ECi Advantage News
Winter 2011-2012

ECi connect Conference 2011
educate • collaborate • inspire

Thank You!

More than 750 people from 10 countries, across eight time zones and from as far away as South Africa, Guam and Bermuda attended. You came, you saw, you connected, you conquered. As keynote speaker, former major league pitcher Jim Morris, said, "Nothing is impossible."

Connect Conference was a valuable experience for everyone. It provided you, our customers, a chance to get hands-on training on your software, to meet the Advantage team and to learn from other users. It was a great opportunity to see the community of which you are a part! Because you, the customer, help make Advantage a success.

On behalf of the ECi Advantage team, thank you very much for attending. It was great to meet all of you! Regional meetings are being scheduled for 2012. We look forward to working more closely with each of you in the New Year!

2011 Holiday Schedule

The ECi offices will be CLOSED on the following dates:

Christmas
Friday, December 23 through Monday, December 26, 2011

New Years
Monday, January 2, 2012

Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year!

Current Software Versions

LEGACY:
1101.012 Legacy customers running Payroll need to be on this version.

NEXT GENERATION:
2.0.5.11

Please contact support at 800-452-2502, option 1 to request the software update for your system.

Welcome NEW Customers

We appreciate you choosing ECi Advantage for your business. We look forward to working with you!

Tucker Lumber

Gulfway Lumber

Old Mill Country Store

Community Lumber

Content

ECi Advantage
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Advantage Legacy End-of-Year Steps

Many companies have requested an End-of-Year checklist to guide them through this process. Now that the year-end prep work is completed, you're in position for a smooth year end. Here's how to make that happen on **Legacy software:**

1. **Attend Physical Inventory training and complete practice batches in the play area.** We recognize that inventory management is a vital part of your business. However, physical inventory activity is not a surprise. Be sure to plan accordingly. At the end of month or year, and the first day of the new month, training cannot be provided. Questions will always be answered. Callers requesting Physical Inventory training during this time period will be registered for the next available class
2. **Make sure General Ledger is in balance, and there are no unposted batches in General Ledger BEFORE the last day end for the month/year. This is especially helpful for those running auto-EOM/EOY, as this will ensure the general ledger closes properly and the calendar EOY area is created as expected.**
3. **Run End-Of-Day** as usual. Make sure to get the EOD backup. We also recommend making a second copy of the EOD/EOY backup! If you are using CD's, place a new blank CD in the drive, go to the main console and log in as root. When the cursor is at a # type the command: **cdreburnd** and hit [Enter]. If you are using DVD's for the daily backup, type the command **dvdreburnd** and hit [Enter].

Warning to ALL USERS:

DO NOT RUN BOTH END-OF-MONTH AND END-OF-YEAR.

4. **Run End-Of-YEAR ONLY**. This option performs BOTH End-of-month and End-of-year at the same time! With the exception of the first question that asks the user to select either a regular End-of-month or an F for Fiscal or C for Colander, the other questions will be answered just as they are for end of month.

ONE Exception: Depending on the version of software, when you execute the EOM, there MAY be a field like the following:

Update inventory LIFO: N – IF your inventory header flag is ON to use the LIFO/FIFO, you MUST change this field manually. Not sure if your company uses LIFO/FIFO? Go to Inventory, Administration, and Inventory Header Configuration. Hit F8 Search and enter LIFO. If the prompt USE CUSTOM LIFO PROCEDURE Y/N is set to N, this option is turned OFF, and N is the correct answer to the update inventory LIFO question.

Future releases will he automated so it won't be necessary to check or change.

5. **AUTO END-OF-MONTH USERS:** Based on the dates in the EOM HEADER record, Auto EOY runs automatically **if the dates are set correctly. Remember, auto end of month is triggered by auto end of day. No end of day, no end of month/year. If your store is closed Sunday CHANGE THE DATES in the End-of-Month Header!**

MANUAL END-OF-MONTH USERS: When running manual EOM/EOY, go to EOM Administration, EOM header and check the last screen. If all options are F, select **F**. If there is a mixture of C's and F's, use **C**.

