tax return specifically calls out income that has been reported on a 1099 form. So, you'll want to separate out any income you receive from customers that pay you more than $600 a year, because they will likely report their payments to you on a 1099-Misc form.

I work with Upper Access in very much the same way that an author works with a publisher. So, one of the things I do each year is to check my income from Upper Access with their records. I have reason to do my taxes early each year. (If any of you have children in college and need to fill out financial aid applications, you will understand why.) Anyway, this is a step that allows me to check on the total before actually receiving the 1099.

To do this, I use the same "Accounts Received" report, and select Upper Access as the customer to report only my receipts from them. Now, as I am writing this, I realized that the default selection screen for the Accounts Received report allows only the selection by a date range. There is, however, a selection screen for selecting receipts. It is fittingly named, RECPTSEL.SPR. You can specify this selection screen in the report maintenance screen. It looks like this:



Once you have specified this selection screen, the selection for the report should look like this:



Now you have a report to check against the 1099's you receive from your biggest customers. One more note on income: If you are using the "Accrual" method of accounting, you'll want to print out the "Invoice List" report for the year. You'll also want to print out the "Returns List" for the year. The invoice total less the returns total will give you your "Receivables" for the year.

Business Expenses from PubAssist "Payment History by Account" report

Reporting income is pretty easy. Reporting expenses can a bit more challenging because of the need to categorize your expenses. If you don't know it already, PubAssist allows you to enter payments for any expense. The payment type field can be used to categorize these expenses for tax reporting purposes.

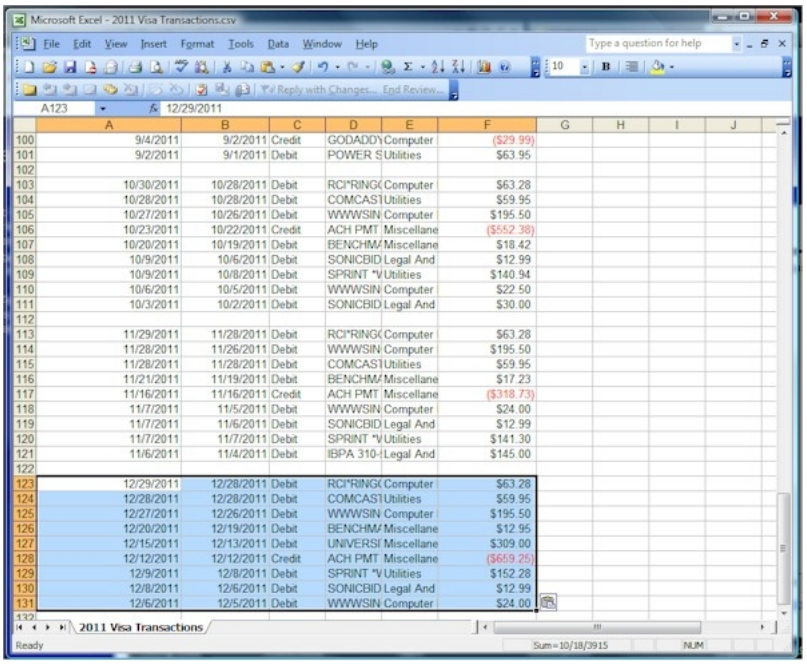
Import Credit Card charges into PubAssist

Before I report on my payments from PubAssist, I have some other work to do. At this point, I have to confess, that I can be pretty lazy when it comes to keeping track of all of the expenses associated with my business. So, one of the things I do is try to get most of my expenses on my business credit card. I keep a separate credit card for my business, and I try

to pay may credit card off each month to minimize finance charges and interest. But, I let the credit card company do my expense tracking for me.

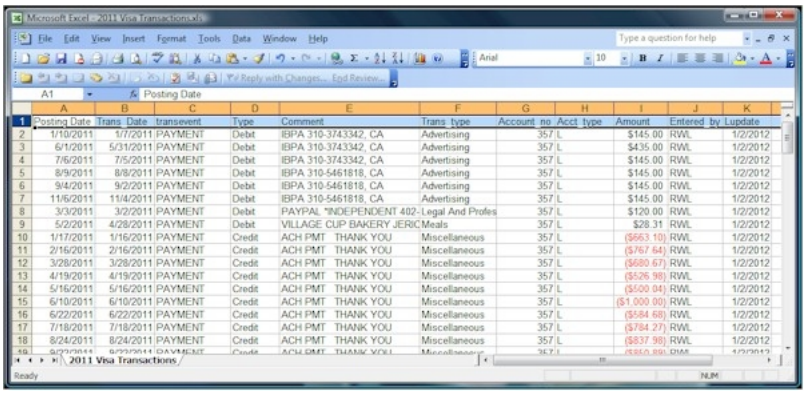
> **An interesting note here, I do track my payments to the credit card company in PubAssist throughout the year. So, I do always have pretty good data for my Profit & Loss report. But, I put off categorizing these expenses until tax time.**

My credit card company has an online feature that allows me to download my transactions in CSV format. They even take a shot at categorizing these expenses for me. They are frequently wrong, but the categorization still helps me to prepare my taxes. So, at tax time, I complete the download process to make sure I have all of my credit card transactions for the year. I then load them into Excel. It looks something like this:



	A	B	C	D	E	F
100	9/4/2011	9/2/2011	Credit	GODADDY	Computer	($29.99)
101	9/2/2011	9/1/2011	Debit	POWER S	Utilities	$63.95
102						
103	10/30/2011	10/28/2011	Debit	RCI*RING(	Computer	$63.28
104	10/28/2011	10/28/2011	Debit	COMCAST	Utilities	$59.95
105	10/27/2011	10/26/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$195.50
106	10/23/2011	10/22/2011	Credit	ACH PMT	Miscellane	($552.38)
107	10/20/2011	10/19/2011	Debit	BENCHM/	Miscellane	$18.42
108	10/9/2011	10/6/2011	Debit	SONICBID	Legal And	$12.99
109	10/9/2011	10/8/2011	Debit	SPRINT *V	Utilities	$140.94
110	10/6/2011	10/5/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$22.50
111	10/3/2011	10/2/2011	Debit	SONICBID	Legal And	$30.00
112						
113	11/29/2011	11/28/2011	Debit	RCI*RING(	Computer	$63.28
114	11/28/2011	11/26/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$195.50
115	11/28/2011	11/28/2011	Debit	COMCAST	Utilities	$59.95
116	11/21/2011	11/19/2011	Debit	BENCHM/	Miscellane	$17.23
117	11/16/2011	11/16/2011	Credit	ACH PMT	Miscellane	($318.73)
118	11/7/2011	11/5/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$24.00
119	11/7/2011	11/6/2011	Debit	SONICBID	Legal And	$12.99
120	11/7/2011	11/7/2011	Debit	SPRINT *V	Utilities	$141.30
121	11/6/2011	11/4/2011	Debit	IBPA 310-(	Legal And	$145.00
122						
123	12/29/2011	12/28/2011	Debit	RCI*RING(	Computer	$63.28
124	12/28/2011	12/28/2011	Debit	COMCAST	Utilities	$59.95
125	12/27/2011	12/26/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$195.50
126	12/20/2011	12/19/2011	Debit	BENCHM/	Miscellane	$12.95
127	12/15/2011	12/13/2011	Debit	UNIVERSI	Miscellane	$309.00
128	12/12/2011	12/12/2011	Credit	ACH PMT	Miscellane	($659.25)
129	12/9/2011	12/8/2011	Debit	SPRINT *V	Utilities	$152.28
130	12/8/2011	12/6/2011	Debit	SONICBID	Legal And	$12.99
131	12/6/2011	12/5/2011	Debit	WWWSIN	Computer	$24.00

As I mentioned, the categories assigned by the credit card company are frequently wrong, but they are consistent. So, the next thing I do is to sort these transactions by category, and reassign the categories to ones I plan to report on my taxes. When I'm done, it looks something like this:



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Posting Date	Trans Date	transevent	Type	Comment	Trans type	Account no	Acct type	Amount	Entered by	Lupdate
2	1/10/2011	1/7/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	Advertising	357	L	$145.00	RWL	1/2/2012
3	6/1/2011	5/31/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	Advertising	357	L	$435.00	RWL	1/2/2012
4	7/6/2011	7/5/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	Advertising	357	L	$145.00	RWL	1/2/2012
5	8/9/2011	8/8/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	Advertising	357	L	$145.00	RWL	1/2/2012
6	9/4/2011	9/2/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	Advertising	357	L	$145.00	RWL	1/2/2012
7	11/6/2011	11/4/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	Advertising	357	L	$145.00	RWL	1/2/2012
8	3/3/2011	3/2/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	PAYPAL *INDEPENDENT 402-	Legal And Profes	357	L	$120.00	RWL	1/2/2012
9	5/2/2011	4/28/2011	PAYMENT	Debit	VILLAGE CUP BAKERY JERIC	Meals	357	L	$28.31	RWL	1/2/2012
10	1/17/2011	1/16/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($663.10)	RWL	1/2/2012
11	2/16/2011	2/16/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($767.64)	RWL	1/2/2012
12	3/28/2011	3/28/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($680.67)	RWL	1/2/2012
13	4/19/2011	4/19/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($526.98)	RWL	1/2/2012
14	5/16/2011	5/16/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($600.04)	RWL	1/2/2012
15	6/10/2011	6/10/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($1,000.00)	RWL	1/2/2012
16	6/22/2011	6/22/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($584.68)	RWL	1/2/2012
17	7/18/2011	7/18/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($784.27)	RWL	1/2/2012
18	8/24/2011	8/24/2011	PAYMENT	Credit	ACH PMT THANK YOU	Miscellaneous	357	L	($837.98)	RWL	1/2/2012

Now, I have an option available to me, that many of you do not. I can use Foxpro directly on my PubAssist database. So, the next thing I do is to change the headings of the columns to match my PubAssist LDGRTRAN fields, and import the transactions. You don't have to do this.

If you want to get your credit card expenses into PubAssist, you need only to sum up the transactions for each category, and enter a single end-of-year transaction for each category as a payment.

If you need more information about how to do this, check out this article on our web site: http://www.pubassist.com/articles/expenses.asp

Note that all of the above can be done by hand from your credit card statements. These days, however, it's not unusual for your bank or credit card company to offer online services that will give you data rather than using your paper report. Using Excel makes it easy to rearrange your data and tally your expenses by category.

Whether you enter individual or summary transactions, if you take this step, then all of your expense categories can be entered into PubAssist.

Check for cash receipts or expenses paid with personal credit card

Another long-time practice has been to set up expense folders in my file cabinet. I have a general expense folder for ad-hoc expenses, like office supplies and online business purchases, that don't fall into my regular business expense accounts. It has happened that I have grabbed the wrong credit card when I pay for an item, or it's a small item which I pay for with cash. In any case, this item on the list is a reminder to me to go through my receipts to capture anything that was not logged into PubAssist and may have been paid for with personal funds, but is nonetheless a legitimate business expense.

Back out personal expenses from Sprint, Comcast

Since my office is in my home, some of my regular expenses contain personal portions. For example, I have a cell phone for business purposes, but it's cost efficient to add my kids on to the same cell plan. O.K. I can already hear some accounts cringing out there, but this step is about dutifully and responsibly backing out any personal portion of my expenses from these bills.

Now, I generally add these adjustments to the same data I import for my credit card expenses. Once again, you can enter them as end-of-year adjustments as payments. Note that these payments will generally have a NEGATIVE amount, since you want to "debit" the expense category for the personal expense.

Payroll expenses from Bookkeeper

Publishers' Assistant is a very small business, but I have taken on employees from time to time. I have done payroll in the past and decided that it is WAY more trouble than I want to get into. So, I have contracted with a local bookkeeping company that does my payroll and files all of the related returns to the various government agencies at a very reasonable cost. I love it!

Anyway, at the end of the year, although I may have logged the actual pay check that I issued, there are other payroll expenses that should be logged and reported: Employer contributions, Federal and state unemployment insurances, etc. Just as above, these expenses can be logged as payments with an appropriate category (payment type) for each.

Cost of Good Sold

I am in the software business. I don't have inventory. But, of course, many of you do. So, it's worth mentioning Cost of Goods Sold (COGS). PubAssist provides you with two ways to report your COGS. One is simple, and the other is quite a bit more complicated—but historically accurate.

If you purchase inventory only occasionally, then the simple method is probably best for you. The Cost of Goods Sold report in PubAssist will report the value of the inventory you have sold based on the FIRST title cost record associated with each of your titles. You can potentially have multiple title cost records which allows you to specify a schedule of costs to be used by the purchase order function of the program. but…

...understand that the Cost Of Goods Sold report will ONLY use the first title cost value to report the cost for each title.

Most of our users know pretty well what the cost of the titles they have in inventory. So, this method works quite well them. Some, however, have many titles which they re-print many times—and each reprint may have a different cost. These people should use the second option for reporting COGS.

This second option depends on your purchase order history. If you have been loading your inventory into PubAssist by using the Inventory Correction screen, *this method will NOT work for you.*

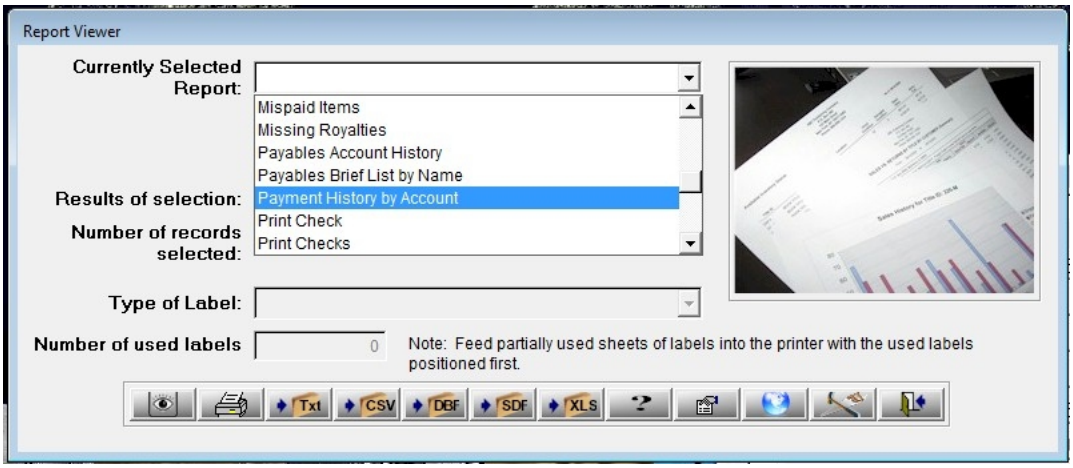
There is no doubt that logging purchase orders is more work than logging inventory corrections. But reporting your COGS is only one good reason for doing so. There are others—the biggest, perhaps, is better visibility into your inventory pipeline.

While logging purchase orders may add to your record keeping work load, reporting an actual Cost of Goods Sold is very easy. You run the “Cost of Goods Sold from History” report. This report works by comparing your sales history with your purchasing history to report an actual cost for the items you sold.

Both the “Cost of Goods Sold” report and the “Cost of Goods Sold from History” report are in the Inventory Reports menu.

Reporting your Expenses

That pretty well completes the process of preparing my business expenses. When I have completed the above steps (excluding reporting Cost of Goods Sold) I can report all of my expenses by running the “Payment History by Account” report. This report is in the Payables Reports menu



Here’s a partial snapshot of the report.

Publishers' Assistant
41 Lawrence Heights
Jericho, VT 05465
Phone: (802) 899-2276
FAX (802) 899-1291

PAYMENT HISTORY BY ACCOUNT (Detail) From 1/1/2011 to 12/31/2011

Date	Payee	Detail	Amount
Account: Advertising			
1/7/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	$145.00
5/31/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	$435.00
7/5/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-3743342, CA	$145.00
8/8/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	$145.00
9/2/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	$145.00
11/4/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	IBPA 310-5461818, CA	$145.00
		Total for Advertising	$1160.00
Account: Charitable			
2/26/2011	Covenant Community Church	General Fund	$150.00
2/26/2011	Bennet, Walker & Wurster	For LMNET	$10.00
5/24/2011	American Cancer Society		$50.00
7/26/2011	Covenant World Relief		$50.00
7/26/2011	Teen Challenge New England	July pledge drive.	$50.00
12/4/2011	Covenant Community Church		$48.00
		Total for Charitable	$358.00
Account: Fees			
1/4/2011	Vermont Secretary of State	Trade Name Registration	$40.00
10/7/2011	Advance Music Center	Singer/Songwriter Contest Entry Fee.	$25.00
		Total for Fees	$65.00
Account: Legal And Pr			
3/2/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	PAYPAL *INDEPENDENT 402-935-7733, CA	$120.00
		Total for Legal And Pr	$120.00
Account: Meals			
4/28/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	VILLAGE CUP BAKERY JERICHO, VT	$28.31
		Total for Meals	$28.31
Account: Misc			
1/16/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	ACH PMT THANK YOU	($663.10)
2/16/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	ACH PMT THANK YOU	($767.64)
3/28/2011	Champlain Valley Credit Union	ACH PMT THANK YOU	($680.67)

You can see that the detail version of the report will show every payment. It also provides a subtotal for each category or payment type. These categories are frequently referred to as "Accounts" in other accounting programs, so the term is used in this report as well. Using this report, I find it fairly easy to fill out the details needed for the business expenses portion of my Schedule C.

For the purposes of double-checking that I have included all expenses in my tax return, I find the summary version of this report to be helpful:

Publishers' Assistant
41 Lawrence Heights
Jericho, VT 05465
Phone: (802) 899-2276
FAX (802) 899-1291

PAYMENT HISTORY BY ACCOUNT (Summary) From 1/1/2011 to 12/31/2011

Account	Amount
Total for Advertising	$1160.00
Total for Charitable	$358.00
Total for Fees	$65.00
Total for Legal And Pr	$120.00
Total for Meals	$28.31
Total for Misc	($8726.61)
Total for Office	$254.83
Total for Personal	$309.00
Total for Postage	$8.80
Total for Service	$4239.61
Total for Tax Prep	$125.90
Total for Travel	$140.32

It frequently turns out that some of my expense categories are not appropriate to enter into my tax return. Still, it's useful to see them listed.

Well, that concludes how I prepare to report my business income and expenses for my tax return. Writing this article has taken longer than it takes me to prepare the business portion of my taxes. I hope you find this explanation helpful. Any accountants out there that have further advice to offer, I would love to hear from you.

Installing Publishers' Assistant on Mac OS X

last edited 2010-07-06 by Richard Lawrence

Contents

1. Step 1: Install CrossOver Mac
2. Step 2: Download the Publishers' Assistant installer
3. Step 3: Install Publishers' Assistant in CrossOver
4. Step 4: Run Publishers' Assistant

You can run Publishers' Assistant on Mac OS X using Wine, which is a Windows emulator for OS X and other Unix-like systems. CrossOver Mac is a proprietary version of Wine published by CodeWeavers.

CrossOver Mac is easy to use and install, but costs about $40 for a license after the 30 day trial period. Because it is proprietary, you will most likely need to pay CodeWeavers for updates and support, and Publishers' Assistant cannot guarantee that it will continue to work with our software. You can also download and compile Wine from source code yourself, which doesn't cost anything to install or update, but doing this is a non-trivial task that requires more advanced knowledge. **This tutorial assumes you are using CrossOver Mac.**

Using Wine or CrossOver to run Publishers' Assistant is still **experimental**. You may experience problems, especially as the result of differences between the Mac and Windows keyboards. Please let us know if you experience such problems and we will try to fix them as soon as possible!

Step 1: Install CrossOver Mac

Download the CrossOver Mac disk image (.dmg file). Open the disk image and drag the CrossOver Mac application to your Applications folder.

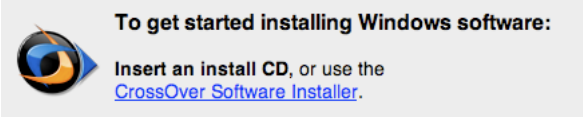
Step 2: Download the Publishers' Assistant installer

You can download the installer (.exe file) from our website by adding your preferred version to the Shopping Cart and checking out. The download is free of charge.

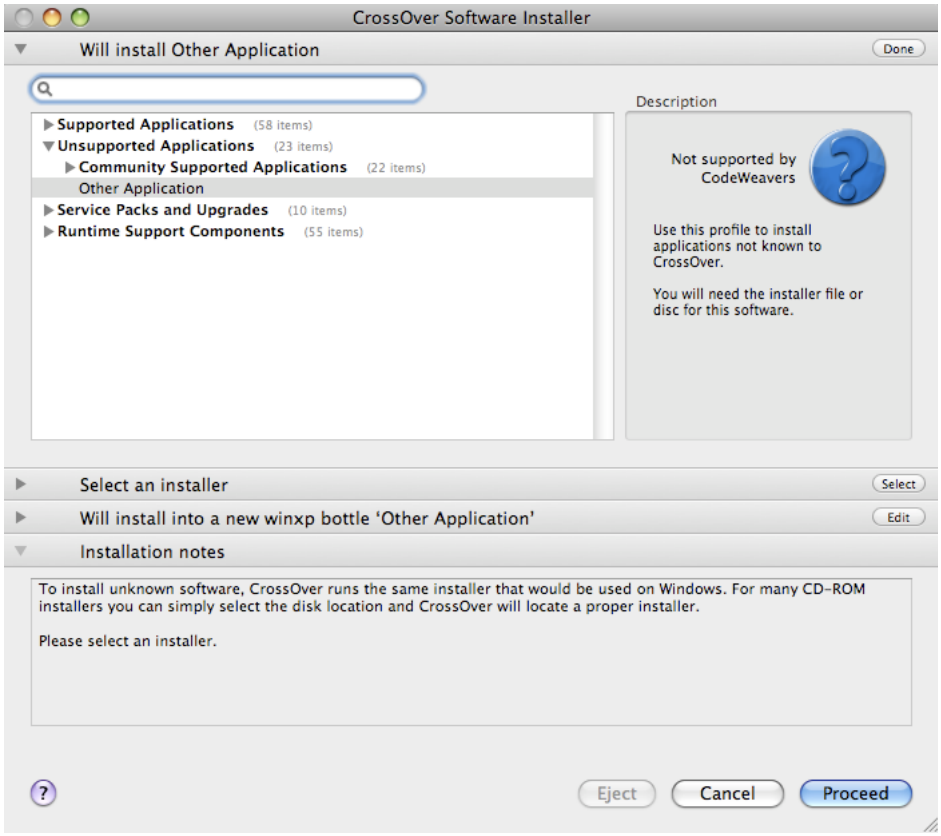
Step 3: Install Publishers' Assistant in CrossOver

1.Open the CrossOver Mac application.

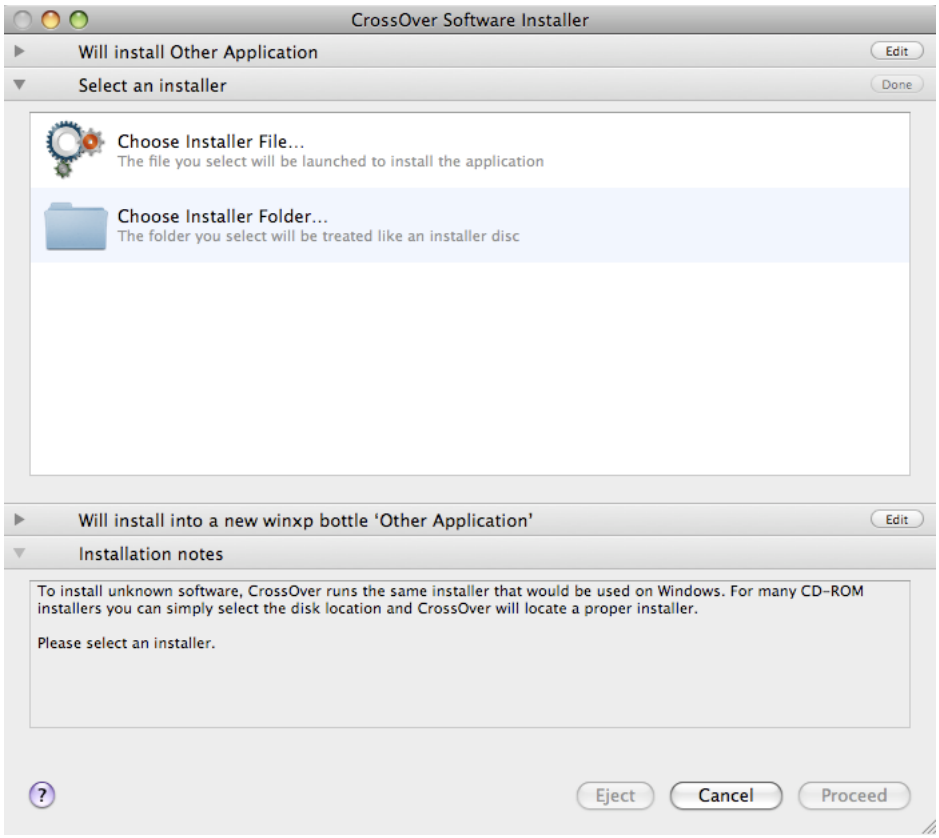
2.From the home screen, click on the link to use the CrossOver Software Installer



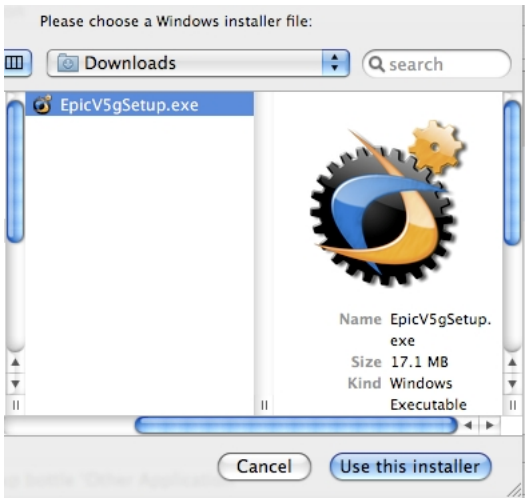
3.Choose "Other Application" from the list of software to install


CrossOver Software Installer
Will install Other Application
Done
Supported Applications (58 items)
Unsupported Applications (23 items)
Community Supported Applications (22 items)
Other Application
Service Packs and Upgrades (10 items)
Runtime Support Components (55 items)
Description
Not supported by CodeWeavers
Use this profile to install applications not known to CrossOver.
You will need the installer file or disc for this software.
Select an installer
Select
Will install into a new winxp bottle 'Other Application'
Edit
Installation notes
To install unknown software, CrossOver runs the same installer that would be used on Windows. For many CD-ROM installers you can simply select the disk location and CrossOver will locate a proper installer.
Please select an installer.
Eject
Cancel
Proceed

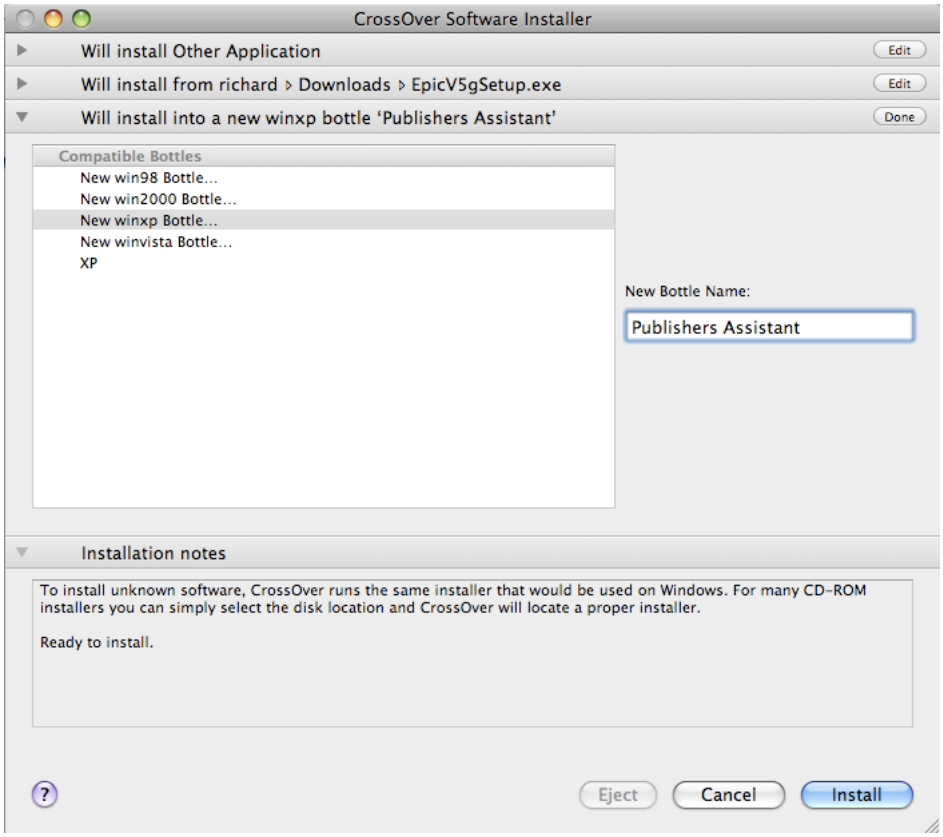
4.Click the "Select an Installer" bar and click "Choose Installer File…"



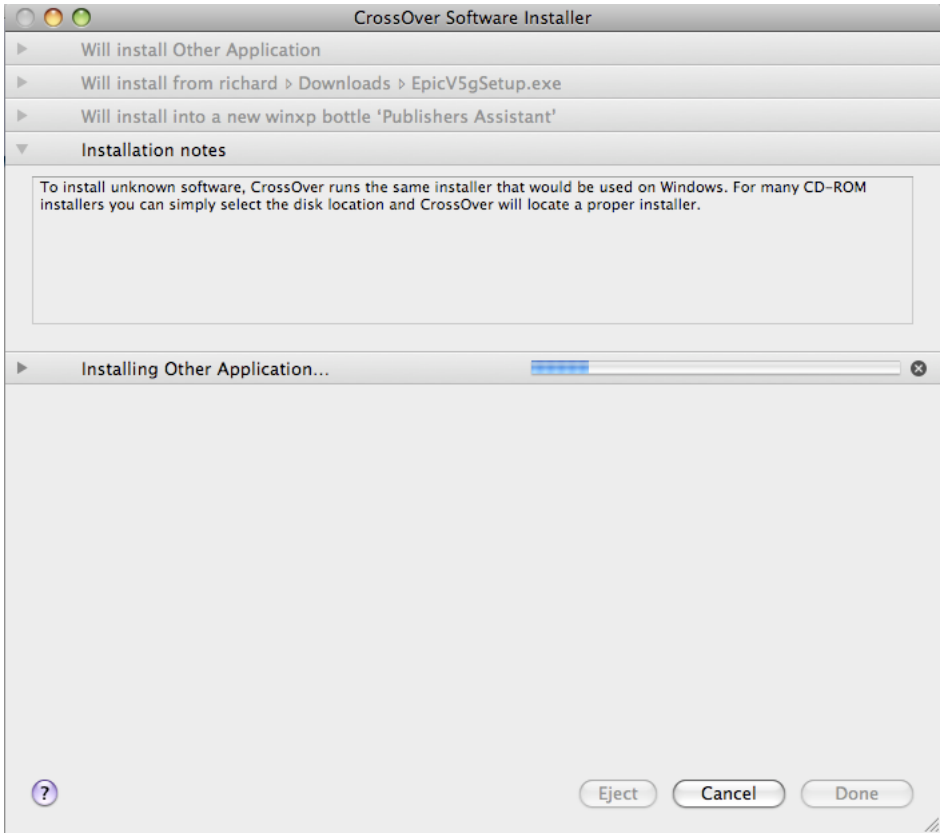
5.Find the Publishers' Assistant installer that you downloaded and select it, then click "Use this installer"



6.Click the "Will install into a new winxp bottle" bar and choose a version of Windows to target. We recommend XP, though any of the options should work. Type a name for your new Wine "Bottle".

