



JUSTInfo

Volume X No. 1

President's Letter

Spring 2003 is finally, sleepily coming. It is a bit slower than normal; the daytime temperatures are not what they would normally be in mid May. Grass is growing, the trees are starting to bloom, and there are more sunny days than gloomy ones. We have had to endure some pretty scary tornados, but at least there's no ice. Summer will be here soon. Life is pretty good.

Contrast the above reflection to what I might have said if I wasn't a "glass is always half full" kind of person. And, that brings me to my topic for this newsletter.

I seem to encounter, more and more, people with a "glass is half empty" personality. I see this in our customers and in our employees, in family members and colleagues at work. It distresses me that folks do not look at life with a more positive attitude.

We all fail. Most of us don't intend to, and we are even hurt and embarrassed and sorry when it happens. But it does. If, when we do not live up to the expectations we set for ourselves or we have set by others, we are judged only by what we did wrong and not by all the things we do right, that is a pity. And if the person we find fault with is a child, it can be even more devastating to that person's whole life.

At **USTI**, we not only have policies and practices and procedures and systems designed to help assure we deliver what our customers expect, but we also have an ongoing program for improving on all those things so that we can deliver better quality tomorrow than we did today. The Japanese call it Kaizen, which means continuous improvement. No one who has watched the Japanese car industry can doubt that Kaizen works in producing better quality.

But, look back to 1957 and the first Japanese automobiles to reach North America and you would wonder how they ever got to be that good. The answer is having a long term view, a commitment to a plan that you believe in, and the persistence to keep on improving even when what you start with seems pretty sad.

We are somewhere in the middle of our plan. We are far from perfect, but far, far better than we were in 1993, just 10 years ago. We are committed to our market and to our plan for creating a company that every small local government knows about and wants to do business with. And, we persist in working to improve the products we offer and the way that we deliver services for them.

Our cup is half full. We hope you can see that and share that perception with us as we continue to improve **USTI**.

Spotlight Article: *Town of Middlebury, CT*

Like many communities in 1999, the Town of Middlebury, CT, then using a municipal software system running in DOS, was faced with Y2K issues. Elaine Strobel, a selectwoman in Middlebury coordinated the search for a system that would be more user friendly, could integrate with Windows, provide a variety of reports for the Board of Finance and be cost effective. The decision was made to go with **asyst**.

At first there was some hesitation about the kind of support an out-of-state company could provide but that concern quickly disappeared. Mike Belden, the new Chief Financial Officer that year, was responsible for completing the FY 99-00 audit and it would be the first complete year using the **asyst.General Ledger** and **asyst.Accounts Payable** modules. "We rarely ever have any system issues --- last one was probably over 6 months ago -- - if we have any issues - Mike (**USTI's** Mike DeFord) is always there to give us a quick response and help us resolve our problem."

The accounting staff Sandy Kales and Anthony Perrotti, along with Mike, make up the finance department. Sandy has been with the town over 10 years and handles all of the bill paying, payroll, and general ledger entries. Anthony is the Financial Accountant responsible for running various monthly expense reports in **asyst** and all of Middlebury's general ledger journal entries.

asyst is extremely easy to use -- the Windows environment allows for easy downloads into Excel worksheets. We utilize the Access report database every day for ad-hoc requests -- example -- Park & Rec wants to know how much money in supplies they have spent this fiscal year and when they spent the money or a board of Finance member wants to know why the Power & Control Charges for the Public Works facility has increased over the past year. "Very easy, Access reports can be written and downloaded into Excel to determine the exact causes for all expenditures," says Mike Belden. Mike likes the **asyst** functionality designed to save time for him and the staff: "**asyst** helps daily because any specific question can be answered in a few minutes -- all info is stored in the database, also I can look back 2 or 3 years to see trends also without having to go look at old boxes".

Looking ahead, Middlebury is working on GASB 34 compliance and plan to input all the new GASB 34 related information required into the **asyst.Fixed assets** module.



GENERAL INFORMATION



asyst: Automated Back-up

This module provides a convenient tool for automatically backing up your entire **asyst** database. If you have ever suffered through the extra work of rebuilding files after a computer catastrophe, you will appreciate the value of this product immediately.