When executing end-of-month manual EOM/EOY, change this prompt:

Run which EOM/**EOY** procedure [N, **C**, or F].....: **read note above!!!!**

- If there are multiple locations with a common General Ledger, close G/L in the LAST location. For assurance, you have the option on the End-of-month header on screen 6 of 7 to close at either the Accounts Receivable or Inventory End-Of-Month. Press [F1] and review the notes to make sure you understand how to set it properly! If in doubt, contact a Software Technician to explain.
- The End-Of-Year (EOY) process automatically purges history based on the History Archival screen in the EOM header record.
- Remember, EOY does NOT create a new EOM dataset for December.
- New EOY dataset is created using the year configured Current fiscal year field in G/L header configuration, screen 2.
- Run your regular history backup as usual

6. **Verify that General Ledger has closed.**
7. **Enter G/L closing dates** for the New Year. In G/L admin menu, G/L Header configuration, screen 2 and enter the closing dates for all months. Use the last date of the month. If closing General Ledger manually, see step 12.
8. **User Access to EOY dataset**. The W2s, Accounts Receivable statements, 1099s, and the accountant adjustments are entered, and year-end financial statements printed from the EOY dataset. If this is the FIRST end

continued on pg. 3, see **Legacy EOY-1**

ECi Advantage

LEGACY EOY-1, *continued*

of year on Advantage, users need permission to access the dataset. From the User Administration menu, select Maintenance and User access to datasets. Highlight the user and hit F7 to choose the appropriate dataset.

DECEMBER STATEMENTS WILL NOT RUN UNTIL THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE COMPLETED IN THE NEW EOY DATASET

9. **Turn off the EOM Flags.** In the new EOY dataset, select End of Month/Year. Select the Administrative menu, EOM header configuration. **Screen 1:** If the first two questions are set to YES, change both answers to NO. [Insert] to save changes. If the first two questions on screen 1 are set to no, write down the error and contact support for assistance. Do not continue.

10. **Add POS and Purchasing Locations in all EOY datasets. Step 10 is required for ALL companies using document imaging, and ANY company that will print inventory reports from the end of year dataset.**

    Statements, consolidated invoices and other reports won't print without correctly building both the POS and Purchasing locations. This information is not brought forward by the year end process, and **must be added into each end of year dataset.**

    a. In the Live system, go to POS, Maintenance Menu, and select **Shipping Location Codes**. Open the location. Hold the shift key and hit F1 to print the screen. Do this for all locations. If the shipping and purchasing locations are in common, do this once.

    b. In the Live system, go to Purchasing, Maintenance Menu, and select **Purchasing Location Codes**. Open the location. Hold the shift key and hit F1 to print the screen. Do this for all locations.

    c. In the **Calendar Year End** data set, go to POS, Maintenance Menu, and Shipping Location Codes. The location list is empty. **[Insert]** to add a new location. Use the information printed in step 10a. At the data directory path, **use F7 to select the calendar year end dataset. Build all POS shipping locations**.

    d. In the **Calendar Year End** data set, go to Purchasing, Maintenance Menu, and Purchasing Location Codes. The location list is empty. **[Insert]** to add a new location. Use the information printed in step 10b. At the data directory path, **use F7 to select the calendar year end dataset. Build all POS shipping locations**.

11. **Accounts Payable After** EOY completes, go to the A/P header configuration screen 2. At the option **path to prior fiscal year end data**, hit F7 to select and assign the correct dataset. Select the new EOY dataset.

12. **Payroll** Please review the Internal Revenue Service Publication 15, Circular E document to obtain the current dependent allowance, FICA and Medicare limits and other information. Use the annual tables to update the tax table changes in the Payroll Header Configuration. Contact the accountant or other tax professional to learn what will change for 2011. Contact your state and local governments to verify whether or not income tax rates are changing. Changes require a software update. Print the 2010 W2s from the EOY dataset.