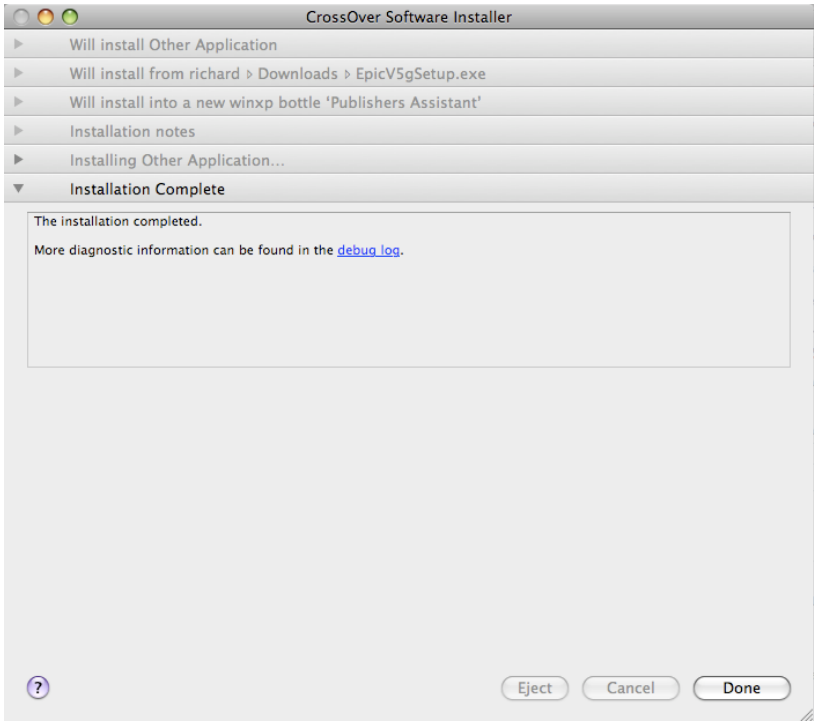


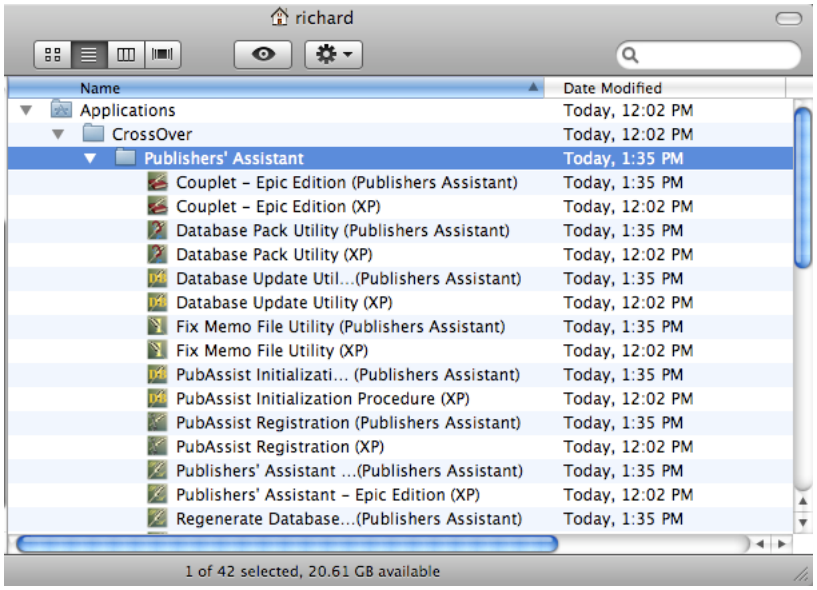
7.Click "Install". The Installer will run the Publishers' Assistant installer file.



8.Go through the Publishers' Assistant installer as you would on Windows.

9.When the installation finishes, the CrossOver installer will report that the installation is complete. You will have a new folder in your home directory containing the Publishers' Assistant software.





Step 4: Run Publishers' Assistant

Double-click the Publishers' Assistant application you wish to run; CrossOver will run the program as if it is in a Windows environment. That's all there is to it! You can read the other documentation on this wiki, or view the video tutorials, to learn how to get started using Publishers' Assistant.

Publishers' Assistant – Publishers' Assistant, Lawrence, Ron, Jericho, VT
File Sales Finance Inventory Marketing Tools Help
Publishers' Assistant TM
Business software developed exclusively for publishers.
Epic Edition - Version 5.0g
Evaluation Copy - Call Upper Access Publishing to register.
Copyright © 1990, 2010, Publishers' Assistant Software & Upper Access Publishing. All rig
1:47:46 pm

Installing Publishers' Assistant on Unix with Wine

Last edited 2010-07-08 by Richard Lawrence

Contents

1. Step 1: Install Wine
2. Step 2: Download the Publishers' Assistant installer
3. Step 3: Install Publishers' Assistant in Wine
4. Step 4: Run Publishers' Assistant

You can run Publishers' Assistant on GNU/Linux, BSD, or another Unix system using Wine, which is a Windows emulator for Unix-like systems.
Since we can't provide instructions for all Unix variants, **this tutorial assumes you are using a recent version of Ubuntu GNU/Linux**. Instructions for other systems should be similar.

> Using Wine to run Publishers' Assistant is still **experimental**. You may experience problems, especially in areas where Publishers' Assistant depends on Windows features that aren't available in Wine. Please let us know if you experience such problems and we will try to fix them as soon as possible!

Step 1: Install Wine

You have several options for installing Wine. You can:

1. download pre-compiled packages from the official Wine site
2. download the source code and compile it yourself
3. install Wine via your system's package manager

In Ubuntu, you can install Wine via the package manager using the following command:

```
$ sudo aptitude install wine
```

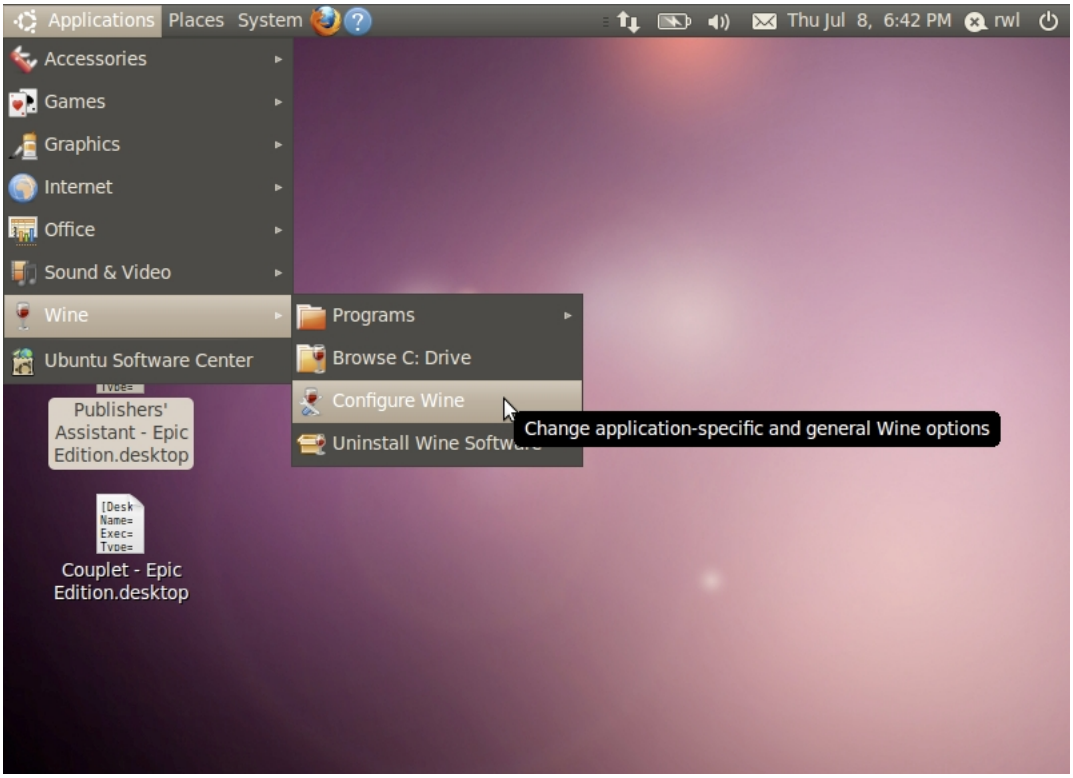
> Publishers' Assistant is known not to run correctly with older versions of Wine (pre-1.0). We have successfully installed and run it using Wine 1.2, available in the Ubuntu (10.04) repositories.

The Ubuntu community documentation page provides more information about installing and running Wine.

Once you have installed Wine, you will need to configure it. You can do this with the command...

```
$ winecfg
```

... or via Applications > Wine > Configure Wine.



Step 2: Download the Publishers' Assistant installer

You can download the installer (.exe file) from our website by adding your preferred version to the Shopping Cart and checking out. The download is free of charge.

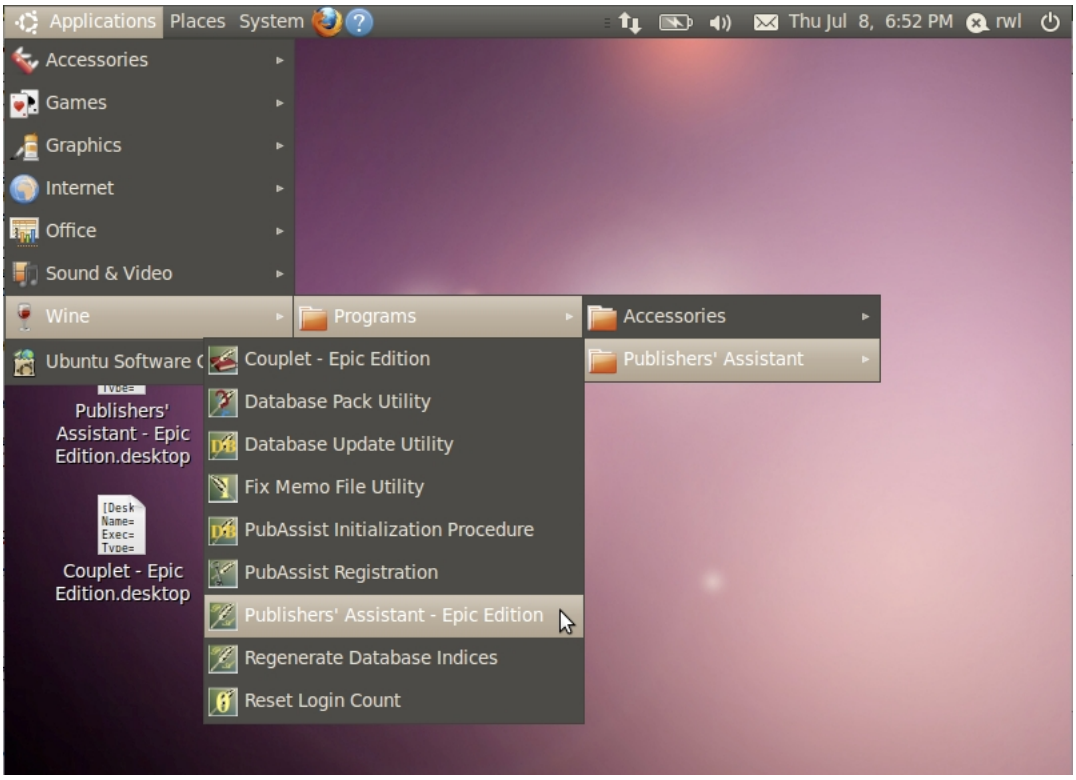
Step 3: Install Publishers' Assistant in Wine

1.From the command line, navigate to the directory in which the installer is downloaded and run it using the wine command. For example:

```
$ cd ~/Downloads
$ wine EpicV5gSetup.exe
```

2.Go through the Publishers' Assistant installer as you would on Windows.

3.When the installation finishes, Publishers' Assistant will be installed on your Wine "C:" drive (typically located at ~/.wine/drive_c). It should also appear in the Wine applications menu.



Step 4: Run Publishers' Assistant

Choose the Publishers' Assistant application you wish to run from the Wine applications menu; Wine will run the program as if it is in a Windows environment. That's all there is to it! You can read the other documentation on this wiki, or view the video tutorials, to learn how to get started using Publishers' Assistant.

Applications Places System
Thu Jul 8, 6:55 PM
rwl
Publishers' Assistant - Publishers' Assistant, Lawrence, Ron, Jericho, VT
File Sales Finance Inventory Marketing Tools Help
Publishers' Assistant TM
Business software developed exclusively for publishers.
Epic Edition - Version 5.0g
Evaluation Copy - Call Upper Access Publishing to register.
Copyright © 1990, 2010, Publishers' Assistant Software & Upper Access Publishing. All righ
6:54:29 pm

Dealing with Lost Data

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

Contents

1. How to Avoid Lost Data
2. Cause
3. Solution

This article was written for for Microsoft Windows ME/98/95, and contains information which may not be relevant to using Publishers' Assistant on a later version of Windows.

Sometimes when an error condition occurs and Publishers' Assistant is abnormally shut down, the whole session's data is lost.

There are really two issues here. The first is that there was an abnormal shutdown in the first place. The second is that all the data you just entered was lost. Both of these may actually be caused by the same thing.

Cause

First of all, it's worth saying that there is nothing in the programming of Publishers' Assistant that should cause you to lose more than a single record, even in the event of an abnormal shutdown. If multiple records are lost (e.g. multiple invoices) then some other factor is at work on your machine.
Publishers' Assistant is developed using Visual Foxpro. Foxpro is a relatively resource hungry program, and if resources are tight on a system, Windows doesn't seem to handle it very well, and the following error message is often presented just prior to shutting down your application:

This program has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down.

Other programs running in memory

There are a number of programs that come installed on new Windows-based computers these days. Anti-Virus software is chief among them. Unfortunately, by their very nature, these programs seem to conflict with Foxpro. Even though most new computers now come with 64Mb of RAM, they also come loaded with several programs which will take up lots of that memory. Since you, the user, never loaded these programs, often you don't even know that they are running.

In order to see a list of the programs you currently have running in memory, type **CTRL**+**ALT**+**DEL** to display the "Close Program" window on your system.
Every line displayed in the box is another program running in memory. There are many programs associated with Windows that are intended to improve the performance of your machine, but you should know that the ONLY two programs that are necessary for your system to function are "Explorer" and "Systray". All other programs are extraneous.

To make matters worse, some software buffers your data before it is written to your hard drive. Anti-virus software and programs like Norton Crash Guard and Anti-Freeze do this. The idea is that if something goes wrong, then your data is protected. Unfortunately, if your whole session has been buffered and something goes wrong, then you lose everthing!

We have seen this behavior on machines that are running Norton Crash Guard and Anti-Freeze, Norton Anti-Virus and ?McAffee Anti-virus software. There are likely to be other programs that will have a similar effect. Understanding these programs in detail and tweaking the settings may allow you to run them while running Publishers' Assistant without a problem. But we are not experts in the use of these programs, so we can't recommend a specific solution other than removing them.

Solution

Our general recommendation is that you **remove these programs from your system completely**. Uninstall them to insure that they do not run and can not start up automatically without your knowledge. It's also a good practice to check out every program that appears in your "Close Programs" list to understand what it is. If it is not needed, remove it.

America Online has a handy list of "Common Known TSR's" (Terminate and Stay Resident programs) which you can review. The site is: http://hometown.aol.com/tsrlst
You can also research others at Microsoft's web site: http://www.microsoft.com

There is an excellent article on the Microsoft web site that lists potential causes to data corruption in Foxpro applications. These are all hardware and configuration issues.

Publishers' Assistant is going to be at the heart of your business, so it makes sense to dedicate some computing resources to it to make sure that it runs smoothly. There is no reason why you shouldn't run other programs on the same machine, but in a new installation, you may go through a period of trial and error before you understand which programs you can and can't run simultaneously to avoid problems with Windows.

Getting Around

This article was originally in the PubAssist Version 4 Help. It has been updated here to reflect changes for Version 5.

When you are entering data into most screens, the information that appears on the screen is roughly equivalent to the data that is stored in each record in a table. For example, the fields that appear in the Customer Order screen present what has been stored or is about to be stored in a particular customer order record.

You can move from field to field in the screen by hitting either ENTER or TAB.

Navigation Buttons

The following command button options appear at the bottom of most data entry screens:

Save & Exit - This option saves the displayed record and exits the screen.

Delete - This options causes the currently displayed record and any related records to be marked for deletion. Once the record is marked for deletion, this option shows the "Recall" icon.

Recall - This options removes the deletion mark on the currently displayed record and any related records. If the record is NOT marked for deletion, this options is labeled with "Delete".

Cancel or Escape - This option will exit the screen without saving changes made to the fields on the screen. Note that there are events that may take place that will force the record to be saved before exiting the screen. Escape simply exits without saving any changes since the last save. If entering a new record, the record will not be saved, and all related records in the database will be deleted as well.

New - This option will save the currently displayed record, and blank the fields in preparation for adding a new record.

Copy Record - Copies the current record to a new record. This is useful, for example, to copy an address for a new contact that works for the same company.

Help - Calls up the online help screen.

Save Defaults - This option will save current screen entries as default values. The default values will be presented (as defaults) when you enter a new record on this screen.

Move to First Record - Moves to the first record in the table or the filtered set.

Move to Previous Record - Moves to the previous record in the table or filtered set.

Move to Next Record - Moves to the next record in the table or the filtered set.

Move to Last Record - Moves to the last record in the table or the filtered set.

Target Record (Clear Filter) - If a filter is in place, this option will remove it, but target the record in the table.

Print - Calls the report writer with the default report for the current screen. For example, when viewing a customer order, the Print option will automatically present the invoice for the currently viewed order.

Save & Reprocess - This option performs the same processing as Save & Exit, but doesn't leave the screen. It's useful for observing the results of the save process. For example, when viewing a customer order, performing the Save option will cause the order to be saved--which will also attempt to ship the order. If successful, the order status will be set to "Shipped". If there are items that can't be shipped, then the order status will be set to "Backorder".

Shortcuts

There are several short-cuts to executing the above command button options:

- PAGE DOWN will move directly to these screen level command button options.
- CTRL+END is a short cut to execute the Save & Exit command button option.
- ESC will execute the "Cancel" option.
- CTRL+ENTER will execute the "New" option.
- ALT will activate the menu at the top of the screen. ALT + the highlighted character will activate that menu option directly.
- CTRL+R will save the current screen contents as defaults for subsequent new records being entered. For example, if most of your orders are placed by people from your home state, you may wish to save your state, your area code, part of your zip code, etc. as default information in the CONTACT screen. Then each time you add a new

contact, these fields will be defaulted to the values you saved.

In addition, there are a number of other "control functions" (activated by pressing CTRL+character) which will activate menu options directly. These control functions appear in the menu next to the options which they will activate. For example…

- CTRL+S will activate the System-Wide Options Screen which is otherwise activated by selecting "System-Wide Options" from the File menu.

- CTRL+A will allow you to enter a new State or province--even while you are currently entering a new contact for that state!

- CTRL+D will call up the Customer/Marketing Codes grid to enter new codes.

- CTRL+I will reindex your database when the Tools menu is active. (For our Mac users, CTRL+I also adds a new order item when entering an order.)

- F2 will present a list of existing entries in special fields that are colored yellow.

- F3 will activate the Trace Fields to allow you to make a change.
- CTRL+LEFTARROW presents the previous record in the currently selected data file.
- CTRL+RIGHTARROW presents the next record in the currently selected data file. For example, if you are looking at the Contact Screen, using CTRL+LEFTARROW and CTRL+RIGHTARROW will allow you to move back and forth through records in the table.

Other shortcuts work throughout the application

- F1 will call up the online help screen from anywhere in the application.

- SHIFT+F6 from the desktop will execute a macro to get you to your last order.

- SHIFT+F10 Activates the macro recorder. Hitting SHIFT+F10 again stops recording and allows you to choose whether you want to store your macro.

- ALT+F4 will exit the Publishers' Assistant application. Where ever you are in the Publishers' Assistant application, pressing either ALT+F4 (the Windows standard) or clicking on the "X" in the upper right hand corner of the main window will cause Publishers' Assistant to exit. If there are active screens, you will be asked to exit them before you can exit the application.

Warning! Foxpro does not like abnormal shut downs. This will sometimes corrupt or damage your database or index files. If you seem to get stuck in Publishers' Assistant, rebooting should be an absolute last resort. Try exiting using ALT+F4 key first. If you

need to perform an End Task or reboot, be sure to reindex and pack files when you get back into Publishers' Assistant.

Product Alert: Royalties logged for "Transfer" Returns

Posted September 16, 2011

Problem:

It has recently come to our attention that negative royalties are being inappropriately logged for returns that have terms set to "Transfer". Transfer returns should not result in any financial transactions being logged. It turns out that this problem only occurs when you use the Recalculate Liabilities function for royalties. The overall impact of the problem is to reduce your royalty liability. You can verify whether you have this problem by looking at the detail version of the "Author Royalty Summary" report. Check the returns in the report to verify whether any one of them has the terms set to"Transfer".

Solution:

Version 5.1d addresses this problem. If you find that this is a problem you have encountered, the remedy is to install the latest version of PubAssist, and run the Recalculate Liabilities function. You'll want to use discretion when choosing the date range for the recalculation. Remember, recalculating liabilities will re-write your liabilities history. If your royalty contract has changed during the period in question, you may not want to run the Recalulate Liabilities function for the whole period.

This problem can also be resolved by revisiting Returns with terms set to "Transfer" and clicking on "Save and Reprocess".

We're sorry for any inconvenience this problem may have caused you. As always, when a problem does arise, we do our best to correct it as soon as possible.

Product Alert: Problem sharing the PubAssist Database in a Windows Network

Submitted by Ron Lawrence, March 11, 2013

It has come to our attention through the plight of one long-time PubAssist user that there is a problem running Publishers' Assistant with a shared database in a networked environment. This problem can result in data corruption!

This is a problem ONLY for users of the Epic edition, where the database is hosted in a network and multiple users are accessing the data at the same time from different computers.

This is NOT a problem for Epic users who are accessing their data locally, i.e., from the computer on which the database is located.

It turns out that this is not a new problem—though it seems that Microsoft hasn't gone out of its way to let registered users know about it. It is caused by features of the Windows file system called, "Opportunistic Locking" and "Read Caching". The problem was made worse by the introduction of a new file system protocol, SMB2. Microsoft introduced this protocol with Windows Vista and Windows server 2008, and has maintained it with subsequent versions.

This situation can be remedied, but it requires setting specific parameters in the Windows registry. If you are not comfortable with this process, you should seek assistance from a knowledgeable person. If you have an active subscription to the Publishers' Assistant maintenance agreement, feel free to contact me (Ron Lawrence) for telephone assistance. If you do not have a subscription, I can help but will have to charge my regular hourly fee. Or you can consult with an IT professional.

A word about editing the Windows registry

Before discussing the procedure further, I am compelled to highlight the following disclaimer from Microsoft:

> ***WARNING: You can edit the registry by using Registry Editor (Regedit.exe or Regedt32.exe). If you use Registry Editor incorrectly, you can cause serious problems that may require you to reinstall your operating system. Microsoft does not guarantee that problems that you cause by using Registry Editor incorrectly can be resolved. Use Registry Editor at your own risk.***

In other words, be careful. It's a good idea to create a "restore point" for your registry (i.e. back it up) before making these changes. You'll have to reboot your system before the changes will take effect. If things don't work when you reboot, you'll want to be able to get back to where you were before your registry changes were made. Here's a sample Microsoft article for how to do this in XP.
http://support.microsoft.com/kb/322756#method3

There are many other articles on backing up and restoring your registry that are more specific to each operating system and some articles that deal with specific problem situations (like you can't reboot). *I'm not planning to go into the details of using RegEdit here. If you are not comfortable with editing your registry, you should talk to a local IT specialist, or give us a call to talk through how best to make these changes.*

Let's cut to the chase

For those who simply want to know what they have to do, here it is in short. All changes are made in the registry. There are different registry settings for client machines vs. your server (presumably where your data is stored).

The relevant parameters may not currently exist in your Windows Registry. If they do not, you will need to create them. All of these parameters are type REG_DWORD.
Registry settings on your server:

You will need to tell your server to NOT grant Opportunistic Locking to your clients. This is true for older servers as well as new. Here's the registry key and parameter setting:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanServer\ ParametersEnableOplocks = 0

HOWEVER, the latest versions of Windows running SMB2 don't have this option because SMB2 doesn't allow you to turn off opportunistic locking.*So, you have to disable SMB2.*

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanServer\ ParametersSMB2 = 0

Once SMB2 is disabled, SMB1 will be used again, and the parameter setting described above should be applied to disable oplocks for SMB1.

Registry settings on your client machines:

Now, you will need to tell your client machines NOT to cache information about the files you are sharing on the server (i.e. your database). If Windows caches part of your database, a user could be operating on data that is no longer current. Here are the registry parameters and settings:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\system\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanWorkstation\ Parameters

- **FileInfoCacheLifetime = 0**
- **FileNotFoundCacheLifetime = 0**
- **DirectoryCacheLifetime = 0**

You can also disable Opportunistic Locking on your client machines. As of this writing, it is not clear whether this is necessary, if you deny it at the server; but here is the registry key and parameter setting to do it:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanServer\ ParametersEnableOplocks = 0

You will need to reboot your machine for the new registry settings to take effect.

More background for the curious

The two features in question are "Opportunistic Locking" and "Read Caching." Personally, I find these names a little intimidating and their meanings are not necessarily what you might surmise from the names. This is all too typical in the computer world. At the end of this paper I will list several articles that describe these features and how they affect this problem; but first I'll take a stab at making a general description.

Opportunistic Locking

When you are sharing files across your network, and particularly when those files are your Foxpro database files, you would expect that Windows and Foxpro would appropriately manage multiple requests for the same files. They do, but it looks like Windows is second-guessing your request. Even though you've asked for shared access to your data, Windows is saying to itself, "*You know, nobody else is looking. It's a lot less trouble to lock the entire file and allow this one user to work with a local copy rather than constantly sending data packets across the network.*"The problem is, with a shared database, someone else is likely to want access—but that first user has a lock on the entire file. So now, even though that first user*requested shared access*, Windows has allowed itself to create a mess that it has to untangle.

This is the default behavior for newer versions of Windows! The reasoning is that for most types of files, this works most of the time. The overall effect is to reduce network traffic. In the case of a shared database, however, it doesn't work at all. Couple this with the local copy (or "cache") that the first user is merrily editing—not knowing whether a second user may be editing the same data—and you have the potential for a real mess.

Read Caching

When I see this term, I tend to think about a local copy of data that was requested for read-only purposes. That would probably work just fine; *but that's not what this term refers to.* It's short for ***"Read-Ahead Caching".***

The business of caching data is tricky. It is used because the local cache provides faster access than if you have to go back to the source of the data every time. When the data sits on another machine across the network, you can easily imagine that getting your data from a local disk or memory (your cache) would be a lot quicker than making another request from the server in your network.

One strategy that is typically employed is called “read-ahead.” The idea is that if you asked for one segment of data in one request, you are likely to ask for the next segment of data in your next request. So, the thinking goes,“*Why not just get them both now?”* So you (or the program you are running) then ask for that next segment, and voila! It’s already here.

Like Opportunistic Locking, in a lot of cases, this works pretty well. Even if that next request for data isn’t for the anticipated segment, you can just toss it away and there is nothing lost for the effort.

If, however, the data being requested is from a shared database, then there’s a pretty high likelihood that more than one user will attempt to edit the same segment of data somewhere along the line. If you are working on a local cache, and Windows has told your program that you have a lock on the file… well, you can see how things might not go the way you expect.

So, the remedy here is to turn off Opportunistic Locking and Read Caching. In other words, tell Windows to keep looking back the server for each new request for data from the database. The overall effect will likely be slower access, but you will also greatly reduce the risk of data corruption.

SMB2

SMB stands for “Server Message Block.” This is the protocol (a standard set of rules) that Windows machines use to transmit requests and responses across your local network. Apparently, SMB2 is a streamlined version of SMB1. One aspect of this streamlining is NOT to carry along all the information that SMB1 transmitted about the source of the data requested. Consequently, it seems that SMB2, while more efficient, is NOT as well equipped to understand whether the local copy of data is—or is not--current. That’s why this problem got worse with the advent of Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008 and subsequent releases that implement SMB2.

Some final commentary

I can’t write this article without venting just a little about this whole situation. Microsoft acquired an excellent product from Fox Software. To their credit, they made that product even better over the years.

But Foxpro was designed from the beginning to be a multi-user database product. It is designed to manage multiple simultaneous requests for data. I submit that in a personal computing world, *there is no reasonable expectation for multi-user access to a database--except in a network environment.*

The design decisions that Microsoft has made to improve network performance are understandable, *but these decisions were undoubtedly made with the knowledge that they would break Microsoft’s own database products.* As a long-time registered user of Foxpro, I would have expected some notification about these changes and how to deal with them. There have obviously been knowledge-base articles written concerning these issues, but no proactive notification to known users.

I have to apologize to our users for not being more on top of this technical issue sooner. Thinking back on some support calls over the years, I know that this has been an issue for some of you. But, since the symptoms were varied and intermittent, it has been very difficult to nail down a specific cause. I hope

that this article helps our users to eliminate this problem in their operations. Please know as well that work is well underway to change the architecture of PubAssist to avoid this problem altogether.

