

HOW TO USE:

DATOW Software's V4.01 Addendum

Documentation Updates

OVERVIEW:

DATOW Software programs are often updated with some changes that do not appear in the normal documentation. Until these changes are added to the documentation, they will appear in this document. Please refer to this document as you read the other documentation to see if the area of the program you are looking for is updated by this document.

All Programs:

PickList Access:

PickList Help has changed. When you are in a field that supports PickList Help, and a PickList Help file exists for that field, the PickList will appear when you press Alt-H the **first** time. Prior versions required you to press Alt-H a second time to see the list. The first level help will still appear, in blue, at the bottom of the screen. This change affects almost all of the documentation, so please keep this change in mind as you read the manuals, guides and other documents. This change will save you some keystrokes.

PickList LOOKUP:

PickList Help has a new lookup feature. If, for example, you enter an "F" in the MAKE field, the first entry in the PickList Help file that starts with an "F" will be entered for you when you press Enter. If you are using the MAKE.PLH file that was shipped to you, this would be "FORD". If you enter 2 characters, such as "FI", the first entry in the PickList Help file that starts with an "FI" will be entered for you when you press Enter. As shipped, this would be "FIAT". You can use Opening Menu Choice #11 (Create/View PickList files) and then select the PickList Editor / Generator Menu Choice #2 (Add and/or Edit a .PLH file) to customize this feature. If, for example, you find that you tow more Chryslers than you do Chevys, simply move Chrysler to make it the first entry that starts with a "C". If you have two or more entries that start with the same 2 letters, the lookup feature will select the first matching entry. So, if you tow more PONTIACS than you do PORSCHEs, put PONTIAC before PORSCHE in the list. Of course, since PLYMOUTH is at the top of the "P" list, it will be selected if you simply enter "P", but PONTIAC will be selected if you enter "PO".

While we see this as a nice feature for fields such as MAKE or COLOR, the real value will be in the longer fields that support PickList Help. For example, the FROM and TO fields in the Truck & Driver Call Detail screen, which are 35 characters long, can really benefit from this lookup feature. Suppose you often tow vehicles from a certain location: "Sherwood Forest Country Club". You could make an entry in the LOC97.PLH file with those words, and then simply type "S" in the FROM location. When you press Enter, the entire "Sherwood Forest Country Club" will be entered for you. Up to 30 Characters may be inserted in this way. Of course, this entry must be the first in the file that starts with an "S". If you had another entry in the file, for example, "Southwest corner of E. North St.", and you put this entry before the "Sherwood" entry, then the lookup feature would select the "Southwest" entry. You could still select the "Sherwood" entry by using 2 letters, "SH", in the FROM field.

The Case (Upper/Lower) of the character(s) that you enter for the lookup feature to use is not considered in performing the lookup. In the above examples, the lookup feature would respond the same no matter

if you entered "S" or "s", "SH", "Sh", "sH"(this would be pretty weird!) or "sh". However, the Case Rule for the target field is honored. That is, if the field only accepts Upper Case, then the lookup feature will enter the information into the screen for you in Upper Case, even if the PickList entry is in lower case. If the field accepts Upper or Lower Case, the case of the entry in the PickList Help file is honored. For example, the MAKE field always is an Upper Case only field. This means that if you enter, or if the PickList lookup feature enters for you, a make such as "Ford", the program will display it as "FORD". But a field such as the FROM location can accept either Upper or Lower Case characters.

So, to recap this new feature, if you enter one letter and press Enter, the lookup will insert the first entry it finds that starts with that letter. If you enter 2 letters and press Enter, the lookup will insert the first entry that starts with those 2 letters. If you want the lookup to insert an entry that starts with the same 2 letters as another entry that is earlier in the list, you will have to use the standard PickList Help to select that entry. Also, if you enter 1 character in a 1 character field (such as Hot Post Destination) or 2 characters in a 2 character field (such as T-Code), the lookup feature will not activate. If you do not want the lookup feature to be active at any field, set the Environment Variable LU=N.

A side note to this new feature: If you edit the PickList Help files, you should save those files in another subdirectory or on a floppy. This is because if you install an update, the update will overwrite your modified files. So, unless you want to re-do that work, you should save your work so that you can restore it after an update. And by update, we mean a system update, not just the quarterly updates that many of you receive. Those quarterly updates DO NOT overwrite the PickList Help files.

HINT: If you decide to modify a PickList Help file, call up the PickList and look at the top of the box that opens. The name of the file which you need to modify will be displayed. All PickList Help files use the filename extension ".PLH".

BETTER HINT: If you decide to modify a PickList Help file, call up the PickList and Press Alt-E (or Alt-A). This will take you into the Editor with the PickList Help file that you have "up", so that you can now Edit the PickList Help file "on-the-fly". This would be helpful if, for example, you are towing many vehicles from one location, such as a Police Sobriety Checkpoint or an Apartment Complex. You could add this address to the PickList Help file that is brought up when you ask for Help at the "From" location in the Truck & Driver Call Detail screen. Then, each time you get another call to tow from that location, you can use the PickList or the PickList Lookup to quickly enter that location. Note that if there is NO PickList for an item, you will not be able to edit it "on-the-fly". You will have to use OPENING MENU choice 11 to first create that PickList. However, almost all items that can have a PickList already do.

This next item only affects existing users - new users already have this in their TOW.BAT file. Check your TOW.BAT to make sure that the following line is present, after the PF environment variable is set (if used) and before the line that starts your programs:

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DEL %PF%*.PLH
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This line in your TOW.BAT file will make sure that you start each DATOW Software session with a "clean slate". That is, the temporary files that we use to speed up the PickList features will be deleted and the program will create them as it needs them. This means two things: When you first use a PickList, it will take a little longer as the program makes the required file. Subsequent uses of that PickList will go much faster. This applies to each field that supports the PickList features. Secondly, anytime the program makes a new PickList, the speedup file will be automatically deleted. So, you will see a slowdown the first time you access a PickList after you have changed that PickList. The exception is when you are using our PROfessional Edition programs on a network. If you change the PickList at, for example, the server and you simply copy those changed PickList files to a workstation, you will need to exit the workstation to the \TST> prompt and type TOW to restart the programs. This will cause the line you added to TOW.BAT, in the above paragraph, to execute so that the program will use the new PickList file(s) to make the speedup files.

We noticed that other towing programs have a feature similar to our PickList Lookup feature. However, we think, and we hope you will agree, that no other program performs this feature with the ease, power and flexibility that we do. We look forward to your comments.

TickerTape & AutoHelp:

Many screens now have the ability to scroll a message while the computer is waiting for you to type something. We call this feature TickerTape (aka TeleType). To activate or deactivate this feature, you simply press Alt-M. Each system (DATOW Lot Control, Lien Sale Processing, Truck & Driver, Accounts Receivable, Opening Menu and even BioRhythms) can have it's own message (TOWMSG.TXT, LSMSG.TXT, TDMSG.TXT, ARMSG.TXT, ACMMSG.TXT and BIOMSG.TXT respectively). As currently configured, we are using a variation of the manuals or our product literature. If the appropriate file is not available, the program will simply scroll a small "commercial". In the future, we think we would like to add such things as the Quote of the Day, the Joke of the Day, etc. We may even be able to link to broadcast news services and/or Internet sites for sports scores, stock market quotes, etc. However, even in the current configuration, you can modify these files to make them say anything you want.

There is also a new, and optional, Environment Variable that is used to control this feature.

