

DDMS DISTRIBUTED DATA

Software to manage your business

Journal
of the
DDMS Family
of Companies

Are you ready?

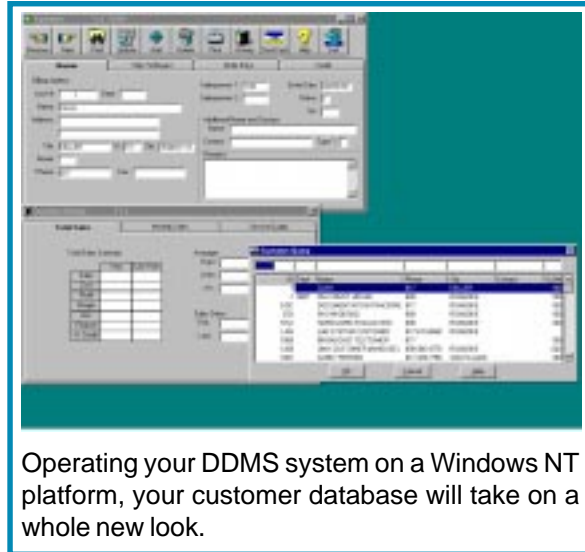
DDMS goes graphic

With the release of our Version 4 software, slated for 1999, DDMS opens a new world to our users. A DDMS graphical interface debuts for Windows NT and AIX-UNIX users.

"In addition to other TBL enhancements," said DDMS President Charles Russell, "we plan to include the customer, inventory and vendor databases, and the commercial order entry module for release with Version 4."

PGDOS, the text-based DDMS platform, will continue to be available. The exciting new UNIX and Windows NT platforms allows graphical capabilities not available in PGDOS.

As with everything we do, we try to make our programming upgrades economical for you to implement. One of the greatest strengths of using your DDMS system on a Windows NT platform is that you can continue to use much of the hardware you already have. You can start your network with both PCs and dumb terminals. That also lets you accommodate long-time text-based users who may be reluctant to make the switch to graphics, while still taking advantage of all that NT has to offer.



Operating your DDMS system on a Windows NT platform, your customer database will take on a whole new look.

Graphics present the same data DDMS users have always had access to, but in a more user-friendly manner. It makes training new employees on your DDMS system easier and quicker than ever. A simplified computer system increases job satisfaction and reduces employee turnover, as well.

The versatility of Windows NT makes it possible for PC users on the NT network to choose either text-based or graphics interfaces. As a matter of fact, you can (see *VERSION 4 page 10*)

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Calendar

- Sept. 17 *BPIA* Orlando
- Oct. 5 - 8 *ISSA Clean Source* Las Vegas
- Oct. 14 - 17 *NOB/NPA* Albuquerque
- Nov. 4 - 7 *SHOPA* Atlanta
- Nov. 13 - 14 *DDMS Users' Meeting* San Francisco
- Nov. 19 *NSSEA* New Orleans

Attention: Serialized Users

DDMS explores serialized link

In today's highly competitive marketplace, margin and customer service can be the difference between surviving and being a casualty.

There's a new tool available to serialized customers that can give you the edge by both lowering your overhead and improving your customer service. It's called Boomerang, a wireless field service application from



(see *BOOMERANG page 11*)

Vol. 12, No.3,
September 1998

DDMS Users' Meeting News

The DDMS Users' Group is the most active users' group in the industry. Each year, DDMS holds meetings and training classes at locations around the country.

The San Francisco Users' Meeting was originally scheduled for October. However, due to a conflict with NOB, we moved it to Nov. 13-14.

We negotiated a special room rate for those attending this meeting—an unheard of low \$109 a night.



San Francisco Users' Meeting

The San Francisco Users' Meeting, slated for November 13 - 14, is a great opportunity to see the future of DDMS. We're working to give you the tools you need to compete with your multi-million-dollar competitors. Open platforms, third-party software interfaces and graphical screens are just the beginning.

The San Francisco meeting is also your last chance this year to meet with other dealers and the DDMS professionals. Users' meetings offer you the opportunity to sit down one-on-one with some of the most innovative businessmen and -women in the industry. Find out how they've already handled some of the same situations you're facing now.

In addition, you can attend the sessions of your choice on topics important to your business today and tomorrow.

Version 4

This is your chance not only to see the future of your DDMS software, but to influence its look and feel. Graphic-based screens will change the way you look at your system forever.

Partnering for Success

Representatives from major wholesalers discuss their marketing programs. You'll be able to compare the features and benefits of all your options for yourself.

Warehouse Flow

Cut labor costs and get orders out more efficiently by improving your warehouse flow. This three-hour session is designed to cover in-depth the different aspects of your warehouse, from picking and packing orders to printing labels to pulling bulk product.

Inventory '98

Learn how the system stores and uses purchasing information from multiple vendors. Find out if floating bin locations can simplify your restocking process.

Vendor Credit Returns

Cut labor costs and turn your inventory dollars faster. Learn to build debit P/Os and track them effortlessly.

