



tSGi
the Support Group, Inc.
PO Box 341270
Austin, TX 78734-0022

We Sell Our Partners' Products

tSGi

ADAGER—

The Adapter/Manager for IMAGE/SQL
Databases
Model 1—Daily Maintenance
Model 2—The Full Power

ALDON—

Harmonizer—Source Code Comparitor
S/Compare

BLANKET SOLUTIONS—

EDI/3000™—EDI Subsystem for MANMAN™
LSR—Labor Summary Report

FUTURION—

Forecasting Front End

HILLARY SOFTWARE—

SHEETMATE—Data Management tool
NIGHTWATCH—Fail-safe Event Notification
System

byREQUEST—Electronic Reports Distribution

HEWLETT PACKARD—

HPe3000
HP9000
Net Servers

IFS:INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS—

A full line of Client/Server and Web-based
ERP solutions
PDM and Configurator, CRM and SFA
Financials and Manufacturing
Maintenance and Assets Management
ERP Applications 2001™

McCONNELL CHASE SOFTWARE WORKS—

FD 5.0—Forecasting for Demand
FD 6.0—Web-enabled Forecasting

O'PIN SYSTEMS—

Reveal/PC—Report Viewer for PC
Reveal/3000—Output Control
Reveal/CS—Report Distribution Solution

QUEST SOFTWARE—

Systems and Performance

ROBELLE—

Supertool—Database Handyman

ROC SOFTWARE—

BackPack™ and more

STR SOFTWARE—

FAX/3000—Application Faxing

SOFTWARE INNOVATION, INC.—

Enterprise SalesMaker

SUMMIT SYSTEMS—

Vendor Performance Measurement System
Usage and Transaction Tracking System
Credit and Collection Manager for OMAR™
Multi-Level Component Availability
Production and Variance Report Writer
MRP Pegging System
Streamlined Cash Receipts System
Transaction Log Toolbox
Routing Analysis System
Report Viewing System
And Much More!

SUPPLYPOINT—

SCM on the Web for MANMAN™

TAMLIN SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS, INC.—

Shop Floor Control Solutions

TELAMON—

Asynch/Bi-synch Connectivity Solutions for
the HPe3000

TRINARY—

EDI Windows™

VEISOFT—

MPEX
Security/3000
VEAudit



Channel
Partner

Products and trade names mentioned may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. ASK™, MANMAN™, Dataport™ and OMAR™ are registered trademarks of Computer Associates International, Inc. OpenView is a trademark of Hewlett Packard. Microsoft Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation. UNIX is a registered trademark of The Open Group.

THOSE SUPPORT *People*

Volume 8, Issue 1

Lean, Mean, Power Users

By John Simonich

We are discounting our rates by \$500 per day from our standard fee for the education of MANMAN™ users—find out why!

Here at the Support Group, inc. we believe, and have always believed, that one of the most important elements of an efficient operation is the effectiveness, knowledge, and skills of the end users. When a company goes through an ERP implementation, training and educating the employees is always a major priority. But what happens once you've been using the system for ten years? Does that emphasis on training increase or decrease? We believe it should always be a priority, especially in the tough times we are all facing.

As companies undergo layoffs and/or a hiring freeze, what happens to the efficiency of the remaining workers? There is only one suitable answer: efficiency must increase in order to carry the same workload with fewer people. That being the case, it is imperative to make sure your end-users are "power users" as much as possible.

Our goal is to help companies become more efficient through the development of MANMAN™ associated user skills. If the users know why they must enter information a certain way and what effect it will have on another area of the company their motivation is increased

(See Power User, page 7)

Fall, 2001

tSGi

Why upgrade that 9x8 or 9x9?

By Donnie Poston

The push to replace 9x7's has been hard because they are going off support in April 2002. The decision to replace an HPe3000 going off support in a few months is an easy one to make. Now for the hard decision: when to trade in your 9x8 or 9x9? They have about 4 years left on support.

Why should you consider trading in your 9x8 or 9x9 as soon as possible? Simple. The sooner you trade it in, the higher trade-in value you will get. I traded in a 957 last June for \$27,000. Now that the deadline is close, that same box has a \$2000 trade-in value. That's quite a difference. 9x7's are an obsolete model. They have no value anymore. Five months of delay cost \$25,000. Do the math to figure out how

(See Upgrade, page 6)

Trusted Advisor

What Makes Us Strong?