Set TT=# Where # is a number that controls the speed that the TickerTape scrolls across the screen. If this variable is present, the programs will automatically start the TeleType in any screen where this feature is active. Larger numbers cause the program to scroll more slowly. NOTE: Pressing Alt-M will toggle this feature on and off, even if this variable is not set. Typical values for # are from 1 to 200. But you can experiment to find the speed that you like best.

An interesting variation of the above new feature is called AutoHelp. We think it is especially useful to new users. It uses the TeleType feature to scroll the help for the field that you are in, in the same way the TeleType feature scrolls messages. As you move from field to field, the scrolling window will display the help for that field. It is as if you pressed Alt-H to see the help, but now it will be Automatic!

To activate this feature, there is a new Environment Variable:

Set AH=Y This must be a capital Y. It tells the system to activate the AutoHelp.

Note: When you are familiar with the help, and you no longer want to see it, either press Alt-M to turn it off temporarily, or remove the AH Environment Variable to turn it off all the time. You can do this by typing SET AH= at the DOS prompt or by editing your TOW.BAT file (or DTDEMO.BAT if you are using the Full Function Demo). However, the OPENING MENU will, by default, display the TickerTape even if you have disabled it for all other programs. Also, you may notice the system is a bit slower moving around the screens if this feature is active. We think this is a fair trade-off for the added convenience, but you can decide for yourself. Remember, it is optional and can be easily turned off.

NOTE: The TT and AH features are new and are still considered EXPERIMENTAL. That is, although we have extensively tested these features, we cannot say that they will function correctly in all conditions. Also, we may remove these features in future versions or we may greatly modify their operation. IF these features cause you a problem, you can simply disable them. Therefore, if there are bugs in an experimental feature, we may or may not fix them and we may or may not send you an update. This is because these features are considered experimental. However, we believe they can be used to advantage, and we encourage you to try them. How will you use these features? What would you like to see scrolling by as you work? Let us know!

Horizontal Printing:

Do you use a laser printer? We have been experimenting with a Horizontal format for certain reports. If you type LASER3H or LASER4H at the \TST prompt, you will activate this new feature. If this does not work well for you, you can revert back to the old way with the commands LASER or LASER4. To try this new feature, use the appropriate "H" command, as described above, and then run a report in compressed mode. The usual question for this, in the report screen, is "Compressed?" or "17Char Pitch?". If you answer Yes, the report should print out sideways. This makes Current, Released, Incoming and many other reports much more easy to read. Try it out and see how you like it. If you do like it, let us know. It is a lot of work to go through each program making this change. But, if our customers like it, we will do it.

Color Changes & Other Miscellaneous Changes:

The Menu choice colors have been changed to make them easier to see. Also, the First Level Help does not flash when a menu choice is selected. Instead, the menu choice will flash to remind you which menu choice you asked for help about.

We have found that certain keystroke sequences during a menu choice selection can cause an Error 5. For example, if you use your arrow keys to highlight a selection, then press Tab to clear the "Your Selection" number that is displayed, and then press Enter, and then press Down Arrow, the error will occur. This is a pretty obscure condition. To correct this, we have disabled the TAB, Left/Right Arrows, Space and Backspace keys during a menu choice selection. If you accidentally enter a menu choice number that you do not want, press the Up or Down Arrow key. However, there are still some extremely obscure keystroke combinations that can cause this Error 5 to occur. Rest assured that no damage can be done to your data if you manage to cause this Error. All files are closed down when this happens. Simply re-start the programs by typing 7 or TOW.

We have found that some of the newer, faster computers are *so* fast, that the "beep" and the "Visual Beep" that we use to get your attention may not appear to work. Actually, they are working, but they work so quickly that you never hear the beep or see the screen flash!

If you leave your computer on overnight, you may find that the date in our program screen is not correct. As soon as you go into another program module, the date will change. Internally, the date has already changed. This is simply a display issue.

All programs have had their HELP reviewed and, in many cases, revised. PLEASE USE IT! It can answer a lot of questions, and you may even learn some neat new stuff! Also, there is a new help file for the backup procedures. To see it, type the command H at the DOS prompt or use the OPENING MENU choice #12 to view/print BHELP.TXT.

If you are printing to a shared printer and/or using a print spooler (Windows 95 often does), you may experience a delay between the time the program finishes printing and the time the printer actually prints. This is due to the way that print spoolers work. You can tell the spooler to send the print job to the printer "NOW", by pressing the Alt-F2 key.

OPENING MENU -- ACMENU:

(previously known as the HARD DISK ACCOUNTING SYSTEM MAIN MENU)

This menu is now, more properly, called "OPENING MENU". SPECIAL NOTE: As a result of this change, you may find references to the "HARD DISK ACCOUNTING SYSTEM" in some places in some manuals. Please remember that this menu is now called the "OPENING MENU". Also, Item 6 (Truck & Driver) has been moved to the left side. A new choice, #12 (Print Manuals) has been added. It allows you to use a LaserJet3 or better printer to print full sized (8.5" X 11") manuals. Note that some docs can be printed using an LJ3 or a dot matrix printer. You could then insert them into page protectors and use a standard 3 ring binder to hold these pages. If you are using password control for this OPENING MENU, and you are using an existing password control file, you may need to edit that file to allow access to Choice #12. Also, you could COPY ACMENU.NPW ACMENU.EXE to select a version of the Opening Menu that does not use the Password. Removing the Password control to the Opening Menu will allow all users to access some of the "trivial" Opening Menu choices, but the important programs will still be protected by the Password. Try it! If you want to change back, use the command COPY ACMENU.PW ACMENU.EXE to set the password protection back on.

Also, a bug in ACMENU has been fixed. It involved only the password version. It would cause the program to exit to the DOS prompt with an error if you let the computer time-out in this program's "Make your selection" field when you have never entered a program. Pretty obscure. And minor. But now it is fixed!

As noted above, the TickerTape feature is automatically active in the Opening Menu, as soon as you enter a password (if required). You can turn it off using the Alt-M key, but it will re-appear the next time you are in the Opening Menu. If you do not like our messages, you can create your own. Note that although you can turn of the TickerTape feature permanently in all other programs, you cannot permanently disable this feature in this program. However, you will only be in this program a short time, until you make a selection.

Truck & Driver:

When you ask for a new Income Code PickList Help file to be created in TD Menu Choice 7 (System Maintenance), and you use a lower case "p" to indicate that you want a PickList, the program will create the file and return to Income Code maintenance. This is instead of returning you to the TD Main Menu. This makes it easier, when you add or delete Income Codes, to get both a new PickList Help file and a printed copy of the Income Codes.

Also, after you modify or add a Driver or a Truck (TD Main Menu choices 5 or 6 respectively), and you press F1 to leave that editing mode, you now have the option to update the PickList Help file for the Drivers or Trucks, whichever system you are in. If you answer with a capital "Y" (the default), or either a capital "N" or a lower case "n", you will be returned to the TD Main Menu. However, if you answer with a lower case "y", the PickList file will be updated and the program will return you to editing the appropriate system (Drivers or Trucks).

PickList help is now available during Income Code Maintenance. It works at both the Income Code field as well as the Description field.

PAGING: Alpha numeric paging has been improved. It is more robust, and you can now send descriptions as well as fields. For example, the prior version allowed you to send the Customer ID, but not the customer's name. Now you can choose to send the name. This also applies to the Income Code. Also, you can send information that is not usually "fielded", such as the "Good/Bad Comment" from the AR record for this customer, the Credit status of this customer and more. Would you like to include some or all of the Extended Comment file, if present? Now you can. See the document TDPAGE.DOC for more information about this capability and for the field numbers to use in your TDPAGE.DAT file to control how the page is created.

