

In Harmony

Future Business Systems Newsletter

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From The Publisher

Welcome to another edition of In Harmony. A lot has happened since the last newsletter, mostly in the GST arena! Our people have gone "beyond the call of duty" to ensure our GST compliant software was ready, installed and implemented in time for 1 July. I am happy to report that all our hard work has paid off, with smooth implementations being the order of the day. I'd like to thank all of our loyal clients for their support and understanding, during what has been an extremely busy time.

We've also held our first major training exercise, and the results have been so encouraging that we are planning to run more training events. If you have any particular topics in mind, contact Karen Bouhadana or your Account Manager.

I would be happy to hear from you on any aspect of our business. Please call me, or send e-mail to msilver@fbsaust.com.au

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Welcome New Harmony Users

Since the last issue of In Harmony, the following companies have become valued customers of FBS:

Merlvic Schrank, Vic. Manufacturers, importers and distributors of nightwear.

Clothing Outlets Pty Ltd, NSW. This is the retail arm of the Discovery clothing company, with over 30 stores selling upmarket womenswear.

Ligne Roset Australia, Vic. Import and retail modern French furniture through their showroom in Richmond.

Aqual Signal, Qld. Part of the Versalux group, Aqual Signal manufactures and distributes marine lighting.

Busch New Zealand, Auckland. Busch imports and distributes vacuum pumps for use in industry and healthcare.

Camec New Zealand, Auckland. This is the NZ branch of Camec, a company that makes and sells caravan and marine components and hardware.

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What's New In Harmony Version 9A

Making Harmony GST compliant has taken up most of our programming resources for the past six months. However, we did find time to make quite a few product enhancements, as well. Following are just some of the improvements made in 9A:

- ◆ EDI for trading with David Jones.
- ◆ Electronic banking for creditors and general ledger. EFT is already saving Harmony users hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in bank fees.
- ◆ Broadcast faxing of statements. Now you can just press a button on your fax machine and go home – no more babysitting the printer, folding, inserting, sealing and posting statements.
- ◆ In batch shipment. You can now select a range for part shipment, to ensure items which must be used together cannot be released separately.
- ◆ Comments can now be made on debtor transactions.
- ◆ Debtor maintenance finance option has been split into three screens to display more information.
- ◆ The system-generated consignment note number can now be overridden by the user. This is handy if your courier supplies pre-numbered consignment notes and you want to use them in preference to Harmony's. You can also have the con note number print on the invoice if desired.
- ◆ The ability to store and track credit note reasons. Harmony now has a table of available credit reasons and you can run a report to analyse why credits have been raised.
- ◆ Printing of price labels in scan pack. As you scan each item a label is produced.
- ◆ Scan ship. You can now create stock transfers by scanning the bar code, rather than re-keying.
- ◆ When creating a Sales Order, a Manufacturing Order can be automatically set-up for creation, if the item is out of stock.
- ◆ Ability to specify invoice date at time of order entry. You can enter the date on the sales order and the invoice will automatically be produced dated accordingly. This works very well with batch invoicing.
- ◆ Improvements to the speed of EDI ordering.

- ◆ A new "sold out" flag is available for stock items. The item remains "live" and can still be manufactured, but the system will not accept orders for it.
- ◆ Name key re name is faster.
- ◆ The ability to flag orders for part or complete shipment, including generating partial ASNs. This will appeal to customers who sell to Target.
- ◆ New total sales report by stock. This is similar to the existing debtors report.

Take Another Look – At Harmony Payroll.

If it's been a while since you looked at our Payroll module, you're in for a surprise. Harmony Payroll has more functionality than ever, and can handle virtually any aspect of HR management. Recent improvements include:

- Electronic lodgement of group certificates. We told you about this great feature in the last issue – now it's available.
- Plain paper printing of group certificates and other forms.
- Storing of emergency details for staff, in line with OH&S requirements.
- Time clock interface for tracking employee attendance and movement. You can collect staff attendance details via time clock, Harmony workstation, or a mix of the two available.

Harmony Payroll can use time clock data to calculate the correct pay, based on the employee's award, day and time worked, and even the cost centre. The time clock functionality is also ideal for shift work and staff who work at multiple locations.

If you'd like a demo of Harmony Payroll, contact your Account Manager.

New E-Commerce Modules Now Available

Viable, cost effective e-commerce is not a myth – for our clients, it's an exciting reality! We have recently developed three new modules, specifically to provide integrated e-commerce solutions for Harmony users:

Debtor Enquiry Module - With this module your customers can look up outstanding orders, review sales history, view and print statements, check delivery schedules, consignment note numbers and the like - everything they might want to know about their account can be catered for. You can even allow customers to make payments on their account online! Because the system is live, all information is completely up-to-date. Access is password protected for security and customers cannot change any information – they can view only.

Because your customers can query the system at any time, they get a higher level of service – especially if they are in a different time zone. This “self service” approach to information may also reduce the need for customer support staff in your business. You can employ fewer people, or deploy them in other areas.

Debtor Order Entry - Authorised customers can view products and prices, obtain quotes, and place orders. You decide whether the orders go directly into your system, or are placed in a log for prior authorisation. Customers enter “trial orders” to obtain accurate quotes, and can make changes to quotes before committing to an order. Because each customer has a unique sign on, pricing can be specific to that client.

Product pictures are available and you can display stock availability if desired. This module can cater for more sophisticated orders, encompassing compound products, sizes and colours, optional extras, prerequisites and the like. Again, this module can save on staffing costs because customers prepare their own quotes and orders!

Public Order Entry - This module has much the same functionality as Debtor Order Entry, but with more information fields to capture the data you need in order to trade with the public. You can decide which lines to offer, rather than making your entire product line available. It incorporates secure payment options, and all sales are prepaid. The familiar “shopping basket” model is used for both order entry modules.

