VISUAL NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2010

LIBRA BARCODING INTERFACES

While Libra does not have any built in Barcoding Capabilities we have been able to adapt it over the years to interface with a couple of the most popular Barcoding Software Programs. Loftware and Labelview Gold are two of the most popular programs of their type used in a variety of industries that support the design and printing of barcodes.

What makes them unique as compared with the simpler Design and Print programs is that they have a well thought out interface that enables almost any Accounting Program to interface with them. You just create a label template with defined field names and place a request to print that format into an in basket. The request supplies the name of the label and the fields you wish to populate on the label.

The combination of the request and the label template combine to print a barcode label in any of a large number of standard formats. When combined with a scanner the barcode label can be scanned to save time entering long customer codes, part numbers and the like. Additional programming can link a scanned serial number to a whole host of other fields saving time and reducing errors.

Barcode printing requires either a laser printer or a specialized barcode label printer to print whole pages or continuous peel and stick labels. The cost of the equipment depends on the volume and speed of printing required.

While integrated barcode printing does require some programming changes, barcode scanning often does not. Barcodes are just a form of character representation that is converted into normal characters once scanned. If you scan the barcode for part number ABC123 then that is what will appear on your screen. To make full use of bar-coding some programming changes may be recommended to improve processing speed..

LIBRA PDF & EMAIL INTERFACES

When Libra prints to a Spool File it creates an Ascii Text File which is located most frequently in the LIBRA2 folder. The names of these Spool Files are generally as follows:

LPFxx1 = Spool File 1 for WSID = xx

LSFxx = Spool File for WSID = xx

If you browse to the LIBRA2 folder and identify the file based on the date modified you can rename the file as REPORT.TXT for example and e-mail the file to the bank or head office.

Text files can be read by any computer equipped with Notepad. The downside of Text Files is that they can be easily changed. You can get around this by utilizing a program that converts Text Files into PDF Files. PDF Files can be read by any computer equipped with the Free Adobe Acrobat Reader program available at www.adobe.com . You can use Adobe Acrobat Professional or several simple free utilities to accomplish this conversion.

Normally Libra can only create simple text files that look like one of their reports. If you wanted to create an invoice with a company logo, this can now be achieved by using an inexpensive PDF Form Filler program. This is similar to the Barcoding Interface where you create a template with named fields and an interface text file with the fields for the form. When they are combined the result is a fairly complex PDF File with integrated graphics.

Having created one of the above files we can now integrate e-mailing those files to your customers, suppliers or employees. Again by using an inexpensive e-mail batch sending program we can create a stack of forms to be emailed and with a touch of an icon send them out to those concerned. This can ultimately save time, paper and postage once activated with relatively minor programming changes.