Boardroom Solutions Inc

Orders of Magnitude

Dear AccountMate Clients,

We automate business processes. That's what we do around here - using the best tool we know of: AccountMate's source-code available accounting and financial management system. But when does it make sense to automate a process - especially if there's a modification required? The issue is often entering/importing records, or making a multi-step process fewer steps - and the answer depends on what I call the "Order of Magnitude".

10 - Ten is NOTHING! Someone can hand key ten records, or do ten transactions over the course of a year faster than we can write code. So, keep your money in your pocket and let's stick with a manual process.

100 - One hundred is work, but it's not THAT much work. Certainly within the realm of human activity to knock out 100 records or transactions-in-a-year, but if we're worried about accuracy, then this might be worth automating.

1,000 - One thousand is a LOT of manual work, and it's probably worth automating as at this point a 1% error rate means ten incorrect records.

10,000 - Ten thousand is beyond the (reasonable) realm of human activity and will have NUMEROUS issues that then need to be tracked down and resolved.

So why do I mention this? Because sometimes people don't consider the order-of-magnitude before making a decision.

We had a client that had bought out a very small competitor and wanted the 25 new customers entered in AccountMate from the (ugly) spreadsheet they were provided. I suggested that for only 25 records they key them in - but they said they would rather we do the work, so WE keyed them. Oh yeah, what made the spreadsheet "ugly"? One thing was the address was in one big field - which we need broken apart to separate fields for street/city/state/zip. Took about 15 minutes for us to key the data - the client was happy and that was the fastest solution for such a small data set.

Another client was implementing AccountMate, coming from QuickBooks, and we typically import "master files" of customers, vendors, inventory items, and GL accounts - especially from QuickBooks since we already have those scripts in our pocket - but the client said they would rather key the information because it would be cheaper. I asked how many customer records they had and if maybe they were going to clean up the list while keying - the answer was 4,000 and they were going to key them all. I tried to convince them that at least the customers were worth programmatically importing since we could guarantee to do the job in an hour or two, but instead they indeed did key them. After a couple of weeks, they only had about 400 keyed, then they hired a temp who took almost two weeks to get the rest in and suffered with typos for months afterwards.

Moral of the story: The order-of-magnitude is always a consideration when applying the technology lever. Now, what do you do more than 100 times that we can apply that lever too? <grin>

Regards,

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AccountMate (and Windows) Performance Improvement

Many MS-Windows applications, including AccountMate, write temporary files to the standard windows "temporary file directory" - and most of those applications clean up after themselves and delete the files when they exit, but that doesn't always happen.

Thus, there can be orphaned files in that directory and then when other applications use the directory it can take a while to list all the files there - slowing down operation of the application, sometimes even to the point of the program "timing out". Luckily, the solution is simple: Manually clean up that temporary directory every once in a while!

To do that, press the "Windows" button in the bottom left of your keyboard while also hitting "R", and a window will pop up labelled "Run" - type in "%TEMP%" and hit <Enter>. Windows Explorer will open up listing the directory contents and, once there, you can manually delete files and subfolders - but you probably can't delete all of them because Windows won't let you delete any files that are currently in use. If you shut down your PC every night (not sleep or hibernate) then you can easily delete all files and subfolders not dated today.

If you're just a little bit tricky, your network administrator can have a login script execute "rd %temp% /s /q" and "md %temp%" and you'll ALWAYS be clean. Net result is you'll have more free space on your local hard drive and applications will run faster and better - enjoy!

Tech Note: Understanding the Transaction Type Codes in General Ledger Listing

The General Ledger Listing is one of the most useful tools available for verifying the transactions that comprise the GL Account ID balances. To maximize the General Ledger Listing's benefits, it is important to understand the various transaction type codes shown in the report. You can use the transaction type code and transaction number to trace the journal entry source.

Technical Tips

Versions: *AM9 for SQL, Express, and LAN*
AM8 for SQL, Express, and LAN
AM7 for LAN

Modules: SO

TIP: *When you cancel sales orders or sales quotes with line items for which reason codes are not assigned, AccountMate will not save the records in the **Lost Sales Order** file. These cancelled sales orders or quotes will be unavailable for selection from the **Copy Lost SO**window or **Copy Lost SQ** window when you use the **Copy** feature in the **Create Sales Order** or **Create Sales Quote** function. These items will also be excluded from the **Lost Sales Order** report.*

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Versions: *AM9 for SQL, Express, and LAN*
AM8 for SQL, Express, and LAN
AM7 for LAN

Module: AR, IC

Q: *I attempted to record a sales return in AccountMate using the**Create Sales Return Without Invoice #** function; however, when I checked the **Line Item Details** tab the item's unit cost was zero and the field was read-only. How should I enter a unit cost for that sales return?*
A: *If you are using the **Create Sales Return Without Invoice #**function, be sure to enter the item's return cost in the **Inventory Maintenance ► Settings ► Return Cost** field prior to recording the sales return. This amount is the cost of one returned unit that will be added back to inventory.*

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Versions: *AM9 for SQL and Express*
AM8 for SQL, Express, and LAN
AM7 for LAN

Modules: AR

TIP: *The **Adjust Open Credit** function in AccountMate 9 for SQL, Express, and LAN versions is the same function as the **Refund Open Credit** function in AccountMate 8 for SQL, Express, and LAN versions and lower. The former has the same functionality as the latter but is enhanced to allow write off of open credits.*

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