Relevant Articles:

The following articles were helpful in understanding and addressing this problem:

- http://www.dataaccess.com/whitepapers/opportunlockingreadcaching.html
- http://www.addsuminc.com/oplockset.html
- http://www.alaska-software.com/fixes/smb2/overview.shtm#download
- http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;Q296264
- http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2028965
- http://fox.wikis.com/wc.dll?Wiki~OpportunisticLocking
- http://social.msdn.microsoft.com/Forums/en/os_fileservices/thread/832d395b-6e6f-4658-8dbb-120138a4cd7c

How to Fix Report Menu Problems

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

Contents

How to Fix Report Menu Problems
1. Cause
2. Solutions
    1. Method 1: Alleviate memory management problem
    2. Method 2: Regenerate CDX files
    3. Method 3: Replace a corrupt report definition table

This article pertains to Publishers' Assistant Version 4. The Report Viewer in Version 5 implements the menu very differently.

Sometimes, for no apparent reason, a report selection menu simply doesn't show up correctly. This can manifest itself in different ways. You may see only an item to exit the report viewer. You may see only a small empty box where the menu items should be. Or you may see the menu, but the entries are blank, or the menu options only partially show up. This article documents some steps to try to fix this problem.

Cause

This behavior seems to be caused by the same things that cause other bizarre behaviors. Ultimately, it seems to be a memory management problem. But memory problems may cause or be caused by a corrupt index. These problems can also indicate damage to your report definitions table, REPORTS.DBF.

Solutions

Try these methods in order to fix your report menu problem.

Method 1: Alleviate memory management problem

Note: these steps were written for Microsoft Windows 95/98/Me. They are unlikely to have the same effect in later versions of Windows.

Memory problems are usually caused by other programs running in the background that you may not even be aware of. Anti-virus programs are often the culprits. They are notorious for conflicts with Foxpro. It's a good idea to run anti-virus software — particularly if you use your

machine to connect to the internet. However, your anti-virus software does not need to be running while you are running Publishers' Assistant.
To view a list of all the programs that are currently running on your machine, type "CTRL+ALT+DEL" to call up the "Close Program" dialog. Many people are surprised to see how many programs are actually running because they had nothing to do with installing them. Most of the programs that you will see running will not cause any problems, and some are actually there to improve the performance of your system. Nonetheless, all of these programs are using some amount of memory, and most are not necessary to operate your machine or to run PubAssist.

The **only** programs needed to run Publishers' Assistant in Windows 95/98/Me are "Explorer" and "Systray."

Before proceeding with this step, make sure you exit Publishers' Assistant. You will be stopping many programs from running, some of which may be affecting the PubAssist process.

1. Type "CTRL+ALT+DEL" to call up the "Close Program" window.

2. From the "Close Program" window, select a program other than EXPLORER or SYSTRAY, and click on the "End Task" button.

3. Repeat this process for all programs other than EXPLORER and SYSTRAY.

You may notice that some programs don't terminate right away. Programs like REALPLAY may take more than one attempt to terminate them, and you will be presented with a secondary window that tells you that "This program is not responding..." Click on "End Task" for that window as well.

This step may be enough to correct your problem. You can call up Publishers' Assistant and test the report menu again to see if the behavior has been corrected. Often, however, it is not, and you will need to take the next step.

Method 2: Regenerate CDX files

There seems to be a relationship between memory management problems and corrupt index files. A memory problem may cause a problem with the management of your indices. A corrupt index may in turn cause a memory violation. Both problems cause bizarre behaviors within Publishers' Assistant.

Make sure that you have completed step 1 before regenerating your CDX files. Programs running in memory that conflict with Foxpro can cause your index regeration to introduce errors. The result will be that you are no better off than when you started.
To regenerate CDX files from within Publishers' Assistant, select the *Tools* menu, then "System Maintenance" -> "Reindex" -> "Regenerate CDX files".

If you ever experience an unexpected shutdown of Publishers' Assistant, you should regenerate your CDX files. If this is happening on a regular basis, it's an indication that something is wrong with your machine. Once again, make sure that you are shutting down unnecessary programs by following the procedure outlined in Step 1.

If the combination of eliminating other programs from running and regenerating your CDX files doesn't alleviate your unexpected shutdowns, you may be experiencing a hardware problem. Please refer to Screen Freezes And Abnormal Shutdowns for more information.

Method 3: Replace a corrupt report definition table

If regenerating your indices doesn't correct the problem, you are likely to have a corrupt reports definitions table. The same issues that can corrupt your index files can also corrupt your report definitions. Your report definitions are stored in the REPORTS table in the database. There are actually 3 files associated with this table: REPORTS.DBF, REPORTS.FPT, and REPORTS.CDX.

Note: If you have customized any of your report definitions, restoring the REPORTS files from your backup should be your first choice.

Generally, your report definitions do not often change, so you should be able to restore them from backup without consequence. If you have any customized reports, it is best to restore from your backups. Your recent backups will hopefully retain any report changes you have made.

However, if you don't have a good backup, or if you restore your REPORTS files from backup and the behavior doesn't change, you can restore the standard report definitions by copying the REPORTS files from the VALID sub-folder in the PubAssist directory.
Use Windows Explorer to copy these REPORTS files from the PUBASSIST/VALID folder to your PUBASSIST/DATA folder.

If you have any doubts as to whether these report definitions are up-to-date, you can restore the latest report definitions from the *File* menu while running Publishers' Assistant. Select *File* then "Report Definitions" => "Restore".

You may be wondering why you can't just restore your report definitions from the file menu and not worry about replacing your REPORTS files. The answer is that restoring your report definitions may not eliminate the corruption in those files.

At this point, you will have to re-enter any report customizations you had. If you made changes to report forms, the good news is that those report forms were probably unaffected and can still be used.

A Simple Explanation about Customer Returns in PubAssist

Submitted by **Ray Fisk, Publisher**
Down The Shore Publishing Corp.
106 Stafford Forge Rd, PO Box 100, West Creek, NJ 08092
down-the-shore.com, p. 609-812-5076, f. 609-812-5098

On ALL RETURNS, it is a 2-step process. (There are 2 transactions -- one for the customer account, one for applying that credit to books internally.)

STEP 1

Enter a return normally. This credits the customer account. All will appear normal with billing at this point.

then... you must follow Step 1 with...

STEP 2

Enter a RECEIPT for $0. (The type is "Account Credit.") The amount of the credit from Step 1 will appear as "unapplied funds." This amount must be allocated to titles accurately for royalty accounting. Apply automatically? No! (except for the most simple accounts that order only one title). The amount of credit for each title (from the return) must be applied manually, or Pubassist will just apply from the oldest, top to bottom.

The easiest way to apply manually is by entering the quantity of each title returned and Pubassist should calculate the correct amount for each title. (Or you can adjust the amount as necessary.) The total should equal the unapplied funds from the return transaction. (Unless there are previous unapplied funds showing up -- a situation that should be addressed, too.)

How To Set the Currency Symbol

Last edited 2009-09-14

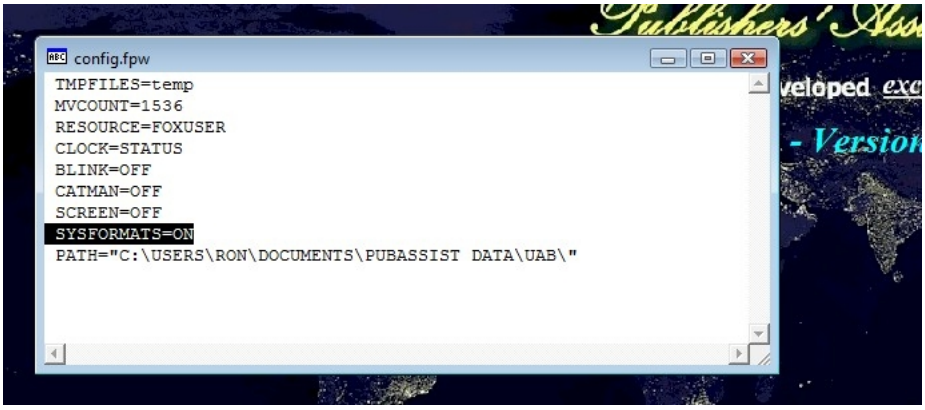
Some time ago, I had a request from one of our international users about how to set the currency used by PubAssist to Euros. First, I should explain that Publishers' Assistant is not designed to handle multiple currencies. However, when I have received questions about handling other currencies, I have recommended that you run the application using your local currency. If you have a need to produce reports--an invoice for example--in another currency, I suggest that you do so using a customized report.

We do have a growing number of international users. And the question still remains: How can I set the currency symbols to indicate my domesic currency? Well, you may not have to do anything. Publishers' Assistant has been developed to use your regional Windows settings. If you find, however, that you are still seeing the U.S. dollar symbol, "$", here is how to change your settings.

1. Make sure that your have the following command in your CONFIG.FPW file for Publishers' Assistant:

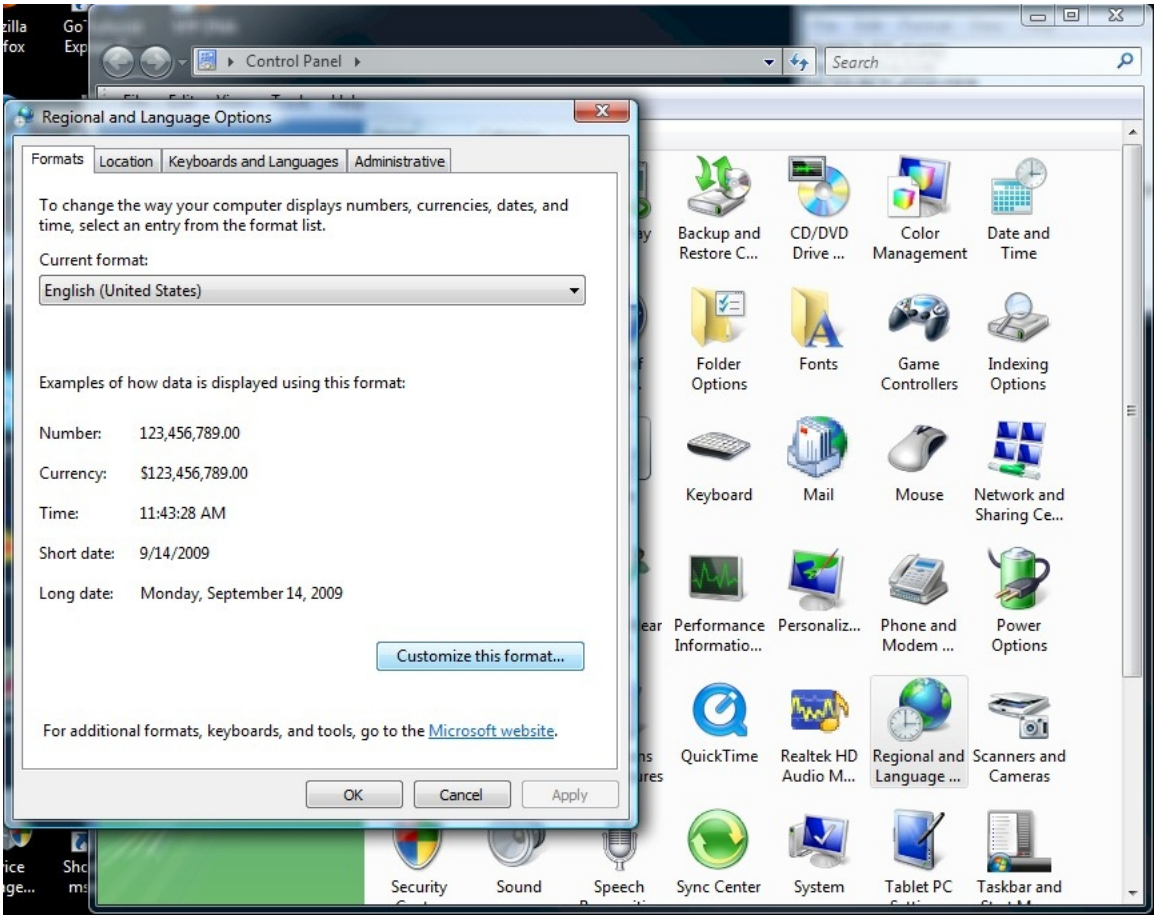
```
SYSFORMATS=ON
```

You will find an option to open this file on the "File" menu in PubAssist.



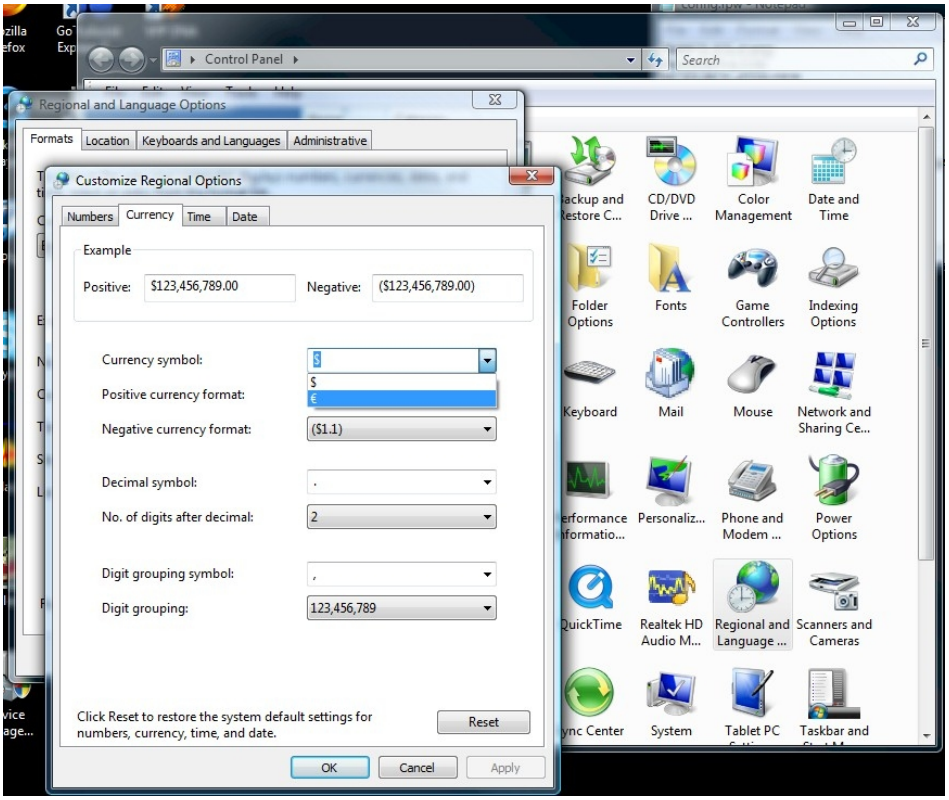
2. Go to the Windows Control Panel and select the "Regional and Language Options" tool.

3. On the "Formats" page of the "Regional and Language Options" window, select "Customize this format".

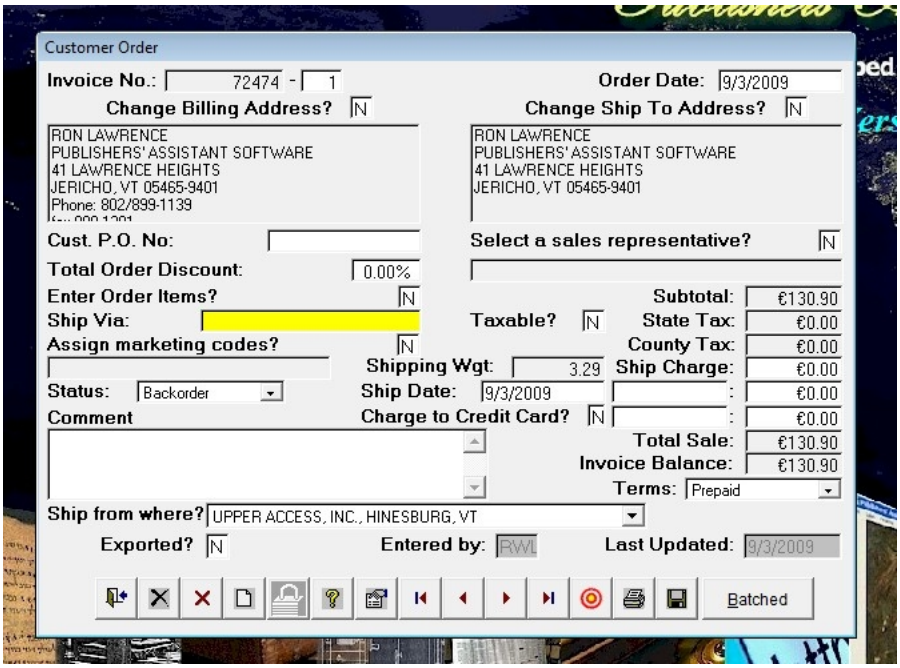


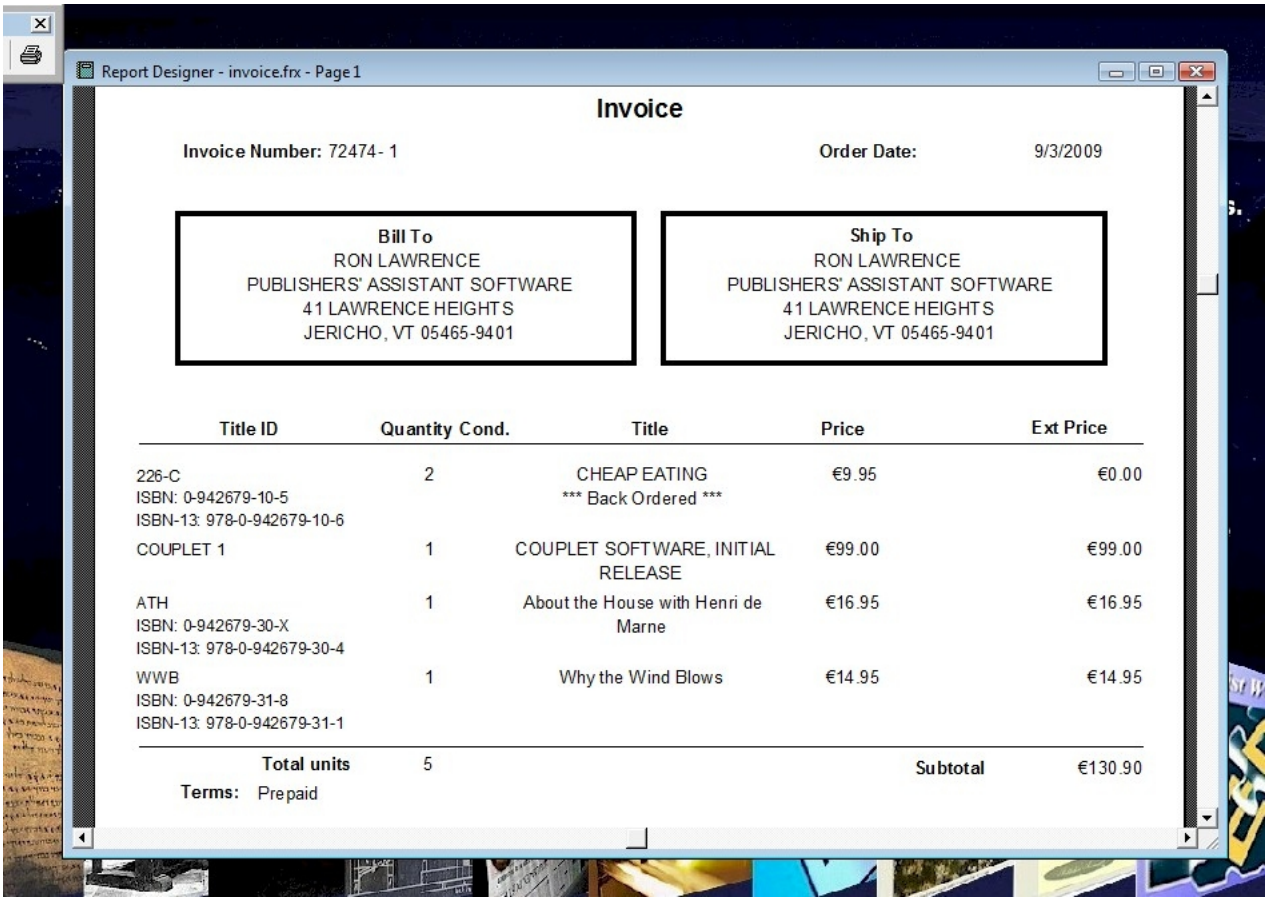
4. Select the "Currency" tab on the "Customize Regional Options" window.

5. Change the currency symbol to the symbol of your choice. (You may find that your local currency is not available. If that's the case, go back to the "Regional and Language Options" window and select the appropriate format for your region. Then repeat this step.)



6. Restart Publishers' Assistant. You should see your selected currency symbol in the screens and reports.





Report Designer - invoice.frx - Page 1

Invoice

Invoice Number: 72474- 1 **Order Date:** 9/3/2009

Bill To	Ship To
RON LAWRENCE PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE 41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS JERICHO, VT 05465-9401	RON LAWRENCE PUBLISHERS' ASSISTANT SOFTWARE 41 LAWRENCE HEIGHTS JERICHO, VT 05465-9401

Title ID	Quantity Cond.	Title	Price	Ext Price
226-C ISBN: 0-942679-10-5 ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-10-6	2	CHEAP EATING *** Back Ordered ***	€9.95	€0.00
COUPLET 1	1	COUPLET SOFTWARE, INITIAL RELEASE	€99.00	€99.00
ATH ISBN: 0-942679-30-X ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-30-4	1	About the House with Henri de Marne	€16.95	€16.95
WWB ISBN: 0-942679-31-8 ISBN-13: 978-0-942679-31-1	1	Why the Wind Blows	€14.95	€14.95
Total units	5		**Subtotal**	€130.90

Terms: Prepaid

How to Invoice from a Warehouse using Version 4.2d

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

Contents

How to Invoice from a Warehouse using Version 4.2d
1. Transactions have Locations
2. The Basic Procedure
3. Do's and Don'ts

This article was written for Publishers' Assistant Version 4.2d. Sonnet users in particular will find that this procedure will allow you to implement multiple warehouses, even though a multi-warehousing function is not really supported for versions 4.2 and earlier. Please refer to the article, "Working with Distributors" for Version 5 and later.

This article outlines a procedure that will allow you to invoice (and ship) out of a warehouse, rather than from local inventory.

Recently, we've noticed that several of our users are making use of distributors to sell their books. The contract terms that these distributors offer can make it difficult to understand exactly how many of your books they have in stock, as well as just what they owe you at any given time. We have found that treating these distributors as a warehouse will give you precisely the control you need to maintain an accurate accounting with your distributors.

New capabilities are under development for PubAssist Version 4.3 (all editions) to make this process easier. However, those new capabilities are simply making use of structures that are already inherent in Publishers' Assistant, and have been for a long time.

Transactions have Locations

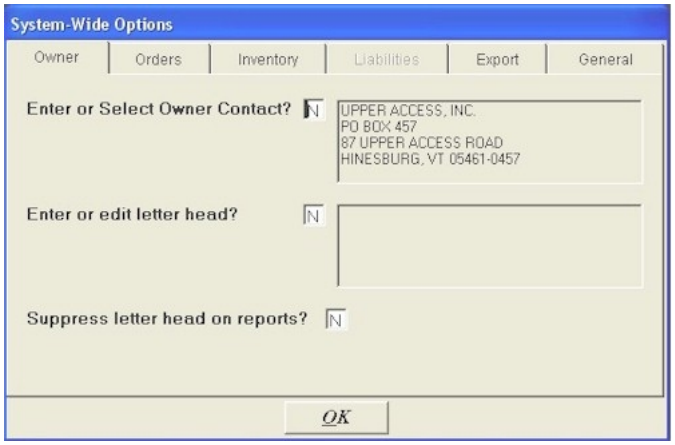
This procedure makes use of the fact that all inventory transactions specify a **location** to which the transaction applies. This location is actually a contact. For example, all local inventory transactions (also referred to as "available" inventory) specify the owner contact as their location. This is why it is so important to make sure that you correctly specify your owner contact if you reinstall PubAssist. If you choose the wrong contact as your owner contact, it will look to PubAssist like you have *nothing* in available inventory. Each customer order also specifies a supplier. In Version 4.2 and earlier, this supplier is always the owner contact.

All editions of Publishers' Assistant use this structure, including Sonnet. Theoretically, any inventory transaction can specify any contact, so there is no limit to the number of contacts (i.e. warehouses) that can hold inventory. You can use of this bit of information to implement warehouses in Sonnet. The key is to judiciously change your owner contact in order to move inventory into and out of your warehouse locations.

The Basic Procedure

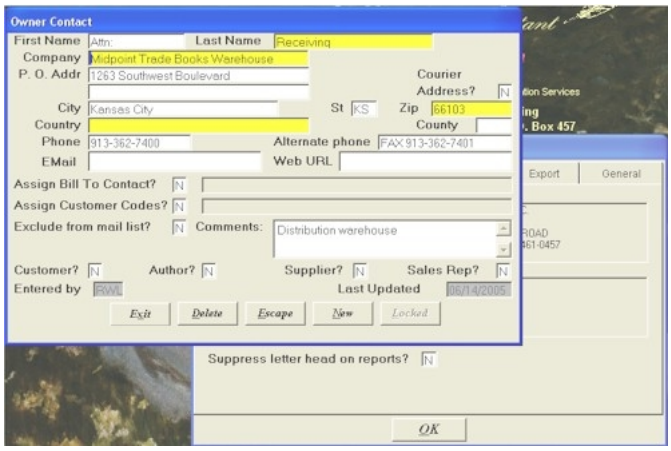
Assuming you are already running Publishers' Assistant, the following steps will allow you to specify a warehouse (your distributor), move inventory into that location, and invoice out of that location.

1. Start by changing your owner contact. You do this from the System-Wide Options screen. The short-cut to get there is CTRL+S, but you will also find it on the "File" menu. Answer "Y" to the prompt to change your owner contact.

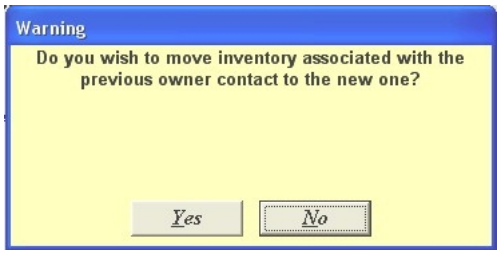


Important! When you are presented with the contact screen, make sure that you select the "New" option to prepare for selecting or entering a new contact. You *don't* want to overwrite the address of your existing owner contact.

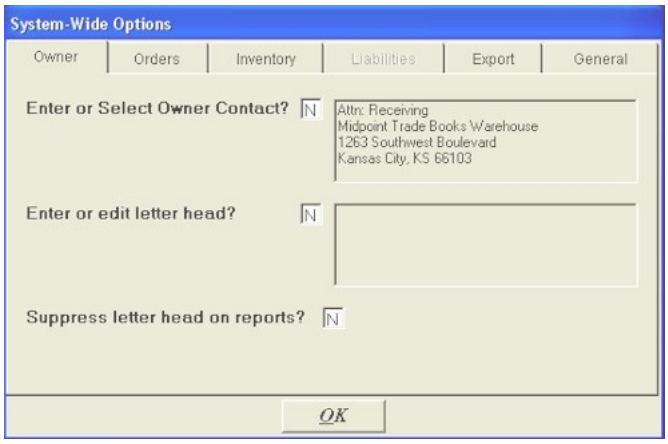
2. Enter or select the distributor as your new owner contact. I've used Midpoint for this illustration.



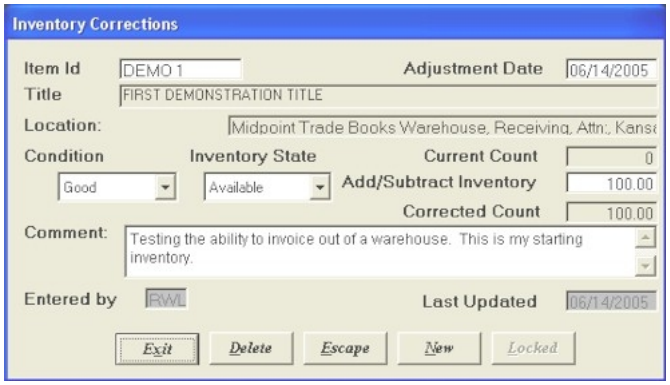
3. After selecting a new owner contact, you will be asked whether to move your local inventory to the new location. **Make sure that you answer "No" to this prompt**. If you answer "Yes", then all of the inventory from your local warehouse will be combined with that of the selected distributor. This will make a royal mess of your inventory!



4. So now your distributor will appear as the owner contact.



5. Once the distributor has been identified as the current owner contact, you can move inventory into that location. Use the Inventory Correction screen to add inventory to your warehouse. In the example I have pictured here, I've moved 100 copies of "Demo 1" into Midpoint.



6. After I entered the inventory correction, I ran the "Inventory Status" report. You can see that multiple locations show up for some of the titles. Indeed, my 100 copies of "Demo 1" show up with Midpoint specified as the location.

Midpoint Trade Books Warehouse
1263 Southwest Boulevard
Kansas City, KS 66103
Phone: 913-362-7400
FAX 913-362-7401

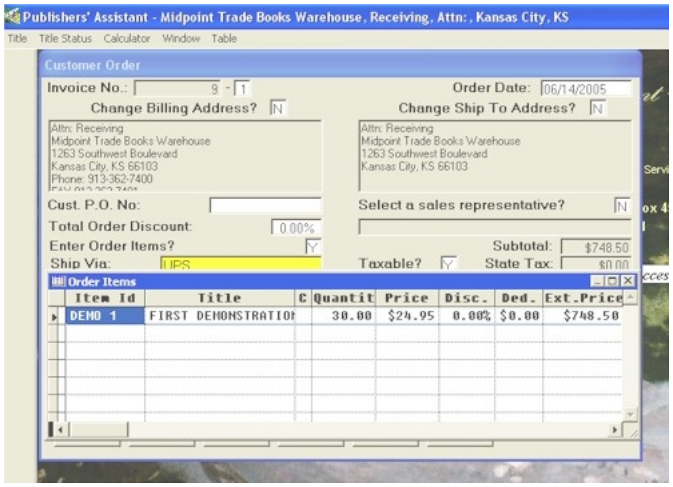
INVENTORY STATUS

As of 06/14/2005

Title ID	Title	Available Good	Available Damaged	Committed Good	Committed Damaged	Total Value
DEMO 1	FIRST DEMONSTRATION TITLE					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	9699	0	0	0	241990.05
	Location: Midpoint Trade Books Warehouse,	100	0	0	0	$2495.00
DEMO 2	DEMONSTRATION TITLE, CONSIGNMENT					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	597	0	0	0	$11910.15
	Location: Upper Access, Inc., Warehouse, Williston,	1000	0	0	0	$19950.00
DIRECTORY	CURRENT ISSUE OF THE ANNUAL DIRECTORY					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	499	0	0	0	$24925.05
FALL ISSUE	FALL ISSUE OF DEMO-LIFE MAGAZINE					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	1000	0	0	0	$5000.00
					Total Retail Value of Inventory:	306270.25

Selection Criteria:

7. Now you can create a new customer order (or invoice). Since you have selected a distributor as your current owner contact, that distributor will become the supplier for the order. What is interesting about the order you will enter now is that the distributor will be both the customer and the supplier for the order.



