

A Friendlier 'AddonSoftware by Barista'

Developers at BASIS have been busy remodeling AddonSoftware®'s Accounting and Distribution bundles from their foundations up. The primary tool they used for this project was the Barista® Application Framework along with the proven functionality of BBj®. By any standard, this was a lofty undertaking resulting in many exciting enhancements to the product. Step into this article for a virtual tour of the most notable highlights of these user-friendly features.

Easy-to-use Menu System

Barista's easy-to-use menu system is revealed in the AddonSoftware menu on the left side of the multiple document interface (MDI). The top pane (see **Figure 1**) shows the individual modules and when a module is selected, the programs available in that module display in the bottom pane. The menu items themselves appear in a very consistent and standardized manner so that it is easy to find a task even when moving between modules. Additionally, the tasks appear so that the primary, daily processing tasks are always at the top and display in an expanded view to eliminate extraneous mouse clicks and movements.

Accommodating Multiple Screens

While the MDI delivers multiple windows in one screen, the AddonSoftware implementation allows you to launch a program in SDI mode. Users launch SDI programs by simply pressing the [Shift] key before making a menu selection. In stand-alone mode, the form has its own menu and status bars and is not constrained by the MDI. This flexibility is convenient for work stations with multiple screens. For more information about how to add this to your application, see [MDI](#)



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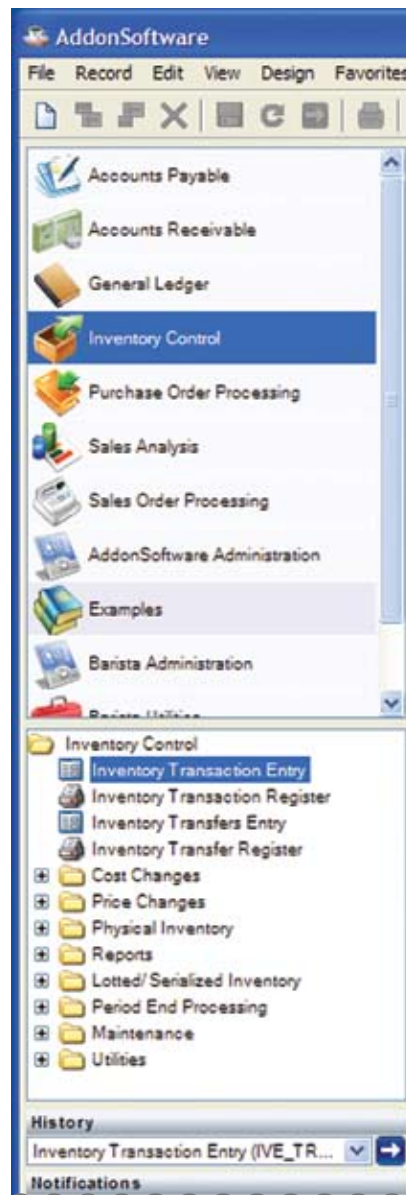


Figure 1. Sample menu with expanded view of tasks

MODES on page 18 of this issue. When windows are launched within the MDI and sized and positioned by the user, AddonSoftware will remember the size and position when the window is launched again.

Favorites

AddonSoftware also takes advantage of the Barista "Favorites" menu. Simply right-clicking on any menu item adds that item to users' favorites – a great place to save their frequently run processes across multiple modules and eliminate the time and effort clicking around searching for a commonly run

task. Selecting Favorites from the top menu bar reveals the selected tasks, as shown in **Figure 2**.

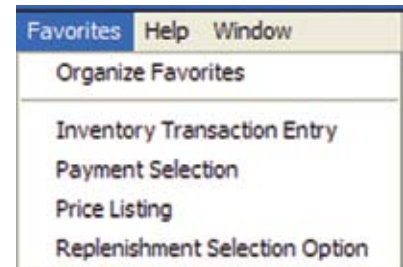


Figure 2. Favorites task shortcut

Navigation Choices

As a matter of preference, users can perform basic navigation with either the mouse or the keyboard. Users control the navigation buttons using the mouse while the mouse or keyboard gives them control of the movement around the form. For quick reference, each command on the menu bar drop downs includes the keyboard shortcut for that function. To return to a process that was run two or three steps ago, select that task from the History drop down (see **Figure 3**) to return to the task quickly. This is just another way that Barista provides shortcuts for ease of access and use.

