Direct from AIMS

Spring/Summer 2010

A Look Inside:

Keep Your Business Running Efficiently & Profitably with These Tools

One of COMPAS Commander's original design specs was that it would be easier to find and correct data input errors—and it is. Here are some important tools you can use.

1) Use the **Purchase Manifest/BOL List report** to review entries of bill of ladings (BOLs) and the resultant dispersals/billings *before you post the BOLs*. Are the unit selling prices correct? Was product dropped to the right customers? Were the dropped quantities correct? Prior to posting, you can simply delete or edit a BOL; *the same is true for the resulting customer invoices*.

But are the unposted customer invoices correct as far as desired margin? Are there any below-minimum margin or below-cost invoices? Run the **Daily Activity report** group for unposted activity. Commander will perform a profit analysis on each line item of each unposted invoice. Incorrect unposted invoices can simply be edited. (Changing a unit selling price on an invoice will trigger an Event Log entry and you will be able to see who changed the price.)

2) Commander uses a convention called the "in-transit bulk plant." This feature allows you to assess the profitability of your wholesale fuel operation alone **by running an income statement just for the in-transit bulk plant;** *it also lets you make sure that all wholesale loads have been completely dispersed*. By running the **Product Movement report** for the in-transit bulk plant alone, and doing this at least at month-end, you will be able to determine if all fuel types have zero inventory. If they do have zero inventory, all product has been billed. If any product was retained, either intentionally or not, this report shows that the retained product was put into bulk storage.

3) If you have to modify **customer receipt-on-account entries**, it is easy with Commander. Simply edit or delete entries prior to posting. Run the Daily Activity reports for unposted activity and you will see all unposted receipt-on-account entries. Review them and make changes within the original entry program as needed.

Suppose receipt-on-account errors aren't caught prior to posting, or what if a customer's check bounces? Again, no problem in Commander. ***You can reverse a posted payment.*** The receipt-on-account program allows you to display all posted payments for a given customer and select the one you want to reverse. Paid items go back into the customer's account as unpaid. Everything is properly reversed and an audit trail is created. Also, you do not have to be in the current working fiscal period to do this.

The exact same functionality exists on the A/P side, too! Posted payments, whether they were vendor EFT's or checks,

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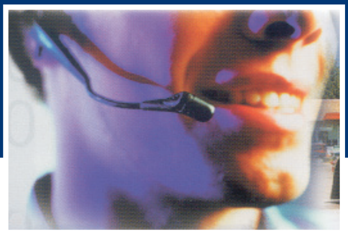


Meet Our Team!

Robert Canterbury, *President and C.E.O.*

In past issues of "Direct from AIMS," we have featured our most senior staff members. We now feature our fourth-longest tenured team member, Robert Canterbury. The more complex the product a company sells, the more important the quality and experience of its personnel becomes. AIMS personnel translate the potential benefits of AIMS' software into actual benefits for our customers.

Robert Canterbury joined AIMS on August 20, 1990, after working several years at a local bank in credit analysis and commercial lending.

Mid-1990 saw AIMS rolling out its new AUTOSEND system, a product that would prove to be extremely successful. Then-president and founder of AIMS, Dr. Bob Canterbury, recognized that the opportunity AUTOSEND represented for AIMS was one that could not be fully realized unless AIMS reorganized and added resources. In conversations with his son, Robert, Dr. Canterbury encouraged him to join the family business.

Robert Canterbury

When Robert joined the company, his work was very hands-on and front-line. He immersed himself into the AUTOSEND system, rapidly becoming the resident expert in its installation and application to our customers' businesses. Robert traveled to client sites all over the country installing and training on AUTOSEND. He also helped develop and present numerous AUTOSEND user training conferences. When his father retired from AIMS in 1998, Robert assumed the presidency.

Over the past 20 years, there are several very satisfying and productive projects with which Robert has been involved. Among them include a key role in bringing AUTO***SIR*** to reality in 1994. He also oversaw the expansion of AIMS' product line to include COMPAS Commander.

"I am very excited about the rapid acceptance of our Windows solution, COMPAS Commander, during the past years, and the overwhelming conversion to Commander from competitive products.

Since 1990, the AIMS staff has increased from ten to twenty-eight; it was primarily Robert's work organizing and improving AIMS' administrative resources that allowed the company to expand without many "growing pains." Robert also lists his daily working relationships with AIMS staff as particularly gratifying. And, of course, perhaps the most satisfying aspect of his role as AIMS president is his knowledge that AIMS' products and services have helped so many of our clients' businesses, businesses that for the most part are family-owned enterprises like AIMS.

"I am very proud of AIMS being a 2nd generation company whose reputation is at stake each time we sell one of our products. Our team is 110% committed to customer satisfaction to maintain the reputation we have developed."

After nearly twenty years with AIMS, what motivates Robert now? Well, one constant is his desire to see our clients being successful and growing their businesses. Our customers' success directly translates to our success. For another, the ever-changing nature of the petroleum distribution business combined with the ever-changing nature of computer-related technologies provides a daily dynamic that never gets boring.

Robert has been married to his wife Traci for 14 years and they have three sons: Garrett, Will and Drew. Spending time with his family is his number one interest away from work. Other interests include boating, motorcycling, exercising, scuba diving and snow skiing. Robert's latest personal activity is learning the guitar.