8. When you receive a statement from your distributor, it will generally specify how many of each of your books are sold. The terms of your contract may allow your distributor to take 120 days to pay. However, if their statement says they've sold 30 copies, then you should expect to be paid for 30 copies. In this example, I've specified that 30 copies of "Demo 1" were sold.

9. Your distributor may also have other fees that they charge back to you. There are a variety of ways that you can choose to deal with those fees. I won't go into that in detail here; but one possibility is to add those fees as open items on this same invoice.

10. When your invoice is saved, inventory transactions will be posted for the ordered items. This removes those quantities from the current owner contact's location.

11. After saving the invoice I again took a look at the "Inventory Status" report to verify that my 30 copies of "Demo 1" were removed from the Midpoint location. Indeed, the remaining quantity of 70 shows up in the report.

Midpoint Trade Books Warehouse
1263 Southwest Boulevard
Kansas City, KS 66103
Phone: 913-362-7400
FAX 913-362-7401

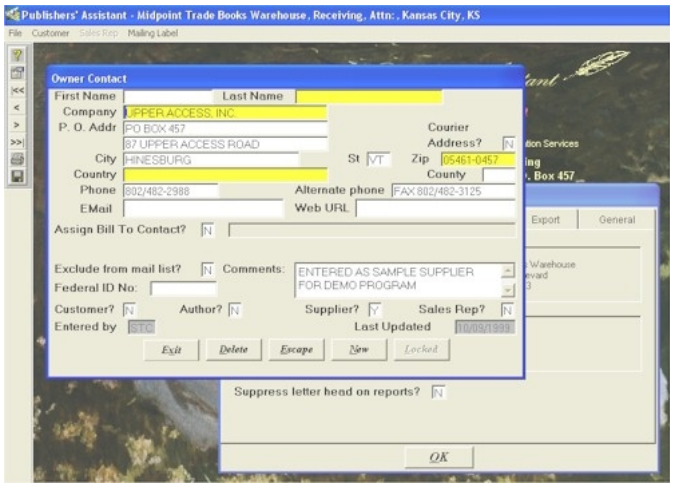
INVENTORY STATUS

As of 06/14/2005

Title ID	Title	Available Good	Available Damaged	Committed Good	Committed Damaged	Total Value
DEMO 1	FIRST DEMONSTRATION TITLE					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	9699	0	0	0	241990.05
	Location: Midpoint Trade Books Warehouse,	70	0	0	0	$1746.50
DEMO 2	DEMONSTRATION TITLE, CONSIGNMENT					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	597	0	0	0	$11910.15
	Location: Upper Access, Inc., Warehouse, Williston,	1000	0	0	0	$19950.00
DIRECTORY	CURRENT ISSUE OF THE ANNUAL DIRECTORY					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	499	0	0	0	$24925.05
FALL ISSUE	FALL ISSUE OF DEMO-LIFE MAGAZINE					
	Location: UPPER ACCESS, INC., HINESBURG,	1000	0	0	0	$5000.00
					Total Retail Value of Inventory:	305521.75

Selection Criteria:

12. When you have completed your transactions for this distributor, you'll want to restore your owner contact. Once again, go to your System-Wide Options and select your previous owner contact. Don't forget to select "New" when you are presented with the contact screen; and don't forget to respond with "No" when asked whether to move your local inventory.



13. That's it! You've just implemented a warehouse using Sonnet. You've moved inventory in, and invoiced out of that warehouse. You've got an accurate count of inventory at that location; and you know exactly what they owe you — no matter when they actually pay you.

Do's and Don'ts

This procedure is designed to help out our Sonnet users in particular who are waiting for multi-warehousing to be released in V4.3. The procedure is not without it's drawbacks. For one thing, it's a little too easy to mess up your inventory when changing your owner contact.

For this reason, you'll want to be organized about when and how you handle your distributors statements. It would be a very good idea to make a backup copy of your data that could be easily restored if a mistake is made.

One other concern is that the "Rebuild Inventory History" data integrity test doesn't replicate this process. Inventory corrections that move books into your warehouse will be preserved, but books will always be "shipped" out of the currently selected owner contact's location. So, you will have to avoid running this data integrity test until the V4.3 upgrade. Nonetheless, this procedure is useful as an interim measure to help you manage your distributor accounts using the existing version of Publishers' Assistant.

Prevent Credit Card Numbers from Printing on Invoices

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

Several users have asked how to keep from printing out the customer's credit card number in the payment information on their invoice. There is an option available on the function that is called to assemble the payment information. However, making use of this option requires a change to the report form for the invoice report.

To effect this change, do the following:

1. Go to an existing invoice with a credit card payment ("receipt") logged against it.
2. Select the "Print Invoice" option on the menu.
3. You should now be in the report viewer. Select the "Invoice" report from the "Select" menu.
4. Once the report is selected, click on the "Maintenance" option on the menu at the top.
5. You should now see the report maintenance screen. Tab to the "Report Form" box, where there will be a prompt to edit the report form. Enter "Y" to edit the form.
6. You should now be looking at the standard Foxpro Report Designer. Select the "Report" option on the menu at the top of the screen.
7. Select the "Variables" option from the "Report" menu.
8. You will be presented with a dialog window that lists the variables that are used in the report form. Click on the "PAYMENTSTR" variable.
9. The expression used to generate the payment string will show up in the "Value to store" field. You may find it easier to see what you're doing if you click on the "..." button following the expression. This will bring up the "expression Builder" dialog.
10. In the expression field of this window, you will see the following expression:

    ```
    invcpaymnt(customerno, order_key_a, total)
    ```

11. Change this expression using normal word processing keystrokes to look like the following:

```
invcpaymnt(customerno, order_key_a, total,.T.)
```

12. Click on "OK" to exit both the expression builder and the variable dialog screens. Once you are back to the report designer, type <CTRL+W> to save your changes. You can also click on the "X" in the upper right-hand corner of the report form, and then answer "Yes" to the prompt to save your changes.

13. Back at the Maintenance screen you can click on "Preview" to verify that your change was successful. The credit card number should no longer appear in the payment information on the invoice.

14. Exit the Maintenance screen and you should be back at the Report Viewer. From here you can "View", "Print", or "File" your report as usual.

What you will have done by following this procedure is to modify the report form, INVOICE.FRX, that is associated with the "Invoice" report. Since the same report form is used to print out batched invoices, the change will take place there as well.

NOTE: Epic users will probably want to propagate this change to all of your computers running Publishers' Assistant. To do this, you can either follow the above procedure on each machine, or you can copy the report form files (INVOICE.FRX and INVOICE.FRT) from your PubAssist folder to the corresponding PubAssist folder on each of your other machines.

How to Resolve a "Too Many Users" Error

When you attempt to run the Epic Edition of Publishers' Assistant, you may get the following error message:

> **Too many users are logged into Publishers' Assistant for your license agreement. Try again later.**

This is normal if you are the seventh user, but you may receive this message even if there is no one else logged into the application. The program immediately exits so there is no way to get in.

Another symptom is that the warning screens that remind you to back up your data and ask if you want to pack your files normally appear when the last user logs out of PubAssist. If you are the last user and you do not see these reminders as you log off, it's an indication that the login count is off.

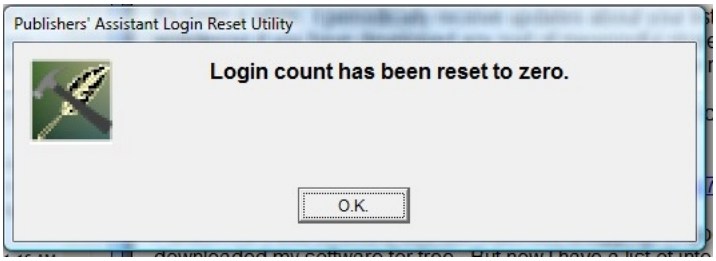
Cause

Publishers' Assistant keeps track of the number of users logged into the application through the keys table (KEY.DBF). If you have experienced an abnormal shutdown, then you have effectively not logged out and the login count was not updated. So, the next time someone logs in, it looks like there is an extra user. If this happens several times, then over time you will reach a point where no one can log in.

Solution

Correcting this problem is a simple matter of purging the keys. If you can log into Publishers' Assistant, then go to the *Tools* menu and select "System maintenance" -> "Keys" -> "Purge Keys".

If you can not log into Publishers' Assistant, with Version 4.3 and later, you can go to Windows: **Start > Programs > Publishers' Assistant > Reset Login Count**. If the procedure was successful, you should see the following screen:



If all else fails, there is an empty KEY.DBF file in the "PubAssist\Valid" sub folder. In a standard installation, this is **C:\Program Files\PubAssist\Valid**.

1. Use Windows Explorer to navigate to this folder. Find the file, KEY.DBF. Click on it to highlight it.

2. Type "CTRL+C" to copy the file to your clipboard.

3. Navigate to the location of your data.

4. Type "CTRL+V" to paste the file into your data folder. You should get a warning that the file already exists with a prompt asking if you want to replace it. Click on "Yes".

5. Start Publishers' Assistant to verify that the problem is solved.

Warning: ***Locating your KEY.DBF file in the wrong directory can cause serious problems with your data.***

If different users are referencing different key files, they are likely to issue duplicate keys for different records. For example, two different invoices may be logged with the same order key. This will cause items associated with those invoices to be associated with each other! It's a mess. Don't do it! Make sure that there is only **one** KEY.DBF file in the path referenced from every system, and *it should reside with the rest of your data.*

If you do not receive a warning when you are pasting the KEY.DBF file in step 4 above, it's an indication that your original KEY.DBF file is out of place. If you find it in your program directory on any of your systems, *delete it*.

How to Deal with Unapplied Funds

Last edited 2008-03-04 by Ron Lawrence

This page describes the "unapplied funds" feature of Publishers' Assistant and procedures for resolving unapplied funds in your accounting.

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What are unapplied funds?

Unapplied funds are the funds received from customers that have not yet been applied to specific items or surcharges.

Unlike some other publishing software, Publishers' Assistant calculates your royalty and consignment liabilities based on the actual amount received for each item, as opposed to what was invoiced. It seems that the actual amount received is different from what was invoiced all too frequently in the publishing business. Many royalty and consignment contracts are affected by the net price. If you charge $10 for a book but only receive $8, why should you have to pay a royalty based on the originally-invoiced $10?

In order to accurately calculate royalty and consignment liabilities, Publishers' Assistant needs to know exactly how much of the revenues you receive is applied to each item that you have sold. Most of the time, this assignment happens automatically. Some situations, however, require that you manually apply funds to the appropriate items being paid for. Any funds that you have received that are not specifically applied to the items you have sold are left in a state called "Unapplied Funds."

Examples

The simplest example of unapplied funds occurs when a customer returns a book. The credit amount for the return will appear as unapplied funds until the credit is used by applying it to a particular invoice or items.

Another example occurs frequently in consignment sales. When a consignment customer pays you for the books they have sold, they may send you a check for an amount different from what you expected. There may be a number of reasons for this: perhaps they assumed an added discount based on a higher number of sales than expected, or perhaps there are some rounding errors because they calculate their discounted prices differently than Publishers' Assistant calculates them. Anyway, your customer has made their best effort to pay you correctly for the titles they have sold but the numbers don't exactly add up.

Yet another example frequently occurs with your larger accounts. Often, a distributor or large retailer will take 120 days to pay. Frequently, their contract terms allow them to hold back some portion of what they owe to cover returns. So, the payment they send may have little or nothing to do with the price you charged them for the books they sold.

In these last two cases, you are receiving a partial payment. But the amount of the payment doesn't add up to an even amount for the quantities of items you have assigned the receipt to. In the case of any partial payment, Publishers' Assistant will ask you to apply the receipt to individual items via the Item Receipts screen. Any funds left over after applying funds to items are available for paying off order surcharges.

NOTE: It is possible to apply more funds to items than are actually available.

The Item Receipts screen allows you to "consume" unapplied funds made available from other receipts. If unapplied funds are available, they are presented on the Receipt screen. The total amount available to be applied to items in the Item Receipts screen is the amount of the receipt being entered *plus any unapplied funds that are available*. If you consume more funds than are available, you will receive a warning when you exit the Item Receipts screen. The warning screen will ask you whether you wish to change your entries.

Applying funds to items can be a little tricky at times, particularly when you have a complicated account with several invoices and several receipts applied across multiple invoices. Publishers' Assistant makes every attempt to allow you to do what you decide is best. So, you can override this warning and leave your assignments consuming more funds than are available. This condition results in "*negative unapplied funds*" (see below).

Unapplied funds are NOT necessarily an account credit

Just to confuse this concept further, as mentioned earlier, a likely cause for the appearance of unapplied funds is a customer return. Here, the customer's account has a credit balance, and

there are no unpaid items to apply the credit to. It therefore results in unapplied funds being posted to the customers account. Those funds can be "consumed" when logging a subsequent receipt for the customer.

> *But it's important to realize that a credit balance for the customer will result in unapplied funds; however, unapplied funds are not necessarily an indication of a credit balance.*

Negative unapplied funds

Negative unapplied funds result when you have applied more funds to items and surcharges than you have received.

This is a legitimate condition in some instances. For example, you may have received a deposit for an order (i.e. a partial payment) which doesn't equate to the expected amount for an ordered item. Perhaps it's close enough, however, that you decide to give full credit for that item, rather than leaving a fractional amount of the item to be paid. (This would make the royalty for the entire item available to the author.)

An unexplained condition of negative unapplied funds, however, can be particularly troublesome when entering new receipts. This is because funds have already been consumed, so the total amount of the receipt is not available to apply to items. The receipt therefore looks like a partial payment, even if the amount of the receipt was the same as the invoice or account total.

Cleaning Up Unapplied Funds

Eliminating unapplied funds is a bit like balancing your check book. There are really two approaches. In method one, you can go back through all of your transactions and find your problem and correct it. In methods two and three, you trust that the bank has correctly reported your balance. You make your adjustments in relation to that and move on. When the problem seems overwhelming, you may want to use the second or third method to get back on track.

Method 1: Revisit all of your transactions

When you have discovered an account that has unapplied funds that you don't understand, the following should help you track them down and correct them if appropriate:

1. **Run the Data Integrity Tests.** First, if the problem seems widespread run the Data Integrity Tests. Orphaned receipt and ledger transaction records may be contributing to the unapplied funds problem. It's a good idea to run all the tests while you are at it. As always when you are about to make wide-spread changes to your data, it's a good

idea to back your data up first.

2. **Double-Check the Account History.** If the account in question still has a problem with unapplied funds, run the "Receivables Account History" report. This report can be found in the *Finance -> Receivables -> Receivables Reports* menu. Check the account history to make sure that the posting of invoice charges and receipts all looks correct. If an extra receipt was posted, it will result in unapplied funds. Make note as well of returns in the account history. If the credit from those returns have not been applied to ordered items, they will remain as unapplied funds. You'll want to know about returns when taking the next step. *Note: Unapplied funds do not affect the customers account balance for billing purposes. Consequently, if your account balance is correct, then this is not likely to be the cause of your unapplied funds.*

3. **Trace back through the Receipts History.** If the account balance and transaction look O.K. your next step will be to trace back through your receipt transactions for the account. You do this by calling up the existing receipts for the customer and navigating backward through these transactions. *It's important to understand that the "Unapplied Funds" that appears on the screen is the result of receipts that were logged prior to the receipt you are currently viewing.* That means that while you are processing backwards, if the unapplied funds amount changes, then the receipt that you are looking at is likely to be the cause of that change.

   a. Go to *Finance -> Receivables -> Enter/Edit Receipts -> Existing Receipts* on the menu.

   b. Select "By Customer" on the resulting menu. The Customer Contact screen will appear. Select the customer who's account you are troubleshooting.

   c. If the account has some history, you will be presented with a list of receipts. The most recent receipt will appear at the top of the list. Select the most recent receipt.

   d. Note the amount in unapplied funds. Then navigate to the previous receipt. You can do this by either clicking on the "Move to the previous record" button on the tool bar, or by entering "CTRL+PGUP".

   e. If the unapplied funds are the same, continue navigating to the previous receipt in the customer's history. If the amount of unapplied funds changes, then the receipt you are now viewing most likely contributed to that change. The only exception to this is if a return was logged between the currently viewed receipt and the one previously viewed.

   f. Go to the "Apply Funds to Items?" prompt and enter a "Y". You will be presented with the Item Receipts screen. This is where your funds are actually applied to each item that is available to be paid for.

   g. Check to see that the total funds that are applied to items match the available funds. If not, adjust the quantity being paid for and the amount received for that

quantity for each item until the available funds are consumed exactly, or the amount remaining exactly matches the surcharges that are intended to be paid. Surcharges are the shipping, taxes, and adjustments associated with invoices. Once you are satisfied with your application of funds, close the Item Receipts screen.

Note: There may be times when no items show up in the item receipts screen. This is because for whatever reason, the receipt was originally saved without any funds applied to items. If this happens, simply exit the Item Receipt screen, go back to the "Apply Funds to Items?" prompt and enter an "X". This should clear the condition and allow you to apply funds to items as if this were a new receipt.

h. After exiting item receipts, you can navigate to the next receipt in history (the one you previously looked at). Take note of the Unapplied Funds amount. It should be the same as the receipt you just edited. Hopefully that amount is now zero. If it's not, then go back to step (d). Continue processing back through your receipts until you have corrected any unapplied funds.

Method 2: Zero Receipt

This method entails entering a receipt for an amount of zero, which won't change the customer's account balance. You then use the unapplied funds to pay off items that should have been paid for in the past.

1. **Enter a new receipt** for the customer's account for the amount of $0.00. You may want to enter a receipt type of "Other" or make up a special receipt type that indicates you are consuming unapplied funds.

2. **Apply funds to items** on the receipt.

3. Go ahead and **Automatically apply funds**. This will attempt to apply funds to the oldest items. *Note that if there are royalties or consignment costs associated with these items, they will show up in your royalty and consignment reports for this period.*

4. If the customer's account has a positive balance (i.e. the customer still owes you money), completely **consume the unapplied funds by applying the funds to items**.

5. Now you'll want to make sure that you haven't paid for items you shouldn't have yet. You'll test for this by adding yet another receipt to the account. **Enter a new receipt** for the amount of the account balance.

6. **Apply funds to items** and verify that the unpaid items match up with the account balance. (You may have to allow some variance for any surcharges on unpaid invoices.) *If the figures match up, your mission has been accomplished!*

7. If the amounts don't match up, you've probably paid for too many items. **Determine the difference** between the items remaining to be paid for and the account balance.

8. Return to the previous receipt (the $0.00 payment), and **reduce the amount** of funds applied to items by the difference you determined in step 7.

9. Go to the **Zero Invoice Method** (below) to consume the remaining unapplied funds.

10. Be sure to **delete this test receipt** so your account balance is properly restored.

Method 3: Zero Invoice

Use this method if you want to consume unapplied funds, but have no more items to apply them to.

1. **Generate a new invoice** for the customer. You can back date this invoice so it won't show up in your current reports or statements for your customer.

2. **Enter an "open item."** You create an "open item" by beginning the Item ID with an asterisk ("*"). This is an indication to Publishers' Assistant that this item will not be found in the Title file. After the asterisk, you can enter whatever you like for the remainder of the Item ID, such as "*UNAPPLIED". You can also enter whatever description you want in the Title field. The price of the item should be zero ($0.00). Thus the invoice total should be zero, and no change will be made to the customer's account balance. The quantity, however, should be one. This is so you'll be able to "pay" for the item when you enter a receipt.

3. **Enter a receipt** against the invoice for an amount of $0.00.

4. **Apply funds to items.**

5. **Pay off only the open item,** applying an amount equal to the remaining unapplied funds for the account.

Other considerations

The Zero Receipt method addresses the case where the customer's account has a positive balance (i.e. the customer still owes you money).

If the account has a *zero balance*, you'll want to pay off any and all items that show up when applying funds to items for your "Zero Receipt." If there are not any items left to be paid for, or if there are simply not enough items to account for the unapplied funds that remain, use the Zero Invoice Method to consume the remaining unapplied funds.

If the account has a *credit balance* (i.e., you owe the customer money), then make sure that you leave a balance of unapplied funds that is equal to the credit balance. That way, those funds will be available when you later go to use that credit to pay off a subsequent invoice.

Finally, you may wish to use the "Unapplied Funds Brief List by Name" report to determine which accounts you need to worry about.

Conclusion

Unapplied funds may seem like a nuisance, but really they are an alarm to alert you to a situation that needs your attention. The accounting is built to protect you from having to pay out more than you need. At the same time, *unapplied funds* help you to insure that you are not either under or over compensating your authors and your suppliers.

The steps outlined above may seem a bit overwhelming. But once you have corrected one or two receipts, you will quickly get the hang of it. Even the worst accounts can generally be corrected in about 20 minutes.

This exercise will also make you keenly aware of the importance of keeping your accounts clean. When you next notice unapplied funds in an account, you'll be ready to address the problem right away. And remember, this is about making sure that you are keeping your commitments to your authors and suppliers and not shorting yourself in the process.

Remember that as you are applying funds, you will be changing your liabilities financial history. Most royalties and consignment fees are based on when the item *has been paid for*.

Good luck!

Unapplied Funds Revisited

by Ron Lawrence
Thursday, January 10, 2002

I've received calls from several users who are trying to resolve unapplied funds for their customers' accounts. Calls about unapplied funds seem to happen in waves. Of course, problems with unapplied funds tend to occur with your biggest and most complicated accounts, so the task of resolving those unapplied funds seems overwhelming. Most users ask, "Isn't there some simple way I can just get rid of these unapplied funds?" I think I've settled on a couple of methods that might do the trick.

Before getting into those methods, it seems worth while to review what unapplied funds are. Unapplied funds represent the amount of money that you have received from the customer, which has not been applied to any particular item or invoice surcharges.

If unapplied funds exist, it means that you likely have not given credit for the sale of some books. So, the royalty or consignment liabilities won't show up in the Publishers' Assistant reports, and thus, the authors and suppliers of those books will not be compensated for those sales. Because of the confusion, people tend to look at unapplied funds as a problem; but in fact they are a tool that is intended to help you fulfill your obligation as a publisher or distributor to your authors and suppliers.

To fulfill that obligation, you want to make sure that you give the appropriate credit for the books you've sold. By far, the most accurate way to do that is to make sure that every receipt you've logged is appropriately applied to the items it is supposed to pay for. I've already posted an article on how to do that, entitled, Unapplied Funds. But somewhere, things went awry, and it's really not practical to track back through your receipts history to fix the problem. Now, you simply want to get back on track — resumably without shorting your authors and suppliers. Here's a couple of methods that will help get you there.

Zero Receipt method

This method entails entering a receipt for an amount of zero, which won't change the customer's account balance. You then use the unapplied funds to pay off items that should have been paid for in the past.

Note that if there are royalties or consignment costs associated with these items, they will show up in your royalty and consignment reports for this period.

1. Enter a new receipt for the customer's account for the amount of $0.00. You may want to enter a receipt type of "Other" or make up a special receipt type that indicates you

are consuming unapplied funds.

2. Apply funds to items on the receipt.

3. Go ahead and "Automatically apply funds". This will attempt to apply funds to the oldest items.

4. If the customer's account has a positive balance (i.e. the customer still owes you money), completely consume the unapplied funds by applying the funds to items.

5. Now you'll want to make sure that you haven't paid for items you shouldn't have yet. You'll test for this by adding yet another receipt to the account. Enter a new receipt for the amount of the account balance.

6. Apply funds to items and verify that the unpaid items match up with the account balance. (You may have to allow some variance for any surcharges on unpaid invoices.) If the figures match up, your mission has been accomplished!

7. If the amounts don't match up, you've probably paid for too many items. Determine the difference between the items remaining to be paid for and the account balance.

8. Return to the previous receipt (the $0.00 payment), and reduce the amount of funds applied to items by the difference you determined in step 7.

9. Go to the Zero Invoice Method (below) to consume the remaining unapplied funds.

10. Be sure to delete this test receipt so your account balance is properly restored.

Zero Invoice Method

Use this method if you want to consume unapplied funds, but have no more items to apply them to.

1. Generate a new invoice for the customer. You can back date this invoice so it won't show up in your current reports or statements for your customer.

2. Enter an "open item". You create an "open item" by beginning the Item ID with an asterisk ("*"). This is an indication to Publishers' Assistant that this item will not be found in the Title file. After the asterisk, you can enter whatever you like for the remainder of the Item ID. I used an item ID of "*UNAPPLIED". You can also enter whatever description you want in the Title field. The price of the item should be zero ($0.00). Thus the invoice total should be zero, and no change will be made to the customer's account balance. The quantity, however, should be one. This is so you'll be able to "pay" for the item when you enter a receipt.

3. Enter a receipt against the invoice for an amount of $0.00.

4. Apply funds to items.

5. Pay off only the open item — applying an amount equal to the remaining unapplied funds for the account.

Other considerations:

The Zero Receipt Method (steps 7 through 9) addresses the case where the customer's account has a positive balance (i.e. the customer still owes you money).

If the account has a zero balance, you'll want to pay off any and all items that show up when applying funds to items for your "Zero Receipt". If there are not any items left to be paid for, or if there are simply not enough items to account for the unapplied funds that remain, use the Zero Invoice Method to consume the remaining *unapplied funds*.

If the account has a credit balance (i.e., you owe the customer money), then make sure that you leave a balance of unapplied funds that is equal to the credit balance. That way, those funds will be available when you later go to use that credit to pay off a subsequent invoice. Finally, I would recommend using the "*Unapplied Funds Brief List by Name*" report to determine which accounts you need to worry about. I would recommend staying away from the *"Unapplied Funds Detail"* report. This report attempts to show you where unapplied funds show up throughout the account history. It's a bit misleading, because it leads you into thinking that you need to eliminate the unapplied funds from every transaction. That's probably not possible or appropriate.

Furthermore, we made some significant changes to how we handle unapplied funds in Version 4.2. So, the *"Unapplied Funds Detail"* report is even further removed from what is important when you are trying to resolve unapplied funds. Unless I hear some strong objections, I may remove the *"Unapplied Funds Detail"* report in the next release.

This explanation seems a bit long-winded; but after you try this for one account, I think you'll find that it's pretty simple. I looked for a worst case account in an old copy of the Upper Access database. Using these methods, I was able to resolve the unapplied funds in about 5 minutes! I scanned down a list of 6 accounts that showed up in the "Unapplied Funds Brief List by Name" report, and was able to resolve all accounts in about 20 minutes. These methods will quickly get you out of the unapplied funds quagmire — without compromising on your commitments to your authors and suppliers.

Once you're out, stay out. Resolve any unapplied funds issues as soon as they show up by revisiting the previous receipt for the customer. That's the best way to make sure that your liabilities reporting process goes smoothly and accurately.

Understanding *"Sell Through"* with Publishers' Assistant

By Ron Lawrence
August, 2005

I've just returned from the PMA University conference in New York, and got a great education on what publishers are focused on to manage their businesses. I'm feeling great about how Publishers' Assistant meets those needs. In several sessions at the conference, Dominique Raccah of Sourcebooks, Inc. promoted a concept she called *"Sell Through."* In this article, I'll explore our interpretation of Dominique's presentation and how Publishers' Assistant can help you get your arms around this important concept for your own titles.

In general, the concept of *"Sell Through"* refers to the management of inventory by being aware of the returns you are likely to experience throughout the life of your title. The major objective in understanding Sell Through is to minimize the unsold inventory at the end of the books sales life.

Dominique has shrewdly focused on understanding the performance of her major customers by measuring how many books they return in relation to their purchases. Imagine you receive an order for 200 copies of one of your titles from a major book handler who we will call the "Enormous Book Company." As exciting as it is to have Enormous Book Company order another 200 books, Dominique has recognized that she's likely to get some percentage of those copies back as returns. That results in a loss for shipping and often damaged books. If the order comes late in the title's sales life, understanding how many copies you are likely to get back becomes critical.

The problem is worse if your inventory is low. The temptation will be to order another print run. Dominique professes that "Your last print run is your most expensive." That's because some percentage of those books will never sell. If a significant number of those books wind up back on your shelves as returns, you could easily realize a financial loss on the print run. Dominique uses another catch phrase to drive home the Sell Through management concept: *"Shipping less to make more!"*

Shipping less to make more?

The idea is that if you understand how many books you truly have in the system, then you can make better decisions about whether and when to ship books to your major buyers. "How many books you have in the system" is not just your on-hand inventory. It's also more than what may still be located at the buyer's location. The number includes a percentage of what

you are likely to see as returns at this point in the title's life cycle. Here's where Publishers' Assistant can help.

How many books do I have on hand?

Inventory Status Report

Publishers' Assistant has several Inventory Status reports which will tell you how much inventory you have and in which locations or warehouses. One thing to keep in mind is that the Publishers' Assistant inventory system is date sensitive. So not only can you tell what you have in stock now, but you can look back in time to see what you had in stock on any given date. That may be important when you begin to analyze Enormous Book Company's performance with other books in your history.

Note: There are several sample reports cited in this article — each is represented by an icon on the left of the page. Click on the icon to see a PDF version of the sample report. Use the "Back" button on your browser to return to the article.

How many copies are located at Enormous Book Company?

Consignment Inventory Status Report

How you get a handle on this depends on your relationship with Enormous Book Company. If you ship them books on consignment, then the "Consignment Inventory Status" report will help. It reports the quantity of each of your titles at each consignment location. You can limit the report to a specific title to get a good picture of where that title is located. If you ship to multiple locations for your buyer, they will all show up in the "Consignment Inventory Status" report.

If, instead, you treat Enormous Book Company as a warehouse, you'll see your inventory in the "Inventory Status" report. Publishers' Assistant 4.3 will allow you to invoice directly out of their warehouse.

If you simply sell your books to Enormous Book Company outright, you may have less visibility into how many they currently have in stock; but you'll still gain more perspective on this when looking at their sales vs. returns performance in the next section.

How many returns should I expect from Enormous Book Company?

There are a couple of ways to look at this. You can look at your buyer's recent sales and returns history for the title in question. But you can also look at their performance for other titles. If you are particularly savvy about this, you can look at Enormous Book Company's sales vs. returns for other titles at a similar period in their life cycle to your current book. To get the full picture, you may want to see what you and your buyer had in stock during that time period. This is where Publishers' Assistant's date-sensitive inventory system comes in handy.