How it works - Using these core modules, we develop active web pages to meet your specific requirements. You only buy the modules you need. We can also develop your “static” web pages if desired. You’ll also require our ODBC module, plus our EDI module if you want order entry. Additional costs will apply for the customisation, which will vary according to the complexity of your trading model.

In most cases a separate NT web server will be connected to your Harmony server, both to assist with transaction load, and for security purposes. The web server hosts your e-commerce web pages, with a link to the live system on the Harmony server.

FBS’s integrated e-commerce is a great way to increase your customer base and improve customer service. Call today for more information.

GST - The Story Of Our Implementation

Like most Australian businesses, we have busily been working towards the GST for many months. Karen Bouhadana, our training manager, was also our GST customer enquiry co-ordinator. She developed the documentation and training materials while the programming was completed.

The GST software release took months of dedicated effort, and is still ongoing. We had to re-program and re-document to cater for late changes made by the ATO, especially in the importing module.

All Harmony clients underwent training. We ran 3 hour training sessions just about every day over a three-week period, averaging a dozen people at each. Every attendee received a manual, which gave step-by-step instructions for implementing the GST release. Karen also ran training in Sydney and even visited a few clients on site. More remote clients, and those with individual needs, were trained in lengthy sessions over the phone.

All in all, about 120 people were trained, and the feedback we received was very gratifying - almost all attendees rated the training very highly. In fact, your positive response encouraged us to run a series of Harmony Payroll courses as well. These went through the electronic lodgement of group certificates and plain paper printing of group certificates – very important before the end of the financial year.

We plan to offer more classroom training in the future. If there is a particular topic you would like to see covered, please advise Karen or your Account Manager.

VPNs In Real Life

Since our article on Virtual Private Networks in a previous issue of In Harmony, we have implemented them for a number of clients. A VPN uses Internet technologies to create a closed intranet for your staff, customers, suppliers, and anyone else you nominate. Security can be set up to allow restricted access, depending on the user's privileges.

Our customers are using VPNs to connect their remote branches to the network, as if they had a direct connection. All the remote user needs is Harmony Desktop and an Internet connection to use Harmony, Word, Excel or any other application on the network – they don't have to have the software installed on their PC. Harmony Desktop's remote printing option even allows system-generated documents to print on the remote user's Laser printer. This method also means instant e-mail for all users.

Harmony users have connected rural, interstate and even overseas branches and agents this way, with very acceptable throughput speeds.

- ◆ One of our clients had a dedicated line between Melbourne and Sydney. They now have national staff connected to the network from wherever they are – home, office, road – by laptop computers.
- ◆ Another client took his laptop on a cruise, and checked his sales figures every day while he was away using mobile phone technologies.
- ◆ Several clients have linked their New Zealand branches using a VPN – a significantly cheaper option than maintaining a dial up line!

If you have remote users, call your Account Manager to discuss the best way of getting them onto your system. A VPN may be a very cost-effective solution for you, too.

Critical Information – From The Helpdesk

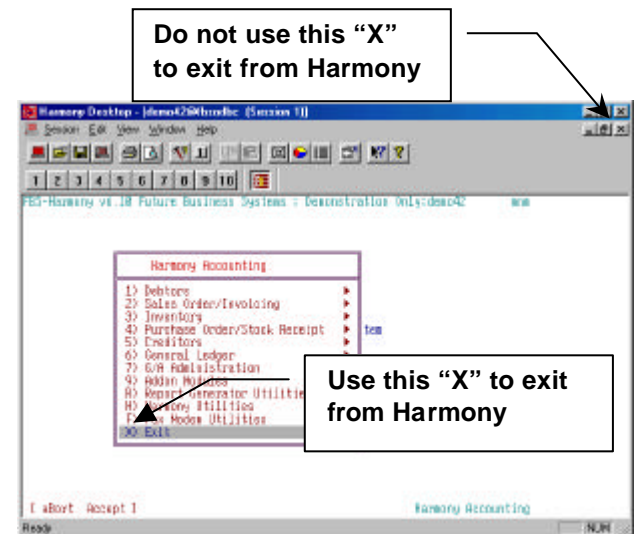
There are a number of Harmony users logging out of Harmony Desktop by clicking on the X button in the top right hand corner of the Window, while still connected to a Harmony session unaware that this is incorrect, and they do not know how to exit from Harmony correctly.

Harmony programs that are run under Windows using Harmony Desktop, must be exited correctly.

The correct way to exit from Harmony is to go back to the Main Menu, and press X – Exit from Harmony. Once ALL Harmony sessions have been logged out in this way, the Harmony Desktop window may be closed.

It is CRITICAL that ALL users know the correct procedure for logging out of Harmony. If users do not log out in this way, your database can become corrupted, resulting in you having to restore from back-up!

If you have any queries on this, please contact your account manager.



Monthly Output File Archiving

Every time you save a print out from Harmony, a copy of the form or report is saved away. Most systems are set up to save forms such as Invoices, Picking Slips, Freight Dockets etc.. Some companies produce Tens of Thousands of these a month and as a result these need to be archived on a monthly basis. If the housekeeping of the OUPUT directories is not performed, your system will gradually slow down to the point where it will take several minutes to print an invoice. Please ensure that archiving is part of your monthly maintenance routine.

Automatic Backups

Automatic backups are great. They save you time and all you have to do is change the tape! Wrong. You also have to read the mail to see that the tape backup has worked. There is no point presuming that the backup is working if the backup is incomplete or even blank. After all it's your data and it's your backup that will be unusable. FBS cannot read or make use of your backup if it is not on the tape.