Also, you can now have up to 10 TDPAGE files! The default is still TDPAGE.DAT, but you can have TDPAGE1.DAT through TDPAGE9.DAT. You can make each different, so that you can now, with one key, change the message that will be sent in a page. To do this, simply create the TDPAGEx.DAT file, where x is the number you want to assign to this paging control file, in the "PF" subdirectory. Then edit that file, exactly as you would the default TDPAGE.DAT file. Then, after you have pressed Alt-P in Truck & Driver to activate the pager program, you can press Alt-x, where x is the number of the TDPAGEx.DAT file that you want to use. The program will re-evaluate and display the new page information. This can be quite useful if you send one set of information for PD tows, another for Club calls and a different one for Commercial tows. If you press Alt-0, or an Alt-number for which you have not created a TDPAGEx.DAT file, the default TDPAGE.DAT file will be used.

CALL SHEET: The Call Ticket options have been expanded. The Environment Variable "CS" controls how Call Tickets are handled and even if you are prompted to "Press P to Print a Call Ticket" when you store a call. The major addition here is the ability to include, in the printing, the Extended Comment for this call. The CS options are:

0	P to Print prompt	1 copy	No Eject	(or CS not set in Environment)
1	P to Print prompt	1 copy	Eject	
2	P to Print prompt	2 copies	Eject	
3	P to Print prompt	1 copy	Eject	Include Extended Comment if present
6	No Print prompt	1 copy	Eject	Include Extended Comment if present
7	No Print prompt	2 copies	Eject	
8	No Print prompt	1 copy	Eject	
9	No Print prompt	1 copy	No Eject	

If you select one of the "No Print Prompt" options (6 through 9), you can still print a Call Ticket by pressing Alt-T while pointing at the call in the dispatch screen or by bringing up the call and pressing Alt-T. Use this option if you never, or rarely, print a Call Ticket. Then, when you store a call in progress, you will go directly back to the Dispatching / Call Access screen. This will save you one keystroke.

If you select the No Eject option 9, or do not set a CS option, the program will remember if you have printed an odd number of Call Tickets and will Eject when you exit from the Active Call screen. If CS=0, then ALL printer eject control is suppressed, even the odd-number counter. There are certain conditions that can arise if you choose the No Eject option 0. For example, if you have printed a Call Ticket, then Hot Post a Call to the A/R, and then ask to have the Invoice printed, your invoice will print half on one page and half on the next page. If you anticipate using this feature, we suggest that you select one of the Eject options.

If you select one of the "2 Copies" options (options 2 or 7), then 2 copies of the Call Ticket will print, each on one half of the page. Since this option will use up the entire page of paper, an Eject is implied. Also, if you select one of the "Include Extended Comment" options, an Eject is performed, since an Extended Comment can be any length.

"Eject" means that the paper will come out of the printer without you doing anything. That is, if you use a laser or ink jet type printer that does not print anything until it has an entire page to print, you will probably want to select one of the Eject options. If you use a Dot Matrix printer, and you do not mind tearing paper in the middle of a page, you can use one of the No Eject options.

The reason we added this feature is because many of you need to be able to easily print the Extended Comments because they contain special instructions about the tow, how to get there, etc. Or the Extended Comment may contain a detailed description of the services provided. This is especially true for a heavy duty recovery.

You can still use the Extended Comment Editor's Print function to print the Extended Comment. But if you do, you will need to manually eject the page. If you do this AND you are using one of the No Eject options AND you have printed an odd number of Call Tickets, the printer will Eject when you exit from the Active Call/Dispatching screen. This can be confusing to the user. That is why we have expanded the Call Sheet options.

Extended Comments do not print on Release Invoices. If you want to print the Extended Comment from the Lot Control, use the Editor's print capability to do this. Just keep in mind the points raised above about the Eject and odd-page conditions.

If you use the DATOW Accounts Receivable, T&D will get the Customer's address as the probable "To" location for a call for that customer. If the Customer has a "Ship To:" address, then T&D will use that address, since the primary address is probably a PO Box. In prior versions, if you did not want T&D to use the primary address as the probable "To" location and you did NOT know the probable "To" location (this is especially true for Club calls), we advised you to enter a dot (".") as the "Ship To: " address in that Customer's AR record. The new version of the T&D program will now NOT put the dot in the "To:" field if it sees a dot and 3 spaces as the first four characters of the address. This will have the added effect of not sending to the AR invoice the dot as the "To:" location, so the invoice will not print the label "Towed to:" on the invoice. This is cleaner. In prior versions, even if you deleted the dot from the call detail screen, it would re-appear in future accesses of that call.

In a Call Detail screen, you now have Control Key options to quickly move around the screen. Ctrl-PageUp / PageDn will move you 6 fields up or down. Ctrl-Home goes to the "From" field and Ctrl-End goes to the "Mileage Charge" field. The non-Control keys work the way they did before: Home to the Date, End to the Zone, PageUp / Page Dn to Prior or Next Call.

THE ALIENS ARE BACK!: You can now (again) set the ETA Warning Beep to make Alien Sounds and Siren sounds. Set the Environment Variable BL=A for Aliens, BL=a (that is a lower case "a") for reverse aliens or BL=S for Siren. If you set BL= some number, it will beep that number of times. Be careful not to set it to too high a number -- 1 to 5 is reasonable, 50 is not. Also, if you set BL=0, then the Alt-B feature to turn the Beep On/Off is disabled and the Beep is always Off. But, if BL is set, then Alt-B will toggle it on and off.

When you assign a Truck to a call, the current odometer reading for that truck is displayed directly under the label "Truck....". This may help you to determine the correct odo entry. Also, if you enter a mileage that is less than the current odo reading, and you have set the 97M entry in the System Maintenance screen to zero, the program will warn you that you are trying to enter a mileage that is less than the current. It does this by beeping, flashing the screen and turning the bright blue "OD" label in front of the displayed current mileage to red. Prior versions would refuse to accept the entry. Now, you are warned that the entry is probably invalid, but you are allowed to continue. This is useful when you are correcting completed calls or you are entering data "after the fact". The new, relaxed rules are more realistic. Note that although you are allowed to enter this lower mileage, the current mileage is not updated to the lower mileage. Only mileage entries that are greater than the current value causes the current value to change.

By the way, did you know that you only need to enter the portion of the odo reading that changes? For example, if the current reading is 71110 and the truck is 97 at 71115, simply enter 5. If it then goes 98 at 71121, just enter 21. Try it! Note: this only works when the System Maintenance 97M entry is zero. If you set that entry to -99.99, then 97 and 98 mileage entries are taken to be absolute miles, not odometer entries.

Mileage charges can now be automatically calculated. In TD System Maintenance, when you press F2 to store an Income Code, and then press F2 to store the Base Commission rate/amount for that Income Code, you will be shown the Loaded (98) Mileage rates. There is a split and then the under and over charges per mile for each of the 4 types of vehicles. Press F2 to get to the Unloaded (97) mileage charges. The screen will describe this in greater detail. Note that this Automatic Calculation will occur when you press Enter at the 98 mileage field in the Call Detail screen, but only if you have set the 97M entry to -99.99 in TD System Maintenance OR if you have left the 97 mileage at zero.

If you have purchased our Accounts Receivable, you can now access the Customer Extended Comment file from the TD Call Detail screen. With the customer selected and entered into the Cust ID field, go to the Cust ID field and press Alt-H. The Customer PickList will appear. Press Alt-H AGAIN and you will be taken into the Editor with the selected customer's Extended Comment file. This is a long awaited and very useful feature. It now allows you to access unlimited information about the customer from dispatching.