13. **Manual G/L Close If** General Ledger does not close GL during the EOY process, do it manually. From General Ledger, select Postings, and Close current fiscal month or year. The system will prompt to close December, and then prompt to close for the year. Don't forget to enter the new year's closing dates!

14. From the LIVE dataset, **Update Beginning Balances** to bring the accountant's adjustments entered into the EOY dataset forward into the current year. This may be done as often as desired. In the live area, go to General Ledger, Administrative menu, and select Update GL beginning balances from alt area. Press F7 to choose the END OF YEAR dataset. DOUBLE CHECK this selection! PLEASE look at it again to make sure you did not accidently select ANOTHER old prior End-of-yea dataset! BE SURE to run the report FIRST. **Check the last page of the report to find G/L accounts that are in one dataset and not the other**. Add the new accounts, and reprint the report. Update ONLY after reviewing the report.

15. **Auto EOM Users:** Companies using the CALENDAR with Auto EOM must change the dates from 2010 to 2011. Forgetting this step means EOM **will not run automatically** for January. Go to End of Month, Admin menu, and select EOM Header configuration. Check screen 2 and correct the

continued on pg. 7, see **Legacy EOY-1A**

LEGACY MANUAL HISTORY BACKUPS

Required for all Auto End-of-Month users: Is your history safe?

The ECi Advantage Legacy system supports increasingly large amounts of data, and consequently, increasingly large stored history archives. Every month, the EOM procedure archives closed records and moves then into their configured history path. These archived files can consume large amounts of space on the hard drive, and can take a long time to back up.

In order to minimize the amount of time taken to backup this massive amount of archived data, Advantage has provided a procedure to backup only the current and previous month of history archives. This method will provide an expedient and reliable overlapping of two or more months backup of only the most recent history files. As time goes on, the history backup CD or DVD library will build, but no time will be wasted in making redundant backups of the entire history file.

The process is simple and configurable, as to how much history will be backed up. The **manual history backup** may be done at a convenient time, like the day after month end, even while the system is up and running. All users that run the automatic end of month process **must run a manual history backup**.

Please contact support at 800-452-2502 option 1 for assistance in setting this up, and to obtain instructions.

LEGACY SOFTWARE

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHERS: ENTRY/EDIT FOR PRIOR YEAR

After the first of the year, the mail brings invoices for December purchases. Here's how to make sure that everything is expensed in the correct period and fiscal year. The best way is to separate activity for each year. For example, complete voucher creation and edits for the current year, exit, and print the report. Then come back in and handle transactions for the prior year. Separate A/P registers for each year will be easier to track and balance.

Before A/P data entry begins, make sure General Ledger closed for last year. Also, make sure the General Ledger Header screen 2 has closing dates assigned for each period in the new year. Next, make sure the A/P header screen 2 contains the correct path to prior fiscal year end data. These steps <u>should already have been completed</u> as part of the Year End procedure done on the first business day of the new year. See the Advantage Year End Steps in this issue for more information.

Let's look at some typical situations. The December phone bill arrives in January. Vouchers created after the first of the year WILL post back to last year, provided the **Path to prior fiscal year end data** is correctly set on screen 2 of the Accounts Payable Header record, and the operator assigns the correct prior year G/L period during voucher entry.

An invoice arrives in January for a December inventory purchase. When editing the existing voucher, the Accounts Payable user will see a message that says:

> **IN TRANSIT AP VOUCHER WAS ENTERED IN LAST FISCAL YEAR.**
>
> **ALL CHANGES POST TO CURRENT YEAR.**

What this means is the original voucher was expensed to last year, and will remain in last year. If you are adding the invoice number and date, there are no changes to the amounts and no dollars update into the new year.