By Terry Floyd

As a nation, we have recently learned how many heroes we have and how they are just ordinary people. It's hard to tell in advance what to be prepared for or what will be of lasting value, but self sufficiency will always be a valuable asset. Some companies and users would be surprised to learn that a few MANMAN™ sites are totally self-sufficient and self-reliant, able to do all of the things that tSGi does and more. They depend on HP's hardware and support, and so do we. They depend on third party MPE utilities from companies like Adager, Bradmark, ROC, Orbit, Opin, and VESoft, and so do we. They depend on third party MANMAN™ support and add-ons from companies like Summit Systems, McConnell Chase, SupplyPoint, and Trinary, and so do we. They modify their own MANMAN™ FOR-TRAN source code (so we don't have to).

(See Trusted Advisor, page 4)

Brought to you by the subsidiaries of Blanket Enterprises: tSGi, ENTSGO and asp4edi.com.

From Shaggy's Desk

I told you in our last issue that I would be looking at a new product and would share my findings with you. Well, I did and here's the scoop. We have established a new partnership with Software Innovation, inc. to bring Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to the MANMAN™ community. CRM can be many things: Sales Force Automation, a Contact Manager, Telesales or Help Desk Support, Marketing Automation, Project Tracking, Service Agreements, or Document Management. It can be any or all of these things, depending on the implementation you choose. There are many good reasons to use Customer Relationship Management software, as you will see on the next page.

Software Innovation has been in business since 1984, providing solutions to their customers' business needs. In 1997, the company introduced their products to North America by creating Software Innovation, Inc. They have chosen the Support Group, inc. to be their Premier Partner for bringing Software Innovation products to the MANMAN™ market. Software Innovation has appointed Harley Shouldice, who I'm sure some of you already know, to work with us. Harley has over 20 years of MANMAN™ experience on both the HP3000 and DEC platforms. He will be a valuable asset in helping the Support Group in this endeavor.

In this issue I want to tell you about Software Innovation's flagship product, Enterprise SalesMaker (ESM). ESM is a modular solution that meets your requirements for managing complex relationships between companies, people, activities, products, projects, documents, and services. It is easily customized and can be tailored to capture your information and use your business rules to ensure a successful implementation within your enterprise.

ESM is available in both Client/Server and Web-based versions. Road warriors who often work in remote settings will benefit from the Client/Server version, which provides all of the business rules and interface on the client's system. The database can be centralized for immediate sharing of information or remotely deployed for standalone operation. Standalone versions are synchronized easily using email as the mechanism for exchanging revisions between remote users and the central copy.

This product is fully integrated with both Lotus

Notes and Microsoft Outlook meaning that users have familiar interfaces for email, tasking, and calendars. The critical advantage to using Enterprise SalesMaker is that it integrates email correspondence, tasks, and appointments with the people, projects, and products that are part of the system. Your salesperson can quickly review scheduled and completed activities for a client before calling to close a deal.

All of the Sales Force Automation functionality that is acknowledged as standard in the industry has been built into ESM, including contact management, account management, activity management, document management, and pipeline management. But that's not all! ESM can handle sales and marketing automation, customer service, and support automation, and will improve communications in any enterprise through project and document management, plus integration of calendaring and tasking.

ESM uses a modular product architecture and offers a wide range of functions related to account and customer management across the enterprise, without any need for customization.

Have you ever provided Service or Support to customers who haven't paid for it? Have you suffered from an inability to prepare timely forecasts, been unable to view activities across account teams, lacked a "global view" of customer issues and opportunities, or been unable to coordinate projects that deliver complex products to customers. If so, Enterprise SalesMaker can help. Call and let us show you a standard demo on-site or via Microsoft Netmeeting. When you see the basic features and functions of the ESM solution, you'll be glad you did.

I'm trying to keep my article short this time, but I want to share some good news with those of you keeping up with my Dance With Cancer. Last week I had a PET Scan and Biopsy that showed no evidence of cancer anywhere in my body! (My Oncologist still plans on at least one or two more rounds of Chemo to make sure there are no more cancer cells left in my blood.) Thank you so much for all your prayers, emails of encouragement, and stories of mothers, wives, sisters and friends with breast cancer. It has made my ordeal so much easier to live with. To all you survivors, I'm Dancing On.