You can create a file called TDXCTEM#.TXT (where # is a number 1 to 5) as a Truck & Driver Extended Comment Template. Place this file in the subdirectory pointed to by PR, which is usually \TST. These text files can contain information that will help the dispatcher to remember to ask the correct questions. For example, file 1 might contain "prompts" regarding Commercial tows. File 2 might remind the dispatcher to ask the questions about a Private Property tow that you want asked. File 3 could be questions about Hazardous Waste recoveries. To cause the appropriate file to be automatically appended to the Extended Comment file (if no Ext. Comment file exists, one will be created), simply press Alt-# where the # is the number 1 to 5 that is appropriate. The cursor will jump to the Comment field. Press Alt-H twice to activate the Editor with the call's Extended Comment active.

A pretty minor point, but the little arrows that indicate the active call that you are pointing at have returned after a short disappearance. You might not have even noticed that they were gone, but let's all be sure to give them a nice "Welcome back!"

You can now print a call ticket for a cancelled call. Although a rare occurrence, we have found that some of our clients require this ability. Simply bring the call onto the screen and press Alt-T (for call Ticket).

The Income Code can now automatically include a charge for the "O/PO/2nd" charge category. You use the System Maintenance menu choice to access the Income Code Maintenance. You will see that new charge slot. We believe it will be useful to those of you who are required to collect a governmental fee under certain conditions. For example, for Impounded vehicles, many cities require the towing company to collect a negligent impound fee. Now, DATOW Software will automatically insert that fee for Unposted calls. This feature also works in the Lot Control program.

The Truck's current Odometer reading is displayed in TD Main Menu choice #2 (Scheduled Maintenance) and choice #4 (Major Expense/Non-Scheduled Maintenance).

Batch Posting (TD Main Menu choice #3) now supports a selection screen that allows you to batch post only certain types of calls. For example, you could choose to batch post your club calls, then use the hot post feature to post your commercial accounts. This new feature should make your work much easier.

TD Main Menu choices #10 and #11 (Driver and Truck Listings) now allow you to exclude drivers or trucks based on their status. For example, you may not want to include drivers that no longer work for you on a listing that you are giving to your Insurance company.

TD Main Menu choice #12 (Call Listing) has been expanded to allow you to exclude from the report all cancelled calls. Use a lower case character to indicate that you want to exclude the cancelled calls. For example, a "P" will give you a report that includes Posted calls that includes cancelled calls, but a "p" will not include the cancelled calls.

Pressing Alt-H twice while in the Customer ID field will take you to the Extended Comment file for the selected customer. This is the same file that you can access in the AR for the customer. With this capability, you can keep extensive notes about this customer and have those notes available to the dispatcher. Special delivery instructions or fees can be noted here. Also, the dispatcher can edit this file, so special notes can be entered about this customer right from the Truck & Driver program.

Here are some features that have been in the Truck & Driver program for some time, but of which many users are not aware:

- Pressing Alt-R at the DISPATCHING / Call Access screen will take you to the Receivables, if your password allows you access to the Accounts Receivable.
- Pointing at an active call and pressing Alt-7 will quickly "97" that call. Likewise, Alt-8 will quickly "98" that call. If you are using one of the CS options 6 through 9, described above, this Alt-7/8 feature can save you a few keystrokes. But use this feature only if you do not record mileage values in each call.
- If you search for a Call, and that Call was Posted to the Yard, the Log # that was assigned to that stored vehicle appears in the Call record. If you want to see the DATOW Lot Control record for that vehicle, simply press Alt-V while the Call is being displayed. The Vehicle Search screen will appear with the Log # already entered for you. Simply press F2 to "bring up" that stored vehicle record.
- There is a very powerful utility program called AMIOK. You run it from a DOS prompt. It will tell you if your Truck & Driver information (calls) and your Accounts Receivable information (invoices) are the same for the calls you specify. Try it! We think you will like it and we think it will help you.
- Hot Re-Posting can be used to MOVE an invoice from one account to another. Simply RePost the call to the original "wrong" account, allow the system to delete the original invoice but Abort the creation of the new invoice. Then, bring the call back up, change the Cust ID to the new account number, and Re-Post again. You will be warned that the invoice does not exist in the customer's account. That is OK. Then, let it create the invoice in that new account. Easy!

- If your Driver issues an Invoice for vehicles that are stored in your yard, and you would like the system to use that Invoice number when you release the vehicle, simply enter the invoice number in the TD Call in the Invoice field. Then, when the call is posted to the Yard, the Invoice number will be inserted into the Lot Control record for this vehicle. However, for this to work, the Starting Invoice Number in the DATOW Lot Control System Maintenance screen must be set to zero. We believe that it is better to allow the Lot Control program to automatically assign the Release Invoice Number, but the choice is up to you.
- At the Dispatching screen, if you enter 1 and press Enter, the program will attempt to bring up the Call #1. However, if you have previously cleared out old calls, Call #1 is no longer in the active database. The program will, instead, show you the First Call in the active database. Note that this only works for #1. If you enter a "2", and there is no Call #2, the system will not bring up the Second Call. It will just beep at you!
- Do you have more than 18 calls active? Would you like to see more on the screen at the same time? Press Alt-E in the Dispatching screen and the screen will "shrink" each line to allow you to see 43 lines instead of just 25. But the Environment Variable EGA=Y must be set. And you had better have a big screen or good eyes!
- Can't wait 30 seconds to see a screen update (or listen to the Beeps just described)? Press Alt-Q in the Dispatching Screen to force an immediate update.
- Want to keep the location of a call displayed, even after the Driver is 97? If it is a service call (jump start, tire change, etc.) you probably do. Just put an "NA" in the "To" field for that call, and the "From" location will display on the Dispatching Screen until the call is cleared.
- There is no need to put the word "Yard" in the "To" field if the vehicle is going to be posted to the Yard. The program will do that for you. Just leave the "To" blank.
- The Home, End, PageUp and PageDn keys will move you quickly up and down through a "busy" Dispatching Screen.
- If you are running an on-screen call listing report, you can see the details of any displayed call by simply typing the call number and pressing Enter. Then the up/down arrow keys will show you the next/previous call. Any other key will take you back to the report. You cannot change call information here, but you can see it and even print it. We call this feature ReportView, but you may hear it called "drilling down".
- If you ask for Help at the Expense Number Entry field, you will have the option to Add this expense to the Extended Commet file for the subject vehicle. If you choose to "Don't Add", you will still be brought into the Extended Commet file and you can add whatever notes you want to. For example, you may want to record the invoice number under which you bought the parts used in this expense, or info about the warranty, etc.
- If you have purchased both DATOW Lot Control and Accounts Receivable, the Truck & Driver Main Menu Choice #9 will take you to the Accounts Receivable. If you want to quickly go to the Lot Control, simply choose TD Main Menu Choice #1 (Dispatching), press Alt-V (as if you wanted to search for a vehicle) and then press F1. You will find yourself in DATOW Main Menu! To go back to Dispatching, simply choose DATOW Main Menu choice #2 (Vehicle Search & Release) and press Alt-V.
- If you are going through some calls, checking them for accuracy and making changes as you go, you can press the Alt-K key to Keep you in the Call Detail screen after you press F2 to save the changes. A flashing yellow "K" will appear on the left side of the screen on the 5th line from the top to tell you that you have activated this mode. To turn it off, simply press Alt-K again while in a Call Detail. Note that even if you have activated this feature, you will return to the Dispatch Screen if you Hot Post a Call.