Unit of Measure Authorization

Have you ever wanted to sell items by the dozen and by the each? Now you've got the freedom to sell and track stock more accurately and with less confusion. *(Space limited to 20.)*

Automated Short-Buy

Everybody's doing it and you should be, too! This three-hour class covers everything you need to put this powerful feature to work cutting your labor costs by eliminating routine purchasing tasks. This is the most popular software feature in years. Simplify your everyday purchases while you cut purchasing costs. *(Space limited to 20.)*

Report Writer I

Now you can make your own reports and formats. Learn how to get the information you want, the way you want it, in this session for Report Writer novices. *(Space limited to 20.)*

Demonstrations

Take a look at all the exciting options available to you when you use your DDMS system with the Windows NT platform, RoadRunner and WinOrder.

Accommodations

While you're in San Francisco, you'll be staying at Marriott's magnificent San Francisco Airport Hotel. We worked out a special rate for the meeting. Rooms are an uncommonly low \$109 a night.

The cost for the meeting is \$240 per person, and includes all materials, a continental breakfast, breaks, and lunch on both days. To register or for more information, call the DDMS Training Department at 1-800-366-3367. **D**

DISTRIBUTED DATA

Published by
Distribution Data
Management Systems, Inc.

Managing Editor
Charles Russell

Editor
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Distributed Data is the bi-monthly newsletter of the DDMS family of companies. DDMS, O/PUS, and Silver Plus customers can obtain multiple copies for \$12 per year for each additional copy (one copy is included in software maintenance). Subscriptions for non-users are \$10 per issue or \$100 per year. DDMS is not responsible for the review, testing, or evaluation of any products advertised in *Distributed Data*, nor does the publication of an ad imply that we endorse or recommend the advertised product or service.

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The
DDMS
Family of Companies
Phone Directory

DDMS

Local: (817)431-0668
Accounting: (800)959-3373
Accounting Fax: (817) 431-8303
Administration: (800)366-3367
Administration Fax: (817)431-8303
Sales: (800)366-3367
Sales Fax: (817) 431-0955
Support: (800)366-4778
Support Fax: (817)431-0201 or 431-0956

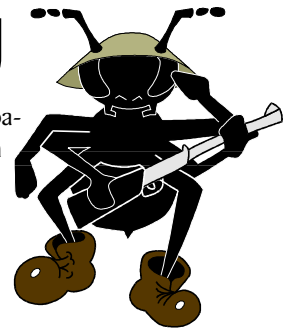
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Local: (817)431-0668
Support: (800)359-6787
Fax: (817)431-2246

Silver Plus

Local: (817)431-8120
Support: (800)200-4226
Fax: (817)431-5117

Arming for the Millennium Bug



As the year 2000 approaches and more companies prepare for the year 2000 computer crisis, we anticipate a significant increase in hardware orders. There is some concern that demand could outpace supply, compounding the crisis.

If you need to upgrade, the sooner you place your order, the more likely that you'll receive it in time to install and test your hardware, then load and test your Version 3.C software.

Jan. 2, 2000, could be another business-as-usual day — or it could spell disaster for your business.

A date-related computer glitch, commonly referred to as the Year 2000 crisis or Millennium Bug, could affect computer-reliant businesses world wide. Fortunately, a little prevention can halt the problem before it occurs.

First, you should test your hardware to determine if it is year-2000 compliant. The Version 3.C software general release includes a special utility program that automatically performs four tests on your PC's hardware. The results of each test — either "pass" or "fail" — appear immediately on your screen.

The first test checks your PC's date rollover capability. It assesses whether your system will go from Dec. 31, 1999, to Jan. 1, 2000. If your system rolls to any other date, it fails the test.

The majority of systems fail this test. However, when you load Version 3.C — which includes an upgrade for the PGDOS operating system — it corrects the date rollover.

The second test determines century storage capability — whether your PC stores the date

as mm/dd/yy or mm/dd/yyyy. The third test insures that your PC acknowledges that 2000 is a leap year. The fourth checks that it does not treat 2001 as a leap year, as well.

If your system fails the century storage test or either leap year test, you probably need to upgrade your hardware.

Preparing your software for the new millennium is easy — when you load Version 3.C, you're ready. Any prior version of DDMS software is not compliant. If you haven't ordered your Version 3 software, do it now. **DD**

To be Year 2000 Compliant, you must:

- load Version 3.C software
- load Version C201 operating system
- test your hardware

Are you ready?

The date rollover test fails on the majority of systems, including most new systems. When you load Version 3.C, it corrects the date rollover. As long as your system passes the other three tests, you need not upgrade your hardware.

Version 3.C Order Form

Documentation Type:

- | | | | |
|--|---------|-----|---------|
| Basic Software materials (tape, diskettes, overview video) | Price | Qty | Total |
| Indicate <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5" floppy drive | | | |
| System type: <input type="checkbox"/> PGDOS | \$27.95 | 1 | \$27.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5.25" floppy drive | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> combination floppy | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows NT | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UNIX | | | |

*You need to order some form of documentation.

| | | | |
|---|----------|--|--|
| CD-ROM Documentation | \$35.95 | | |
| Printed Documentation Update | \$59.95 | | |
| CD-ROM and Videos | \$89.00 | | |
| Printed Documentation and Videos | \$97.00 | | |
| CD-ROM, Printed Documentation, and Videos | \$119.00 | | |
| Additional Set of 7 Videos | \$69.00 | | |

Grand Total:

Your order will be charged to your DDMS account.