Publishers' Assistant actually features a number of Sales vs. Returns reports. In the interest of giving credit where credit is due, we would like to thank some of our users who have requested these reports and aided in their specification:

- Laura Rust of Scholarly Books
- Tom Doherty of Cardinal Publishers Group
- Arnold Smoller of Book Clearing House

All of the Sales vs. Returns reports appear on the Sales Reports menu. Here's a partial list:

Sales vs. Returns

The "Sales vs. Returns" report shows you returns as a percentage of sales for each customer. The detail version of this report will list the individual invoices and returns. You may notice in these reports that it's possible to have returns outrun your sales for the period being reported.

Sales vs. Returns Descending

You can quickly gain some perspective about the relative performance of your customers by looking at the "Sales vs. Returns Descending" report. This report sorts your customers by the amount of returns (in dollars) in descending order. So, the customers that return the most will appear at the top of the report. In this sample report, the Enormous Book Company is at the top of our list!
Which titles are Enormous Book Company ordering and then returning?

Sales vs. Returns by Title by Customer

The "Sales vs. Returns by Title by Customer" shows the titles ordered and returned in detail. That gives you a pretty good picture of how the buyer is doing with each of your titles, as well as how one title compares with another. One thing to look for is whether a particular title is being ordered and returned in the same period. Some of the major book buyers have multiple locations.

One location may not know that the book they need is slated to be returned from another location.

On this point, Steve Carlson of Upper Access Publishing offers that "'Enormous' wholesalers and chains never put back into stock the returns they receive from bookstores. They simply ship them back to the publishers, even on the same day as ordering more."

Sales History for a Title

While writing this article, I was curious to see what the life span of a title looked like visually. So, I exported data from Publishers' Assistant to graph it using Microsoft Excel. Click on the icon at the left to view the Excel document that was generated.

You can see that I've broken down the quantities that were shipped and returned, as well as the quantity that was paid for each month for the reporting period. The result is that you can not only see the shipments and returns performance; but you can also see the delay in payment for those books.

My curiosity led me to figure out how to automatically generate this graph from within Publishers' Assistant. Consequently, our users will have another exciting new feature to look forward to in our upcoming release!

Note: The graph I have produced is for the same one-year span I have used in the other reports. However, the curve over the life-span of the title becomes much more obvious if I graph a longer period (two or three years). On the other hand, the bars on the graph become so thin that it becomes difficult to read. So, I opted for consistency with the other reports I've included.

So, should I ship this order to Enormous Book Company?

If your history shows that you can expect a significant number of returns at this point in a book's life, then you may want to apply the brakes. If your own inventory is low, then you'll really want to be on top of how many books you have out in the market. We heard several times during the convention that even books that have been paid for can be returned.

Knowing the numbers is one thing; but managing the situation is another. A strategy that Dominique seems to use is to work with her customers to help them understand their own purchasing history. Again, Steve Carlson offers that "You should probably discuss with your buyer at Enormous Book Company the reduced quantity that you are shipping, and the reasons. If you can show that you have crunched numbers and are reasonably predicting that Enormous Book Company's need will be met with a smaller shipment, their buyer will usually be happy to accept the smaller shipment."

Having good data and presenting it in an easy-to-understand format is the key. And that's exactly where Publishers' Assistant can help.

Upgrading to Lyric or Epic from Sonnet

Last edited 2009-01-30 by Ron Lawrence

Congratulations for making this move. You've just expanded your accounting capabilities and given yourself some great time-saving tools. The major difference between Sonnet and the Lyric and Epic editions is that Lyric and Epic include the payables side of accounting. While Sonnet will tell you what you owe for royalties, Lyric and Epic actually track those royalties in accounts for your authors. They will also track the payments you make to those accounts. Likewise, you can enter payments for any other expense and get a summary report of those expenses. You can pay off your liabilities automatically and either print off your checks, or transfer those automatic payments to Quickbooks.

You do have a couple of simple housekeeping tasks to perform when you upgrade to Lyric or Epic. The Lryic and Epic editions have a different reports--particularly the payables reports. Since your report definitions are part of your database, you'll need to swap out the Sonnet reports. Also, since Sonnet doesn't maintain the payables history, you'll want to generate that history from your previously entered transactions. Both of these tasks are fairly simple.

Swapping Out your Sonnet reports for Lyric/Epic Reports

Many of the Sonnet and Lyric/Epic reports share the same name, but a few do not. So, a quick and easy way to get going would be to restore your report definitions. This function is on the File menu.

Restoring report definitions is quick and easy. The drawback is that there may be some Sonnet reports left behind. A more thorough method for getting rid of the old reports and instantiating the new would be to remove your existing report table and move a fresh copy into your data folder. Make sure that you are not running PubAssist when you execute this procedure:

1. Go to My Computer (or "Computer" on Vista)

2. Navigate to c:\program files\pubassist\data

3. Locate the three files associated with the REPORTS table: reports.dbf, reports.fpt, and reports.cdx

You may want to keep the old table around in case something goes wrong, or you realize that you have a customized report that you didn't want to lose.

4. Create a new folder in the data folder: e.g. "Hold"

5. Select the reports files by holding down the CTRL key and clicking on each one.

6. Click and drag the selected group into your new "Hold" folder.

Now, we'll obtain a fresh copy of the reports table for your database.

7. Navigate to the VALID subfolder in the pubassist: i.e. c:\program files\pubassist\valid

8. Locate and select the same three files for the reports table.

9. Type CTRL+C or select "Copy" on the "Edit" menu.

10. Navigate back to the Data folder.

11. Type CTRL+V or select "Paste" on the "Edit" menu.

This will *copy* (not move) the standard reports table to your data folder. This will be the table used by Publishers' Assistant.

Generating your Payables Accounting History

Now that the reports are in place, you'll want to generate the accounting history that is used in those reports. You may not care about this history, but it's important to do this anyway. The Lyric and Epic editions of Publishers' Assistant will automatically regenerate liability transactions when you review or edit an old transaction. Consequently, when you go back to revisit an old invoice, it will generate the royalty, consignment, and commission transactions that should have been there before. Your payables are a running account. If these transactions were missing before, you will now have an account balance.

In Sonnet, you simply ran the royalty report and paid the royalty amount reported. Your assumption after each payment is that your account balance is zero. But in our example, you will have generated royalty fees that you probably already paid. So, this step is about filling in that old payables history, and then we'll pay off those liabilities so that you really do have a zero balance. When you revisit an old invoice, your balance may change, but you'll be taking into account the fee that you previously incurred as well as what you already paid.
So, here's how to generate the history of your liabilities:

1. In Publishers' Assistant, go to Finance>Payables>Recalculate Liabilities>Royalty Fees on the menu

2. You will be presented with a Title Selection screen. You may have occasion to recalculate liabilies because something just doesn't look right in your history. In those cases, you'll probably want to be fairly specific--recalculating royalties for a specific title and a specific date range. In this case, however, we want to generate all royalties for all titles for all time. Simply click on "Continue".

3. You now see the progress while your invoices, receipts and returns will be processed for royalties.

4. Repeat these steps for consignment costs if you sell books on consignment, and commissions if you pay commissions to sales representatives. The Commissions option will present you with a different selection screen, but the logic is the same. You want to reclaculate commissions for all sales rep's, all customers, and for all time. Just click on the "Continue" button.

So, now you have generated liabilities for royalties, consignment costs, and commissions for all of your back history. Now, you'll want to pay off those accounts as of the time you made your last payments. You use the Automatic Payment option to do this.

For example, many publishers pay their royalties each quarter. Let's say that your last paid royalty period ended on December 31, 2008. If you log payments for all of your payable balances as of December 31, then on January 1, 2009, you'll have all zero balances. This is a good way to start. Note that the payments for this date will be the sum of ALL of your royalties, consignment costs, and commissions to date. These payments will be large and of course they won't be real; but they will zero your payables and allow you to begin realistic accounting after that payment date.

Use the ***"AutomaticPayments"*** function to perform this task. As of Version 4.3b, this function is facilitated by a wizard. Follow the steps in the wizard to pay off all accounts as of the last day of your last paid royalty period. Use the same date for both the As Of Date and the Transaction Date. This will give you a zero balance for the next day.

Now you're ready to start tracking your liabilities with each new sale.

Upgrading To Publishers' Assistant Version 5

Submitted by Ron Lawrence
February 16, 2010

While installing Version 5 is pretty straight forward, upgrading from previous versions can present some challenges. There are some significant differences in the installation of Version 5 from previous versions of PubAssist. The most significant of these changes is the new location of your data. If you are an Epic user, then you have already had to deal with locating your data in a place where it can be accessed by multiple users. Sonnet and Lyric users, however, haven't had to worry much about this.

Traditionally, your PubAssist data has been located in the data sub-folder in c:\program files\pubassist\data\. The Version 5 installation is designed to be Windows Vista compatible. Vista doesn't like anything in the program files folder to change, and will insist on administrative privileges to make those changes. You can change the security settings on your Vista machine to allow PubAssist to run as it always has, but we figured it was better in the long-run to play along with what Microsoft has in mind.

The installation now creates a new "home" folder where all the data elements of the application will be stored. The Publishers' Assistant programs and supporting files will still be installed to c:\program fiels\pubassist. However, your database, report forms, configuration file, and user preferences, anything that can change as a result of running the application are now stored in the new home folder. After much deliberation, it was decided that this new home folder should reside in your "Documents" folder. Prior versions of Windows refer to this as your "My Documents" folder. By default, your installation will create a home folder at **Documents\pubassist data**.

Just as it was not a good idea to store your database directly in the **c:\program files\pubassist** folder in previous versions, in Version 5 your database should not be directly in the new home folder. The reason is that if PubAssist finds a database in the home folder, it will never look beyond that folder for another. This would prevent you from being able to point to different databases should the need arise *(and it probably will at some time)*.
The default location for your database is **documents\pubassist data\data**. So the main installation issue, particularly for Lyric and Sonnet users who are upgrading, is that you must move your data from its old location to the new one. This, however, is not the only issue. Once you move your data in place, you will need to update report definitions. You'll also need to re-register.

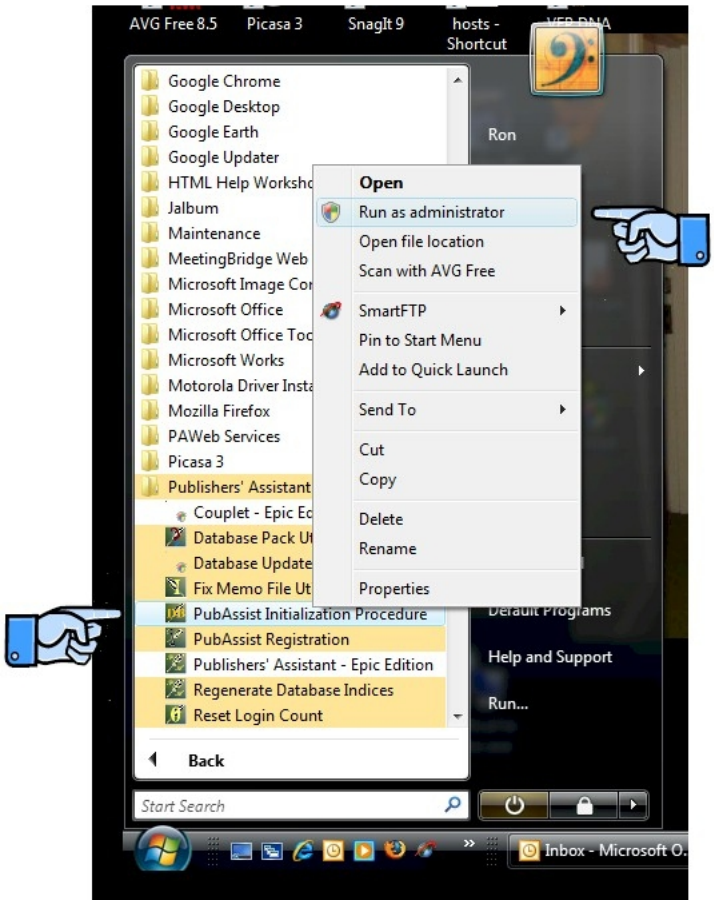
The PubAssist Initialization Wizard

To make things a little easier, we've developed a wizard to guide you through the process. You will start the Initialization Wizard from the Windows Start menu. Go to **Start>Programs>Publishers' Assistant** on the menu.

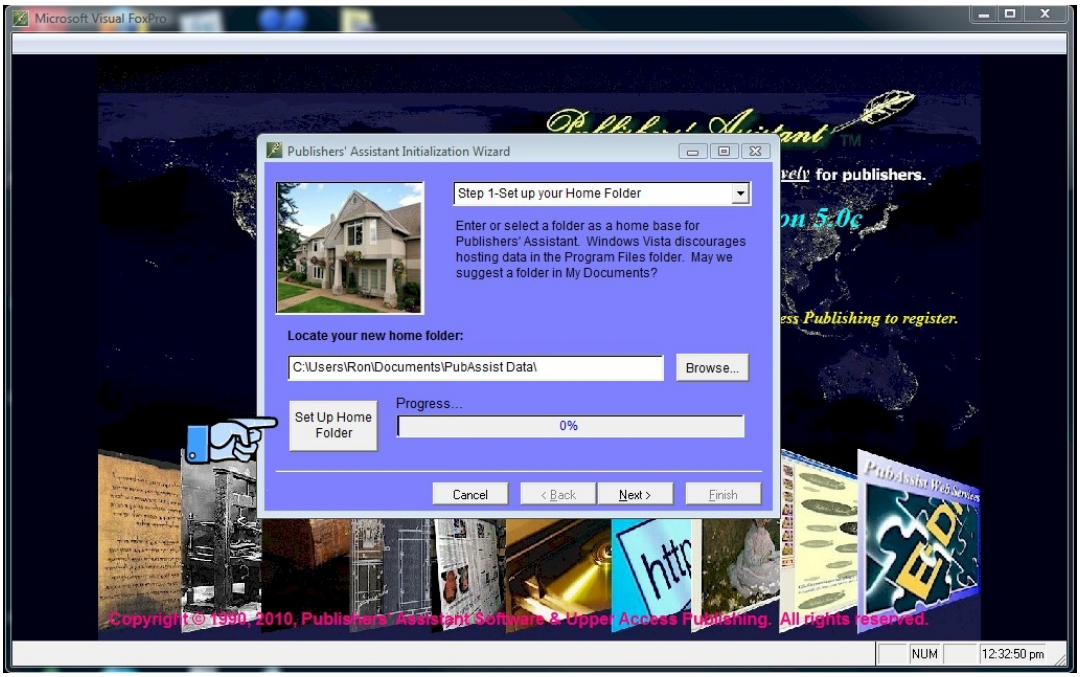
This wizard may require administrative access to complete all of the tasks at hand. For example, it will insure that your shortcuts (icons) are pointing to your new home folder. Mind you, the installation procedure has already done this, but the wizard affords you an opportunity to move your home folder to wherever you want.

> **In order for the wizard to update these shortcuts, it will need administrative privileges.**

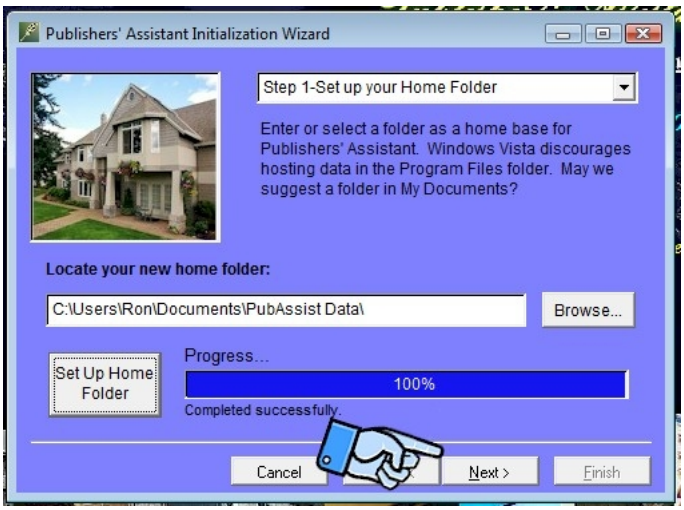
So, you need to use the "Run As Administrator" option on the menu. Right click on "PubAssist Initialization Procedure" to see that option.



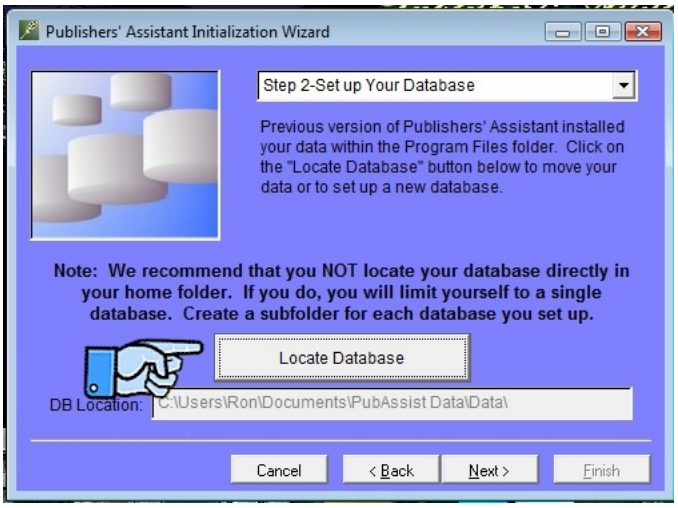
This will bring up the initialization wizard. As you can see, the home folder is documents\pubassist data\data by default. You can use the options on this page to set up a home folder in a different location. Until you get the hang of things, I'd suggest leaving it in this location. Now if you just installed, your home folder is already set up. So, you can actually skip this step. But know that this procedure is here in case you need to reinitialize or move your home folder. Click on the "Set up Home Folder" button to initialize your home folder and update your shortcuts.



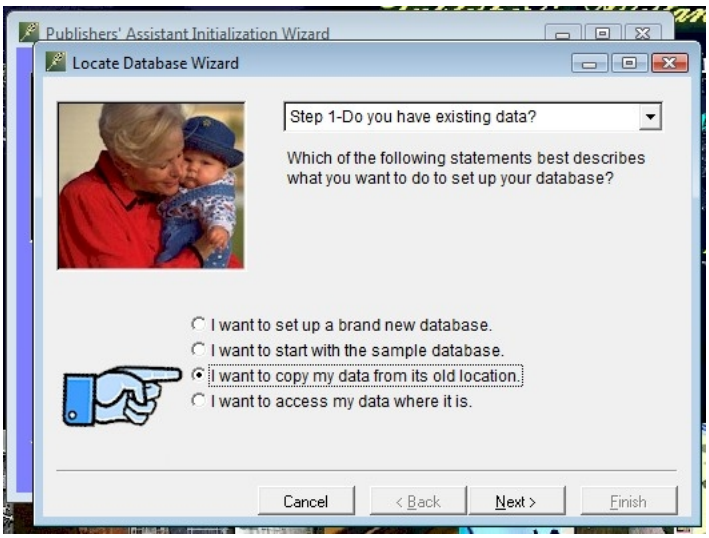
Click on "Next" to move on...



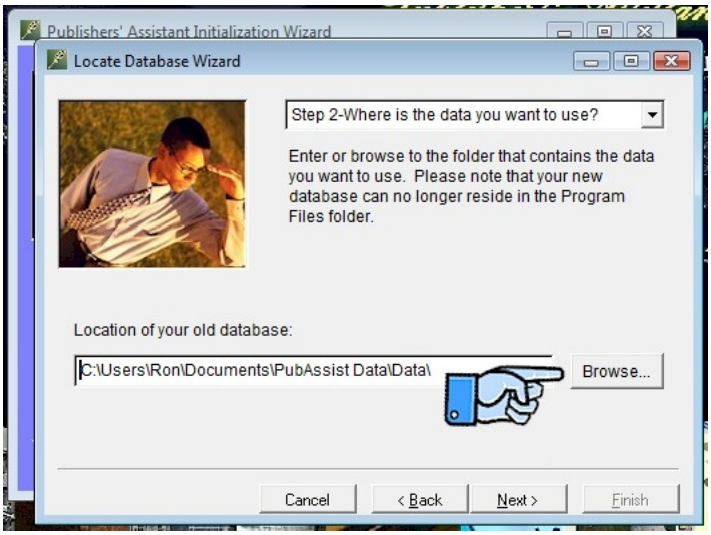
Once your new home folder is initialized, you'll want to move your database into it. At this step, you'll actually be calling up the Locate Database Wizard--a second wizard--to move your data. You can see that the default location is documents\pubassist data\data. Click on the "Locate Database" button to start the new wizard.



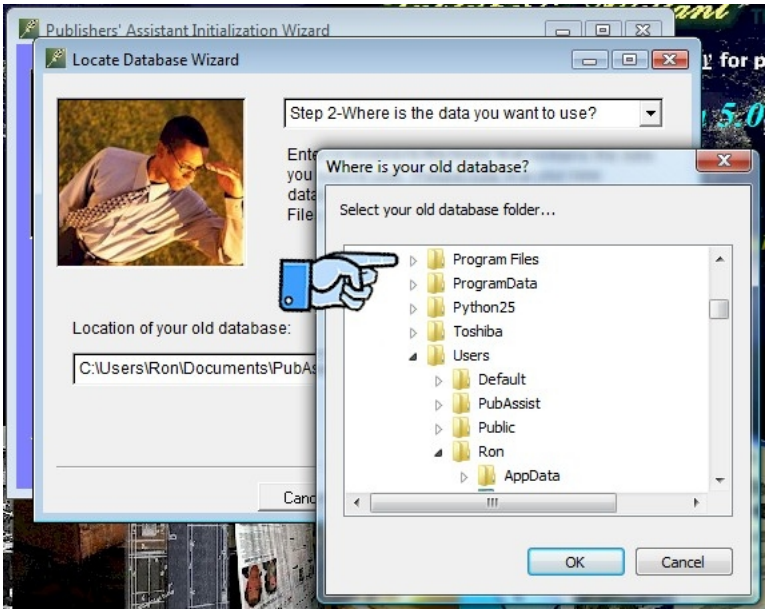
This is the same wizard that runs when you choose the "Locate Database" option on the File menu inside PubAssist Version 5. As you can see, it allows you several options. Since we are upgrading, we have a set of data out there that we want to copy into our new home folder. So, I've suggested choosing the third option in the image below. Epic users will want to choose the fourth option. Your data is probably already in a location where it can be accessed by other users, so you'll simply want to access the data where it is.



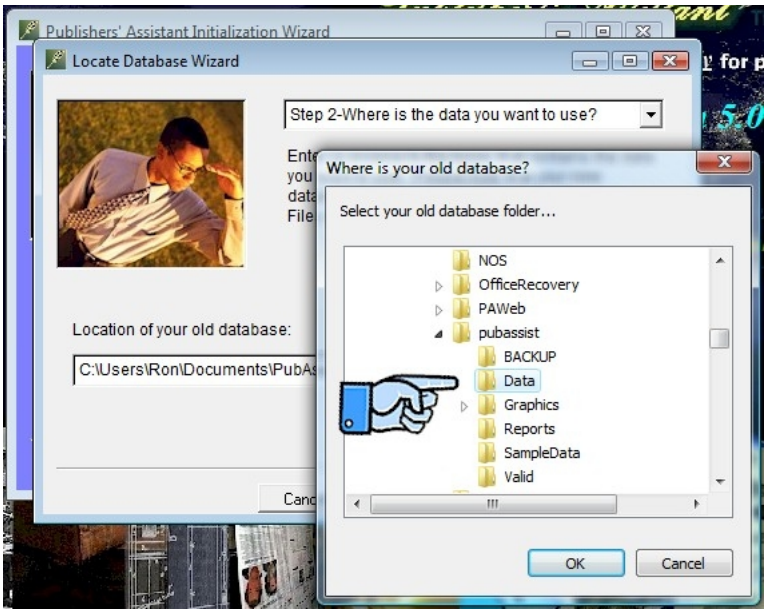
In this example, we're going to assume that our data is in the standard location for Version 4 Sonnet and Lyric users. Unless you've moved it, your data should be in c:\program files\pubassist\data. Click on the "Browse" button to navigate to that location.



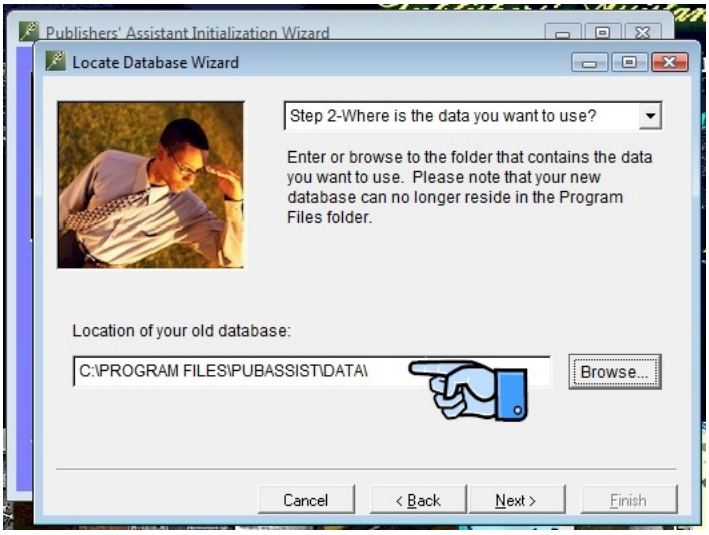
Go to "Program Files"...



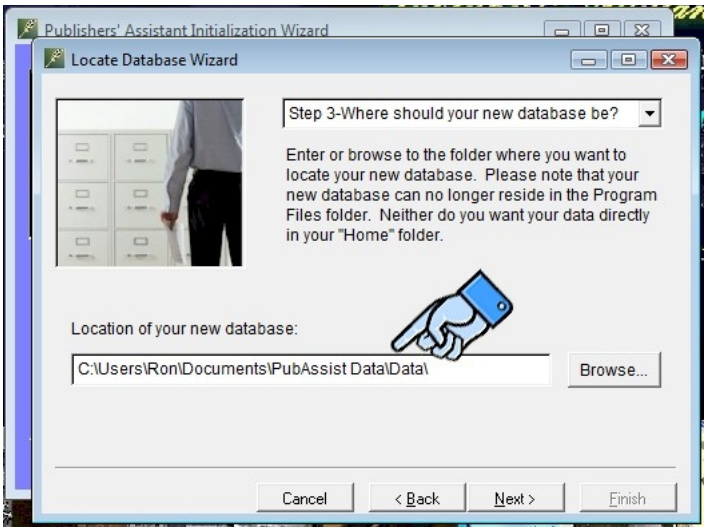
...then pubassist...and finally to the data subfolder. Click on "OK".



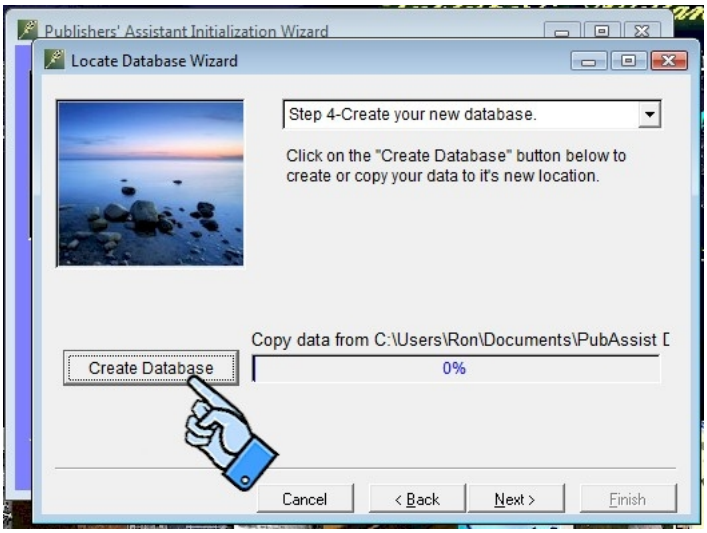
Back at the Locate Database Wizard, notice that your selected data path has been filled in. Click on "Next".



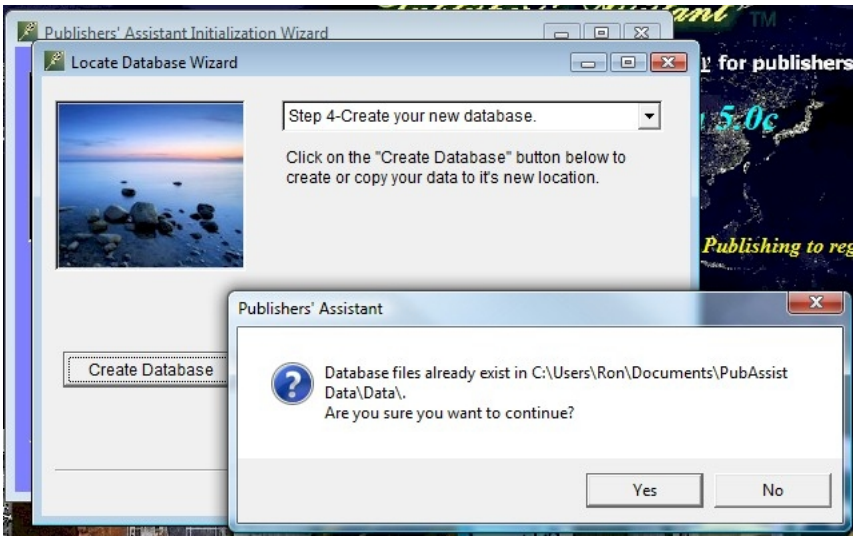
Now you will specify the new location for your database. Again, notice that documents\ pubassist data\data\ is the default. You can change this by clicking on the "Browse" button and navigating to a new location, or by editing the data path in the box. We're going to leave the default data path here for this example. Click on "Next".



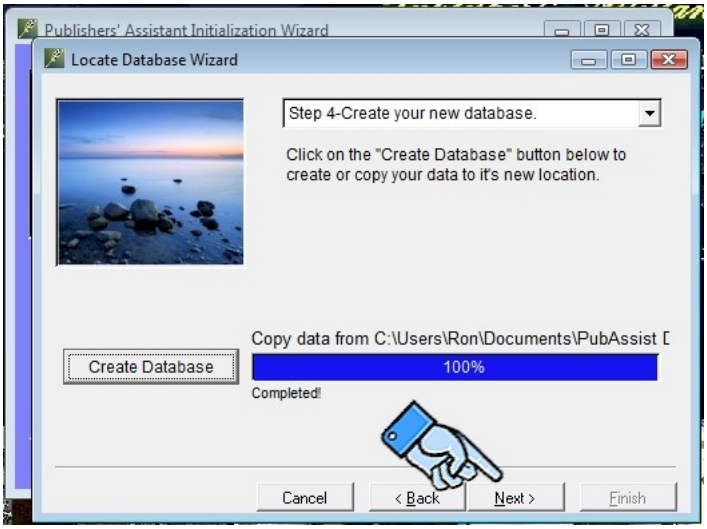
This is where you actually copy your data from its old location to the new one. Click on "Create Database".