(Continued from previous page)

Manufacturing Conductor Saves Time and Money by:

- ✓ Supporting and enhancing quality control initiatives
- ✓ Capturing in-process quality control data live on the shop floor
- ✓ Providing a complete audit trail of who worked on what when and QC results
- ✓ Providing the tools to make your ISO certification much easier
- ✓ Providing access to engineering drawings from your CAD system on the shop floor
- ✓ Displaying specific detailed work instructions at each step in the manufacturing process
- ✓ Providing critical engineering revision tracking and control
- ✓ Supporting serialized items and components and providing lot control, including complete inventory part history
- ✓ Managing your shop floor and optimizing your operations
- ✓ Providing on-line, real-time shop floor management data for scheduling and shop management
- ✓ Providing real-time visibility of all shop floor activity
- ✓ Supporting seamless handling of re-work and scrap
- ✓ Supporting batch size of one to allow tracking of partial moves
- ✓ Enabling Theory of Constraints through small batch sizes and constraint data
- ✓ Providing WIP reports to help identify constraints for scheduling
- ✓ Providing real-time data to customer service information



Visit us at www.supgrp.com today!



Power User

(Continued from page 1)

simply by having the big picture. It's much easier to care about your work when you understand its purpose. Some companies have made the mistake of teaching people how to do their job and nothing else. This approach does not provide the power users you need to run an efficient company, especially when resources are tight.

To show that the Support Group, inc. really means it when we say we are committed to helping companies be as efficient as possible, **we are discounting our standard fee for the education of MANMAN™ users by \$500 per day for those who submit a Purchase Order before the end of the calendar year.** Take advantage of the Support Group's commitment to efficiency and schedule your users for training today. Contact me at **1-800-798-9862** or **jsimonich@supgrp.com** for more information.❖

MPE certification testing will become more important within the next year. Do you have someone studying to pass the series of tests required to prove proficiency in HP e3000 skills?

To learn more, visit Tech Group University at TechGroupMD.com. We have initiated and cooperated on initiatives with Tech Group University on several MANMAN™ specific offerings.

Also, get a copy of "The MPE/iX Handbook" as soon as possible. We have several copies already and it's only been out a few months. We've learned a lot of things we didn't know about MPE already!

New Product Offerings

By Chuck Combs

Today's complex computing infrastructure is composed of hundreds—if not thousands—of components from a wide scope of vendors and manufacturers. As a Trusted Advisor to our customers, our challenge is to offer you the best possible mix of hardware, software, support and consulting services to help you meet your business goals. We have established a network of independent software vendors and hardware providers that provides leading-edge solutions for MANMAN™ users. Rest assured that through your relationship with the Support Group, inc. you have access to some of the best software and hardware solutions in the industry to optimize your business.

At the Support Group we continually search for a "better way" to provide solutions to our customers' business problems. Toward this end, we are in the process of forming several new relationships for the coming year. Recently we have formed a partnership with Tamlin Software, based in Dallas. Tamlin Software Developers, Inc. is a systems integrator providing Shop Floor Control solutions to small and mid-range manufacturers and distributors. Tamlin, like tSGi, takes a consultative approach to projects, helping customers identify and achieve their business goals through effective use of information and technology.

One of the products that Tamlin offers is Manufacturing Conductor™, a paperless shop floor control system designed for mid-sized manufacturers of discrete or complex products. Manufacturing Conductor™ is a powerful tool that allows your company to grow while simultaneously providing you with the real-time information you need to make the best business decisions. Manufacturing Conductor™ can help you save time and money while increasing product quality and improving your company-wide quality of life.

Have you ever asked yourself, "Where are my parts? Where are my people?" Manufacturing Conductor will allow your company to grow while adding less overhead. It was designed to be integrated into your accounting/ERP and scheduling systems. This eliminates duplicate data entry, allowing less staff to process higher volumes. It is available with interfaces for shipping manifest and point-of-sale solutions.