Also in January, an invoice arrives and the dollars on the original voucher must be changed. Any dollar adjustments to existing vouchers will post into the current fiscal period. Any vouchers removed (RMV) or updated (UPD) update the current period; not last year.

By verifying that General Ledger has closed for the prior year, and the G/L and A/P headers are correctly set *before* Accounts Payable data entry begins for the new year makes it much easier to keep the system in balance.

Legacy Software Webinar Schedule 2011-2012

All times are Central time zone (CST).

DECEMBER 2011	Date	Time	Instructor
Advanced POS	December 8	10:00-12:00	Larence
Inventory Counts	December 13	2:00-4:00	Larence
AML Training	December 14	10:00-12:00	Al
JANUARY 2012	**Date**	**Time**	**Instructor**
Payroll	January 17	2:00-4:00	Les
Document Imaging	January 18	10:00-12:00	Larence
General Ledger	January 19	10:00-12:00	Al
FEBRUARY 2012	**Date**	**Time**	**Instructor**
Accounts Payable	February 7	10:00-12:00	Les
Inventory Counts	February 8	2:00-4:00	Larence
AML Training	February 9	1:00-3:00	Al
MARCH 2012	**Date**	**Time**	**Instructor**
Accounts Receivable	March 6	10:00-12:00	Les
Document Imaging	March 7	2:00-4:00	Larence
Report Generator	March 8	2:00-4:00	Larence

The Legacy schedule serves software versions 0909 and higher. The current software version is 1101.013.

Classes are conducted via conference call and our online meeting website. Each session lasts approximately two hours. The conference call opens 15 minutes before the meeting start time. The instructor is available to assist people in accessing the website, so the class begins on time.

Attendance is limited to 12 companies per webinar. **Registration is required by 4 pm CST one day prior to class.** Register for classes by calling 800-452-2502, select option 1 and talk with the support operator or anyone on the support team.

Reservations are confirmed via email. Anyone attending class will need the email to obtain both the website and conference call information.

2012 Q1 Tradeshow Agenda

House Hasson
Nashville, TN • 1/5–1/7/2012
Opryland Resort
Booth #258

Handy Hardware
Houston, TX • 1/19–1/21/2012
George R Brown Convention Center
Booth #1301

Do-It Best Winter
Orlando, FL• 1/25–1/27/2012
Walt Disney World Swan

LBM EXPO-NRLA
Mashantucket, CT • 1/25–1/27/2012
MGM Grand at Foxwoods
Booth #1117

Orgill Spring Dealer Market
Orlando, FL • 2/2–2/4/2012
Orange County Convention Center
Booth #5812

Allied Building Stores Winter
Arlington, TX • 2/3/2012
Arlington Convention Center
Booth #311

Purina Retail Solutions Expo
Phoenix, AZ • 2/7–2/8/2012
Phoenix Convention Center

True Value Spring Market
Orlando, FL• 2/20–2/22/2012
Orange County Convention Center

LMC Spring 2012 Annual Meeting
Fort Worth, TX • 3/7–3/9/2012
Fort Worth Convention Center

ENAP
Orlando, FL • 3/7–3/9/2012
Disney Coronado Springs Resort

Mountain States (MSLBMDA)
Denver, CO • 3/8–3/9/2012
Denver Merchandise Mart
Booth # 103

Emery-Waterhouse
Providence, RI • 3/16–3/17/2012
Rhode Island Convention Center

Blish Mize 2012 Spring Market
Overland Park, KS • 3/23–3/24/2012
Overland Park Convention Center

NEXT GENERATION WEBINAR SCHEDULE 2012

January

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
10	11	12
2:00 Point of Sale Administration	9:00 Point of Sale Order Entry	2:00 Point of Sale Quotes & Estimates
17	18	19
9:00 Purchasing	2:00 General Ledger Processing	2:00 Accounts Payable Administration