COMPANY INFORMATION

Company: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Current Software Version : _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Contact Name: _____

To order your Version 3.C software, complete the form at left and fax or mail to **(817) 431-8303 Attn: Version 3 DDMS P.O. Box 507 Keller, Texas 76244**

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz



Pricing for Profit: Varying your Margin

Competition from superstores is a fact of life for independent Office Products dealers. Many dealers have found ways to neutralize the superstores' perceived pricing advantage by using their DDMS systems to provide services such as usage reports, and next-day delivery. Still, for some customers, price is the bottom line.

Cost-plus pricing across your inventory used to be the rule. Word got around that there was money to be made in the office supply industry. More players joined the fray and suddenly in order to stay in business, pricing strategy became important.

Marking your inventory up or down across the board increases the risk of crossing the fine line between being the low-price provider and being out of business. That's why variable margin pricing is the route to having your cake and eating it, too.

With variable margin pricing, you protect your margins on the majority of the items you sell, while still offering your customers competitive pricing. As a rule, the more often you turn a given item, the lower gross profit margin you can afford to make. In other words, you can afford to give a customer a larger discount on items that turn frequently. Variable margin pricing allows you to group items together according to the gross profit that you need to make on the items in order to stay in business and allows you to place them on special contracts that you can offer to selected customers. Instead of giving these customers a straight twenty or thirty percent discount on everything,

you can offer them an even larger discount on more popular items while protecting your margin on items that you turn less frequently.

The DDMS system offers several ways to implement variable margin pricing. However, the simplest is the variable margin pricing matrix.

Perception is Reality

Superstores and independent dealers alike invest heavily in advertising to increase customers' awareness of product availability and price. Your customers' heightened price sensitivity is the key to preserving your profit margin.

Everybody's looking for a bargain — but it's a rare individual who knows the exact price of a vast quantity of products. Most people know the approximate price of the limited number of items that they use frequently or that have special importance for them. These price-sensitive items are

often products that are disposable, fast-moving, seasonal, or have a high dollar value. They may also be products that are heavily promoted by your competitors.

The variable margin matrix lets you provide your price-sensitive customers with reports that emphasize their savings on "known-value" items (KVI) such as file folders, liquid paper, and ball point pens. These are the items that people believe they buy most frequently. They are also the items that are constantly advertised by the superstores. People know the "price" of these items and base their buying decisions accordingly. However, some stores may even be using these items as loss leaders — selling them at or below cost to create the impression that, because these items are priced low, everything in the store is priced low.

Price-sensitive items usually account for only about five to 10 percent of your entire inventory. An even smaller percentage (two to four percent) are items that are highly price sensitive. These items are often referred to as known-value items (KVIs) or high visibility items. While all price-sensitive items play an important role in your customers' perception of you and your business, KVIs are especially important. In many cases, your price on these items — high or low — defines a customer's perception of your pricing on everything.

You can use variable margin pricing to establish yourself as a low-price provider without giving away the store. Essentially, you identify KVIs, price them low and promote them aggressively. Price other price-sensitive items com-

Everybody's looking for a bargain — but it's a rare individual who knows the exact price of a vast quantity of products.

petitively. Price the less common items high enough to provide a comfortable margin.

Before you can sell to customers who are extremely price-sensitive, you must appear competitive with the superstores, at least on these KVI items. Otherwise, this type of customer will not give you the chance to demonstrate the other money-saving benefits you can provide. Depending on your situation and customerbase, competing on certain KVI items may be a necessary cost of marketing.

The variable margin matrix allows you to handle KVI items separately from the other items in the matrix. Instead of grouping them by gross profit, you can price these items individually. This allows you to protect your margins as much as possible while matching your competitors' pricing on these items.

The variable margin pricing matrix also contains a special analysis function that lets you compare the results of your current pricing structure with variable margin pricing on a customer-by-customer basis. With the available Matrix Report Package, you can generate reports showing your current profit margins for a particular customer as well as the profit you would have made if that customer had been set up to receive margin pricing. You can also provide your customers with pricing sheets and catalogs, as well as generating sales reports for yourself.

KVIs

The first step is to identify the KVIs and price-sensitive items — usually between 175 and 550 items depending on your customers, the size of your business and the size of your inventory. Divide these items into four or five product groups using an identifier such as a sort code or stock class.

Your KVIs go in one group of no more than 20 to 50 items. Pricing KVIs can be a sensitive issue, especially when being competitive translates into taking a loss on those items. While you don't always have to have the lowest price in town on KVIs, you must be competitive enough that the customer can justify paying a little more in exchange for the other values you offer.

If your pricing on these items is not less than or equal to your competition's pricing, do not over-promote the items. Doing so will make you seem high-priced.

Promoting your competitive pricing is important. If customers see well known items priced competitively, they will presume that you offer fair prices overall. However, remember to price your items right, or don't promote them.

Price-Sensitive Items

The rest of your price-sensitive items make up the other groups. The contents of each group are determined by a combination of price-sensitivity and usage. For example, the first group might contain the 50 items that have the highest combination of price sensitivity and usage. The next group contains the 50 next highest ranking items. Usage can be determined by hits, quantity sold or sales dollars, whichever best suits your needs.

Identify each group with a product code, and periodically review your groupings.

The Rest

When your highly sensitive and sensitive items are identified and priced, you can focus on your nonsensitive items. These products are just as important as the rest of your inventory: the KVIs draw a customer in, but the nonsensitive products pay the bills.