Additionally, Manufacturing Conductor™ has a simple, user-friendly interface designed with your workers in mind because employee time tracking and inventory movement is barcode driven. It can be customized to fit specific needs through source code options, runs on Windows NT/95/and higher, and optionally replaces all paper on the shop floor, including routers. For more information on Manufacturing Conductor™ call us at **1-800-798-9862** or visit our Web page at **www.supgrp.com**. (Continued on next page)

Upgrade

(Continued from page 1)

quickly the rest of the 9x8 and 9x9 models will lose their value.

Don't forget our new HP Affiliate Website, **www.bstore.hp.com/web/associate/supgrp**. This website is provided to our customers as a direct service for HP supplies and other equipment. The larger items, such as e3000's, still need to be quoted directly by the Support Group. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call **1-800-798-9862** or email me at **dposton@supgrp.com**. Remember, if it is hardware related, I can help.❖

Question:

How does your company intend to address the manufacturing challenges of R&D, Time-to-Market, and Customer Service?

Answer:

A web of service alliances with your strategic partners. Be sure to include the Support Group, inc. in those plans. Business Process Integration through software is our forte.

Benefits of Customer Relationship Management

There are a number of reasons to automate your sales and marketing departments with a CRM solution. Rising cost of sales, increased global competition, and a greater need for control and access to corporate information are driving many organizations to seek out CRM solutions. However, there are a number of other benefits that can be derived from implementing CRM in your organization. These include:

Your sales reps can spend more time with customers and less time dealing with administrative and reporting tasks. Because reporting is automated, sales management can review performance of the sales team at any time.

Your organization can focus more on new prospects vs. 'house' accounts through activity management. Because all activities are archived in ESM, reps that spend too much time "farming" and not enough time "hunting" can be encouraged to change their focus, and spend more time on the objectives that are important to your company.

More time for sales managers to spend "coaching people" instead of "managing a process". The inherent automation of documentation and reporting means that mundane tasks take less time and the sales team can focus on their real objective: selling.

Better customer service. The very act of accurately tracking all touch points on each customer helps drive a better level of customer service. Because every sales and marketing person contacting a customer can be made aware of that customer's needs, wants, and problems, each customer touch will be more effective.

More timely follow-ups through the automation and escalation of tasks. Again, when activities are recorded and tracked in a CRM solution, there's less danger of important activities "falling off of someone's plate".

Increased revenue. If sales reps spend more time selling, odds are you'll win more business.

Increased recognition of your customer's needs. Because so many processes are automated, it will be easier than ever for your sales and marketing team to contact your customers. Keeping your organization "top of mind" with your customers helps your retention and add-on sales.

Increased customer satisfaction. More attentive, accurate salespeople, more highly targeted marketing, and more effective service reps are likely to lead to more satisfied customers.

Improved communications within your company. One of the main problems at many companies is that the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. With CRM, you can ensure that everyone has a clear picture of what's going on with each customer.

Increase in sales agreement close rates and decrease in sales cycle time. If your salespeople are more focused and better educated about their customers, you've got a much better chance to close business, and to close it more rapidly.

Increased employee motivation and satisfaction. Successful people tend to be happy people; with the technology to help them be more successful, employees will be happier, reducing turnover and increasing productivity.

Better-trained sales/marketing people, requiring less time to train. By embedding your best practices and processes into the software, you can require that all sales reps follow the same procedures as your star performers.

Support for organizational change. If your organization is restructuring and adopting new ways of doing business, a key factor in the success of your new organization will be the degree to which employees adopt the new structure.

Improved understanding of and control over sales and marketing expenses. Instead of these expenses being a black hole in the organization's budget, simply putting CRM in place can help you gather the information you need to answer questions like, "How effective is my marketing?" or, "What is my cost per sale?"

Trusted Advisor

(continued from page 1)

I first heard about MANMAN™ and ASK Computer Systems, Inc. in October, 1975. I called Sandra Kurtzig after reading an ad in Datamation Magazine about a FORTRAN/IMAGE Inventory control system. I selected, bought, and implemented MANMAN™ as an MIS Manager in 1978.

What made MANMAN™ so great? Was it MPE? IMAGE? The HP3000 hardware? Lately, I've been thinking that it was the fact that the FORTRAN Source Code was provided at no extra charge. All of it.