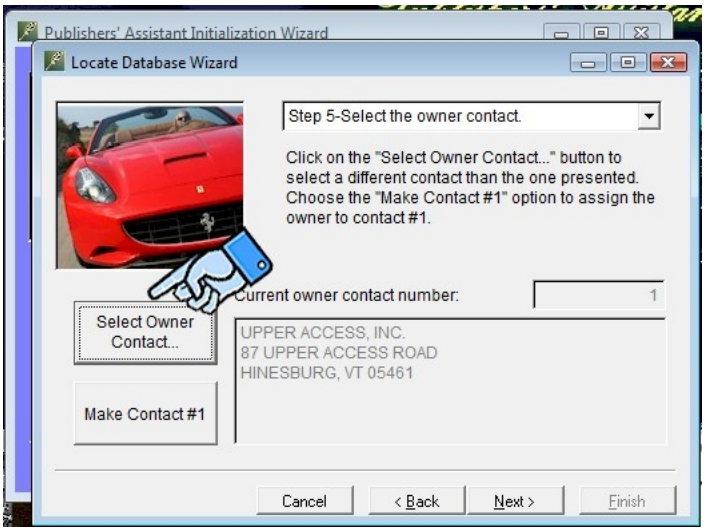
Since we've chosen the default data folder, there is already an empty database in the folder. So, we'll get this warning that a database already exists. Click on "Yes" to continue.



The Wizard will copy your database from its old location to the new. When completed, click on "Next".

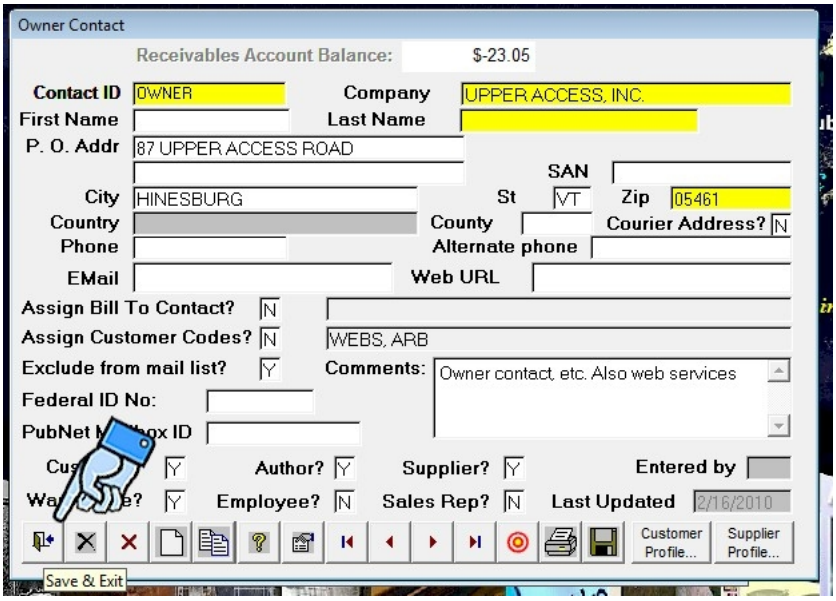


In the past, remembering to select your owner contact was always a problem. This step in the Locate Database Wizard prompts you to do that. The newly initialized user preferences will specify contact #1 as your owner contact. If contact #1 is not the owner contact in your database, click on the "Select Owner Contact" button.



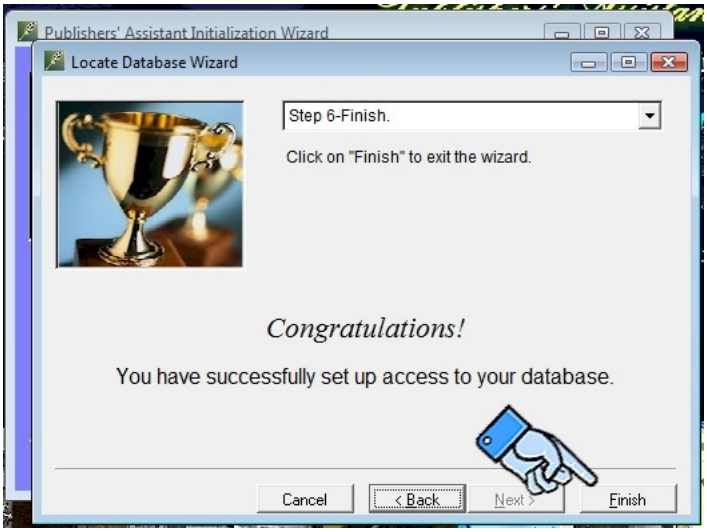
That will bring up the contact screen to allow you to select your owner contact. This screen should be an old friend by now if you are upgrading. So, I won't go into detail here. What is new is the navigation tools at the bottom. Actually this is a combination of the same options as in Version 4. They are even in the same order. We've replaced the words with icons to save some space. We've also moved the navigation tools from the far left of the Version 4 screen to each of the data entry screens. Hopefully, this will result in better visibility for these tools for new users. It's also intended to clarify for which screen you are navigating through records. If you pass your mouse over these options, you will get a little tool-tip text to help you understand the function for that option.

The "Continue" option has been replaced with the doorway icon and the tool-tip now reads, "Save and Exit". Click on that to return to the wizard.

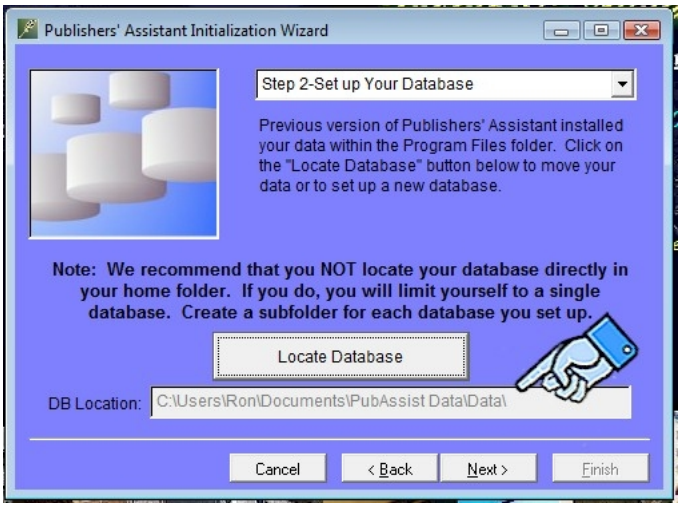


So now, you've selected your owner contact. There is good reason to make your owner contact the first contact in your database and assign it contact number 1. This is especially handy if you manage multiple databases. It will save you time when bouncing back and forth. If your owner contact is NOT contact number 1, I recommend choosing the "Make Contact #1" option on the wizard. It will move your owner contact into the first record, and reassign the number 1 to all transactions throughout the database that refered to your old owner contact number. Click "Next" to continue.

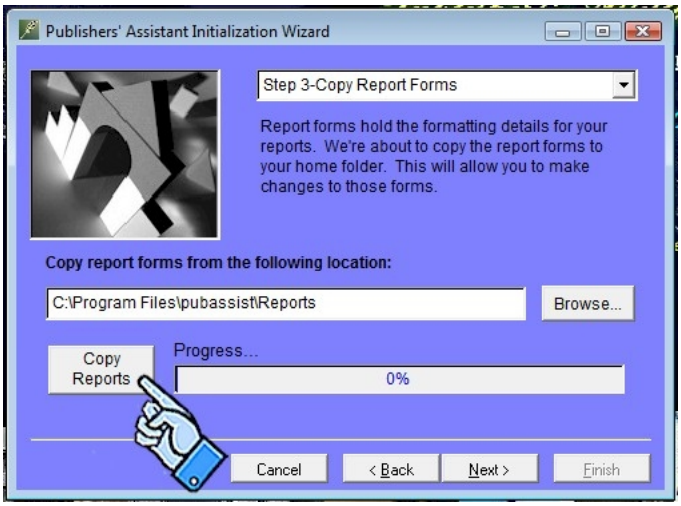
Congratulations! You've just moved your data to its new location and reassigned your owner contact. But, we're not done. Click on "Finish" to return to the Initialization Wizard.



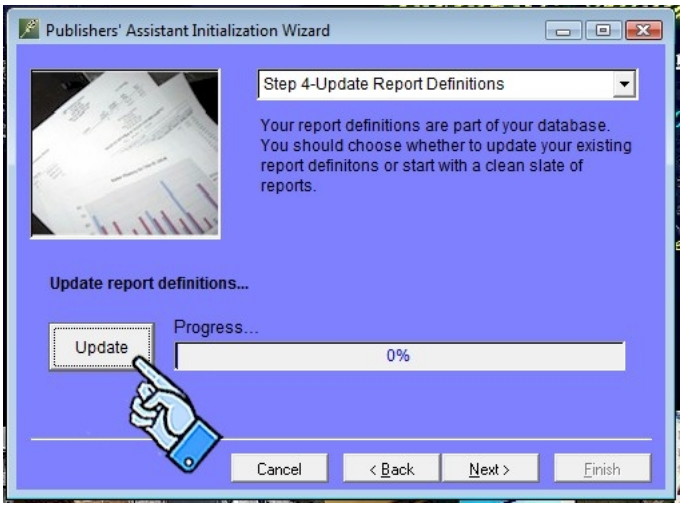
Notice that had you chosen a different location for your database, the new location of your data would be filled in here. Click "Next" to continue.



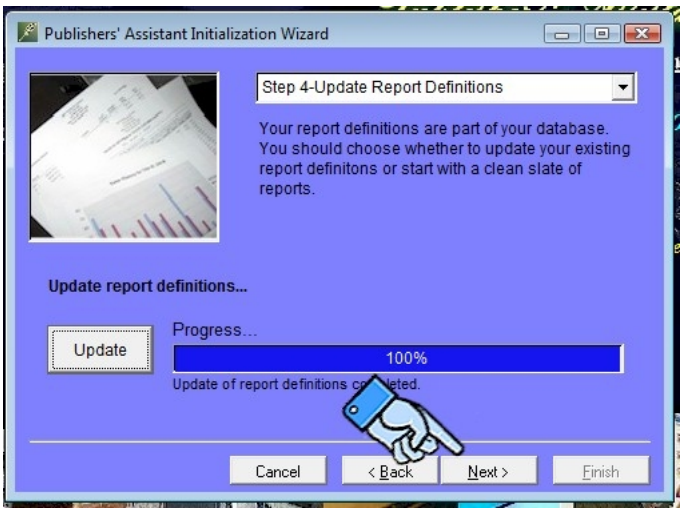
Since you just replaced the empty database with your old one, you need to update your report definitions. There are two parts to this. The first part is to copy the new report forms to your new home folder. Now, once again, the standard installation procedure does this for you. So, you may be able to skip this step. But since the wizard doesn't know whether you are initializing a new home folder or simply using the standard, it give you an opportunity to refresh your report forms here. Click on "Copy Reports" to copy the standard report forms to your home folder. When that is completed, click on "Next" to continue.



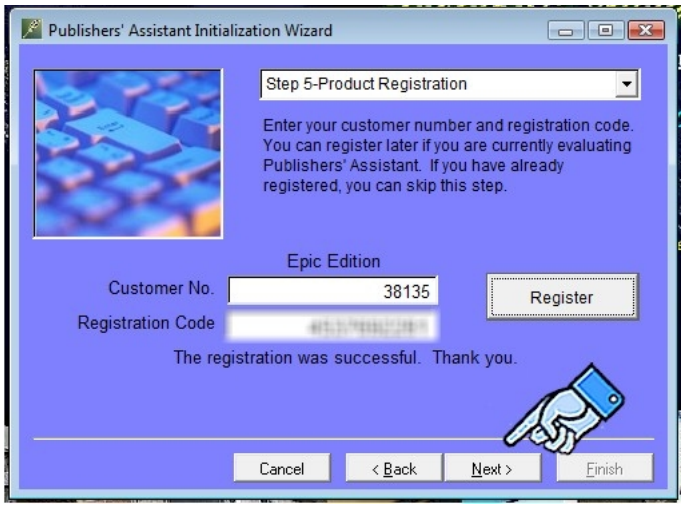
The second part of updating your reports is to update the report definitions. I'm sure that you remember that your report definitions are actually part of your data. That's what allows you to edit the reports. Click on "Update" to update your report definitions. This is a little different from previous versions. Sonnet users in particular will appreciate that many of the Sonnet reports are not appropriate for the Lyric and Epic Editions. This update will actually copy any non-standard reports from your old report definitions, and add them to a clean copy of the new report definitions. This will insure that those inappropriate Sonnet reports won't clutter up your report menus.



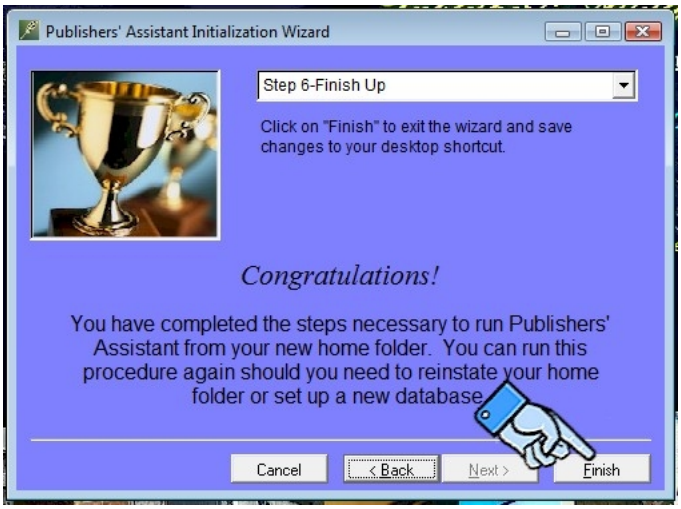
When completed, click on "Next" to continue.



We're still not done! When you reinitialized your home folder and copied your old database, you probably wiped out your registration information. So, the Initialization Wizard gives you a chance to register now. Enter the customer number and registration code you received from Upper Access. Click on "Register" to update your registration. Click on "Next" to continue.



Finally! You've completed the initialization process. Click on "Finish" to exit the wizard.



It's important to know that all of these steps could have been done manually. You could have moved your data using Windows Explorer. You can use the "Locate Database" wizard to relocate your data inside of PubAssist. You can also update your report definitions and forms from within PubAssist. And most of you know that you could have re-registered by using the PubAsssit Registration option on the Start menu. This wizard simply puts the whole thing together for you. I hope that you find it helpful.

Happy Publishing! And thanks for upgrading to Version 5.

Dealing with a "Variable REC_NO Not Found" Error

Last edited 2008-03-05 by Ron Lawrence

This article deals with an old version of Publishers' Assistant. If you see this error with a recent version of the software, please contact support.

Cause

With the release of Publishers' Assistant V4.0, the structure of the error log (ERROR.DBF) was changed. The REC_NO field was added. Users of PiiGS V2 and PiiGS for Windows who transferred their database into Publishers' Assistant may have wiped out the newly installed error log. The problem occurs only when logging an error so if you see this message, it is because another error occurred.

Solution

Move a newly structured error log file into your data directory. There is an empty ERROR.DBF and ERROR.FPT files in the "PubAssist\SampleData" sub folder. In a standard installation, this is:

C:\Program Files\PubAssist\SampleData

1. Use Windows Explorer to navigate to this folder. Find the ERROR.DBF and ERROR.FPT files.

2. Click with your mouse on the first file to highlight it, then hold the CTRL key while clicking on the second file. This will highlight both files for copying.

3. Type "CTRL+C" to copy the files to your clipboard.

4. Now navigate to the location of your data.

5. Type "CTRL+V" to past the files into your data folder. You will get a warning that the files already exist and a prompt asking whether you want to replace them. Click on "Yes to All".

6. Start Publishers' Assistant and try to recreate the situation that caused the error condition. This will verify that the problem with your error log has been solved, but will also allow you to see what your real problem was.

What are my sales?

Submitted by Ron Lawrence, December 15, 2009

Remember word problems in Algebra? My memories are not fond ones, but I did eventually figure out that word problems were teaching me a skill for turning what I wanted into numbers.

I guess that's why I became a systems analyst. Well, for nearly 20 years now, defining "Sales" for Publishers' Assistant users has been a challenge. Different users have different definitions, or so it seems. For some publishers, all invoices are sales. Most—not all—don't want to count consignment invoices. And for some, a book isn't sold until it's paid for. Even then we're not completely sure. That's why most distributors offer such horrendous terms. The recent addition of the "Transfer" terms to the customer order screen has introduced yet another new challenge for how we look at our sales history for useful information.

Understanding the Publishers' Assistant sales reports has been a challenge because *there is no simple definition* for "sales". There *might* be a fairly complex definition, and I'm going to offer one up here. I am also in the process of implementing some changes to the sales reports that will make use of this new definition. So, I'm hoping that this article will convey a clearer understanding to our users about the new sales reports. I'm also hoping that it will convey why such a simple concept has been so elusive.

So what do we consider "sold", anyway?

It turns out that there are several components to what we call "sales" in publishing. The most obvious and perhaps biggest chunk is:

- Books that are ordered and paid for immediately.

There aren't too many that would argue with that. A little less tangible, but close cousins are…

- Books that are ordered for which we expect payment shortly.

"Shortly" can mean up to 120 days. These are your "Net 30", "Net 60", "Net 90", and "Net 120" terms invoices. If your business doesn't offer terms over, say, 60 days, then you won't have any "Net 90" or "Net 120" day invoices.

Next, it's worth considering which books we *don't* want to count as sales. The list is long and includes the following:

- Books that are shipped on consignment
- Books that listed on a "Pro Forma" invoice
- Books that are "Transferred" to a warehouse
- Books that were sent out as review copies
- Books that are backordered

- Books that have been ordered but were cancelled later on
- Books that were discounted 100%

Whew! O.K. we're starting to get our arms around the situation, but what about those consignment sales? Eventually they are "sold", so we must add…

- Books shipped on "Consignment" that have been paid for

All of the previous exclusions apply to consignment books as well. But, we're not done yet. If we are to have an accurate and useful picture of "Sales", then we must deduct…

- Books that have been returned.

Now, we're getting close. So, "Sales" can be described as the following:

Sales = Books that are ordered and paid for immediately
+ Books that are ordered for which we expect payment "shortly"
+ Books shipped on "Consignment" that have been paid for
- Books that have been returned

And we want to *exclude* from "Sales":

•Books that are shipped on consignment (and not yet paid for)
•Books that are listed on "Pro Forma" invoices
•Books that are "Transferred" to a warehouse
•Books that were sent out as "Review Copies"
•Books that are backordered
•Books that have been ordered but cancelled
•Books that discounted 100%

Really, the above is not quite complete. We're not really after the number of books we've sold. We're after the amount of money that we have charged and expect to receive for the books that we have sold. So the quantities above must be multiplied by the prices we've charged for each item, less any discount (or deduction).

Anatomy of a Report

So, great! We have a working definition, if not a simple one, for "sales". Now let's put that definition to work in a report.

Long time users and those who are accustomed to using database products may know that Publishers' Assistant report definitions are based on queries written in SQL. For those who don't know, SQL stands for "Standard Query Language". Although it is implemented slightly differently across different database products, the standard holds up quite well across all of those products. Using SQL, you can gather data with the SELECT command. I won't go into all of the details of the SELECT command, but it's fairly readable. Since our users can

actually modify report definitions—including the SQL query—it seems worthwhile to relate our definition for “Sales” to a SQL query that will execute it.

The following is the query from a new “Title Sales by Discount” report. For current users, this report will replace the "Orders by Title (Consignment)", "Orders by Title (Non-Consignment)" and "Receipts by Title" reports.

It turns out that as long as we are going to all the trouble of implementing this definition of “Sales”, a few added considerations are in order which will present a more complete picture of our financial position. For example, in addition to knowing the amount of money we have charged for books that have been “sold”, it would be nice to know how much of that money we have already received. It is also good to get a handle on what proportion of our sales are discounted, and by what amount. So, the following query will list our sales by discount level.

Here we go:

SQL Query

```
SELECT ;
        UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;
        ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;
        1-(orders.discount+ordritem.discount)/100 AS rate, ;
        ordritem.quantity AS order_qty, ;
        orders.order_no, ;
        orders.invoice_no, ;
        orders.order_type, ;
        orders.shptocntct, ;
        orders.terms, ;
        orders.discount AS odiscount, ;
        orders.ship_date, ;
        ordritem.* ;
  FROM ordritem ;
    JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;
    JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;
  WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.order_type  = "C"  ;
        AND orders.order_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.terms NOT IN ("Consignment", "Pro Forma", "Review
Copy", "Transfer") ;
        AND orders.discount + ordritem.discount < 100 ;
        AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;
        AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;
        AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;
        <<select_str>> ;
UNION ;
```

```
SELECT ;
        UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;
        ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;
        itemrcpt.amount/itemrcpt.quantity/ordritem.price AS rate, ;
        SUM(itemrcpt.quantity) AS order_qty, ;
        orders.order_no, ;
        orders.invoice_no, ;
        orders.order_type, ;
        orders.shptocntct, ;
        orders.terms, ;
        orders.discount AS odiscount, ;
        receipt.recpt_date AS ship_date, ;
        ordritem.* ;
  FROM ordritem ;
    JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;
    JOIN itemrcpt ON itemrcpt.item_no = ordritem.item_no ;
    JOIN receipt ON receipt.receipt_no = itemrcpt.receipt_no ;
    JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;
  WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.order_type  = "C"  ;
        AND orders.order_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.terms = "Consignment" ;
        AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;
        AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;
        AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;
        <<select_str>> ;
  GROUP BY ordritem.item_no ;
UNION ;
SELECT ;
        UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;
        ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;
        1-(orders.discount+ordritem.discount)/100 AS rate, ;
        IIF(orders.terms="Consignment", 0, -ordritem.quantity) ;
                AS order_qty, ;
        orders.order_no, ;
        orders.invoice_no, ;
        orders.order_type, ;
        orders.shptocntct, ;
        orders.terms, ;
        orders.discount AS odiscount, ;
        orders.ship_date, ;
        ordritem.* ;
  FROM ordritem ;
    JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;
    JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;
  WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.order_type  = "R"  ;
```

```
        AND orders.order_no > 0 ;
        AND orders.terms != "Transfer" ;
        AND orders.discount + ordritem.discount < 100 ;
        AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;
        AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;
        AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;
        <<select_str>> ;
  ORDER BY 1, 2, 3 DESC ;
  INTO CURSOR sales
```

O.K. Stay with me here! Since our definition is complex, it stands to reason that the query will be complex as well. I hope this gives you a little appreciation for what Publishers' Assistant is doing for you. (It may also give you some insight into why its primary developer is so wacky!) When you break it down, however, it's really not that bad.

Let's try that so we can relate it back to our definition of "sales". For starters, our query is not just one SQL SELECT command, it's three. These three selections gather sales data from slightly different sources into the same structure so we can combine them and sort them. The first SELECT command gathers non-consignment "sales". The second gathers consignment sales that have been paid for. And the third SELECT command gathers returns.

The following table will juxtapose the query code with comments that relate to our definition.

Query Code	**Description**	**SELECT**
`SELECT ;`		The first SELECT gathers sales data for non-consignment invoices.
`UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;`	These fields are for sorting without regard to case	
`ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;`		
`1-(orders.discount+ordritem.discount)/100 AS rate, ;`	This is the effective discount also used for sorting	
`ordritem.quantity AS order_qty, ;`	These are various fields that will be useful for the report.	
`orders.order_no, ;`		
`orders.invoice_no, ;`		
`orders.order_type, ;`		
`orders.shptocntct, ;`		
`orders.terms, ;`		
`orders.discount AS odiscount, ;`		
`orders.ship_date, ;`		
`ordritem.* ;`	This pulls *all* fields associated	

	with the order item.	
FROM ordritem ;	Records taken from ordritem, orders, and title tables.	
JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;		
JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;		
WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;	Excludes blank items.	
AND orders.order_type = "C" ;	Selects only customer orders	
AND orders.order_no > 0 ;	Excludes blank orders.	
AND orders.terms NOT IN ("Consignment", "Pro Forma", "Review Copy", "Transfer") ;	Excludes Consignment, Pro Forma, Review Copy and Transfer orders	
AND orders.discount + ordritem.discount < 100 ;	Excludes items that are discounted 100%	
AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;	Date range for the reporting period	
AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;		
AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;	Excludes inventory corrections, backorders, and cancelled items.	
<<select_str>> ;	This token is where user provided selection criteria is added to the query	
UNION ;		
SELECT ;		The second SELECT gathers sales data for consignment items that have been paid for.
UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;	This must be the same list of fields as in the first SELECT.	
ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;		
itemrcpt.amount/ itemrcpt.quantity/ ordritem.price AS	Note that item receipt (paid) quantities are used rather than	

rate, ;	the order quantity.	
SUM(itemrcpt.quantity) AS order_qty, ;		
orders.order_no, ;	These are the same fields as above.	
orders.invoice_no, ;		
orders.order_type, ;		
orders.shptocntct, ;		
orders.terms, ;		
orders.discount AS odiscount, ;		
receipt.recpt_date AS ship_date, ;	Note that receipt dates are used rather than shipment dates.	
ordritem.* ;		
FROM ordritem ;	Records taken from ordritem, orders, and title tables, but items are tied to receipts and item receipts to indicate they are paid for.	
JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;		
JOIN itemrcpt ON itemrcpt.item_no = ordritem.item_no ;		
JOIN receipt ON receipt.receipt_no = itemrcpt.receipt_no ;		
JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;		
WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;	Excludes blank items.	
AND orders.order_type = "C" ;	Looking again at customer orders.	
AND orders.order_no > 0 ;	Excludes blank orders.	
AND orders.terms = "Consignment" ;	Now selecting ONLY Consignment orders.	
AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;		
AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;		

AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;	Exclude corrections, backorders, and cancelled items.	
<<select_str>> ;	User-provided selection criteria	
GROUP BY ordritem.item_no ;	Causes item receipt information to be summarized for each ordered item.	
UNION ;		
SELECT ;		The third SELECT gathers sales data from returns.
UPPER(LEFT(ordritem.title, 50)) AS Sort1, ;	Again, the same list of fields must be selected.	
ordritem.title_id AS Sort2, ;		
1-(orders.discount+ordritem.discount)/100 AS rate, ;		
IIF(orders.terms="Consignment", 0, -ordritem.quantity) AS order_qty, ;	Note that a negative order quantity is used. Consignment return quantities are ignored because they are not counted as sales when shipped.	
orders.order_no, ;		
orders.invoice_no, ;		
orders.order_type, ;		
orders.shptocntct, ;		
orders.terms, ;		
orders.discount AS odiscount, ;		
orders.ship_date, ;		
ordritem.* ;		
FROM ordritem ;	Records taken from ordritem, orders, and title tables.	
JOIN orders ON orders.order_key = ordritem.order_key ;		
JOIN title ON upper(title.title_id) == upper(ordritem.title_id) ;		
WHERE ordritem.item_no > 0 ;	Excludes blank items.	

`AND orders.order_type = "R" ;`	Selects only returns.	
`AND orders.order_no > 0 ;`	Excludes blank orders.	
`AND orders.terms != "Transfer" ;`	Excludes warehouse transfers.	
`AND orders.discount + ordritem.discount < 100 ;`	Excludes returned items that are discounted 100%	
`AND orders.ship_date >= m.start_date ;`	Selects returns received within the reporting period.	
`AND orders.ship_date <= m.end_date ;`		
`AND ordritem.item_state NOT IN ("A", "B", "X", "Y") ;`	Excludes corrections, backorders, and cancelled items.	
`<<select_str>> ;`	User-provided selection criteria	
`ORDER BY 1, 2, 3 DESC ;`	Sort all of these sales items by title, title_ID, and descengin discount rate.	These work across all three SELECTs.
`INTO CURSOR sales`	Collect selected items into a cursor called "Sales".	

Conclusions

Well, O.K. Maybe that's still more detail than most people want to look at. The point is that "Sales" has a pretty complex definition. Even if your business defines it slightly differently, this query should provide a good starting point to work from.

It's worth stating that it's usually a good idea to keep the concept of most reports as simple as possible. Traditionally, we've tried to maintain that philosophy. For example, reporting your non-consignment invoices *is a pretty good shot* at understanding your "sales"; but clearly, this has never been quite good enough. This new definition of sales takes a decidedly different approach. We are forgoing the simple for something that is more meaningful with a single glance.

There are some important new features in the Report Viewer in Version 5.1. Those new features will allow us to take this complex query and use it as a basis for other reports. Then if we want to tweak this report definition, the results will automatically be perpetuated to the other reports that use this data. The result should be better consistency between reports throughout Publishers' Assistant.

Why Not Just Use QuickBooks?

by Steve Carlson, Upper Access Publishing, Inc.

New publishers often start out with over-the-counter business software such as QuickBooks™ or PeachTree™. This may be a good choice early on, when inventory consists of boxes of books in the garage and each day produces a handful of orders to invoice and ship.

But as time goes on, the limitations become increasingly apparent. Although every publishing company is different, here are a few issues that often come up:

- You may find that your software isn't producing the kinds of invoices Baker & Taylor wants, or the kinds of monthly statements Ingram requests, or the detailed histories needed to collect past-due bills from Borders or other large customers.

- You may find that your software can't properly track consignment accounts like Amazon Advantage or Quality Books, let alone the sales, returns, and reserves reported by an exclusive trade distributor such as Midpoint or PGW.

- You may get an inquiry from a college or state agency that needs a pro forma invoice before finalizing its big order of your books.

- Many publishers start with books they have written themselves, so royalties are not a concern, but then take on other authors on a royalty basis. At that point, you'll need precise records of sales, shipment, and receipts for each title. All invoices and receipts will have to be produced in a "smart" manner, so that your software will know exactly which books are sold or paid for, in a way consistent with your author contracts.

- As publishers grow, they often contract with sales reps. These may be traditional regional reps who sell to the trade, or they may be friends or fellow publishers who sell your books from their Web sites or other outlets. Your software will need to produce reports computing their commissions, with enough detail to show that you are being accountable to them.

- You may find you need quicker, easier ways to crunch numbers for business analysis. Exactly how many direct sales did you get from each of the ads, or the radio interviews, or the Book Sense Advance Access program, the Google Ad Words, etc. Which specific promotions have been cost effective, and which have been duds? To run your business efficiently, you'll need to be able to answer those questions at any time, with just a few keystrokes.

- Publishers' needs for contact management are different from those of other businesses. They need to hone down specific lists of reviewers for each title, based on the subject matter and other issues. They need to keep track of which customers bought which books, for mailings (or e-mail) when the next title from that series comes out.
- Keeping track of inventory can become tricky, particularly when some of the books are in the warehouses of your consignment customers. At any given point, you may need to know exactly how many copies of each book are available at each location. And in April (if that's when you fill out your taxes), you may need to know exactly how many copies of each book you had back on December 31. In other words, inventory tracking needs to be date-sensitive.