- No more forgetting to do backups.
- No more extra steps outside of **asyst** to get the job done.
- No more worry about when the backup was done, or which one is the most current version.

asyst: Automated Back-up will make the whole process as simple as a click of the mouse. Statistics from the helpline have proven time and again that clients that have experienced data corruption problems have typically not had a good back-up to easily restore the data. They have unfortunately had to go through a long process to correct the corrupted data. A good back-up will eliminate the tedious and painful experience of rebuilding your data files. If you would like to learn more about this module and how it works please call Lisa Bush at 866-700-8784 or email at lisa.bush@usti.us. For the low price of \$195 you can feel confident that your data is being backed up on a regular basis.



The 2003 Dallas UserForum

The 2003 Dallas UserForum took place May 7th through the 9th at the Sheraton Dallas Brookhollow hotel. We had a great turnout and thank all those who attended. We hope to see even more of you next year! We kicked the UserForum off on Wednesday evening with an opening reception. We had a lot of fun settling in and getting to know everyone. The learning began bright and early Thursday morning after breakfast with opening words from **USTI's** President, Tom Gibbs. After a full day of classes everyone prepared for the festivities that lay ahead that evening. We had a scavenger hunt, quiz show, eating contest and to really end the night on a comedic level, karaoke. Friday wrapped up the UserForum with a half day of classes, one of which Jamie Shell of Prairie Village, KS came so prepared for that he ended up teaching the session. Jamie is a whiz at Reports Xlence and did a fantastic job demonstrating to the class real world examples on how he produces financial reports with the tool. Once again, thanks to all of you who attended and made the 2003 Dallas UserForum such a success!



USTI Support On-Line

Support On-Line is a tool that will allow you to accomplish many tasks by hitting one convenient website. Listed below are some of the key benefits of using **USTI** Support On-Line:

- Read Frequently Asked Questions – you can easily get the answer to many questions that you may not know the answer.
 - Log a Call – this is a great tool for questions that an immediate response is not required. Typical response time for on-line calls is 24 hours.
 - Get an update – updates can quickly and easily be downloaded on your schedule.
 - Get my custom – custom modifications can be downloaded instantly.
 - Upload Files – files can be uploaded quickly so that support representatives can review your data. You no longer have to drop a copy of your files in the mail.
 - Order Forms – you can place an order for forms 24 hours a day.
 - Change Password – you can easily change your password on-line.
 - **asyst** Serial Numbers – **asyst** serial numbers can be downloaded for the modules that you have licensed.
- Update My Account – keep your email address up to date so that you do not miss important update announcements or miss the opportunity to respond to the helpline surveys that are issued after every support call is closed.

The website is www.usti.us. The next step is to access

Remote Training



Remote training is an efficient and cost-effective method to receive training. Using the telephone for conversation, pcAnywhere communications software and a modem, the **USTI** trainer can log onto your computer and provide training as effective as on-site, for much less of the cost. This method of delivering training is ideal for start-up assistance, a quickie refresher course or to zero in on a specific area of the software. It is also an alternative where full days of training are not practical.

If you are interested in discussing your training options, or would like to purchase some training time, please call Debbie Jones at 800-352-1460, extension 2031.



Northern Exposure



asyst on the MOVE in Canada update

Spring has sprung here in Canada, and so has the **asyst** movement.

The Ontario **USTI Canada** customers have now completed their 2003 Interim Tax Billing. We are pleased to announce that all **asyst:Property Tax** customers have successfully sent out their Interim Bills. Ten clients have billed over 63,511 Interim Bills with the new **asyst:Property Tax** module. In addition these clients are live on the General Ledger, Accounts Payable and Payroll. **USTI** appreciates the partnership and dedication from these clients to work through the process of billing for the first time with a new tax billing product. The feedback from clients going live has been invaluable. As a direct result from the comments, **USTI** has added several new features to make the product even better for the next wave of clients wanting to move forward with **asyst**.