Identify characteristics of the nonsensitive items that will allow you to price them higher than the sensitive items. These item characteristics can include the following:

- requires extra pricing time, such as additional handling
- requires extra handling time for your customers
- includes natural add-on items, such as tabs for folders
- is seldom used, and customers buy it because they need it
- is a repair or replacement item
- carries luxury or status appeal

- is seldom promoted (not price shopped)
- is not seasonal.

Once your pricing strategy is established, you must constantly monitor the competition and your own sales activity to ensure that your strategy stays accurate and up to date.

Keep in mind that when using variable margin pricing, you should always follow these pricing steps consistently. However, remember that pricing is not an exact science; rather, it is a tool that should be used as part of your total marketing plan. **D**

Variable margin pricing allows you to protect your margins as much as possible while matching your competitors' pricing on these items.

Variable Margin Pricing Matrix

| | Product Groups | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | KVI | A | B | C | D |
| Customer 1 | 25% | 30% | 35% | 40% | 40% |
| Customer 2 | 25% | 35% | 40% | 40% | 45% |
| Customer 3 | 25% | 35% | 40% | 45% | 45% |
| Customer 4 | 25% | 40% | 45% | 45% | 45% |

Four customers receive different levels of pricing for the same product groups. Each customer is assigned to a different contract. These contracts give the dealer different levels of gross profit on the same product groups.

A DEALER PROFILE

Making opportunities in small town America — and Mexico

There's no question that the independent office products dealer today faces some stiff competition — from other independents, monster chain stores, buying clubs and direct mailers, just to name a few. Carving out a niche for yourself and hanging on to it can be a real challenge. Compound that competition by the limitations of being located in a small town, and you're looking at the marketplace from Eric Garcia's

point of view. Garcia is the operations manager for Office Mart in Del Rio, Texas.

With a population of only 40,000, Del Rio is definitely small-town America. Just this side of the Mexican

border, Office Mart faces some stiff competition. San Antonio, eighth largest city in the U.S., is only 140 miles away. Although in some parts of the country a distance of 140 miles is a comfortable market cushion, in Texas, it's just down the road a piece.

So, how does a small independent compete in a market like this?

The first step is to analyze your market and your customers, then see how your business can be their "go-to" store.

Garcia sized up the competition and discovered there were niches he could fill, although it meant changing the family business a bit. However, the Garcias have long embraced change.

Office Mart is owned by Garcia's parents who started the business in the mid-70s as Del Rio Coffee Service. They sold and serviced office coffee machines in and

around Del Rio. In 1991, they decided to wade into office products with a line of general office supplies.

That spirit of diversification has helped Office Mart thrive in the turbulent 90s when others have barely survived. Garcia has branched out into computer software, teaching and art supplies, safety equipment and supplies, and now a line of Cannon copiers, too.

Office Mart debuted their line of teaching supplies

with a Teachers' Expo in May. Local teachers were surprised at the variety now available locally.

"It was our first year to do teaching supplies," said Garcia. "We were a little

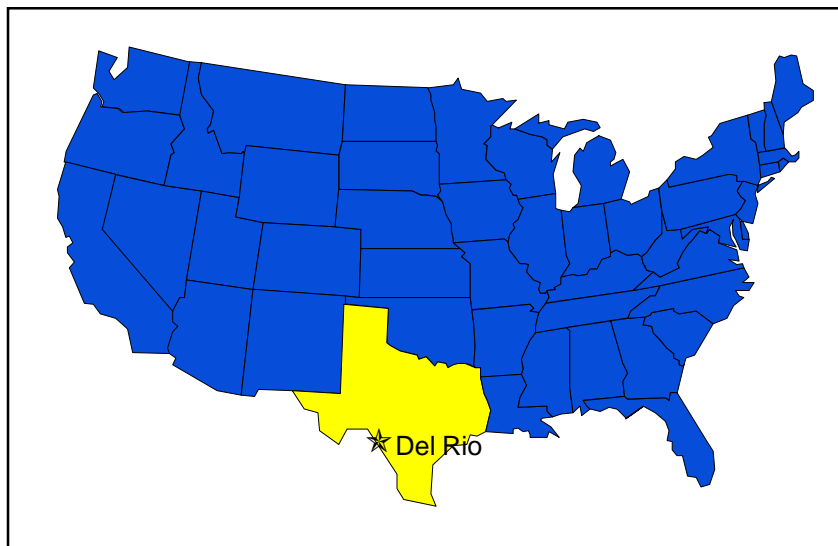
disappointed with the turnout — only about 60 teachers came. The few who came, though, went back and told the others. They said they never knew we carried these kinds of supplies."

Garcia said his biggest challenge has been making the public aware of what they carry and what they can get in stock quickly.

"Del Rio is a small town," he said. "We've been doing a lot more advertising to make the public aware of what supplies we can provide them and how fast we can get them."

The Teachers' Expo was another step toward reclaiming their market share from the price clubs and chain stores in San Antonio.

Facing off with the mail-order houses required different tactics, since they strongly tout their pricing and quick delivery.



Diversification has helped Office Mart thrive in the turbulent 90s when others have barely survived. Garcia has branched out into computer software, teaching and art supplies, safety equipment and supplies, and now a line of Cannon copiers, too.

Using the principles of variable margin pricing, Garcia selected about 30 popular items from his inventory. He checked their prices in the (E) Inventory Screen. Then he compared his prices to those published in catalogs by Viking and Quill, his two main mail-order competitors.

"We matched them or beat them on every one," he said.