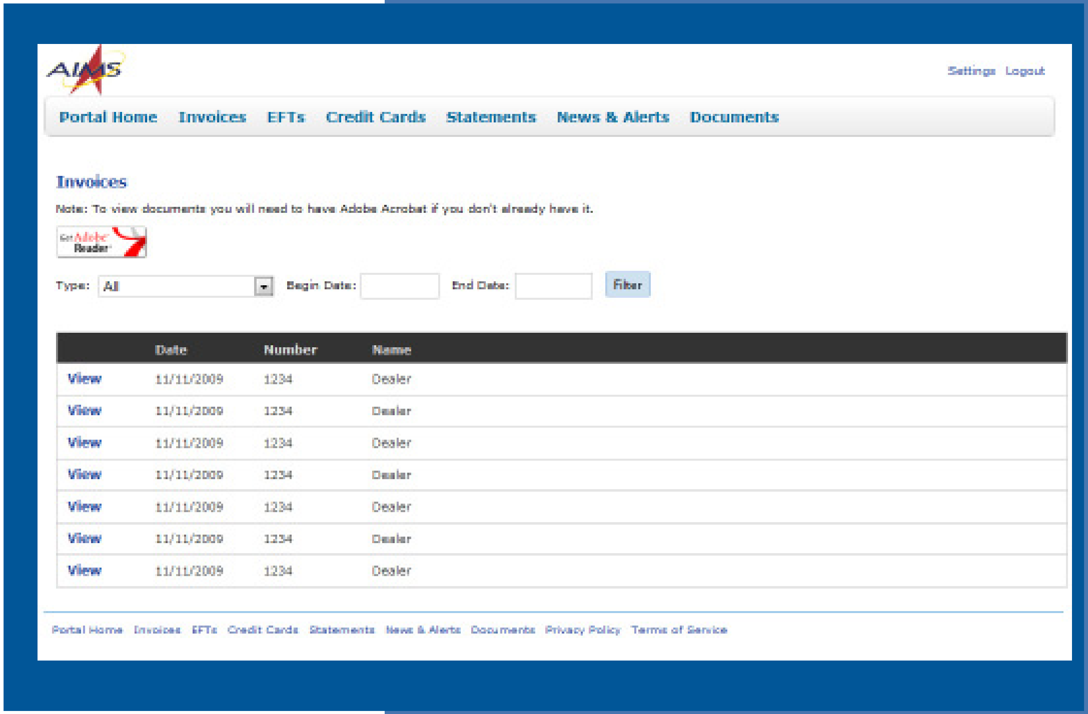
What's New!

Announcing

AIMS' New Customer Web Portal

Accessing EFT notices, statements, and invoices is now even more convenient with AIMS' new web portal, available 24/7

AIMS is enhancing its customer communication by providing the new AIMS web portal for you to conveniently view and retrieve your company's EFT notices, statements and invoices. Our web portal will be available 24 hours a day, every day. There is no charge for your company to begin accessing your personal EFT notices, statements and invoices on the AIMS customer web portal. We believe you will quickly see the value that a personal web portal can offer your customers by becoming familiar with the functionality and convenience of the AIMS web portal.



Soon all COMPAS 8.0 customers will be able to provide a web portal to their customers. Your customers will be able to conveniently view/retrieve their EFT notices, statements, invoices, credit card settlement reports, prices, AUTOSIR compliance reports and other documents directly from your private portal. You can easily load documents to the portal directly from COMPAS 8. You do not have to have a website to deploy the web portal. AIMS' will setup, configure and host the web portal for you.

By 3rd quarter all Commander customers will be able to deploy a web portal for their customers.

Contact Annette Kesler at 318.323.2467, ext. 9313 for your personal login ID and password to the AIMS portal. Contact Arrah Cicala at 318.323.2467, ext 9339 if you are interested in deploying a portal for your customers.

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can be reversed within any fiscal period. Unposted payment details can simply be edited, or deleted and re-entered in full.

4) Are you performing month-end inventory balancing? Make sure all purchases and sales have been entered into Commander through the same period as your stick readings or inventory count.

For Fuel - Run the station inventory reports and compare the ending (book) with the physical inventory. If the differences are within an acceptable range, then use the inventory adjustment program to adjust your inventory to the physical count. If your differences are not acceptable, then follow these troubleshooting tips to discover the discrepancies.

A. Do you have a delivery or sale entered in the system that physically occurred after the stick or reading was taken? Confirm the date/times of receipts and sales vs. physical counts

B. Is there a delivery or sale that was included in the stick or reading that has NOT been entered in the system? Confirm the date/times of the receipts and sales vs. physical counts

C. Does one station have about the same quantity short as another station has over? Maybe product was dropped to the wrong station. Confirm all drops to both locations.

D. Is there a product in one station that has about the same tank quantity short as another tank has over? Maybe the product was dropped to the wrong tank. Confirm all drops to both tanks. Is it possible that the driver split the fuel into two tanks without letting you know? Or, if you are blending product from these two tanks, did you enter the percentage of the blends into the system correctly? You may need to run a test at the station to verify that the blend percentage is correct.

E. If a particular product is consistently short or over, maybe you have a mis-calibrated meter (if you are using meter readings to calculate your sales).

For Warehouse Inventory - use the Inventory Counting Sheets (or the Inventory snapshot in Commander) and count your product. If the differences between book and physical inventory are within an acceptable range, use the inventory adjustment program to adjust your inventory. If your differences are not acceptable then follow these troubleshooting tips to discover the errors.

A. Is there a delivery, sale, or transfer entered in the system that physically occurred after a count was taken? Confirm the date/times of receipts, sales, and transfers vs. physical counts

B. Do you have a delivery, sale, or transfer included in the count that has NOT been entered in the system? Confirm the date/times of the receipts, sales and transfers vs. physical counts

C. Do you have a similar product that has about the same quantity short as another product is over – maybe the product was dropped to the wrong station. Confirm all of your drops to both locations

D. If you blend bulk product into containers, did the warehouse turn in all of the blends to the office?

These are just a few of the practices available to keep your business running efficiently and profitably. We welcome your ideas about other best practices that interest you.