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"Streamlining Receiving - Part One"

As I mentioned last week, I attended the annual Garden Center Group Fall Event followed immediately by the IGC trade show in Chicago. In case I have never mentioned it, I love Chicago. It is a fabulous town and someday, I hope Cleveland will grow up and be Chicago.



My fantasies aside, it was a great week for number of reasons. First, I got to see a ton of my customers and old friends. If I tried to name everyone, I would end up leaving someone off, but it was great to be with everyone. Second, I attended several excellent sessions hosted by The Garden Center Group and even got a lovely boat ride on Lake Michigan. Last, I had the privileged of attending Robert Hendrickson's keynote address at IGC.

Robert Hendrickson is the founder of the Garden Center Group (www.thegardencentergroup.com) and, if you are in the green business, you have either heard of, or personally know, Robert. He can best be described as an industry "consultant" but, like most labels, it hardly does him justice; a "visionary" would be a more descriptive title. I have always thought it was shame that Robert has worked exclusively in the green industry! However, if you are in the green industry and are not working with the Garden Center Group, I encourage you to call Wendy (Robert's lovely wife) and find out how you could benefit from working with this wonderful group. Wendy can be reached at (410) 313-8067. Tell her J. sent you!

So, what does all this have to do with streamlining receiving? Those of you, who have read my Trusted Advisors over the last two years, know I always come to my point, albeit in a (sometimes) round-about way. During Robert's keynote speech, he put two words up on the screen, "What is..." and then suggested that, if we just changed one letter, we could revolutionize retail. Instead of "What is...", he wants us to think: "What if....".

Regardless of your industry, purchasing and receiving (and new item "setup") are most likely the weaker links in your CounterPoint system. They are the most time -consuming, and the place where your employees are likely to make the most mistakes. The problem is that, without accurate receiving, your inventory will never be correct. Therefore, you might argue that my last few weeks of Trusted Advisors ("Accurate Costs" and "Accurate Counts") are more or less worthless. So let's play Robert Hendrickson's game of "What if..." What if ... instead of having to keystroke every Purchase Order into CounterPoint, you could push a button and have everything set up? What if ... all the new items on each Purchase Order were set up automatically, including the bar code? What if ... your receiving process was set up so that all you needed to do (after you verified that items listed were received) was push a button and voila!, receiving was complete? What if ... you could receive your inventory through a wireless device that actually worked as advertised? Hopefully, I now have your attention.

Over the next few weeks, I am going to lay out how I plan to help my CounterPoint users move their systems to the next level. As they said in the "Six Million Dollar Man" introduction all those year ago: "We have the technology." (If you don't know what that is, don't even ask me; I still can't explain my childhood.) The point is, we have the tools to move the CounterPoint retailers to the very highest levels

of productivity. And in this ever changing retail world we live in, being more productive is just one of the requirements to staying in business.

I will be showing you how to move your CounterPoint system to the absolutely best retail system on the market. And I am going to start by making a very important announcement next week. So, as they say: "Stay tuned sports fans."

Next week: "How To Streamline The Receiving Processing - Part Two"

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