As for quick delivery, Office Mart has arranged with a vendor to deliver orders in his own truck rather than using a freight line. Garcia said, "We'll get our orders a little earlier and a little faster."

Although primarily a retail operation, Office Mart has about 280 commercial accounts and is opening more doors all the time.

In addition to diversifying the Office Mart product line, Garcia also saw a vast, untapped market in their own backyard — Mexico.

Mexican maquiladora or in-bond plants have existed for 25 years. Ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement has allowed the factories to flourish. The Mexican Government allows maquilas to import duty-free into Mexico raw materials and components used to manufacture products for export. Once assembled or manufactured, maquila products must be exported unless special permission is obtained to sell a limited amount of output in the Mexican market. If maquila products remain in Mexico, they are subject to applicable Mexican duties. For example, if a maquila imports 10 gallons of paint, they have to return the empty cans to customs officials to demonstrate that the paint was used and not resold in Mexico.

A tariff is levied on all goods brought in for the Mexican market. That tariff translates into paperwork, shipping, customs hassles and a tax on office products brought into the maquilas.

Garcia said, "For them [the maquilas] to bring in an 18-wheeler with raw materials and then throw some office supplies on the back was a real headache with customs. One of the Government's rules is that if a maquila purchases a large quantity of items over here, they have to show receipts in order to import them into Mexico and then pay the tax on those items every year, which makes it cost prohibitive."

Office Mart opened locations in Acuna and Piedras Negras, Mexico, just across the border from Del Rio.

"By having companies in Mexico, we sell to the maquilas, but we invoice in pesos, using the maquila's purchase order," said Garcia. "We do the paperwork. It takes a big burden off the maquilas. They don't have to worry about the taxes because they purchased the products from a Mexican company. The taxes fall on us instead of them."

Garcia said the arrangement also satisfies Mexican

laws requiring maquilas established for a decade or more to purchase Mexican products.

The maquilas were the inspiration behind expanding the Office Mart product mix to include safety equipment. Garcia said most of his demand for safety products was from the maquilas — fire extinguishers, safety goggles, gloves, suits, etc. However, he plans to expand his in-stock inventory to cover his American market.

Garcia said that before the end of 1998, he hopes to open another store in Eagle Pass, a near-by city with tremendous maquiladora market potential.

Another market Office Mart began tapping last year was back-to-school.

"This is our second year to work with the Del Rio school district and prepare class packages. We get the supply list from the teacher and package the materials together by grade. It's a lot easier for parents to come in and ask for a second grade package than it is for them to fight the crowd at WalMart. We've sold about 150 of them. We got started a little late this year, but still had a pretty good turnout."

Garcia said the most valuable feature of the DDMS system to his business has been EDI (electronic data interchange). EDI is the intercompany, computer-to-computer exchange of business information in a standardized format. Of particular value, noted Garcia, is his ability to accept electronic invoices from vendors. This electronic link allows paperless transactions and bridges the gap between companies that use different computer systems.

Using EDI, you can automate your purchasing process. It lets you expand your marketplace and handle very large customer orders without hiring additional people.

Electronic vendor invoicing is efficient — no wasted time waiting for the invoices to arrive. It's paperless — no printing means no wasted resources. It also saves keying time by minimizing data entry errors.

Garcia uses his DDMS system to handle the routine so he can take care of the exceptions.

Office Mart is a true family enterprise. "Dad is semi-retired," Garcia said. "My sister Liz is in purchasing and my brother Joey is in and out. He also has a Tom's Snacks distributorship that keeps him pretty busy."

Electronic vendor invoicing is efficient — no wasted time waiting for the invoices to arrive. It's paperless — no printing means no wasted resources. It also saves keying time by minimizing data entry errors.


Editor's Note: Del Rio made national headlines in August when a tropical storm led to such severe flooding that President Clinton declared it a national disaster area.

*Office Mart survived the flood without incident, according to Garcia, who expressed great concern for his community. **D***

Refurbished equipment saves \$

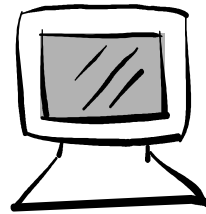
The high cost of doing business just went down a bit. Now you can purchase remanufactured printers and refurbished terminals from DDMS. Adding a workstation won't break the bank when you buy name-brand remanufactured equipment from DDMS, like Okidata, Genicom and Wyse.

This high-quality equipment is available in the most popular models.

Some companies hesitate to buy used equipment. Like buying a pig in a poke, you just don't know what you're getting. However, when you buy remanufactured or refurbished equipment from DDMS, you also receive a warranty. Our terminals carry a two-year warranty. Our remanufactured Okidata printers include a six month warranty. Genicom printers are also warranted as specified. 



Printers



Terminals

Remanufactured Okidata printers include a six-month manufacturer's warranty.

All terminals include keyboards.

Wyse
Link
Addis
NCR

Digital terminals available.

For more information call DDMS Sales at 1-800-366-3367.