February

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
7	8	9
2:00 Accounts Payable Processing	9:00 Bank Account Manager	9:00 Cash Drawer Manager
14	15	16
2:00 Payroll Administration	9:00 Payroll Processing	2:00 Inventory Administration
21	22	23
9:00 Inventory Stock & Pricing	9:00 Inventory Counts & Management	2:00 Accounts Receivable Administration

March

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
6	7	8
2:00 Accounts Receivable Processing	9:00 Point of Sale Order Administration	9:00 Point of Sale Order Entry
13	14	15
2:00 Point of Sale Quotes & Estimates	9:00 Purchasing	2:00 General Ledger Processing
20	21	22

All times are Central Standard Time (CST)

The following classes are for the ECi **Next Generation software product versions less than 2.0.10.0**.

Webinar training is conducted via conference call and online meeting. The call opens 10 minutes before the meeting start time. The instructor is available to assist people in accessing the website so training begins on time. Attendees will be able to see the entire process and ask questions along the way.

Registration Required

Email invitations are sent with the link to the website, conference call and other class materials. Attendance is limited to 12 companies per webinar. **Registration is required by 4 pm CDT one day prior to class.** Save your seats by calling 800-452-2502, option 1, and talking with the operator or one of the support team.

Legacy End-of-Year Class Schedule

The Legacy End-of-Year class is for users on software versions 0909 and higher. Anyone that has ever struggled with end of year, or has never been through it before will benefit most from this training. Topics include year-end preparation for all applications. The End-of-Year Steps document will be used to walk through the entire process. Payroll will be discussed at the end of the session.

Last year, many people did not register, and joined the training session anyway. This caused classes to fill unexpectedly. Unfortunately, some companies that did register were unable to attend because the class maximum had already been reached. Our goal is to deliver an effective training experience. We have reviewed our procedures and addressed this in three ways.

Class size is limited to 12 companies per session. All class materials will be distributed via email, including the website and conference call information. Anyone that wants to attend training must have the email.

Without registration, there is no way to access a class. The conference call is handled through the class website, and is outside the ECi phone service. *The ECi operator cannot transfer anyone into the conference call.*

Additional classes will be scheduled based on demand. Customers calling to register may be placed in the next available class.

End-of-Year Class		CST
December		
20th	Tuesday	9–10:30 AM

Next Generation: End-of-Year Steps

These steps must be completed before the last business day of the year.

1. Create the Fiscal Period for the New Year.

a. From the General Ledger Administration menu, select **Fiscal Periods**

b. Search By FISCAL YEAR. A list of the defined fiscal years will display. If next year is shown, continue to step 2.

c. To add the next year click the New button or enter CTRL+N to create a new fiscal year. Use the QUICK ENTRY button and enter the starting date of the new fiscal year. Select the option to **copy fiscal periods from the previous year.** Click OK. Review the New Year, check the dates and SAVE if correct.

2. Post any unposted General Ledger Batches.

a. From the General Ledger Administration menu, select Journal Entries, and Post Batches.

b. Only batches from today's date should appear.

c. Batches with a number other than zero in the FAILURES column need to be corrected before the batch will post.

d. Post all batches.

3. Update Beginning Balances.
The system can schedule a job to run overnight on the first day of the year that updates the beginning general ledger account balances. The General Ledger financial statements like the Balance Sheet or Income Statement will not have any beginning balances until this function is run.

a. From the System Administration menu, select Job Scheduler and Schedule Jobs.

b. At Module, select General Ledger.

c. From the application list, select **EOY Balance Forward** and double click the line.

d. The Scheduled Job screen opens and should display one job. Double click on the job to open it. The START and END TIMES determine how often the job runs, not WHEN it runs. Check the bottom half of the screen. This end of year function may be set for January 1, December 31, or the last day of the fiscal year. **Be careful with the time assignment.** Running at 1 am December 31 will not include business conducted between 8 am and 5 pm, for example.

e. If no job displays, please contact Support for assistance.