- If you pre-allocate (clone) calls, and use a completed call as the template for the calls, the new calls will appear on the dispatch screen as blue calls. Simply access each call, change whatever info you need to for that call, and store it. It will no longer appear in the active call screen.
- When you are running a Call Listing, the Start # field is a real speed feature. If you know that, for example, the calls you want listed are in the 8000 range, you can tell the report program to skip to call 8000. It will start evaluation at the call number you enter. Even on very fast computers, this is a real time saver. Just be sure that you do not enter a number too high. If you do, the report will not include calls that should be included.
- If you bring a call up to simply look at it, and you do not make any changes to it, press F1 instead of F2 to go back to the Dispatch screen. It is faster and it makes it easier on the program and your computer system. If you press F2, the program has to store the call, update certain files and do some other steps. Why bother, if all you are doing is looking at something? This applies to stored vehicles, too.

DATOW Lot Control:

When a vehicle is displayed on the screen, AND there is Registered Owner information available for this vehicle, pressing Alt-R will bring that information onto the screen, for viewing only. You cannot add or change that information using this feature. (Additions or changes must be made using Lien Sale Main Menu choice #4.) This feature makes it easy to verify that the person you are talking to is listed with the DMV as the RO, LO or an Interested Party. In the past, you would have had to exit from the vehicle, go to the LS #4 choice and bring up the vehicle using the Log#. Now, just one keystroke brings that information to you. If there is no RO, etc. information for this vehicle, Alt-R will not work and you will just get a beep. If there is RO, etc. information for this vehicle, the letters "R/O" will flash in the lower right portion of the screen to remind you that there is some RO, etc. information available.

If you want to release the vehicle to the R/O that is shown to you using this feature, simply press Alt-R when you are in the REL TO: field (or the Address or the Address-2 fields). When you exit from the RO Information display with an Enter or an F1, the Name and Address of the RO will be automatically inserted into the appropriate fields. This can save you time and prevent errors. Note that the Name and City State Zip fields in the LS program are longer than the Name and Address-2 fields in DATOW Lot Control, so some information, most notably the Zip Code, may not transfer completely. Usually this will not affect you, but we wanted you to know about this possibility.

The default password will allow access to only the NAMES of the RO, LO and interested parties. To enable a user to see and/or insert the address of these parties, the password access control for that user's TOW system must be modified to include an "X" or an "E" in the last (30th) position of the control line. See the How to Use Passwords document for instructions about making that change. This is to maintain the confidential nature of the address. However, if all users of the system have signed the Employee Security Statement the the California DMV requires OR if you are not a California company AND the confidential addresses are not an issue for you, there is a version of the program that will not enforce the password access control described above. To activate it, use the command COPY TOWMENU.IPY TOWMENU.EXE to make the "Interested Parties Yes" version the active executable.

Lot Control now uses an optional control file, named TOWINVCE.INI (located in the "PF" subdirectory or the default, usually \TST, subdirectory) to determine if the invoice is a half page type or a full page type. A sample file, TOWINVCE.CPN is included. The first entry in this file defines the type of invoice you want to print. HPG is half page and CPN is full page. If you choose to use the full page invoice, which works better with laser printers, the file TOWCOUPN.TXT will print in the bottom half of the release invoice if that file exists. We have included a sample Coupon file, TOWCOUPN.NOP, to show you the format for this file.. You can modify the file to print whatever you wish it to print and rename it to TOWCOUPN.TXT. Some users print directions to their release yard, or their rate, or even a discount coupon for future services or for other company's services (a car wash or a repair facility). Be creative! If there is no TOWCOUPN.TXT file, the program will simply eject the page, which is why it is so useful for a laser printer which does not print until an entire page is received by the printer.

If you use a laser printer to print release invoices, and if a file called TOWCOUPN.IMG is found, it will be sent to the printer before the Invoice is printed. This file can contain a watermark, which is a background image that can contain your logo or whatever you wish. We can create one for you for a small fee. Contact us for details.

This TOWINVCE.INI control file also enables you to define if you want the "Note/Action" field to print on a release invoice. If prior versions of DATOW, this field did not print on the invoice. If you want it to print on the release invoice, include the words "Note Action", in quotes, as the second line of the TOWINVCE.INI file. The sample file, TOWINVCE.CPN includes this line.

If you are going to release a vehicle that is on hold, you can now attempt the release even with the flashing Y for on hold. The program will beep and put your cursor at the Y. Just change it to N and press F2 again. The release will proceed. Prior versions would clear the Release Vehicle? and Employee# fields, requiring you to go back to them and reenter that information. Now, that information is preserved so it is easier to release a vehicle. Just be sure that you really intend to release this vehicle. If you find that you do not want to, just press F1. The Release To information will be preserved.

The notes in the TD section of this document about access to the CHARGE Extended Help information files also applies to DATOW Lot Control.

When you are in any screen that contains a VIN field, Alt-V will force the cursor to the VIN field. Alt-V at the VIN field will test the VIN for validity. The year is checked and, if set to "??", it is updated if VIN is OK. Note: UNKNOWN for VIN is not tested. Also, this test only works for 1981 or greater 17 digit VINS. If the VIN tests OK, the VIN label will turn bright blue or bright green. If the VIN is not valid, it will turn bright red. This also applies to the year.

When you ask for a new Income Code PickList Help file to be created in DATOW Menu Choice 11 (System Maintenance), and you use a lower case "p" to indicate that you want a PickList, the program will create the file and return to Income Code maintenance. This is instead of returning you to the DATOW Main Menu. This makes it easier, when you add or delete Income Codes, to get both a new PickList Help file *and* a printed copy of the Income Codes.

PickList help is now available during Income Code Maintenance. It works at both the Income Code field as well as the Description field.

The "SPECIAL" field in DATOW MAIN MENU choice #2 (Vehicle Search and Release) now will find what you are searching for regardless of the case of the search. This means that if enter *lmain* in Special, because you want to search for a vehicle that has the word "MAIN" in the Location, it will find it even if you have entered it as "main", "Main", "MAIN", etc.

In a DATOW -Vehicle Search & Release screen, you now have 2 additional Control Key options to quickly move around the screen. Ctrl-Home goes to the "Income Code" field and Ctrl-End goes to the "Release VEH (Y/N)" field. The non-Control keys work the way they did before: Home to the Year, End to the Release Time, PageUp / Page Dn to move quickly 6 fields up or down.

The Income Code can now automatically include a charge for the "O/PO/2nd" charge category. You use the System Maintenance menu choice to access the Income Code Maintenance. You will see that new charge slot. We believe it will be useful to those of you who are required to collect a governmental fee under certain conditions. For example, for Impounded vehicles, many cities require the towing company to collect a negligent impound fee. Now, DATOW Lot Control will automatically insert that fee during New Vehicle Entry. This feature also works in the Truck & Driver program when you access an unposted call. Note that this feature is NOT retroactive in the Lot Control Program. That is, existing stored vehicle records will not show this new fee; only NEW vehicles. However, Truck & Driver will insert the fee for any unposted call if you bring the call up and store it with the new fee displayed.

IMPORTANT: You MUST run an Income Code listing when you install the new version that contains this "O/PO/2nd" charge. Running the listing causes the program to initialize the data field for this charge in each Income Code. If you do not do this, you will see a very large charge appear in that field.

The Release Activity Report (DATOW Main Menu choice #7) has been expanded to allow you to get reports that include/exclude vehicles using the Lien Sale Clear Date as a qualifier. See the Extended Help under that field for details. This can be useful in cases where you are required to collect a fee for a governmental agency, but NOT if the vehicle gets released on the Clear Date (since it is highly unlikely

that you will have received the full amount due). We encourage you to experiment with this new capability and let us know how it helps you.