- Okidata OKI-320 narrow
360 CPS, 9-Pin, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$664
DDMS Price: \$395
- Okidata OKI-321 wide
360 CPS, 9-Pin, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$853
DDMS Price: \$450
- Okidata OKI-320 Turbo narrow
360 CPS, 9-Pin, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$564
DDMS Price: \$525
- Okidata OKI-321 Turbo wide
360 CPS, 9-Pin, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$764
DDMS Price: \$695
- Okidata OKI-520 narrow
430 CPS, 9-Pin, Barcode, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$664
DDMS Price: \$525
- Okidata OKI-521 wide
430 CPS, 9-Pin, Barcode, Parallel, Serial Card
Retail Price: \$864
DDMS Price: \$595
- Genicom 3810s
Wide Carriage, 118-Pin, Table-top, 600 CPS
Warranty: Six month replacement
Retail Price: \$2125
DDMS Price: \$899
- Genicom 4410xt
400 LPM, Stand-alone, Parallel & Serial Shuttle Matrix
Warranty: Ninety day replacement
Retail Price: \$6250
DDMS Price: \$1995

- Wyse 30
Emulations: WY30, ADDS Viewpoint A2, Televideo 901 & 925
Retail Price: \$549
DDMS Price: \$225
- Wyse 99GT
Emulations: 99GT, Wyse 50+, VT52, VT100,mVT220 7/8 Bit, ADDS A2, HZ 1500, ADM-31, 4010, 4014, PC Terminal, PC Graphics, Televideo TVI 910+/912/920/925/950
Retail Price: \$549
DDMS Price: \$249
- LINK MC5
Emulations: ANSI.SYS, VT220-7/8, VT100, VT52, Link MC125, Wyse 60, Wyse 50+, ADM 3A, ADM 5, TVI 955, TVI 950, TVI 925, TVI 910+, PC Term, ADDS VP, ADDS 60
Retail Price: \$579
DDMS Price: \$299
- ADDS 1010
Emulations: A1, A2, 3A, 3A+
Retail Price: \$395
DDMS Price: \$235
- ADDS 4000
Emulations: Viewpoint, Regent 40, Wyse 50, TVI 925, TVI 920, TVI 910, HAZ 1500, VT 52, Wyse 75, VT100
Retail Price: \$495
DDMS Price: \$299
- NCR 2900
Emulations: Viewpoint, Regent 40, Wyse 50, TVI 925, TVI 920, TVI 910, HAZ 1500, VT 52, Wyse 75, VT 100
Retail Price: \$599
DDMS Price: \$299
- Digital DEC VT420
Emulations: VT 300 series, VT200 series, VT100 series, VT52
DDMS Price: \$259

DDMS opens new avenue

Over 1,500 office products dealers are managing their businesses with the DDMS system. Now, that same technology is available to janitorial/sanitation distributors, as well. Your business software should handle the day-to-day tasks of running your business — tasks such as accounting, inventory, and purchasing. When DDMS handles the routine, you're free to handle the exceptions.

The entrance of DDMS into the janitorial/sanitation marketplace opens possibilities never before enjoyed by the industry, including computerized, automated communications.

LaGasse Brothers, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of United Stationers, is now capable of receiving electronic transmissions via computer. United's purchase of LaGasse is one of the factors influencing their move to electronic communications.

Bob Rosa, of Rosa's Office Plus in Richmond, Ind., said that until now, orders were handled by voice. "That level of service is wonderful, but those days are over. We have to be able to deal with one another electronically on routine matters, that's the way of the world today," he said, "To the jan/san industry, this computer-to-computer stuff is pretty high tech."

"We're just starting to get from LaGasse an item file on diskette so we can update electronically. Right now we update manually, which is awful," Rosa said.

Jan/san supplies are currently about eight percent of Rosa's total business, the majority of which is made up of general office products, business machines and office furniture. With a foot in both the office products and the jan/san camps, Rosa is in a unique position to observe the strengths of both industries.

"Because of technology, the window of opportunity is open for the office products industry to make serious inroads into the jan/san marketplace. Our businesses are very similar. We both have trucks that deliver consumables to the same customers. One just delivers toilet paper while the other delivers copy paper," he said.

While the basic foundation of the industries are very similar, Rosa contends that there are significant differences, too. "The jan/san industry works on a narrower gross margin percentage than the office products industry. Jan/san distributors deal with a lot fewer customers and a lot larger order size. They have \$100 minimum orders. They don't solicit small accounts."

That leaves the door open for Rosa's and other office supply businesses to cater to those smaller accounts.

Rosa pointed out that a typical office spends 50% more on jan/san supplies than on office products. "Every

restroom has toilet paper, paper towels, soap, air freshener. The floors, walls and fixtures have to be cleaned. Go back in the shop and look at all the cleaning that goes on there. It's a huge market.

"We target the small customer that the large jan/san distributors didn't want — the doctors' offices and insurance offices. It's a hassle for the office manager to have to get petty cash to go buy supplies, load them in the car, and then carry them inside. A case of toilet paper is heavy. So, we charge their order and deliver it."

The similarities between the industries make it a natural for single sourcing, which is primarily responsible for the jan/san industry's jump to technology.

"The office products industry and the jan/san industry have the same customers, so typically a customer is dealing with an office products vendor and a jan/san vendor. A lot of people are looking at going to single sourcing to simplify their purchasing process. The jan/san folks are at real loss because they don't have access to office products, nor are they technically proficient enough to talk to the customer about EDI. Because of the office products industry's technical capabilities, we're poised to take advantage of the movement toward single sourcing."

Computerized purchasing can give office products dealers a competitive edge. "I don't like competing with the big jan/san distributors for business. They work on a narrower margin," Rosa said. "DDMS lets us keep our overhead down by not hiring as many people, which lets us operate on a narrower margin so we can compete with the players in the jan/san industry."