Ontario clients that have successfully sent out their Interim Tax Bills with **asyst**:

Municipality **Number Bills**

<i>The Town of Bancroft</i>	2,611
<i>The Town of Manitowadge</i>	1,773
<i>The Township of Central Frontenac</i>	7,140
<i>The Township of Dysart ET AL</i>	11,324
<i>The Township of Howick</i>	1,731
<i>The Township of Leeds & 1000 Islands</i>	9,642
<i>The Township of North Frontenac</i>	5,490
<i>The Township of Rideau Lakes</i>	12,205
<i>The Township of Stone Mills</i>	6,895
<i>The Township of Algonquin Highlands</i>	6,300

Other Canadian sites in Manitoba, British Columbia and the Yukon are in the process of sending out their tax bills for the 2003 tax season. **USTI** would like to thank Marion Grogan from the RM of Eriksdale, Manitoba for being the first client to go live in Manitoba. Marion upgraded from Solomon and has found the **asyst** products very easy to use. She has been instrumental in working with **USTI** on the conversion from AA2000 to **asyst**. If you would like to schedule a demonstration or learn more about **asyst** please contact Lisa Bush at 866-700- 8784 or send her an email at lisa.bush@usti.us.

Village of Memramcook, New Brunswick

USTI's first client in New Brunswick goes live with **asyst Utility Billing**. Terry LeBlanc, Controller for the Village of Memramcook has successfully billed two cycles with the windows based solution. Terry said that **asyst** was very easy to learn and install. Terry also said that his staff found the software easy to use and loaded with features. Additionally, Terry said that his staff loves the ability to export reports to Microsoft Word. One of the key reasons that the Village of Memramcook selected the **asyst** solution was that they knew that they would be doubling their customer base in 2003. The Village's existing software vendor had gone out of business and Terry felt that it was too big of a risk to make this move without support. Terry said that he plans on adding the financials in 2004.

We've Moved!



Our New Office Location in London:

USTI Canada, Inc.
 650 Colborne Street, suite 7
 London, ON N6A 5A1
 1-800-352-1460



DATES TO REMEMBER

June 5th through 6th: **Manitoba User's Group Meeting**
 October 26th through 28th: **Canada UserForum**

Report Writing with **asyst**

Microsoft Access provides a report writing tool that will easily allow you to report on any data element within the **asyst** family of products. The report writer utilizes a report wizard thus simplifying the process of creating ad hoc reports. The wizard within Access will walk you through the steps of building a custom report. The **asyst** data elements are labeled so that an end user can easily identify the data that is stored in the given table. If you are not quite ready to jump in and start building your own reports you can call support to schedule a session of telephone training. After an hour of training, you will be ready to create custom reports from your **asyst** database. Subtotaling, sorting and analyzing data becomes a snap with Access. Reports that are developed can be saved and re-ran each month with new data. Additionally, reports that are developed with Access can easily be exported to Excel to produce graphs and charts of your data.

UB Related Meters Release

HSTI is pleased to announce the release of the UB Related Meters sub-system. Related Meters, sometimes referred to as Compound Meters, are two or more meters that work in conjunction to create a single consumption. The UB Related Meters sub-system will allow meters to be associated in an additive or subtractive relationship. The meters can exist on the same account or on separate accounts. Simply set up the Target and Source services and the percent of the consumption to include in the relationship. If you have meters that use a combined consumption, contact your sales rep for more information about the UB Related Meters sub-system.

asyst Updates

HSTI is now offering three types of updates for **asyst** applications. The three options are Updates, Hot Fixes and Service Packs. An Update distributes modifications that address one or more Service Request. Hot Fixes are our newest addition. A Hot Fix for an application will contain every individual Update that has been released since the last Service Pack. You may choose to install each individual update as they are released or you can install the Hot Fix and bring your programs up to the current release all in one process. Periodically we will release a Service Pack for an application and increment the version number and re-start the Hot Fix list. Service Packs will usually contain enhancements. If you have any questions please feel free to contact support.

The United States Office Will be Closed the Following Days:

January 1st **New Years Day**
May 26th **Memorial Day**
July 4th **Independence Day**
September 1st **Labor Day**
November 27th and 28th **Thanksgiving**
December 24th and 25th **Christmas Eve and Christmas Day**

The Canada Office Will be Closed the Following Days:

January 1st **New Years Day**
April 18 **Good Friday**
May 19th **Victoria Day**
July 1st **Canada Day**
August 4th **Civic Holliday**
September 1st **Labour Day**
October 13th **Thanksgiving**
December 25th **Christmas Day**
December 26th **Boxing Day**