Here are some features that have been in the DATOW Lot Control program for some time, but of which many users are not aware:

- Pressing Alt-A at the Release Screen, when you have a Cust# entered for this vehicle, will put that Customer's Name & Address into the Release To: fields for you, only if those fields are blank.
- If there is a flashing "R/O" in the lower right corner of the screen, and you press Alt-R while you are in one of the Release To: fields, the Registered Owner's name will be inserted into the Release To: fields for you, even if there is already something there. Note that ONLY the RO information is inserted, not the LO or IP.
- When you search for a vehicle, usually you use the "Plate". But did you know that you can search by the Invoice Number, Color, Location, Comment and more? Use the "Special" field to do this.
- You can print a duplicate invoice for a released vehicle. Simply bring the vehicle up onto the screen (remember, it will be in the Released file) and press F1 to exit from that vehicle. Then, with the vehicle still on the screen, and the cursor at the bottom of the screen with the prompt "Press F1 to Exit, F2 to search for next vehicle", press Alt-D. The computer will beep and a Duplicate will print. Note that you can only print one Duplicate at a time and your password must allow this.

Lien Sale Processing:

For California, we have added forms for the ODOmeter Disclosure statement and for Under \$2500 liens we have added a Statement of Facts for Valuation. Both these forms can be printed for ANY vehicle, as they each have their own Form Selection Number. However, you have access to 2 triggers for these forms. If you accept the default, the ODO will print for any vehicle for which the year is 10 years or newer (or has Question Marks for the year) and the Statement of Facts will print for any vehicle 5 years or newer. You can adjust these defaults at run time. The ODO will print for value 2 or 3. The Statement of Facts for value 2 only.

We have also found a way to dramatically speed up the printing of forms. If you have a LaserJet4+, you will need to add more memory. We have in stock some memory that we have tested, so give us a call. If you have a LaserJet 5, which comes with 4 MB memory, no additional memory is necessary. We are still experimenting with other models, and will keep you posted on the Bulletin Board. But, and this is really cool, even if you do not have one of these printers, or if you do not want to add the memory, we can still speed up your printing. The new image files are about one third the size of the old ones, but still have all the detail that our forms are famous for. They look great!

We have added a new envelope for the Under \$300 liens. This is the envelope that you must insert into the envelope that you mail the Notice of Intent to Dispose to the RO, etc.. The graphic on this new envelope is, well, graphic! It says "Contains Authorization to SUE Opposer. Begin Court Action Immediately". Now, maybe they will think twice before sending it to you! Also, we are attempting to get the law changed so that ALL Declarations of Opposition must be mailed Certified, Return Receipt requested. This will "raise the ante" for opposers to \$2.52 from .32, and, again, get them to think twice, or call you, before they file an opposition. Since we cannot change the wording on the form, perhaps this will help.

Likewise, we are trying to get the LS division to cease and desist the practice of stopping your lien if they think the vehicle should be valued over \$2500. Of course, filing the Statement of Facts as described above with your 668 will help, but there is no legal basis for their actions. They seem to understand this and seem to be willing to drop this practice. But we may need to push them in the right direction. Again, the CTTA will probably carry this banner for us.

We have been experimenting with including your signature on the 668 and some other forms. Our testing has gone well, but we are still working out the details with the DMV. We are not clear if they need an actual signature, or just a scripted approximation. We are working on this and will let you know. Wouldn't it be nice to Not have to sign your name several hundred times a month!

Also, we have a new Certificate of Mailing option. If you have the appropriate laser printer, we can print 50 names (but this may go down to 45 so that there is more room for the Post Office - let us know if you think we should) on each sheet, instead of 9. This means less sheets, and easier copies. In fact, the new sheet tells you how many unique logs are on each sheet, so that when you come back from the post office, you simply put the sheet onto your copy machine and tell it to make THAT many copies. This also reduces the probability of a vehicle splitting across two sheets (about 5 times less likely).

If you select the 50 name option, the program will print the names sideways on the paper using 12 characters per inch. However, we have also included a control file that will tell the program to print using 16 characters per inch, and adjust the spacing of the information so that you have extra room to write by hand any extra information that does not fit into the computer. For example, some names or addresses are too long to fit in the space the program provides, so you simply put in as much as you can fit and then, when the forms and the Certificate of Mailing are printed, you can handwrite the extra letters or numbers. You activate this by using the command `COPY LL12P.16 LL12P.PAM` at the \TST

prompt. To set the program back to the 12 character per inch format, replace the 16 in the above command with a 12. The program is shipped with the 12 as the default. This new format uses smaller characters, which are more difficult to read, but this document is not a report that you will read. It is a clearance document that goes with the vehicle to the new buyer and to the DMV registration desk.

The way the program handles the printing of a BLANK form is now a little cleaner. Also, when in Manual mode, it is somewhat easier to "rock & roll" through a batch.

Did you know that if you enter anything, even a dot, in the RO or LO Certified Mail number field in mode 4, that party will NOT print on a Certificate of Mail sheet? Some of you have found this out by accident. Well, we thought about this and realized that you may want to keep track of the certified number of, for example, a Legal Owner notification. But you may still want the lien papers to go Certificate of Mail. So, simply put a space and then the certified mail number. The program now only looks at the first position in that field and, if it is a blank, it will include that party on the Certificate of Mail. This is the certified number field for the RO and the LO, not the DMV.

We have dropped the Sticker Number. It was obsolete and we needed the space.

The Application to Conduct an over \$2500 had a bug where a real strange date printed above the date towed. This has been fixed.

Some very subtle changes have been made to the print location of data on certain forms. We had some room so we used it.

The printout program had a bug where it incorrectly reported that there was a *possible* overflow whenever a prior record that had an overflow, but did not have a pending master record, was encountered. Since this error was one of those "on the side of caution" errors, it was only an inconvenience, not a "real" problem. This is now fixed.

Also, if you are updating expiration dates during the PRINTOUT program (which is the default), a date of 00000 in the Pending Master record would result in no expiration date (a blank) being entered for the vehicle. Very rare.

The documentation has an incorrect NOTE regarding **under \$300** liens. It says that if there is no one to notify, you can dispose of the vehicle immediately. While that used to be true, it is no longer true. Therefore, you must still wait the 15 days for the vehicle to clear. The program does this date calculation correctly. Only the documentation is incorrect. This affects the documentation files HTLS3.HP3 for towing companies and HTLSAGT.HP3 for Agents.

This raises an interesting point regarding 30 day holds for these under \$300 liens. If you follow the law and start your lien within 15 days, the vehicle may clear before the 30 days are up. Simply hold the paperwork and do not let the vehicle out of your possession until the 30 days are up plus whatever number of days your City/PD has told you to wait. This is another example of knee-jerk laws being passed without consideration of their impact. As if it would have killed the legislature to spend an extra couple of hours writing the law so that it took into consideration the existing laws regarding lien sales.

Certain date fields in various portions of the lien programs will now default to a date that is 32 days from today. For example, the For Sale List. Since most users run the For Sale List immediately after they run the forms, the program is trying to "guess" the date of the sale. If it guesses correctly, it saves you some typing. If not, you would have to enter the date anyway, so nothing is lost.

If you are experiencing a delay between the time the computer thinks it has printed a form and the time it actually prints, let us know. We have a new way to force the printer to print "NOW", that can be automatically invoked. By default, we do not, but it is easy to activate and we can walk you through this change over the telephone.