4. Inventory Valuation Report
An Inventory Valuation report may be run and **emailed** to one or more users. This shows the value of the inventory on the last day of the year. This requires a saved parameter for the report.

a. From the System Administration menu, select Job Scheduler and Schedule Jobs.

b. At Module, select Inventory Manager.

c. From the application list, the last option is **Valuation Report**. Double click the line.

d. Create a new job for the valuation report. It may run on January 1, if the store is closed. When using December 31, be careful with the time assignment. Be sure to run the report after the store is closed and all posting processes are complete.

5. When will Scheduled Jobs stop?
Any reports and functions that run overnight are also set to stop at a specific time. The end of year is a great time to verify those dates and make any changes.

a. From the System Administration menu, select Job Scheduler and Job Schedule Listing.

b. Hit the Print button or enter CTRL + P to print the report.

c. Check the END DATE/TIME column, which is the second column from the right. Note any dates that will expire soon.

d. Go to Job Scheduler and change the ending date. Note: You may need to login as the system administrator to change the existing jobs.

LEGACY EOY-1A, *continued*

dates. Adjust dates for months ending on Sunday in 2011. Please refer to the Auto EOM story in this issue for more information.

16. **CHECK THE BACKUP SPACE**
Once a new fiscal or calendar End-of-year dataset is created, the system automatically adds that dataset to the End-of-day backup. PLEASE review the first End-of-day backup after the End-of-Year to make sure the data fits on the End-of-day backup. Check the space by logging in as root. At the # or $ sign, type in **sysut**. Select >Tape and cdrom Menu>>Data backup options tape and cdrom>>Examine or restore data from cdrom. Please call software Support to assist if there is a question.

Federal Payroll Tax Table Changes

All payroll users need to make sure the federal, state and local tax tables are up to date.

Next Generation users can update their own tables for federal, state and local taxes.

Legacy users require a software update for **state and local tax tables** if the state withholding changes for the New Year. Legacy users can update their own federal tax tables.

The Circular E publication from the Internal Revenue Service is used to update the payroll tax tables every year. Customers must obtain and review this document, and correct the Payroll tax tables before running the first payroll for 2012. This article explains how to use the Circular E publication to update the tax information located in the Payroll Header for the Advantage Legacy product.

From the Payroll menu, select Administrative Menu, and Payroll Header Configuration menu.

Payroll Header Screen 1 contains both the FICA and Medicare tax rates and limits. Verify the Social Security and Medicare tax rates and wage limits. This information is found in a section called **Tax rates and the social security wage base limit.** Check the Circular E table of Contents for the correct page number.

The Federal unemployment limit and rate are also on screen 1 of the payroll header. Verify the FUTA information it in the section called **Computing FUTA** Tax.

Payroll header screen 5 contains both the dependent allowance and the federal married tax table. Changes to the dependent allowance will be found in a table called **Percentage Method – 2010 Amount for One Withholding Allowance.** Use the amount on the Annual line. See Table 5.

The federal married and single tables are built on header screens 5 and 6. Use the **Annual Pay Period** tables on page 40 to update this information. Look closely at the table in the Circular E. Notice that the column called **But not over…** is not used in the Advantage federal tax tables.

Go to the Internal Revenue Website at http://www.irs.gov and select Publication 15 from the Forms and Publications menu on the left, or type in **Circular E** in the search box.

Payroll State Income Tax Changes

Payroll taxes often sneak up on us as the New Year approaches. Since payroll state and local taxes are hard-coded in the software, ECi must make these changes on the **Legacy** software. **Next Generation** software users may change their own tables. Your state and local areas do not notify us when tax codes are modified. We rely on you, the customer, to inform us of any changes in state or local taxes. States often do not send notification for tax changes until after the New Year.

When sending us this type of information, please make sure it is an official document from the state, city or county. Fax it to 903-636-5434, Attention: Programming. Remember, this does not apply to Federal changes.

Please contact ECi Advantage Support at 800 452-2502 to request a software update if the payroll state or local taxes have changed for 2012.