- You may need to keep track of subscriptions for a newsletter or e-zine, or standing orders for an annual directory or series of books.

The list goes on. But the point is, the over-the-counter programs are made to be useful for caterers, plumbers, wedding singers, and birthday clowns. Book publishing is a different kind of business. All of the large publishers, and most of the successful small houses, use business software that meets the specific needs of our industry.

Incidentally, don't throw away your copy of QuickBooks. You'll still want to use it for some of the standard functions that are, indeed, common to all types of business. Managing your checkbook, for example, and handling your payables that are not specific to publishing, and producing certain reports you'll need for taxes. You may want to use QuickBooks to compute your payroll. Publishers' Assistant, like most other industry-specific software programs, does not try to do the things that generic software programs do very well. In fact, we make it easy to export data from Publishers' Assistant to QuickBooks, to avoid any need for duplicate data entry.

But to meet the specific demands of our unique industry, you need industry-specific software. We've been a leading developer of business software for publishers since 1989, and in that time, we don't know of a single publisher who has considered going back to depending on generic business software. We can help your business to grow, and, in the process, we can provide software that grows with your business.

Why Choose Publishers' Assistant?

Publishers' Assistant is business management software that was designed specifically for the publishing industry. That means that you'll be dealing with software and people who understand the business of publishing. We've been offering solutions to publishers since 1989. If you have a question about how to handle a business situation, help — real help — is just a phone call away.

While you enter your invoices, Publishers' Assistant takes care of logging any and all liabilities that are associated with that sale — including royalty fees, consignment costs, and commissions. Royalty and consignment contracts can get complicated. PubAssist handles them, and you'll know what you owe your authors and suppliers at any time.

Paying your authors, suppliers, and sales representatives is as simple as running a report. If you have several liability accounts, the Lyric and Epic editions of PubAssist can automatically pay off all your accounts with a single transaction! You can spend your time dealing with exceptions — rather than the grind of entering each and every payment.

When you are dealing with major book distributors and retailers, life can get complicated in a hurry. For example, distributors frequently demand 120 days to pay, yet take credit for returns immediately, and sometimes withhold funds as a further hedge against returns. PubAssist gives you the tools to stay in control! You'll know how much inventory your distributor or retailer has, as well as exactly what they owe you at all times.

With the additional new capabilities of Couplet™ you'll be able to manage your title data in one place. That means that you can eliminate the duplicate efforts needed to keep your web site and your trading partners up to date.

Publishers' Assistant will also help you to stay on top of your marketing efforts. You'll know who your reviewers are. You can track which books you've sent them and when. You'll be able to track which marketing efforts are paying off the most.

With features like an open-ended reporting environment, support for the ONIX International Standard, a date-sensitive inventory system, industry-specific liability accounting, and interfaces to popular tools like Quickbooks and UPS Online WorldShip, Publishers' Assistant provides you with a complete arsenal to meet the challenges of today's publishing industry.

If this sounds good to you, give us a call:

802-222-0112

Publishers' Assistant™
Business software developed exclusively for publishers.

It's About Selling More Books!

Working with Distributors

By Ron Lawrence April 9, 2010

I've received many calls over the years from publishers who are overwhelmed by their situation when working with a distributor. It's not much wonder. The terms that most distributors offer are horrendous. To be fair, the returns rate is so high in the publishing industry that distributors have had to protect themselves. Consequently, as with most things concerning books, its the publisher that is generally left holding the bag.

If you haven't yet been dealing with a distributor, here's what you can expect:

- You will ship your books to your distributor at their request and you will likely pay the shipping.
- Your distributor will generally pay you 120 days *after they sell your book.*
- But, they will take immediate credit for returns.
- Frequently, your distributor will hold back some portion of what they owe you as a further hedge against returns.
- The distributor may also charge you for warehouse space and marketing expenses.

So, when you finally receive a check from your distributor, it becomes really difficult to know what those funds are actually paying for. As a publisher, it's your responsibility to accuratly account for your sales so you can pay an appropriate royalty to your authors. With many systems, you have to resign yourself to paying those royalties when you ship the product, or you have to lie to your accounting system because the shipment to your distributor is not a real receivable--at least not until they say that they have actually sold something. These are not good options.

Publishers' Assistant, however, has solved this problem--neatly and reliably. We do this through the multi-warehousing functions we've added to the customer order screen. Specifically, we've given you the ability to…

1. track inventory in any number of locations (or warehouses),
2. ship books to a specific location without creating a receivable, and
3. specify on an invoice, the location from where the books are shipped.

Here's how it works...

You begin when your distributor places an order. You enter the order into Publishers' Assistant like any other order. However, you set the terms to "Transfer". This is a signal to the customer order screen that the order should not create a receivable. In other words, the customer (your distributor) will show nothing charged to their account yet. The "Transfer" terms is also a signal to move the books out of your local inventory and into your distributors location. In Publishers' Assistant, a location or a warehouse, is simply a contact. That's why it's necessary for you to specify an "owner contact" for yourself. The owner contact is simply the local

warehouse. So, when you have completed this step, your inventory history will show a movement of the books ordered out of your location and into your distributor's location. Eventually, your distributor's efforts have resulted in lots of sales, and they start sending you monthly reports. The first report may show that they have sold 20 copies of title "A", 14 copies of title "B" and 32 copies of title "C", etc. No money yet. You have to wait a 120 days for the first check. But, your distributor has committed to selling those titles, and they no longer have them in their inventory. So, it's time to create a receivable by entering an invoice for those sales.

You enter *another* invoice for the distributor. You list only the books and quantities that they have *sold*. Make sure you assign the appropriate discount for your distributor. This time, the terms should be set to "Net 120 Days". This will charge the distributors account for the order total. You also want to specify the distributor as the "Ship From" location at the bottom of the customer order screen. This will cause the inventory to be shipped out of their location—*not yours*. As a result of this invoice, your distributors account will have a balance, and their inventory will be appropriately depleted. **You know exactly what they owe you and what books they have left!** But, we're not finished.

Over the next few months, you receive similar reports, but now you begin to see some returns. You will need to enter an invoice for each report—all with "Net 120 days" terms. You may choose to either net the returns out of the books sold for the invoice, or you can log the returns seperately. A return logged seperately will debit the distributors account and require you to apply those funds to something that was sold, so my inclination would be to simply net the numbers out in the invoice. In either case, you need to make sure that the books are returned to your distributor's location—*not yours*.

Finally, after four months, you receive a report with a check. This check is not likely to be for the amount that they owe you. It may not relate to much of anything at all on the current report. *But, it sure does count against what they owe you.* So, log the receipt against the account. Do not try to attribute the receipt to any particular invoice.

Here's the beauty of this: When you log the receipt against the account, you will be asked to apply those funds to the items that were previously sold. It might be quite a list. However, because whatever you get paid at this point is trailing what your distributor actually owes you, you can safely assume that ***the funds you receive are for the oldest items sold.*** Thus, you can automatically apply funds to items and let the amounts fall where they may. I like to check the results to see if there are any rounding errors to get rid of, but that's a minor task.

Now, there may be some new charges or "credits" on these reports as well. Perhaps the distributor is charging you for warehouse space or some marketing effort that included your books. If these are line items on your monthly report, your distributor is assuming a credit to their account. So, you should log these credits as receipts in Publishers' Assistant for the exact amount of the credit. These credit receipts can be applied to the oldest items just like the checks. Make sure you choose an appropriate receipt type to distinguish these from actual income.

You could log each credit line item individually and comment on each one. I think a better course is to log a single receipt for all credits on the report. As time goes on, you'll develop a pattern of an invoice, a "credit" receipt, and a receipt for an actual check each month from your distributor. When your distributor orders more books, you log another "Transfer" order. If they return books to you, you log a "Transfer" return. If you keep up with your reports and orders in this fashion, **you will always have an accurate accounting of what your distributor still owes you and how many books they have in their inventory.**

Closing

Now, I have had some publishers say to me, *"I don't need to do this. My distributor sends me all this information in reports every month."* To that I say, *"Well then, what is it you actually log into your accounting system? How do you know what to pay your authors and when?"*

That's when I usually find out that they are using an Excel spreadsheet to figure out their royalties anyway. What's more, it has happened that a distributor has gone out of business. How dependent are you on the accuracy of their reports? ***How dependent do you want to be?***

One other final point. The main reason that distributors offer these terms to begin with is because they don't have a system that actually **calculates their liabilities based on when they get paid**.

You do! You might want to share that bit of information with your distributor. If you can get them to use PubAssist, life will probably be a lot happier for both of you.

Questions and Answers

About Publishers' Assistant

The following pages are emails with questions from users and prospective users about Publishers' Assistant, what it is, how to use it, and how to take care of problems that arise.

Consignment Invoices vs. Warehouse Transfers

Gary of New City Press recently asked the following:

From: Gary
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2009 10:19 AM
To: 'Ron Lawrence' Cc: 'NCP Accounting' Subject: consigment invoices

Ron,
Quick question: Could you give me a picture of how PA handles invoices that have "Consignment" as terms?

I'm assuming that the number of books entered in these invoices will no longer be "available" to sell to anyone else, correct?

More importantly, do we rightly assume that no COGS will be calculated for these invoices and that consequently nothing will change, for example, in the "approximate cost" column of the "Available Inventory Status" report?

Anything else we would need to be aware of?

Thanks.

Gary

From: Ron Lawrence Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2009 8:15 AM
To: Gary
Subject: RE: consigment invoices

Hi Gary,

Consignment Invoices

Consignment invoices act like normal ("Net 30") invoices except that when they ship inventory, it is moved to the consignment customer's location. The invoice creates a receivable—just like a Net 30 invoice. The Consignment terms are for customers who typically request books but don't expect to pay for them until THEY get paid. Amazon.com is a perfect example.

The real difference shows up when you get paid. You will log a receipt and typically pay for items that may appear on multiple invoices. When you apply funds to those specific items,

they are removed from “consignment” status at the customers location. Through this mechanism, you can maintain a picture of not only how many books you have on your own shelf, but how many are on your consignment customer’s shelf as well.

Warehouse Transfers

Recently, we’ve added a new, but similar, mechanism for handling distributors. It’s tempting to use for traditional consignment customers as well. When you ship books to them, the terms on the invoice should be set to “Transfer”. This performs an inventory transfer of items from your location to the ship to contact’s location. There is NO receivable logged for the invoice—no charge to the billing contact. You have simply moved books to their location.
Now when the distributor sends you a report, you log a new invoice for the books they say they have sold. This will be a normal “Prepaid”,or, more typically, a “Net 120” invoice. At the bottom of the invoice screen, you can specify that the books are shipped out of THEIR location—not yours. This new invoice will of course create a receivable for the billing contact. The nice thing is that the receivable is real. The consignment receivable is questionable, because you don’t know when those books will actually sell.

The “Transfer” invoice is particularly handy because it takes the guesswork out of the horrendous terms you typically get with a distributor (i.e. Net 120 days for sales, but immediate credit for returns, and some percentage they hold back as a further hedge against returns) By the time you actually do get paid from a distributor, it’s hard to know what to apply those funds to. Using the above procedure, you ALWAYS invoice and ship what they say they have sold. So, you ALWAYS know exactly what they have left on the shelf. Then you can confidently apply the payment you receive (whatever the amount) to the oldest invoices—since these are books that they have said that they sold sometime in the past. So, you ALWAYS know exactly what they owe you. Life is good. :-)

Effect on Inventory, Inventory Value and COGS

In both of these scenarios, the shipped items will no longer be available in local inventory for sale to other customers. The “Available Inventory Status” report shows what you have in each warehouse location. So, items from the “Transfer” scenario will appear in this report, but will not be available for sale unless you specifically select to ship out of that warehouse location.

There is a similar “Consignment Inventory Status” report that will list the books that are still in inventory at Consignment locations. This distinction of “Consignment” inventory versus “Available” inventory at another warehouse is very fine. It’s there because the consignment invoice was developed long ago and continues to be used by many PubAssist users; but there is really not much difference between the two.

In both reports, the approximate cost will be based on the quantities reported. The COGS report is similar, but based on inventory that has been “Released” or sold.

Hope that helps,

Ron

Updates to the Database

Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 3:42 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: shipitem.dbf missing

Hi Ron,

I'm checking with you on an error message I got in PA. I think things are OK, but I thought I'd ask just to be on the safe side.

Yesterday afternoon Chuck installed 5.1d on our computers, and it seemed to work fine (importing a batch of online orders). But just after he left (of course) I was packing the files after running the duplicate contact program, and got this message:

> **"Error in PA_PACK:**
> **File 'c.'\users\nancy\documents\pubassistdate\shipitem.dbf**
> **does not exist"**

I clicked OK, then got

> **"shipitem.dbf is missing. Do you wish to create a new copy?"**

I said "yes"

I have since processed a batch of imported invoices, and a batch I entered manually, and all seemed to work well.

Thanks,

Nancy

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 4:08 PM
Subject: RE: shipitem.dbf missing

Yep. There has been an update to the database to accommodate the new ***Advance Shipment Notification*** EDI function.

Ron

Questions from a New Prospective User

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Friday, October 21, 2011 2:20 PM
Subject: RE: Questions regarding Publishers' Assistant

??? REGARDING NEW SOFTWARE

My answers to your questions are in RED below...

General:

1) Multiple users invoicing (not just working in the program) at the same time *(minimum of 2; preferably 3)*?

> As an Epic user, you will have a license for up to 6 users. All functions will be available to all users. A few functions (e.g. packing files and recalculating liabilities) require exclusive access.

2) Written for 32 bit or 64 bit? Will Carolyn need to get a 64 bit computer?

> 32 bit. Version 5 was packaged with considerations for Vista. It will work under Windows 7 as
> well.

Setting up accounts:

1) Does the system automatically assign an acct # or do we have the ability to assign our own #'s, using both alpha and numeric data?

> Both. Contacts are assigned an internally generated contact number. However, you can optionally assign a contact ID to some or all of your contacts.

2) Do "individual" customers have to be assigned an acct # or is it possible to simply have a database of "individuals" that have ordered before that will come up with that customer's address & basic info when accessed?

> PubAssist doesn't distinguish between individuals and other organizations. Everyone is a contact—regardless of their relationship with you. Authors, customers, sales representatives, even you as the owner are all contacts.
>
> Finding a contact will entail entering a few characters into the Company, Last Name, Zip Code, and Contact ID fields. Generally it takes just a few characters limit the existing entries to identify the contact you are looking for.

3) Is there a way for us to indicate whether the acct is for a bookstore, a distributor, a ministry, etc? We need something that will allow us to differentiate the type of acct for mailings. (Anybooks has a place where we can assign a one-letter code. This code is then used to sort for mailings.)

> Publishers' Assistant uses customer codes to allow you to categorize contacts. Several reports allow you to select contacts by customer and/or marketing codes. You can assign an unlimitednumber of codes to a contact.

4) Is there a place to write notes on the customer database screen that relate to that specific customer? Is there unlimited space for those notes?

> Most entities tracked in PubAssist (e.g. contacts, orders, receipts, payments, etc. have a comment field. Comments associated with contacts are generally private in nature. Comments on orders, by contrast, are printed on the invoice.

5) Is there a place to enter the telephone # and email address on the customer screen?

> There are many attributes associated with a contact. Among them are two phone numbers, an email field and a web URL. For promotional purposes, you can also specify a biography and photograph via Couplet.

6) Can several accounts (with different shipping addresses) be attached to the same billing account by applying a common bill group #? (Ingram accts, Amazon accts, STL, etc)

> Yes. In fact, the customer order screen will prompt you for the shipping address first. This saves you lots of keystrokes. If you have associated a separate billing address with the shipping contact selected, the billing address will be filled in automatically. You can see this demonstrated in our tutorials.

Inventory:

1) Can each item be assigned a unique 3 or 4 digit item # that combines both alpha and numeric data? (i.e. A301)

> Titles are identified by a Title ID which can be up to 20 characters long.

2) Can you easily check current inventory available for an item when talking with a customer or preparing an invoice?

> While in the customer order screen, you can hit the F2 key when in the item quantity field and get the inventory status for that item. PubAssist will also warn you if the item you are selling puts you below a previously specified safety stock. Items that are not in stock will be backordered.

Invoicing:

1) Can items be invoiced by simply entering the 3 or 4 digit item # mentioned above? Will doing this enter all the necessary info for that item on the invoice (title, full ISBN, retail price)?

> Yes. In addition, if you do not remember the title ID, you can hit F2 to be assisted by a Title Search function. This allows you to look up titles using a variety of attributes. (e.g. Keywords, ISBN, etc.)

2) Does the invoice have a place to clearly display the customer's PO#, the shipping method, and the billing terms?

> Yes to all.

3) Can you manually type in additional line items on the invoice for product that we do not normally carry or for special fees/credits?

> You can add new inventory items on the fly while entering an invoice, or you can enter what we call an "Open item". To do this, you simply begin the title ID with an asterisk ("*"). This will allow you to fill in the title and remaining fields on your own.

4) Is there a place where we can type in special notes at the bottom of the invoice if needed (that will show up on the printed invoice like Anybks "add/edit" feature)?

> This would be the Comment field in PubAssist. You can also add comments to individual items.

5) Can you create pro forma invoices?

> Yes.

6) Is there an "email export" feature so that invoices and monthly statements can be emailed to a customer?

> Generally, I use a PDF driver for this. No special export is needed.

7) Can you run a "filter" of some kind that will allow you to find and scroll through all invoices for a specific customer

> Yes. You simply find existing invoices by "customer" on the menu system.

8) Can you do a "search" based on varied info that you have (i.e. acct#, bill name, ship to address, PO#, ship via, accts w/ credit only, etc).

You can select existing invoices in a variety of ways…
If you are referring to reports—rather than selecting invoices for data entry—the customer order selection screen looks like this…

9) Can you invoice books on a consignment basis?

Yes. You will also find some other very helpful terms for working with distributors.

Payments:

1) Can one payment be easily applied to multiple invoices and credit memos?

Yes.

2) Is there a place to enter credit card information on the invoice screen? Will it later encrypt the credit card info?

Credit card information is posted on the "receipt" (customer payment) transaction. The credit card information, however, is also saved to the customer's profile so it can be easily retrieved when they next make a payment. Encryption is optional. Both the receipt transactions and customer profiles are encrypted.

3) Is there a place to indicate the payment method (cash, check, card, EFT, etc?)

These are attributes of the ***receipt*** transaction.

More Questions from a New User

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Friday, November 04, 2011 10:02 AM
Subject: RE: A Few more questions

Hi David,

Let me answer your questions below…

Ron

Sent: Friday, November 04, 2011 9:23 AM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: A Few more questions

Ron,
I have a few more questions.

1. We run two databases, one for Publications and one for Distribution. How would we handle that in Publishers Assistant?

   You can run as many different databases as you need. To do so, simply use the "Locate Database" option on the "File" menu. You can create a new database in a new location using this wizard.

   However, I would caution you to carefully consider whether you SHOULD set up separate databases. The answer generally lies in whether you need to separate the reporting for tax purposes. Maintaining separate databases means that you will need to look in two places to put together information on your overall business. You will have to look in two places to understand your receivables, for example. If your publishing and distribution businesses have some of the same customers, it means that you will have to switch databases to enter certain transactions.

   If these are not really two completely separate businesses, I generally do NOT recommend using separate databases.

2. Can we set up different categories in inventory for the same title – one designating qty on hand in good condition and another designating qty on hand in unusable condition (returns/slightly damaged to be sold at 50% discount)?

   The inventory system tracks the condition of the books that are transferred. There are essentially three conditions that are tracked: Good, Damaged, and Unusable. This is generally done by specifying the condition in the Order Item screen on an order (That's

the column marked “C” in the heading), or by setting the condition in an inventory correction transaction.

3. Does the program calculate and add Late Charges to the account balance?

   No. You can add a late charge as an item to an invoice, but this calculation is not automated.

4. Other than the online Videos what other training do you have and is there a cost involved?

   I have a variety of webinars prepared. You can view them on the web site. There are also many help articles on the web site. The web site is intended to facilitate finding help fairly quickly—though I admit that there are many holes to fill. There always have been and there probably always will. That’s one of the reasons we offer the support subscription. It allows you to call whenever you have a question.

   I mentioned the webinars, but while there has been plenty of interest, getting people together for a scheduled online presentation has been a problem. If you would like to schedule some training, it can be conducted online. These prepared webinars have a standing cost per person. But we can also discuss training that may be more tailored to your needs as well.

5. What would be the cost to have you convert our existing Anybook Database and exactly what information gets converted and transferred over?

   I can’t remember if I already provided you with this information. We want to help people convert to PubAssist, so I offer a conversion service that caps my time at 4 hours ($480). That would only include the conversion of titles and contacts. I have detailed information on the AnyBook database from Ron Waters, but I haven’t yet taken a close look at it. It may very well be that converting titles and contacts can happen in much less time using Couplet. But it will cost no more.

   Note that this does NOT include the conversion of invoices. We generally don’t recommend attempting to convert your sales history. That’s because the cost generally far outweighs the benefit. For all the times that you might actually need to look back in your sales history, it generally makes more sense to simply keep your old system available for a period of time. Choose a cut-off date. Anything before that date, simply refer to the old system. You can begin your sales history in PubAssist by entering a beginning balance invoice for any open accounts you have at the time you switch over.

6. We will be saving the database(s) on a Windows 2008 R2 Foundation Server and mapping to them. Is this a problem?

   No. That’s the expected configuration.

Thanks

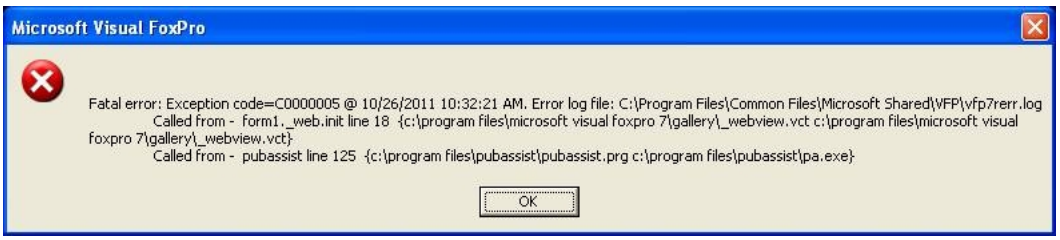
Davy

Hope these answers are helpful to you.
Best wishes,
Ron

Internet Explorer is Needed Even If You Don't Use It

From: Gary
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 10:44 AM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: error message

Ron,
Once in a while, when loading PA, I get this message:



When I try the second time, it usually works, so not a big deal.
But is it a sign of anything?

Thanks.
Gary

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 11:47 AM
To: Gary
Subject: RE: error message

Hi Gary,

This is from the message board that displays when you get into PubAssist. It looks like, occasionally, your system is not happy initiating a browser session. There might be more information in the error log that is cited in the error message. Would you send me that error log?

I'm not sure there is much I can do. There is a system-wide option to turn that feature off, but it means that you will be missing out on the messages and update notifications. It also doesn't take care of the underlying problem. It simply avoids it.

If it were me, I would be looking for updates to my browser and/or Internet Explorer. Even if IE is not your normal browser, Windows assumes that IE is available and functioning. You might also look for Windows updates. This is a fatal error—which means that Windows didn't know how to handle it.

Hope that helps,

Ron

From: Gary
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2011 9:29 AM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: RE: error message

Thanks, Ron.

The file is attached.
I'll look into IE updates.

Gary

```
Fatal error: Exception code=C0000005 @ 10/26/2011 10:32:21 AM.
Error log file: C:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\
VFP\vfp7rerr.log
Called from - form1._web.init line 18 {c:\program files\
microsoft visual foxpro 7\gallery\_webview.vct c:\program files\
microsoft visual foxpro 7\gallery\_webview.vct}
Called from - pubassist line 125 {c:\program files\pubassist\
pubassist.prg c:\program files\pubassist\pa.exe}

Fatal error: Exception code=C0000005 @ 10/27/2011 9:24:36 AM.
Error log file: C:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\
VFP\vfp7rerr.log
Called from - form1._web.init line 18 {c:\program files\
microsoft visual foxpro 7\gallery\_webview.vct c:\program files\
microsoft visual foxpro 7\gallery\_webview.vct}
Called from - pubassist line 125 {c:\program files\pubassist\
pubassist.prg c:\program files\pubassist\pa.exe}
```

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2011 10:43 AM

To: Gary
Subject: RE: error message

Actually, that was somewhat helpful. I've done a little more reading on the control I used for this function. It depends on Internet Explorer as I surmised. So, I still think the resolution is likely to be ***making sure Internet Explorer is happy on your machine.***

Ron

Multiple Warehouses: Where is my inventory?

From: Eugene
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2011 1:40 PM
To: Anne
Subject: Publisher's Assistant

Dear Anne,

Greetings!

Sarah of CSPA referred me to you. She says you use Publisher’s Assistant. We are considering using it. I hope you may be able to tell me how it works for you. It would help to know how many titles you deal with and how many distributors you send inventory to and whether you have books on consignment and track them through PA.
Thanks for any information you can provide regarding the suitability of PA in real life business,

Eugene

From: Anne
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2011 12:33 PM
To: Eugene
Subject: RE: Publisher's Assistant

Greetings from sunny Puerto Vallarta!
I’m on vacation this week, but am checking emails today. We have used Publishers Assistant since 2006 and love it. And they keep upgrading the functionality. We have all of our titles on there as well as additional products we sell. Royalties are calculated at a click of a button. All consignment sales are also managed through PA. I’m sure that Ron from Publishers Assistant would be happy to talk you through some of the functions that you are particularly looking for. I have found that on the few times I have needed assistance, they are very responsive. If you need any other information, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Anne

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2011 6:04 AM

To: Eugene
Subject: RE: Publisher's Assistant

Hi Eugene,

Anne copied me on her response to you. I can tell you that the number of titles you have should not be an issue. We are working with one distributor who has some 25,000 titles in their PubAssist database.

Also, PubAssist is particularly well suited to deal with both consignment sales and sales through distributors. There is a specific article for dealing with distributors on our web site:

http://www.pubassist.com/articles/Distributors.asp

Hope that helps,
Ron Lawrence
Publishers' Assistant
Check out our new Training Webinars
www.pubassist.com
Ph: 800-310-8716, Local: 802-899-2276

From: Eugene
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 5:30 PM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: RE: Publisher's Assistant

Thanks Ron!

I have worked with PA a bit today and am trying to figure out why 1,000 books I received does not appear on the warehouse report. It appears on the Available Inventory History report, but not on the warehouse. I want to be able to see all our inventory on a single report, whether it is a “Transfer” or actual inventory we have in the home warehouse. I am grateful for your guidance. We are still trying to determine whether PA will work for us. We hope it will. Still trying to figure out how it works under different scenarios. I believe I have watched all the tutorials but some things not included.

Eugene

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 6:23 PM

To: Eugene
Subject: RE: Publisher's Assistant

Hi Eugene,

All of your transfer inventory should show up on your Available Inventory Status report. If it does not, I would go back to the transfer order. Make sure that your warehouse is specified as the Ship To address.

The following is a snapshot of a sample Available Inventory Status report that shows a title in multiple locations…

Available Inventory Status As of 11/2/2011

Title ID	Title	Location	Good Condition	Damaged Condition	Retail Value	Aprox. Cost
1.09L	PIIGS PROGRAM, V 1.09	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	0	0	$0.00	$0.00
226*2	LOW-TAX DREAM HOUSE (SALE	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	0	0	$0.00	$0.00
226*3	HERBS OF THE EARTH: A	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	46	0	$595.70	$80.50
226*3	HERBS OF THE EARTH: A	MIDPOINT TRADE BOOKS,	12	0	$155.40	$21.00
226*3	HERBS OF THE EARTH: A	MIDPOINT TRADE BOOKS	18	0	$233.10	$31.50
226*8	LETTERS--HARDBACK EDITION	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	30	0	$478.50	$45.00
226*M	CARING FOR THE DEAD: YOUR	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	156	0	$2340.00	$0.00
226-1	CARING FOR YOUR OWN DEAD	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	0	0	$0.00	$0.00
226-2	YOUR LOW-TAX DREAM HOUSE	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	4	160	$2123.80	$328.00
226-3	HERBS OF THE EARTH (PBK)	UPPER ACCESS, INC.,	0	0	$0.00	$0.00

Before you ask, in this case, there are two different Midpoint locations where books were shipped. The differences in the addresses don't show up in the small space allotted in this report. But clearly, you can see that inventory for title ID 225*3 is listed for three different locations.

Hope that helps,

Ron

Why is Unpaid Quantity Negative?

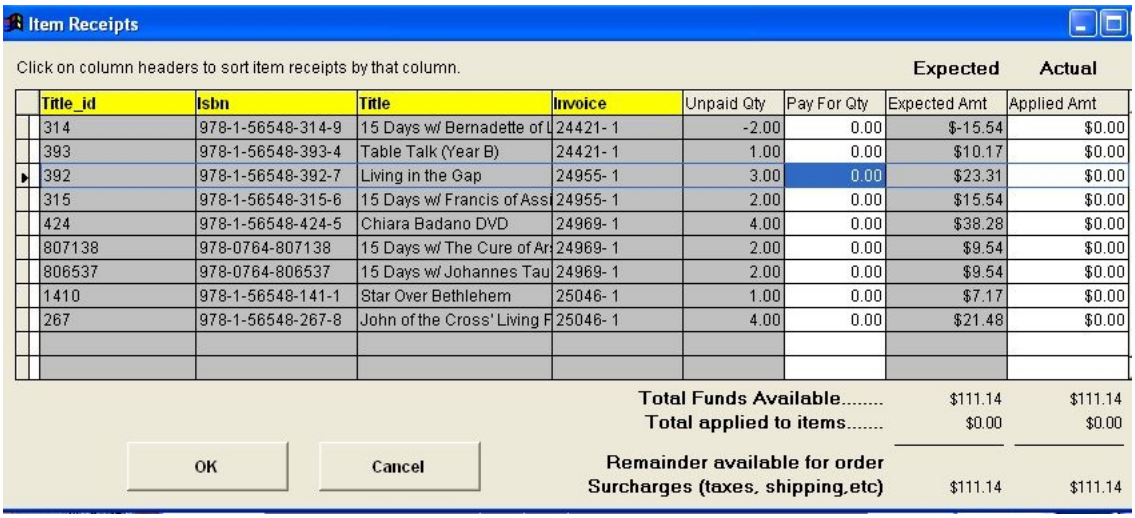
From: New City Press
Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2011 5:42 PM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Cc: 'NCP Accounting'
Subject: Question on receipts screen

Hi Ron,

We hope that things are going well for you. Something does not add up for us on the Receipts screen. (see picture). Can you please let us know what causes an Unpaid Qty to show a negative value? Thanks and hope to hear from you soon.

