

IN HARMONY

Future Business Systems Newsletter

Issue 6, Spring 2001

From The Publisher

Welcome to this new edition of In Harmony.

Since our last newsletter, we have been hard at work enhancing the Harmony software. Several modules have had major re-writes. These include:

- o Import Module (Part 1 and 2 are available now, Part 3 after Harmony 10A release)
- o Fixed Assets (Available with 10A release)
- o Creditors (Available with 10A release)

We have also introduced a new module:

Harmony MIS Reporting (Available Now), which, many of you will find very useful.

As we reported last time, we have also branched out into classroom training in our new facilities, and the response from you has been phenomenal. The training sessions we ran earlier this year were very well attended, and we plan to run them again next year. We will be offering training in Melbourne and Sydney, – contact Lina Mauceri or your Account Manager to express your interest.

As most of you already know, we are conducting an Information Seminar in the first week of December in Melbourne. Please contact Lina Mauceri or your Account Manager in regards to these.

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Harmony Desktop 1.4 Now Available!

The new version of Harmony Desktop is ready. As previously advised, this upgrade offers greater security, especially for remote, Internet based users. It also has the ability to create and attach sound files to Harmony functions – instead of just a written message, you can have an audio file play too. This is useful for creating high-impact warnings and error messages.

Some other features are:

- o Use of Windows Printers
- o EFTPOS Integration
- o Direct link to Online Help

You can download 1.4 right now from our Web site. Make sure all your workstations are updated.

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Important news about your Unix operating system

As most of you know, for many years the basic operating system for Harmony has been SCO Unix Open Server. But in March this year, we began moving to a new version, Open Unix (formally called Unixware). All new Harmony installations are on Open Unix, and existing clients will be upgraded when upgrading their server.

Open Unix is newer technology and offers more features than Open Server.

Some of these features are:

- Upgraded path for 64bit processors
- Linux personality allows Linux programs to be run as well as UNIX
- Advanced load balancing giving better performance under heavy load.

We have moved to it because:

- It runs Harmony much faster, especially under load
- It will run on 64-bit processor – Open Server won't
- It runs Linux programs
- It allows us to put more functionality into our software
- It can utilise the latest hardware
- All new software development will be for Open Unix

And perhaps most importantly, development of Open Server has ceased, so all users will eventually have to upgrade to the new operating system.

Unfortunately, the upgrade is not cheap, however it is a one-off purchase and will give you a long-term growth path.

We will be upgrading clients to Open Unix as they buy new servers, which, may enable you to lease the upgrade at the same time.

New Import Module release

As we mentioned in the last issue, we have developed a completely new Import Module. It has now been tested and documentation is complete, so it's ready to roll.



If you do any importing and don't have the import module, please contact your Account Manager.

EDI News!

We have completed our EDI interface to BigW. All major Australian EDI formats are now available with Harmony.

Suppliers to Coles-Myer have recently been advised of changes to the order number formats. We would like to assure our clients that Harmony can handle the larger order number with no modification necessary.

We anticipated this development when we built our interface and made sure to allow for such developments.

POS News!

Harmony's Point of Sale just keeps getting better. We have recently improved the trading reports, and there is a new version of the shop performance report, which tracks best sellers.

A new feature in Harmony is the ability to convert sales orders to stock transfers. This is not strictly a POS function but it supports retailers.

In addition, we have now completed the integration of EFTPOS with Comm2000, the Commonwealth Bank system.



We are currently working on the integration for NAB, ANZ, Westpac and ST George banks, and will let you know when they are available.

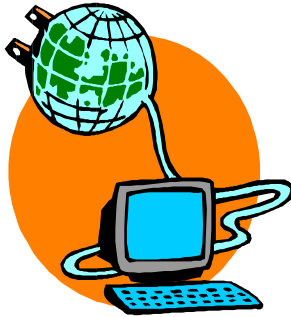
At last an Internet Connection that's fast, reliable and Cheap!

We are talking about ADSL, a relatively new method that is faster than ISDN and frame relay, but far less costly!

A variety of ADSL plans are available, which allow you to achieve far superior speeds at a very low cost. We have a number of clients using ADSL to run Harmony and it is working well. ADSL can also be used alongside other Internet connections, depending on your needs.

It sounds great, and it is – but there are few caveats:

- It is not available everywhere
- Only a few ISPs offer it
- Reliability varies from ISP to ISP as their technologies vary
- There can be long delays in getting the service connected



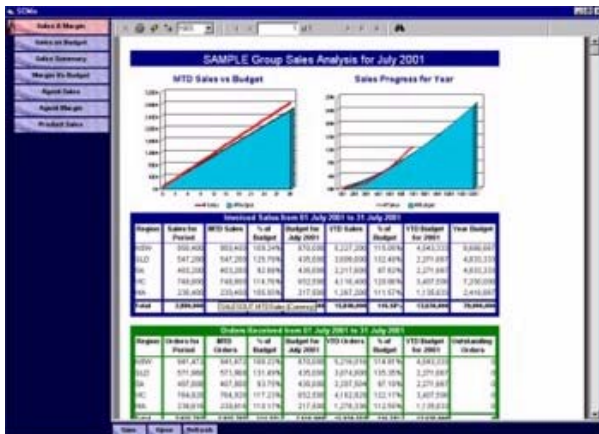
We are affiliated with two of the major ISPs that offer ADSL connection, and we can organise the whole thing for you, just contact your Account Manager.