Times have changed a lot since 1978, but MANMAN™'s availability of source code is still a major benefit to its users and the IT staffs who support them. Even MANMAN™ has changed a lot, but that one thing has remained constant. It makes MANMAN™ flexible and easy to support, two key ingredients missing in other applications systems.

Without the FORTRAN source, you're trapped. You're unable to "read the code" to figure out those really sticky technical challenges, unable to change the application software processes with easy FORTRAN mods, unable even to understand how it all works.

Beware of buying software additions for MANMAN™ that do not include source code for no

Get it now - 1099 Reformat

The IRS has issued a new 1099 form and the Support Group, inc. is ready to provide you with a solution that will save you the trouble of manually printing the forms or making the tedious but required modifications. Give us a call and let us provide the details, the answers to your questions, and the solution to your 1099 reformat problem.

We at the Support Group, inc., a customer-driven organization, have in place a set of principles that we believe in. These principles are understood and practiced by everyone in our company. They shape how our customers and vendors perceive us.

Recently, events and information have been posted on the **manman-I list server** concerning a change in the relationship between the Support Group inc. and Quantum Software. Our standard policy is to not respond directly to these items, especially through a user-focused list server. There have been numerous inquiries made about this issue, however, and we feel that a response is necessary.

When we establish relationships with a vendor or partner, we try to ensure that our business goals and objectives are a good match. We do this to support the high standards we have placed on the products, support and customer satisfaction that we offer. As these relationships with our partners evolve, each participant incorporates changes as their business plan dictates. This appears to be the case with tSGi's relationship with Quantum Software. Quantum has opted to align themselves with other parties, so we have agreed to end our partnership. This decision was difficult because of our long and valued relationship with Ali Saadat.

We hope our decision to part ways with Quantum Software does not inconvenience any of our valued customers. We are actively pursuing new partnerships and will keep you informed. If you have any questions concerning this issue, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Your IT staff has more important new projects than ever before. Your software and systems are becoming more complex. Temps, contractors, and outsourcing should be in your budget to ensure that your own people can focus on their jobs without distractions, interruptions, and time wasted trying to figure out something that could take weeks unless they know exactly who to call.

Ask for Help

By Rob Gentry

Hi everyone. I want to take this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to enhancing and supporting your investment in MANMAN™. We continue to research new products, and support our partners in attaining our mutual goals. One of these goals is to provide you with technical support, both for the MANMAN™ family of products and for the HP platforms that run it. We are also providing the same type of support for the VMS version of MANMAN™ through our association with Manufacturing Services Group.

We define support as providing MANMAN™ and HP expertise to augment or extend the experience of your IT staff and "power users." Therefore, tSGi is here to answer questions about the system and to review issues when things do not work according to expectations, what we refer to as "challenging opportunities."

The key word here is "extend". Recently we have had numerous questions about Physical Inventory and Product Costing as companies complete their fiscal year and prepare for the next one. In these instances we can act as an extension of the IT staff, answering questions and providing support on execution and completion of these projects.

What I am trying to say here is use our experience. Your support contract entitles you to this benefit, but

ALWAYS ON

We have to bring our systems down, or at least make them unavailable to some of the users some of the time. But if we have enough coverage for all shifts, our people *can be* "always on."

it requires you to contact us to tap into that experience. Don't "spin your wheels" and consume valuable time when the answer is only a phone call or email away. If you can't figure something out, ask us. That's what we're about.

Belvac Product Machinery, Inc. has been our support customer for over six years. Chuck Brooks, the MIS Manager at Belvac, says, "tSGi is always there and goes out of their way to provide the support I need when I'm too swamped to deal with it." That's what we're here for.

We can also provide a Needs Analysis and/or Performance Analysis of your systems. These are on-site visits to review your system and your use of it. The results are documented in a written report outlining what can be done to improve your application and its use. Then, to continue our support of your investment in MANMAN™, we offer consulting and programming to assist in fulfilling the recommendations of the analysis.

When you have questions or problems with MANMAN™ give us a call. We can help. But we can't help you until you ask.❖

You probably have lots of "exceptions" in your MANMAN™ data. There are dangling records (headers without details and vice versa) and other inconsistencies like data values out of the acceptable range of values. Stuff is lurking in the "dead ends" of your data files, waiting for you to try to access it, which you may never attempt until you begin to migrate to a new system.