"The DDMS system handles the mundane tasks for you. It's wonderful. The machine does all that stuff you used to spend all your time on so you can handle the exceptions. It's what we should have been doing years ago. We're ahead of other industries — they're aghast at all the purchasing module does: how it takes the order, transmits it to another computer and interacts with it to get an acknowledgement back. Those are powerful things to be doing automatically. That's big stuff. You're not usually afforded such sophisticated software at this price point. It's usually million dollar systems that are doing stuff like that. And this ain't a million dollar system. It's wonderful that it's affordable for businesses like ours." ■



"Because of technology, the window of opportunity is open for the office products industry to make serious inroads into the jan/san marketplace."
— Bob Rosa, Rosa's Office Plus, Richmond, Ind.

Version 4
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use both simultaneously.

For example, in the Order Entry module, you can add orders using the text-based application if that's more efficient for you. However, to check the availability of an item, minimize your Order Entry window and access the Inventory module using the graphics interface. Recent upgrades to the Inventory module might require you to have several Inventory windows open at once. That's not a problem using your DDMS system operating on a NT

platform.

You'll find multiple efficiencies using the graphics interface. You only have to pull up a record once to access it in multiple screens. Floating windows give you instant access to more information.

Advanced search and indexing capabilities lets you look up customers by account number, contact name, company name, location or phone number.

The graphics- and text-based interfaces both work off a common database, so when you make a change to a record using the graphics interface, it instantly updates the text-based interface, as well.

Adding or changing information in a database is quicker and easier using the graphics interface.

Using your mouse, you'll be able to click on a field to instantly change, add or delete information. No more tabbing through every field in a screen to move the cursor to the one you want.

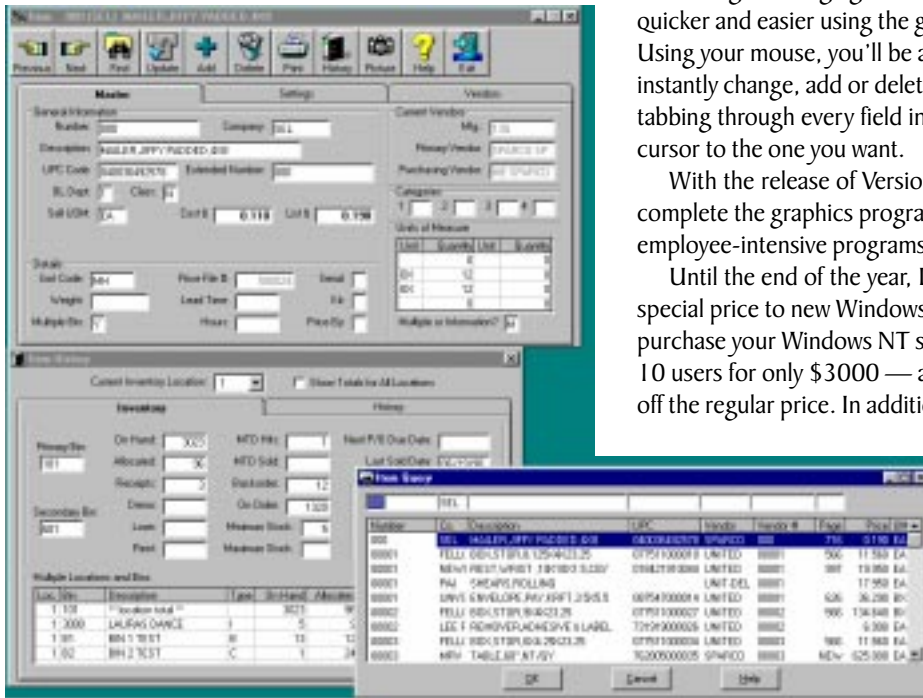
With the release of Version 5, we plan to complete the graphics programming for most of the employee-intensive programs.

Until the end of the year, DDMS is offering a special price to new Windows NT users. You can purchase your Windows NT software and licenses for 10 users for only \$3000 — a savings of 40 percent off the regular price. In addition, for six months after

the purchase date, you can add users for just \$200 each. After six months, adding a new user is \$500.

Sign up for Windows NT now at a huge savings and be ready for the release of the graphical interface in 1999.

For more information about DDMS in the graphical world, call our Sales Department at 1-800-366-3367.



D

DDMS family grows — and grows!

We're having a baby boom at DDMS. Twelve little ones have joined the DDMS family since December, and we're expecting three more before long. We want to share our good news with you as we welcome the next generation of programmers, support technicians, owners and executives. **D**