Think about e-commerce

Remember that FBS has developed a variety of solutions for Harmony. If you are thinking of any kind of online trading, give us a call to discuss your options.

Announcing MIS for Harmony

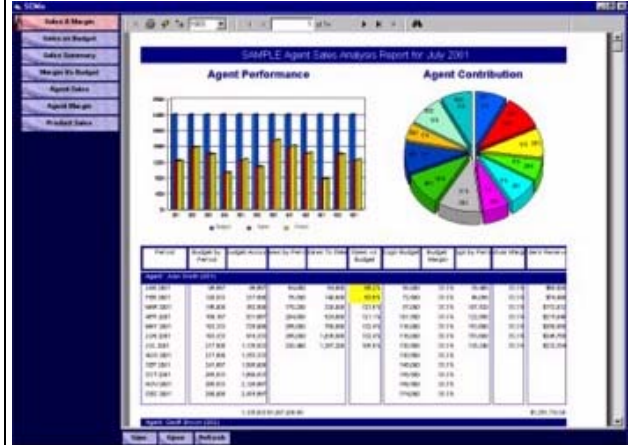
Our most recent product development is MIS for Harmony, a graphical reporting solution. Based on Crystal Reports, it allows you to create amazingly detailed and colourful management reports.



What's more, regular reports can be set to run overnight, so that they are up to date and ready to view the next morning.

They can even be e-mailed to nominated people or posted on a Web site or Intranet automatically!

These reports are ideal for presentation to board members and shareholders, and anyone who is not comfortable with traditional computerised reporting.



A number of standard reports are available, and others can be customised for your needs. MIS for Harmony uses ODBC technology to import data from Harmony, so you will need our ODBC module to use it.

You really must see it to appreciate it, and we encourage you to look on our web site, under "What's New".

We will be officially launching the MIS for Harmony at our December Information Seminars.

Web site developments

The Members area of our web site is now active. You will need a user name and password to enter this area – if you don't have one, contact Lina or Leon. New in the members area, are:

1. An online problem report sheet, so you can log incidents and they will automatically be e-mailed to the help desk.
2. More detailed information on various modules. If you can't find what you need in the manual or on the help CD, check this area. Some manuals are too big to be downloaded so they will be listed by title. If you see one you need, your Account Manager can arrange to have a CD burned for you.

New Harmony 10A Release

The next release of Harmony, 10A, is currently under development and expected to be released in the first half of 2002.

We won't tell you more about it in this issue, but for now we can tell you that there will be hundreds of new features and improvements, and a brand new version of Online Help.

Harmony User Profile Central Retail Group

The women's wear retailer, Central Retail Group, is better known by its labels, Taking Shape and Central Depot.

Taking Shape is an established fashion house for sizes 14-26. Central Depot was set up in June 2001 and is expected to grow fast, with a planned total of 100 outlets between the two labels (currently 40 outlets).

Naturally, expansion like this doesn't happen without the support of a good information system: Harmony from FBS. Harmony's manufacturing and accounting modules have been in use for some years, and recently the retail module was added.

The key benefit has been the access to fast, accurate information. "We get the information quickly so we can make decisions quickly," says Jacquie Holloway, Retail Manager for Taking Shape. "We used to have to do manual reports on things like top sellers – it took several days, and of course was out of date by then! Now the Managing Director has the previous day's top sellers report by 8:30 the next morning, and I can see how we finished the day as soon as the stores are closed, or at any time."

Jacquie also enjoys Harmony's very flexible reporting. "Our previous software had fairly rigid reports – if you wanted a different format, you had to pay for it," she remembers. "Now we can change the formatting pretty much at will. This is very important to us."

Central Retail is now able to report on product sales by a number of variables, and monitor profit by garment. As well as the top sellers report, there are sales histories by store, weeks on hand and sell through, which tracks the age of stock.

"Most of these reports are things we wanted but never had," comments Jacquie. "Now we have the information, and it's immediate. We can even e-mail the reports to save even more time!"

The biggest impact that Harmony has had on Jacquie's job is the improved flow of information in the integrated system. "There are no bottlenecks to hold things up, and less reconciliation work," she says.

"Because the system collates the information, I don't have to – and that save me two weeks in every month that I used to spend on financial reporting!"

This means Jacquie can spend her time in the stores, where she's needed.

....and another year comes to a close.....

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support, and to wish you all a very happy and healthy festive season.

FBS will be open throughout the summer, except for public holidays, and help desk will be fully staffed as usual.



Have a great Festive Season from all of us at
Future Business Systems!