Deficient Lien Collections:

You can now designate the "target" for your collections. Prior versions only allowed the Registered Owner to be the target. But now, you can easily select the Registered Owner, the Legal Owner or any one of the 4 Interested Party names/addresses as the target. Simply access the vehicle using DL Collections Menu choice #6 (Modify Records). Under the Street Address, and to the right of the Receipt No., you will see a field called "DL Party". (Hint: press the "End" key to get there quickly.) Usually, this will have an "R" there, to indicate that the Registered owner is the target. But, if you put an "L" there, and there is a Legal Owner recorded for this vehicle, you will see that party displayed when you press Enter. Also, the descriptor of the target party will change to "L/O". You get to this field immediately after the "Do Not Process" field. The End key will take you to this field quickly.

Also, the program will now take you to different locations in the Modify Record screen, based on what information is present for that vehicle. If, for example, there is no "Sale Date", the program will take you to that field first.

If you have not explicitly chosen a target, the program will use the last name it finds in the database as the target. That is, if there is an Interested Party #4, that will be used. If not, it will try to use IP #3, then IP #2, then IP #1 and then, finally, the RO. Notice that it will skip the LO. If you want the LO, or any other specific party, to be the target, use DL Collections Menu choice #6 to explicitly set the target to the one you want.

A bug has been fixed that would cause an error if you tried to access the NOTES.TXT file by pressing Alt-H twice at a date field.

The "Press P to Process" prompt now requires that you enter a "P". Earlier releases of the program would accept an Enter as a "P".

If you are using our DL program AND our Lot Control program, you have a new option in the Lot Control program. When someone comes to retrieve their personal property from a vehicle, you will probably bring the vehicle up on the screen. If you press Alt-P at that point, a special form will print. We call it a "Release of Personal Property and Promise to Pay". Use it to gather the information you should have regarding the person and the property being claimed. Try to get the person to read and sign it. Keep in mind that if they refuse, you must still release the property. But we have found that most people will fill it out and sign it. Having this document helps you to prove that the property was properly claimed. Also, in the event that you choose to take this person to court or submit the debt for intensive collection, this document can be very useful. To activate this feature, use the command

```
COPY TOWMENU.RPP TOWMENU.EXE
```

at the \TST prompt.

We are considering adding a method by which you could submit for collection unpaid accounts that are not deficient liens. This would include commercial accounts and bad checks. Do you think you could use such a feature? Please let us know.

Accounts Receivable:

During an AR Query or during a Customer File Maintenance session, if the customer has an Extended Comment file, you are now notified of this fact. During a Query, the "Good/Bad Comment", will flash. This is displayed under the Customer's Name, Address, Phone # and Credit Limit. If you have not entered a "Good/Bad Comment for this Customer, the AutoBill information will flash, even if you do not use AutoBilling. The words that you will see on the screen are "A/B Code: Qty". During a Customer File Maintenance session, the word "Comment" will turn yellow and flash if you have an Extended Comment for this Customer.

You can now access the Customer Extended Comment file during an AR Query. Previously, you needed to exit from the Query to the "Enter Customer I.D." field and then press Alt-H twice. Now, you can press Alt-H once while you are viewing the customer's transactions to get access to the Extended Comment file for that customer. Note that if you have the detail of a single transaction displayed, you must go back to the Customer Status Query screen where each transaction is a single line and then press Alt-H to get access to this Extended Comment file. By the way, if no Extended Comment file exists for this customer, you can create one at this time.

Any time you modify your Customer records (AR File Maintenance Menu choice #3), the PickList Help file will be automatically updated as you exit from that mode. No need to go to the AR Main Menu choice #5 (Reports) and run the Customer Listing (#1) and ask for the "P"ickList. This should save you time and make it easier. This automatic PickList file update is also now active for AR File Maintenance Menu choices #1 (General Ledger), #2 (Salespersons), #4 (Vendors) and #5 (Products). Remember, if you are using our programs on more than one computer (PROfessional Edition), you will still need to update the PickLists on all the other computers. Also, please keep in mind that this feature does not allow you to exclude Customers, Products, etc. from the PickList Help file. If you need to do this, use AR Main Menu choice #5, which will give you that capability.

If you have chosen the LASER4 or LASER4H printer control files, we can print your company name in a real big font on your statement. Try it!

The watermark capability described in the DATOW Lot Control portion of this document is enabled in the AR, too. It will print on AR invoices (TOW) and Statements (CTW), if the file CUWRMK1.IMG is present. Contact us for details and costs.

A nagging little bug that sometimes caused the AR to misreport the current balance for a customer in queries has been tracked down and squashed! It occurred if you pressed F1 when entering or editing an invoice at the point where it asked you if you want to print the invoice. This in no way affected the accuracy of the customer's account, since all reports and statements are transaction oriented. But the program tries to keep a running balance for speed purposes. It was this running balance that was not being properly updated in the above condition. This is why you would sometimes see an "OUT OF BALANCE" message in a Query. And this is why a re-balance of the accounts would fix it.

In a related issue, certain payment session actions would cause the system balances to incorrectly calculate. These conditions have been resolved, and in most cases you will not have any problems. However, certain payment session actions, such as deleting an applied unapplied credit, will not restore the system balances to the prior state. The totals will be accurate, but the distribution of the credits will not accurately reflect the new (again!) unapplied credit. If this happens, use AR Utility Menu choice 2 to rebalance based on actual transactions.

Also, as a result of the need to round certain numbers, the sales tax would sometimes print on an invoice incorrectly. The amount was calculated correctly, but the rate at which the tax was calculated would display and print incorrectly. That has also been fixed.

An issue has arisen regarding Club Accounts that take a discount. Normally, you should simply set up that account to be discounted automatically, using AR Main Menu choice #1 | AR File Maintenance choice #8 (Cust/Product Discounting). Using this approach, the full amount is entered into Truck & Driver (or AR directly if you are manually cutting an invoice, which is rare), but the Invoice in the AR will automatically have the discount applied. This will be shown in the Discount category of the Invoice. It will also show on a statement, in the line item, as a Credit.

However, some Clubs are taking the discount AGAIN! That is, although your Statement and/or Invoice clearly shows that a discount has already been applied, these Clubs are taking the discount again. The nerve of some people's kids!

To counteract this practice, we have the following suggestion. DO NOT use the automatic discounting for these accounts. Instead, set up the Club's account to use the "Fast Pay" discount. If they get a 10% discount, put in Terms of 10% disc 999 days. Then, when an Invoice is created, the terms for that invoice will reflect these settings. The portion of the AR program where you apply the payments will then allow you to put in the discounted amount the customer is paying and it will properly apply the discount to the invoice.

For example, if the customer is setup for a 10% fast pay discount (and they pay within 999 days!) and the invoice is for \$100.00, if you pay that invoice with only \$90.00, the program will accept the \$90.00 as payment in full, since the client is eligible for a 10% (\$10.00) discount.

In the event that the customer pays only a portion of the invoice, the payment program will apply the discount ONLY to the portion of the invoice that is being paid. For example, if the customer sends you \$50.00 to pay this \$100.00 invoice, the program will credit the invoice for \$55.00 ($\$50.00 + \$5.00 = \55.00; that is, the amount actually paid plus 10% of the amount being paid). This would leave a balance due on that invoice of \$45.00. When the customer sends you a payment for the balance of the invoice, that payment would probably be for \$40.00, since the original invoice was for \$100.00 and the discount would have been \$10.00. The customer has already paid \$50.00, so they send you \$40.00. The program will see that the customer is paying \$40.00, it will apply the 10% to the amount paid and calculate the discount as \$4.00. However, the invoice is still open for \$45.00, so the invoice would remain open for \$1.00 ($45 \text{ minus } 40 \text{ minus } 4$). To allow you to easily adjust for this, if you pay an invoice and you use a lower case "p" to indicate this, you will be taken to the Discount Taken field after you enter the amount the customer is paying. In the above example, you would press a lower case "p", type in 40 and press Enter. The Discount taken field will show "\$4.00". Simply change that to "\$5.00" and press Enter. The program will take your entry (\$5.00) instead of the amount it calculated (\$4.00) as the Discount Taken. The invoice will be paid in full. The total discount will be correct. And the amount you show as Income will not be over-stated.