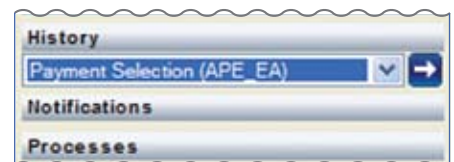


Figure 3. History process shortcut

Built-in Security and Auditing

Another versatile and powerful feature that the new AddonSoftware makes use of is Barista's built-in security. The role-based security structure secures access to data and business practices by defining user roles with permissions, access, or restrictions, and then assigning those roles to specific users. For example, tasks may or may not display in a given menu depending on the permissions of that user. At a more granular level, security enabled on specific fields in a table prevents users from editing or viewing the restricted data. Additionally, the audit logging feature records when and who made changes to the database. >>

Context Sensitive Help

Best of all, 'help' is just a click away. Right-clicking on an item from any menu displays the help topic for that function. Alternatively, users can launch Help by either pressing the [F1] key or by clicking on the Help drop down at the top of the screen. Once inside the Help topic, users can easily navigate to other help topics by clicking the title in the topic listing. The Help system provides a very quick and direct way for users to get assistance on the specific task they are running. Alternatively, the Help menu at the top menu bar displays the traditional Web-based Application Help.

Report Selections are Remembered

Running reports in AddonSoftware involves selecting multiple filters to access and display the data you require. To preserve the selections for frequently run reports, simply select the Save icon on the selection window and name the report (see **Figure 4**). Saved report selections can be made private for that specific user or created and used throughout the organization.

Document Management

AddonSoftware also incorporates the Barista document management system. This empowers users to search and quickly retrieve any document or report previously generated and saved in the document archive. Once retrieved, they can open it to print a traditional hard copy, send it electronically via e-mail or fax to a customer or send it within the organization for collaborative work.

Expresso Search

The new "Expresso" Search function greatly expands the traditional inquiry and drilldown capabilities. While the Barista inquiry system provides search, sort, and filtering capabilities at table and field level, Expresso Search provides users with predefined or easily customizable drilldown relationships based on table definitions and their relationships. Create custom search definitions and drilldown into master records with hyperlinks.

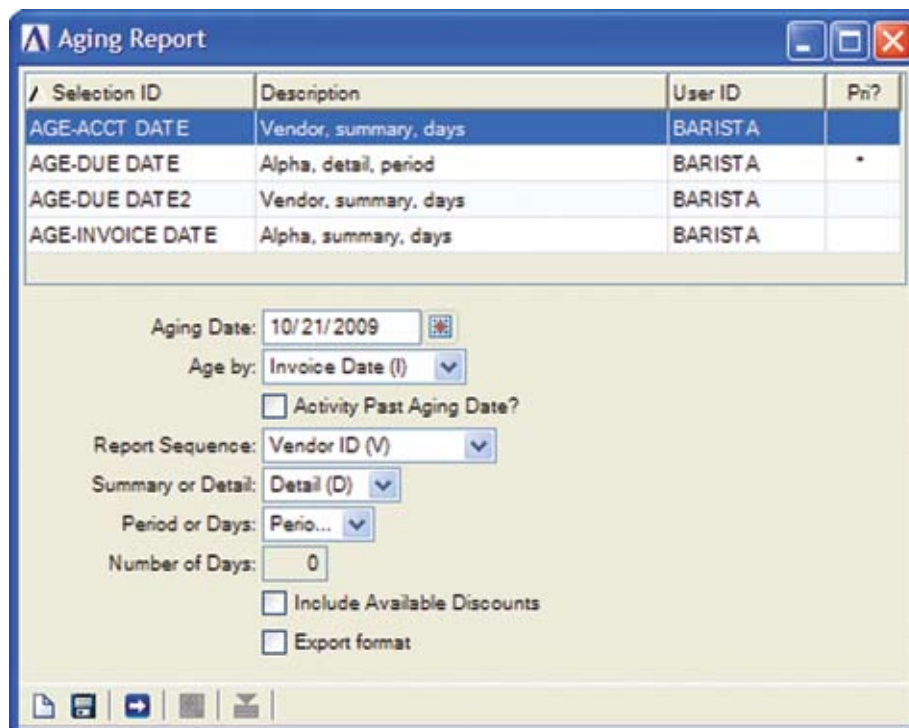


Figure 4. Saved report selection defaults



Figure 5. Notify when record is available

Traffic Cop for File Access

If a user attempts to edit a master file currently being edited by someone else, they are notified that the record is not accessible. For efficiency, that user may select an option that notifies them when the record is available for them to edit (see **Figure 5**). No wasted time checking back periodically for record access. The system will notify you automatically.

Summary

AddonSoftware by Barista has the core accounting and distribution functions one expects to find in a modern, scalable business solution. Many of these user experience features are easy to demonstrate and deliver value by increasing the productivity of your end users. ■



See a demonstration of many of these new 'AddonSoftware by Barista' features at tinyurl.com/yjxb9t3