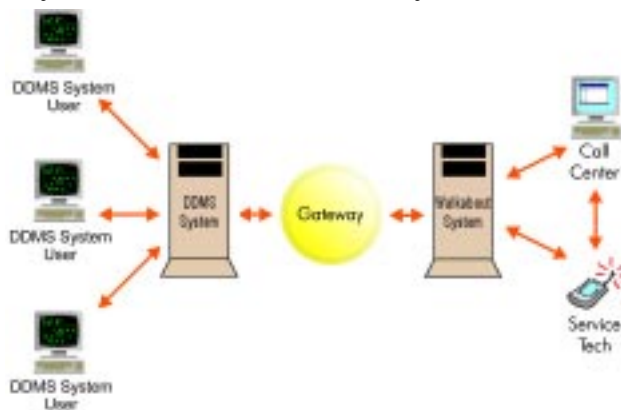
| New Parent | Department | Baby | Birthdate |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Steve LeMaire | Programming | Peyton Lindsey | Dec. 3 |
| Scott Eller | Support | Cortlin Jacob | Jan. 26 |
| Traci Johnson | Silver Plus | Garrett Anthony | Jan. 30 |
| Peter Karaganis | Support | Ashley Elizabeth | Feb. 18 |
| Ken Sladovnik | Support | Mollie Jane | Mar. 17 |
| Val Valadez | Hardware | Emily Nicole | Apr. 19 |
| Kevin Ferren | Owner | Bryanna Star | May 21 |
| Lisa Means | Marketing | Victoria RoseMarie | May 21 |
| Charles & Darla Russell | Administration | Ashlie Grace | June 2 |
| Bryan Grissom | EDI | Blake Macade | June 19 |
| Jimmy Hollon | Programming | Jaxon Lee | July 13 |
| Carol Gee | Programming | Julie Lynn | Aug. 23 |

BOOMERANG
Continued from page 1

Walkabout Software.

Using Boomerang with your DDMS system gives your field technicians real-time access to your databases and order entry application. That way, you can keep customer, equipment, inventory and service ticket information up-to-date and in sync.

Automatic dispatching accelerates the turn-around time on service calls, reducing overtime and other operating costs. Wireless dispatches and email give technicians and operators real-time communication without having to spend time on the phone. It eliminates the paper forms and redundant data entry needed to complete service calls.



Service techs in the field have all the information they need, including equipment service history, up-to-date parts pricing and availability. They're able to capture all the information needed to complete the service ticket, including parts, meters, timestamps, payment methods and customer signatures. All the information is transmitted wirelessly and updates your DDMS system in real-time.

Package pricing lets you decide which features you want to take advantage of. Packages start as low as \$39 per tech per month.

As part of our quest to bring you interfaces with cutting-edge third-party software, DDMS is currently evaluating your interest in Boomerang.

We'd like to know what you think. Please complete and return the short survey below to (817) 431-0955.

- ▶ Increase number of service tickets closed each day
- ▶ Reduce service response time
- ▶ Increase number of calls handled
- ▶ Reduce number of phone calls to service centers
- ▶ Have on-site access to customer account information
- ▶ Reduce paper costs (forms, filing, handling, storage)
- ▶ Shorten billing cycles
- ▶ Reduce inventory losses

Serialized survey

We want to know how you do business and if you'd be interested in using Boomerang as a wireless field service application.

1. How many field service technicians do you have?

2. How do you communicate with them in the field?

3. How do you assign new calls to them?
 Telephone Beeper Portable phone
4. What is your machine population?

5. Are you live on inventory?
 Yes No
6. Do you have car stocks set up?
 Yes No
7. How interested are you in having an automated option like Boomerang?
Very 1 2 3 4 5 Not at all
8. How important is to you to reduce turn-around time on calls?
Very 1 2 3 4 5 Not at all
9. How important is to you to reduce labor costs?
Very 1 2 3 4 5 Not at all

10. Who are you?

Company: _____

Contact name: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Phone: _____

When you've completed your survey, please fax or mail it to:
DDMS
PO Box 507
Keller, TX 76244
(817) 431-0955.

ACUMA is cutting-edge technology

Your customers' direct link to your DDMS system — designed to be easy to use — is about to become even easier with the release of ACUMA's Version 4 software.

ACUMA is the only software available that allows any customer to communicate with the dealer, regardless of their operating platform. Customers build orders at their convenience using product descriptions, color photos, and even special contract pricing that you set up. They can also check pricing on a real-time basis, enter new orders, and check the status of existing orders — all from their desktop PC.

Acuma's Version 4 enhancements were made with you and your customers in mind.

Budgeting

You can set dollar values that when exceeded, automatically put a customer's order on hold pending approval, not refused. That makes you aware of the order and lets your customer approve it. As an added security benefit, you can require a second approval. The order is held:

- if it exceeds the dollar value you specify for the order;
- if it exceeds the dollar value you specify for the month;
- if it exceeds the dollar value you specify for the P/O;
- if it includes an uncataloged item;
- if it includes a non-contract item.


Marketing

You can build strong relationships with large accounts by gathering information from more than just the person placing an order.

- A 30-digit department field lets you capture information that defines a subgroup within a large account, such as "XYZ Co. Accounting on First St."
- The WHOCALLED field tells you who placed the order; the WHOFOR field lets you capture information for desktop delivery. You can use this information to develop a laundry list for that individual or design a flyer especially for him or her.
- Multiple SHIPTO locations within a department let you deliver to the WHOFOR, regardless of WHOCALLED.
- Now ACUMA uses the same history files your DDMS system uses. That cuts down on file maintenance and storage.

The Future of ACUMA

Scheduled for release in mid-1999, we're writing a JAVA program to enhance ACUMA's Internet capabilities. You'll be able to add your own items, along with a description and pictures.

DDMS is committed to partnering with third-party software companies to give you a choice in the e-commerce marketplace. When considering your choices, it's important that an independent option be available — an e-commerce package not tied to any wholesaler or buying group. As such, our plan for ACUMA is to continue enhancing it so that it remains state-of-the-art. 



P.O. Box 507, Keller, TX 76244

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| PERMIT #2816 |



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November 13 - 14