Regards,

Maria,
Accounting Office
New City Press



Item Receipts

Click on column headers to sort item receipts by that column.

Title_id	Isbn	Title	Invoice	Unpaid Qty	Pay For Qty	Expected Amt	Applied Amt
314	978-1-56548-314-9	15 Days w/ Bernadette of U	24421- 1	-2.00	0.00	$-15.54	$0.00
393	978-1-56548-393-4	Table Talk (Year B)	24421- 1	1.00	0.00	$10.17	$0.00
392	978-1-56548-392-7	Living in the Gap	24955- 1	3.00	0.00	$23.31	$0.00
315	978-1-56548-315-6	15 Days w/ Francis of Assi	24955- 1	2.00	0.00	$15.54	$0.00
424	978-1-56548-424-5	Chiara Badano DVD	24969- 1	4.00	0.00	$38.28	$0.00
807138	978-0764-807138	15 Days w/ The Cure of Ar	24969- 1	2.00	0.00	$9.54	$0.00
806537	978-0764-806537	15 Days w/ Johannes Tau	24969- 1	2.00	0.00	$9.54	$0.00
1410	978-1-56548-141-1	Star Over Bethlehem	25046- 1	1.00	0.00	$7.17	$0.00
267	978-1-56548-267-8	John of the Cross' Living F	25046- 1	4.00	0.00	$21.48	$0.00

	Expected	Actual
Total Funds Available.....	$111.14	$111.14
Total applied to items.....	$0.00	$0.00
Remainder available for order		
Surcharges (taxes, shipping,etc)	$111.14	$111.14

OK Cancel

Hi Maria,

The original item may have been entered with a negative quantity—which is perfectly legitimate. It simply means that the item was a return. This is a convenient way to track returns for an account where you have regular orders and returns.

The other alternative is that another receipt has paid for more of that item than was previously unpaid—creating negative unapplied funds. (Yuck!) In that case, you'll probably want to find the overpayment. The "Item Receipts" report in the Receivables Reports menu will help.

ITEM RECEIPTS (Detail)

For Sales

1/1/2011 To 12/2/2011

					Order Qty	Paid Qty	Order Amount	Paid Amount	Balance Due
Title ID CONVERSION		ISBN		Title Data conversion to PubAssist format					
Item No.	610	Invoice#	62666- 1	Date 11/18/2011	3.00	0.00	$360.00	$0.00	$360.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
Item No.	611	Invoice#	62667- 1	Date 11/18/2011	4.00	4.00	$480.00	$480.00	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
				Totals for CONVERSIO	7.00	4.00	$840.00	$480.00	$360.00
Title ID REPORT		ISBN		Title Report customization hourly rate.					
Item No.	593	Invoice#	62653- 1	Date 2/8/2011	2.00	2.00	$240.00	$240.00	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
Item No.	605	Invoice#	62662- 1	Date 8/8/2011	1.00	1.00	$120.00	$120.00	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
				Totals for REPORT	3.00	3.00	$360.00	$360.00	$0.00
Title ID ROYALTY		ISBN		Title Royalty for sales of PubAssist or Pligs.					
Item No.	592	Invoice#	62652- 1	Date 1/18/2011	1.00	1.00	$887.40	$887.40	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
Item No.	595	Invoice#	62655- 1	Date 2/7/2011	1.00	1.00	$1298.80	$1298.80	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
Item No.	598	Invoice#	62656- 1	Date 3/9/2011	1.00	1.00	$1258.85	$1258.85	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						
Item No.	599	Invoice#	62657- 1	Date 4/5/2011	1.00	1.00	$869.55	$869.55	$0.00
		Terms	Upon Receipt						

In either case, you will add to your available funds by paying for the negative quantity. The amount received will be negative as well. Royalties will of course be assessed based on the negative quantity and amount received.

Ron

Question on entering a new contacts

Adding additional authors/contributors for a Title.

From: Norma
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 11:41 AM
To: Ron
Subject: memory jog needed

Hi, Ron, I'm trying to get all authors and illustrators and royalties logged in.--(aren't you proud of your student?)

I don't want to mess up.

1. I click on royalties and log in the author.

2. I do the same thing and click Y then enter in the illustrator by erasing the information for the author that has come up. Right?

I would hate to mess up the author when I enter the illustrator.

When that is done, I hope to put in the cost of the books to help with TAX time. But, I'll get back to you on that one when this is done.

Norma

From: Ron Lawrence
To: Norma
Subject: RE: memory jog needed
Date: Wed, 26 Oct 2011 12:28:47 -0400

Hi Norma,

Sorry. You’re close but that’s not quite right. If you overwrite the information in the contact screen, you will be *modifying the first author’s record*. You don’t want to do that. What you want to do is click on “New”—which will clear the screen. You can then select or enter a different contact.

Ron

From: Norma
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 4:03 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: RE: memory jog needed

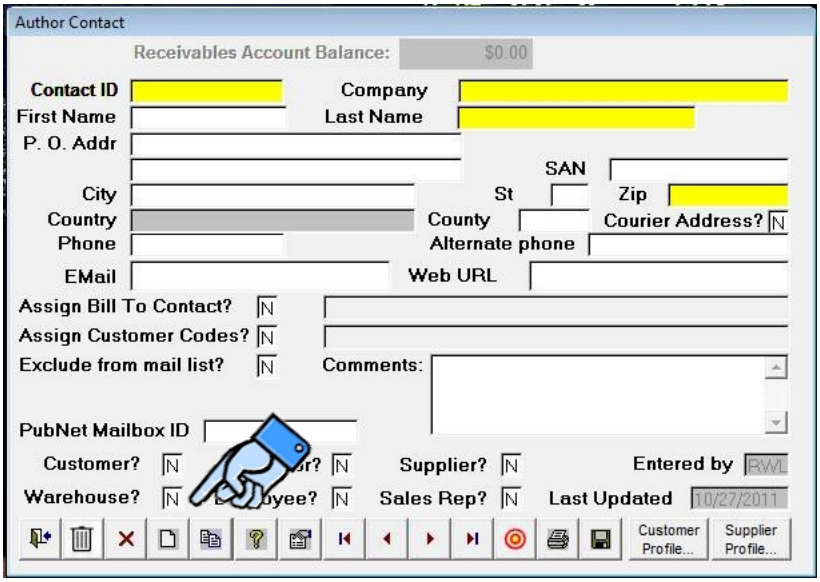
OH... Where is 'new'. I'm not at the right computer-- I have quit for the day. Maybe I wasn't even on the right screen. I'll check it in the morning. Thanks. Good thing I only changed three or four before contacting you. Thanks so much.

Norma

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2011 7:52 AM
To: Norma
Subject: RE: memory jog needed

Whew! Make sure you change those three or four back to their original addresses or you will be wondering what happened to those contacts! You'll have to do that by overwriting the data in those records again—even though that is something that you normally never want to do.

The "new" option icon looks like an empty page. It's on the toolbar at the bottom.



Print On Demand: Selling Books back to the Author

From: Linda
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 11:26 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: finally getting a handle on the order part but there is another problem

I only have a chance to work on this late in the evenings these days. I came over extra early so I could 'change the default' on the order. I did what you told me but every single time, even though I cleared out all the fields, I clicked on the 'new' sheet of paper logo on the bottom Rogue Phoenix Press came up so I cleared the fields and put in the info. I managed to get through the process for two orders and needed to quit for a while so I could help Bruce bind some books. When I came back it showed no orders so I assumed I did something wrong. I went through the three tutorials, taking notes to make sure i didn't forget anything and put in the first order again, even, again, putting in PayPal as a pay source but it didn't register the order. I'm not unhappy ... I am learning but am a tad frustrated that it isn't working quite right.

I did figure out that since I have some control over the amounts that go into the order I can manipulate the price a bit. All of our sales are based on the ebook price + the print price if the book is a print version so if I want to give the author her discount I can just put in the download price and add her extra amount to bring the price up to the amount she is required to pay minus her % and mark it as no royalty for her? That allows me to make sure the rest of the staff gets their royalties??? Let me know if that makes sense, please?

Linda

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 8:18 AM
To: 'Linda'
Subject: RE: finally getting a handle on the order part but there is another problem

In general, I don’t recommend changing the price of a product in the order. You can do it, but if your royalties are based on the retail price, you will be effectively discounting the price (and thus the royalty) when you probably don’t intend to. Of course, there are exceptions to every rule. I’d still need to work through the math to understand whether this will help you or not. My initial impression is that it will not.

Let me see if I can feed back to you what I heard as your “business rules” when selling books to your authors.

- You sell books back to your author typically at a 30% discount.
- That 30% represents what you would normally pay them in royalties for the sale.
- You are likely to have other contributors (editor, cover artist, etc.) that also receive royalties on the book. These contributors should receive their royalty as normal.

The issue for PubAssist is that an order can incur royalties or NOT incur royalties by setting the terms of the order; *but it can't process some of the royalties and not others.*

Given that your author is the only one in a potential group of contributors that should not receive the royalty, I still think the best solution is to give them the discount, but immediately credit yourself by logging an artificial payment to the author's royalty account.

You'll have to decide whether the author's and other contributors' royalties should be based on the Net or the Retail price for these situations. Again, the issue for PubAssist is that the royalty specifications must apply for all sales—not just the sales to the author. So, for example, if you base your royalties on the net price, and sell to the author at a 30% discount, you will be discounting the royalty to the other contributors. That may be perfectly legitimate. It's a discounted sale. But you'll have to decide that for yourself.

Likewise, if the author's royalty is based on the Net price, then the payment you apply should be the discounted royalty—NOT the straight 30%. So, let's go through an example where the author's royalty is based on the net price. Let's say that your author's book sells for $16.95 and the author wants to buy 10 copies. The procedure for recording the sale and the royalty credit would look like this:

Scenario 1:

1. Enter the customer order with the author as the billing (and probably shipping) contact.
2. Enter their book (Title ID) in the items screen with a quantity of 10. The extended price will be $169.50.
3. Discount this item 30%. The extended price will now be $118.60.
4. Thus, you have discounted the sale by $50.90.
5. If the author's royalty is normally 30% and based on the net price, this will yield a royalty fee of $35.60.
6. So, you should next log a payment to the author's account to compensate for the royalty.

Note the difference between what you credited the author by discounting the sale, $50.90, and what you will incur in royalty fees because of the discounted sale, $35.60. If you simply reverse the royalty fee by entering a payment of $35.60, you have just shorted yourself $15.30. You'll make some of that up because the other contributors' royalties will be discounted as well. But, let's try another alternative procedure:

Scenario 2:

1. Enter the customer order as in Scenario 1, but DON'T discount the item for the author's book.

2. Instead, you can immediately*enter a receipt*against the invoice that credits the author for 30% of their sale, (i.e. $50.90).
3. I would enter this receipt as a “Cancel Debt” receipt. That way, you can separate those receipts from your income when reporting for tax purposes.
4. Now, even though all your royalties may be based on the net price, in this case the*invoice is for the retail price*of the book. So, your author’s royalty will be $50.90.
5. Thus, you can log the payment to the author’s royalty account for $50.90.

You will have to decide which of these scenarios makes the most sense to you. I can think of justifications for either one. The second scenario will make numbers easier to understand.

Hope that helps,

Ron

Problems Getting Started

From: Linda
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 11:26 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: finally getting a handle on the order part but there is another problem

I only have a chance to work on this late in the evenings these days. I came over extra early so I could 'change the default' on the order. I did what you told me but every single time, even though I cleared out all the fields, I clicked on the 'new' sheet of paper logo on the bottom Rogue Phoenix Press came up so I cleared the fields and put in the info. I managed to get through the process for two orders and needed to quit for a while so I could help Bruce bind some books. When I came back it showed no orders so I assumed I did something wrong. I went through the three tutorials, taking notes to make sure i didn't forget anything and put in the first order again, even, again, putting in PayPal as a pay source but it didn't register the order. I'm not unhappy ... I am learning but am a tad frustrated that it isn't working quite right.

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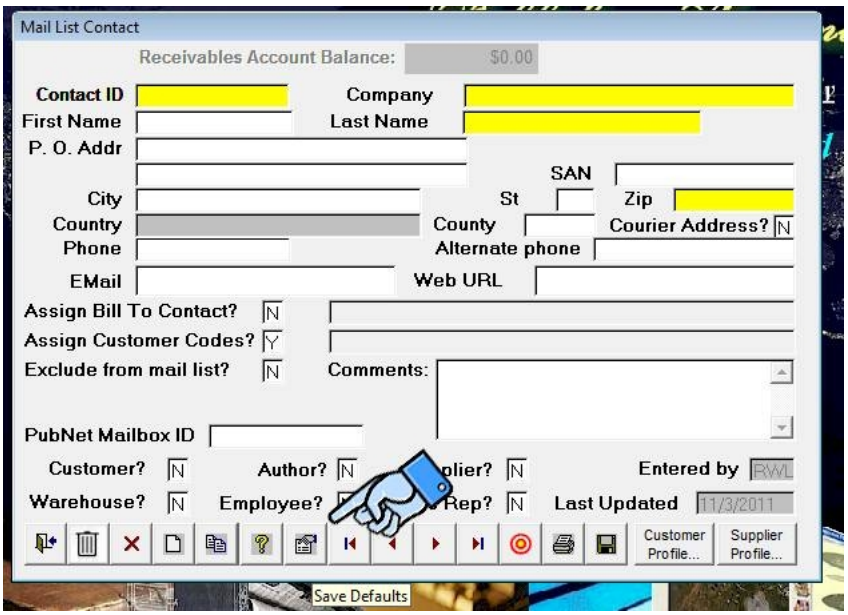
Linda

On 11/3/2011 6:30 AM, Ron Lawrence wrote:

Did you save defaults again after clearing the fields?



Do this once—before attempting any other data entry.

Ron

From: Linda
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 12:57 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: Re: finally getting a handle on the order part but there is another problem

I wish it had been that easy to start. I must have misunderstood your directions from last time. I used control R but that didn't do the trick. I immediately put in the first order and hit save and exit after I finished. Then I went up to sales again and clicked on existing orders and there weren't any so it still isn't recording my sales. Oh, When I first opened the program I got a message "Report, BEST SALES BY TITLE CHART, was not found" Is that the reason?

Linda

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 1:48 PM
To: 'Linda'
Subject: RE: finally getting a handle on the order part but there is another problem

Linda,

There is something very wrong with your installation or the way you are calling up the program. If you are clicking on the Save & Exit button and the order is not being saved, it has to be due to a security issue. The application (after several years of development) goes to great lengths to make sure that each transaction is saved to your database. But it can't override the security settings of Windows. It may also be possible that your anti-virus software is buffering up your disk Input/Output.

These things require a computer specialist to look at your machine. I would be happy to take a look myself, but as we have already experienced, the internet connection won't allow it. I would put things aside for now until we can get to the bottom of this. It's just going to add to your frustration.

Ron

Logging Receipts from Amazon.com

Resolving Unapplied Funds

From: Anne
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 5:52 PM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: bug?

Hi, Ron.

On one of my rare ‘days off,’ I am trying to reconcile my Amazon account in PA. I am running up against something I have seen before, but I never get to the point that I can correct this. I have unapplied funds, which doesn’t make sense, since it is consignment. But nonetheless, let me paint this picture for your.

I pull up the order and go to put in a receipt. It shows an unapplied balance that exceeds the invoice balance. To demonstrate, I’ll just use some round numbers. Let’s say the invoice balance is $35 and I want to put in a payment of $10. The unapplied balance is $150. When I save the receipt, two things happen. First, the invoice balance goes to zero and the books that weren’t paid, disappear in the Order Items field. Secondly, if I go in and delete that receipt and then open a new receipt (to try again), the unapplied balance changes to $140. I could do this multiple times and the unapplied amount changes, even though I have deleted the receipt and did a save and exit.

I did read your article, and once I get caught up on a couple of things, I do want to clear out any unapplied balances with Amazon and start clean for the year. But this other issue keeps coming up. Have you ever seen this before?

Anne

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2012 7:56 AM
To: 'Anne Fenske'
Subject: RE: bug?

Hi Anne,

Well, you’ve probably made life more complicated for yourself by entering Amazon receipts for specific invoices. You know you don’t have to do that, right? The receipt screen allows you to enter receipts against the *account.* To do this, simply go to **Finance >Receivables >Enter/Edit Receipts >New Receipt** on the menu.

In general, if a payment you receive is for a specific invoice, then you should specify the invoice in the receipt. *That has the effect of limiting the items that can be paid for with that receipt.*

That's why it's NOT a good idea to enter Amazon payments against a specific invoice. Amazon will typically pay you for books that were ordered over several invoices.

We're in the beginning of a new year, so it's a good time to begin a new practice. I'm pretty compulsive about these things, so I would have a tendency to go back through my receipts history with Amazon and fix them. If you simply want to get things corrected and move on, here is what I would do:

1. First, I would pack files to get rid of anything that was marked for deletion. Running the Data Integrity Tests would be a good idea as well. That will ensure that you don't have any orphaned receipt or ledger transactions.

2. Obtain an Amazon.com inventory report as of the end of 2011—so you know how many of each title they have remaining in stock.

3. Assuming that you have correctly entered receipts totaling the amount that Amazon has paid you, *enter a new receipt*…

4. Date it December 31, 2011.

5. Give it an amount of zero. (You are going to consume unapplied funds.)

6. Do NOT assign an invoice number. (You want to pay off items across invoices.)

7. Apply funds to items. You should see a list of all unpaid items in the Item Receipts screen.

8. Click on the Title ID header. That will sort your unpaid items by title ID.

9. Pay off each item—leaving an unpaid quantity that matches the Amazon inventory report.

Hopefully, this procedure will consume your *unapplied funds* exactly and leave you with unpaid items that match the Amazon inventory. Experience, however, tells me that this is not likely. The fact is there is a mistake somewhere in your history. Your choices are either to go back and find it, or to write it off.

In the case where you have remaining *unapplied funds*, you'll want to consume those funds somehow. You could apply those funds to one item. One trick would be to enter a new open item on an invoice to Amazon. Charge a price of $0.00, but make sure there is a quantity of 1 to pay for. Then you can pay for it when applying funds with the remaining unapplied funds.

Since there is no royalty associated with this open item, paying for it won't generate a liability for you.

In the case where you have too many items to pay off for the *unapplied funds* that are available, I guess I would recommend spreading the loss over the items you are paying for. So, in step 4 above, simply reduce the amount received for each item until you consume the *unapplied funds* exactly.

I know this is a complicated affair, and it's hard reading through these details. In the end, what you want is:

1. **your unapplied funds to be zero, and**

2. **the remaining unpaid item quantities should match the Amazon inventory report.**

From this point on, enter a single receipt for the payments you receive from Amazon.com. Apply the receipt to the account, and pay for the oldest items—matching the titles and quantities that they say they are paying you for. This should give you an accurate account balance and inventory at Amazon from this point forward.

Best wishes,

Ron

Reset Login Count Doesn't Work… Bad shortcut

From: Linda
Sent: Saturday, October 29, 2011 3:33 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: still broken ...

I've tried to follow your instructions ...

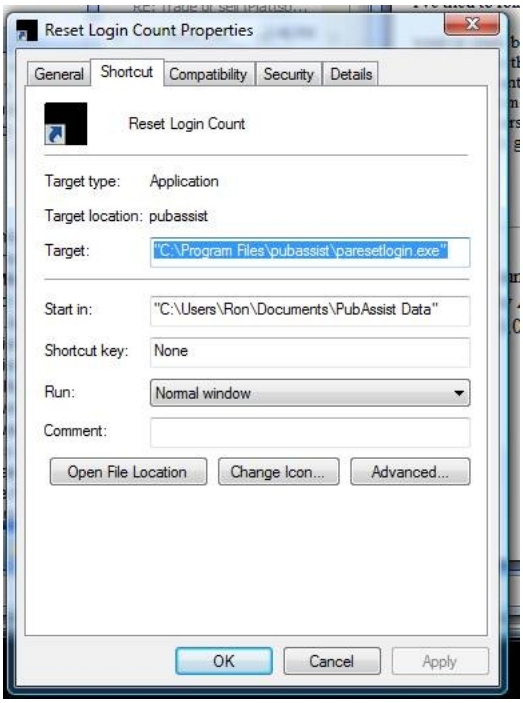
went to start, brought up programs, went to Publisher's Assistant (didn't realize there was a help manual there ... Thanks!) and reset the login count. The message told me it had been reset to zero but it still won't let me in. I bring up the program and it tells me there are too many users are logged in to the account. I know it is Saturday but I really want to get into the system. Do you have any other suggestions?

Linda

From: Ron Lawrence [mailto:ron@pubassist.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 29, 2011 5:28 PM
To: 'Linda'
Subject: RE: still broken ...

Linda,

Go to the Reset Login Count item on your Windows Start menu, and right click on it. Then select "properties" at the bottom of the list. Your properties window should look like this…



Note the "Start In" property should point to your PubAssist Data folder. Make sure this is the SAME "Documents" folder where your data is located. If you are logged into a different account than the one where PubAssist was installed, it won't work. Each user's "Documents" folder is in a different location.

Ron

How to Return an Entire Order?

Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 11:17 AM
To: Ron
Subject: help

Ron, I need help before I try to figure it out and make a big mess.

Situation: A woman at a book supply place called and talked in Brooklynese for a confusing time and wanted to order 60 books of different titles. I assumed from her yeses and noes that she wanted paper. I FAXed the invoice for paper. She Oked and sent the payment which arrived before she got the books. Today she called and is returning the books. I invoiced the same order in the hardcover editions and will send them tomorrow. I gave her credit for the payment on the new invoice. What do I do about the original invouce which will affect the royalties, etc. I don't do returns as a rule, but this is evidently my fault and lack of certain types of English. (Good thing I understand New England. I've lived there more years than anyplace but PA!)

Can you provide the information in a 1. 2. 3. format for feeble minded folk?

Thanks. Norma

From: "Ron Lawrence" <ron@pubassist.com>
Subject: RE: help
Date: Mon, 14 Nov 2011 11:34:07 -0500
Hi Norma,

- If all of the books were returned in good condition, then I would simply delete the original order and pack files. It never happened.

- If some of the books were returned damaged, you can still move them into a damaged state using inventory correction transactions (on the inventory menu).

- If you want to retain the complete history…

    1. Enter a customer return (on the Sales menu) for the same books that were ordered. This is very much like entering a customer order. Use the “Credit” terms for the return.

2. Then go back to the original customer order, and…
3. enter a receipt of type “Account Credit” and an amount of zero.
4. Use the unapplied funds from the credit to pay for the original order.

Hope that helps,

Ron

Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 12:18 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: RE: help

Hi, The first option sounds good to me. That will work for the payment, the royalties and all?

Thanks again.

Norma

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 12:37 PM
Subject: RE: help

Yes. Deleting the order will also delete any royalty or other liabilities that may be associated with the order.

Ron

Does PubAssist Handle Royalties?

From: Jon
Sent: Friday, July 27, 2012 3:19 AM
To: 'info@pubassist.com'
Subject: Request for information

Hi

I'm searching for alternatives for a SW solution for Aller Medias publishing unit. Our primary focus at this point is base functionality like production scheduling/project management/workflow control, royalty management and also cost of ownership/lease for the solution. Our publishing unit is currently small with limited number of user licenses required. Could you please provide me with some information on the above subjects?

Regards

Jon Thode

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: 7. august 2012 17:43
To: Jon
Subject: RE: Request for information

Hi Jon,

PubAssist is primarily an accounting system with support for bibliographic data management and communication with your trading partners. We also offer an integrated set of Web Services that will allow you to port your title data directly to your web site, and port your web orders directly into PubAssist.

Publishers' Assistant really does not address project management—other than tracking your project expenses. I have been asked about project management in the past, but haven't found a great deal of overlap in these areas. There are other programs that are dedicated to project management. So to date, we haven't developed anything in that functional space.

One thing I am happy to point out is that PubAssist is free! Even the support is only $35/month. *That leaves a lot of room in your budget for acquiring software for project management.*

Concerning what we do offer, here is a couple of detailed question and answer articles from another prospective customer that you may find helpful:

http://www.pubassist.com/questions/ProspectiveInquiry.asp
http://www.pubassist.com/questions/ProspectiveInquiry2.asp

Good luck in your evaluation of publishing software. Thanks for your interest in Publishers' Assistant.

Ron Lawrence

From: Jon
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 9:38 AM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: RE: Request for information

Hi Ron

Thanks for your answer. I have 1 question that I didn't find an answer to in the product description; does the software handle royalty calculations? If so, could you provide me with a brief summary of alternative royalty models covered? – flat, step wise based on number of sold books or total revenue, minimum payments, payment schedules..

Regards

Jon

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 10:20 AM
To: ' Jon'
Subject: RE: Request for information

Hi Jon,

Royalties is really *what we do*. More generally, we have the ability to track liabilities based on the sale of your books. Royalties are calculated based on the royalty contract specifics you enter into PubAssist. Each royalty spec has the following attributes:

- The author (or royalty recipient)
- The royalty rate (expressed as a percentage)
- Whether the rate is applied to the retail or the net price

- A number sold threshold (the number of books that must be sold before the royalty rate applies)
- A discount threshold (the royalty rate will only be applied for books sold above the discount threshold)
- Whether the royalty is due when the order is saved, vs. *when you have received payment.* (The latter is the default and our recommended option.)

You can have an unlimited number of royalty spec's for a title. That means that you can have as many authors associated with a title as you want—each with their own royalty contract.

Royalties are calculated and posted to the authors' accounts at the following events:

- When you save a customer order
- When you enter a customer payment (a "receipt" in our terminology)
- When you save a customer return

I hope you can see that through this mechanism, you can have either very simple royalty contracts, or very complex contracts. We've been at this for over 20 years. This system has worked very well for hundreds (if not thousands) of users.

In addition to royalty calculations, we have similar liability tracking for consignment sales, as well as commissions for sales representatives.

I hope that answers your question. If not, don't hesitate to give me a call: 802-222-0112.

Best wishes and good luck with your evaluation,

Ron

Setting up PubAssist shortcuts to point to different databases

From: Steve
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 10:31 PM
To: Ron Lawrence
Subject: Need help (hopefully quick)

Long story, but Norton wiped out my PubAssist today. I've restored all the files from backups, but Norton also wiped out the separate shortcuts to the versions for Publishing and for Cottages.

I have the data with the correct FPWs. I can get to the databases with Select Database. But that is burdensome as I need to switch back and forth several times a day, and I often need to look up something in one or the other databases while somebody is on the phone.

I'm thinking it's something in the shortcut itself. Can the config.fpw be referenced in the "target" or "start in" fields?

I'm really sorry about asking you about this again. I should have remembered all of the steps from last time, or written them down. But if you can just point me in the right direction with this I'll stop tearing out the tiny bit of hair I have left!

Thanks,

Steve

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 7:07 AM
To: Steve
Subject: RE: Need help (hopefully quick)

Not a problem, but how about taking a shot at repairing yourself. Then you'll be able to pass the info on to users. If you get into trouble, you know how to reach me.

Yes, the solution is implemented in the shortcuts. You'll want to copy the standard short cut for each new database you want to maintain. Give each shortcut a meaningful description so you

know which database you'll be addressing.
To make each short cut point to a different database, you specify a configuration file that you want to use when starting up PubAssist. You do this by adding the "-C" option to the "Target" command in the short cut properties.

The Target normally reads:

"C:\Program Files\pubassist\pa.exe"

For example, if your configuration file is named, *"configUAP.fpw"*, to get Foxpro to use it, your target should look like this:

"C:\Program Files\pubassist\pa.exe" -CconfigUAP.fpw

Notice that the option is outside the closing quote, and there is no space between the "-C" and the configuration filename. I'm not sure if you can have a space in there or not, but it works this way.

Obviously, too, you have to have these configuration files in place for your separate databases. The standard configuration file is config.fpw. It generally has the following for contents:

```
TMPFILES=temp
MVCOUNT=1536
RESOURCE=FOXUSER
CLOCK=STATUS
BLINK=OFF
CATMAN=OFF
SCREEN=OFF
EXCLUSIVE=OFF
SYSFORMATS=ON
PATH="C:\USERS\PUBLIC\PADATA\lis"
```

As you can see, the path to your database is specified in the "PATH=" command. You can edit the config.fpw file using Notepad, and save it to a new file name for use with each shortcut.

So, your configuration files for each database will specify the unique path for that database. Your configuration files should be located in your "Documents\PubAssist Data\" folder. That's the "Start In" folder for the typical PubAssist short cut.

Give this a try and let me know how you make out.

So...Norton wiped out your PubAssist? That doesn't sound good. What's going on there?

Ron

Question on Standing Orders

From: Jim Webber (New City Press)
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 2:58 PM
To: 'Ron Lawrence'
Subject: Tech support

Ron,

...I was wondering if you could address an issue we have with the order entry portion of the PA.

We have a standing order for about 500 copies of a book that we will publish in August –

For this particular book – we would like to enter the orders into the PA and have them sit as "OPEN" or whatever category you give to items where there is no inventory currently.

Can you point me and Nick, our order entry /customer service manager in the direction as to how to enter orders where the inventory is 0.

By entering them ahead of time we will be able to kick them all out as orders almost on the same day as the book arrives in our warehouse and we enter the units into inventory.

Thank you.

Jim Webber

NEW CITY PRESS of the Focolare

From: Ron Lawrence
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 3:16 PM
To: 'Jim Webber (New City Press)'
Subject: RE: Tech support

Hi Jim,

There is a "Process Standing Orders" option on the Sales menu. It allows you to specify the title ID of the standing order item. It uses that item to select the customers who have ordered it. This item ID is expected to be a special standing order item, but it doesn't have to be. For example, it could be the title ID of the previous edition of your publication.

When you process standing order items, it generates an invoice for each customer who ordered that standing order item. It takes all of the order information (i.e. billing and shipping contacts, terms, discount, etc) from that previous order. It will also generate a receipt for customers who have a credit card account on file.

So, when the new edition arrives…

1. Enter the title information to let PubAssist know of the new edition. Give it a new Title ID. (At this point, there is no inventory associated with the item.)

2. Enter the inventory correction to put the new title into stock.

3. Process Standing Orders to generate a slew of new invoices. If there are any that you don't want, simply delete those invoices. You can review and make changes to other invoices as necessary.

4. Generate a credit card worksheet for the new receipts. Use that to process payments for the new batch of invoices.

5. Print off your invoices. Those that have been paid will be marked as paid. Those that have not will show a balance due.

Note: You could process standing orders before you get your new inventory. That will result in placing all of the generated invoices in a backordered state. When you get your inventory, you can then process backorders to fulfill them. Since processing standing orders works automatically, I don't think there is much advantage to doing it early.

Hope that helps,

Ron