This may sound complicated, and, well, it is! But it is a rare situation that will not affect many users. But if it is an issue for you, we believe that you will like this new approach and that you will find it easier to use than it is to describe.

During a Payment Session, prior versions allowed you to pay an invoice with more funds than you had available to apply. This would result in an Unapplied Credit being automatically created with a negative value. Since UA credits should have a positive value, but are displayed during a payment session as a negative value, these negative valued UA credits were more like debit memos. This has now been changed so that you can no longer apply more against an invoice than you have funds available.

Interim Statements can now exclude transactions prior to a given date. You have the option to completely ignore these transactions or to have them accumulated in a single line at the start of the statement. You can also choose to include applied payments dated after the "End of Period *effectivity* date." These new features are presented to you as pop-up questions after you press F2.

At the end of an AR payment session, the prior versions of the program would print a report of the session. Now, that report is optional. Also, that report is saved as a text file (%PF%ARPSmdd.XXX where mm=month, dd=day, XXX=your AR company code and %PF% is the optional Private File subdirectory. If %PF% is not set, the file will be created and stored in the current (usually \TST) subdirectory.) If you perform more than one session in a day, both sessions are saved using the same file name.

We recommend that you print this report at the end of the session and save that paper. Also, we recommend that you do NOT delete that file. These files are quite small and will provide a useful audit trail in the event of a problem. Note that if you perform more than one payment session on any given day, and you choose to print that recommended report, it will re-print the first session. So, if you know you are going to do more payment sessions later in the same day, you may want to print the report only for the last session of the day. If you print it after each session, you will get a lot of paper, since each session will add it's transactions to the prior session(s) and give you a complete report of the day's payments. This change gives you more control over how and when (or even "if") payment reports are printed. This is especially helpful to PROfessional Edition users who may be sharing a printer or using a shared printer. Earlier versions of AR always printed a payment report and it printed it AS you finished with each payment. Now, it will only print at the end and only if you tell it to.

Note: Although the above paragraph indicates that you should NOT delete the payment session file, eventually you will have to. Since the filename does not include the Year, it is possible and even likely that you could be doing a payment session on the same date but on the next year. The program will think it is doing a second payment session on the same day. Therefore, you should periodically delete the old payment session files when you are sure you will not need them anymore. It is unlikely that you will need files that are 6 months old or older. So we suggest you get into the habit of deleting these old files when you do an AR End of Period.

The AR sorting programs have been enhanced to handle conditions that can arise if the computer is turned off during a payment session. Part of this enhancement includes the reporting to the ERROR.FIL text file the date, time and information about any transactions that were cleared by the sort due to an incomplete transaction. Also, duplicate invoice numbers within a customer on the same date are processed differently by the sorting programs. If a duplicate is found, any payments against any of these invoices are removed and re-created as Unapplied Credits, which you will need to re-apply to the appropriate invoice(s). Also, since each invoice must have a unique number, the first invoice retains the original number but all other duplicates are assigned an invoice number from the AR's invoice numbering system. These actions are also fully reported in the ERROR.FIL text file. Note that there is an option in the AR Company Maintenance screen that allows you to control the ability of the system to allow or disallow duplicate invoice numbers. It is called "DC" for Duplicate Check and it allows you to define whether invoices should be checked for duplicates within a customer, within your entire system, or not at all. If invoice creation is taking too long, especially for any very large accounts you might have, and especially during a Hot Post from Truck and Driver, then you can turn off this Duplicate Check. But be advised that doing so can result in duplicate invoices in the AR. The sorting programs will do the best they can to resolve this situation should it arise, but it is better if it does not arise. Due to technical reasons, if duplicates do occur, the descriptions of the vehicle may not be accurate. That is, the description for one invoice could get "re-attached" to the wrong invoice. The dollar amounts are not affected. Although this condition is rare, you should be aware of the possibility of this happening.

If you choose to disable the Duplicate Check, then you should use the AR Reports menu choice #8 Invoice List (Sales Journal) to look for duplicates (dupe Only). If you have duplicates, you must change the invoice number on one of them so that the duplicate does not exist BEFORE you run a sort or an AR End of Period.

A major new feature for the AR is the ability to perform ON SCREEN reports. That is, most reports (AR Main Menu choice 5) can now be sent to the screen instead of the printer or a file. The exceptions are reports 2 (Customer Activity, because the Query feature is a more robust way to see this information), 3 (Collections report, because this produces a worksheet for telephone follow-up) and 9 (Labels, because of obvious reasons). The on screen transaction report and the invoice report are especially powerful ways to view your AR information.

Also, the Salesperson report is now operational. It is essentially the same as a transaction report, but it reports by salesperson instead of customer. If you pay a commission to the person who brought you the account, you can enter that person as the Assigned Salesperson for the customer.

There is a feature in AR Main Menu Choice 2 Add/Edit/Review Invoices that very few users have explored. The AR can search all customers for an invoice number. It can also search all customers for an invoice that contains certain words in the Detail Ref: or the PO# fields. That search now does not care if the text is upper or lower case and it uses our Sliding Search capability. This Sliding Search means that you can put in partial information for the search, even if it is not the first part of the Detail Ref: or PO # fields. It is just like searching for a license plate in DATOW Lot Control. This search will look through both the Detail Ref: and the PO# fields for the text you tell it to search for.

Also, you can now tell the program to search for the NEXT invoice that matches your search criteria. This works for either invoice number searches or for text searches. If the program finds an invoice that matches your search criteria, it will display that invoice and position the cursor at the invoice number field. Just press F2 to tell the program to search for the NEXT matching invoice. Again, this is very similar to DATOW Lot Control where a search for a vehicle brings up a record that matches the search criteria but is not the vehicle you are looking for.

AR envelope printing has been enhanced to allow you to choose the format of the envelope that you want to print. Ask for help on the AR Main Menu Choice 5 (Report) / AR Reports Selection Menu Choice 9 (Customer or Product Labels or Laser Envelopes) or in several other locations while you are printing envelopes, and read more about it. Note: This is the file ARLABEL.DOC usually found in your \TST subdirectory.

AMIOK -- a program for companies that use BOTH the AR and TD:

A new utility program, called AMIOK, is included with the Truck & Driver program. This is a utility program that is NOT a menu choice. You can run this program from the DOS prompt. This utility will check the AR for invoices that started as calls in TD. You specify the date range, starting log number, etc. in the AMIOK screen and the program will look at the TD call, and if it is posted to the AR, it will check the AR for that invoice under the customer indicated in the call. If it finds the invoice in that customer, and the dollar amounts match, it goes to the next call. If it does not find the invoice under the indicated customer, it searches the entire AR for that invoice number and reports the customer number that it found it under. If it doesn't find it under any customer, it reports that fact to you. If the dollar amounts do not match, it reports that to you, and it indicates the difference between the amount that the AR shows and the amount that the TD call shows. It also prints whether that amount is less than or greater than the amount indicated in the TD call. Note that if you are using Discounting, the amounts will not match since TD does not show the discount but AR does. However, it does indicate, if the dollar amounts do not match, if there is a discount or a tax that would be the reason for the mis-match and the amount of the discount and/or tax. This extra information on the report will save you time, since you will not have to manually review the actual invoice to determine why the amounts are different.

