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Business Development's Take...

**Matt Gacek
Vice President -
Business
Development**

I am proud to announce the newest member of the Business Development Department, Lindsey Downey. Lindsey will join us as a Territory Account Manager. Lindsey brings 11 years of experience in providing solutions to the company's challenge via software and services. I can say first-hand that Lindsey is a pro's pro; B&L has been her customer for the past four years! Lindsey, married with three children, will join us at Spectrum '11 so please come and say "Hi."

Community

We have plans in place to make the on-line community even better. In late September, Brenda Povlock, Amber Layman, and I will meet with our website company about community enhancements. This meeting is more about behind the scenes administrative tools we need. We want to include your requirements as well. Please plan on attending the Community session at Spectrum and let me know what you want from the B&L community. If you cannot make Spectrum, send me an e-mail at **mgacek@blinfo.com** with your suggestions.

Marketing Campaigns

What makes B&L unique is you, our customers. When you look at our customer list it is the who's who of the metalcasting world. Many of you have great stories to tell; let us help you tell them. Over the next few months we plan on showcasing many of you in our ads. These ads will briefly discuss a business challenge and how you overcame these challenges. These are not painful to do (probably take 10 minutes of your time), and it is a great way for you to get free advertising! Let us know your story by contacting Amber Layman at **alayman@blinfo.com**.

Software as a Service

We have been in the cloud since 2008, and it is becoming a large portion of our business. For many organizations, it simply does not make sense to deploy resources (i.e. money) for a non- value add activity. In the early 1900s, factories evolved from producing their own electricity to hooking up to the grid. SaaS technologies is a continuation of this business evolution.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at Spectrum '11! ■

New faces

**Phil Laney
President
& CEO**

Due to our steady growth, B&L's been hiring over the last several months. Here's a quick rundown of the great group of individuals joining your B&L team:

Amber Layman, Marketing Coordinator - Amber comes to us from Whirlpool Corp. (Benton Harbor, MI) where she was a Business Analyst. She will report to Matt Gacek, VP – Business Development. She will coordinate our marketing, branding and public relations campaigns. Amber lives in Benton Harbor, MI with her husband and 5 year old son.

Phil Gehlhausen, Support Specialist Phil comes to us from 80/20, Inc. (Columbia City, IN), a manufacturer of modular industrial framing systems, e.g. assembly lines, etc., where he was a Programmer/Analyst. He will report to Brenda Povlock, VP-Client Services. Phil will be starting on the help desk. He lives with his wife in South Bend, IN and has a 14 year old daughter.

Jim Adams, Project Consultant Jim also comes to us from Whirlpool Corp. where he was a Project Manager in the IT Department, working on SAP and other CRM systems. He will report to Brenda Povlock and serve as a project consultant on Phase II client implementation projects. Jim lives with his wife and youngest child in St. Joseph, MI and has two older sons.

Lindsey Downy, Territory Account Manager - Lindsey comes to us from CBTS (Cincinnati, OH), a cloud-based managed service provider where she was a Senior Account Executive. She will be reporting to Matt Gacek, and will serve as a Territory Account Manager. Lindsey lives in South Bend, IN with her husband and 3 children under the age of 6!

B&L Welcomes New Clients

City Aluminum Foundry
Waterford, MI
Foundry – Odyssey

Rothbury Steel LLC
Rothbury, MI
Foundry - Oddyssy SaaS

Arizona Castings Inc.
Maricopa, AZ
Foundry - Oddyssy SaaS

On The Horizon

Joe Harmon
Vice President — Technology

In this article I would like to discuss innovation. Steve Jobs (Apple) once said "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." Well, here at B&L we strive to be the leader in metalcasting software and not followers; therefore, we are constantly creating new, unique, and more efficient ways of doing things within our software. The struggle of moving forward, however, involves managing change. How do we introduce new functionality in our software without overwhelming the user? How do we improve processes and procedures and keep the user experience the same so they don't have to learn something new? Well you probably already know the answer - "We can't," at least not in all areas. Not sure where I heard it, but I once heard the phrase "How can you expect change if you keep doing things the same way?" This is something we constantly have to evaluate at B&L and make appropriate "balanced" decisions that have the most positive effect on the product and our users.

With the new zero client interface, we have some exciting new features that I think definitely go along with the whole innovation topic. Just let me make this disclaimer before going on. Anything I may say or show from this point on is subject to change, for we have not finalized our new interface.

With that disclaimer, one part of the new interface I have been involved in is a way to enter in data not only for the table you are working on but also for its children. Take Order Entry for example. You have the order header, order item, and order dates information to contend with. Wouldn't it be nice if you could add or review the order in its entirety without having to switch back and forth between screens? Well here is a sneak peek at what we have come up with. The screenshot is based on a work order that has work order items as its children. Each work order item has crafts and repair parts as children. **See Screenshot #1.**

Screenshot #1

As you can see, we are currently modifying work order item 25, and you also can see that there are crafts and repair parts tied to the work order item. After clicking on the repair part ELECTRICAL, we can modify its data without having to leave the current screen. **See Screenshot #2.**

This design will simplify updating information when children records are involved. It will save time because the user will not have to jump in and out of various screens to do the updating.

R&D DEVELOPMENTS

Doug Hinman
Vice President — Research & Development

Odyssey and BLIS enhancements come in many varieties. They range from small and simple to large and complex, with technically-oriented enhancements sprinkled in. Odyssey 4.4 was just recently released and BLIS 7.3 in its final stages of development. Here are a few examples of new features coming your way.

Big Ones

The Odyssey quality system was greatly enhanced in 4.4. Extensive changes were made to lot tracking with emphasis on serializing castings, including new heat treat control and tracking. Another example in 4.4 is a new payroll interface to the ADP WorkforceNow system. This also includes the ability to calculate overtime prior to feeding payroll. The standard cost module was reworked in BLIS 7.3 to allow storing cost information by period with the ability to reopen the prior period.

Small Ones

It's interesting to note that many times our clients seem to get most excited by the small enhancements we do. Examples in Odyssey 4.4 include a new option to print A/P checks by supplier name, expanded phone number fields, and more data included in auto e-mails. Small BLIS 7.3 enhancements include printing the receipt date on the Receiver Accrual list and an option to print the dollar amount on the PO Receiver form.

Technical Ones

These types of features are designed for users who are technically savvy and can use tools like report writers (e.g., Crystal Reports) to take advantage of them. You can now create your own comment types in Odyssey 4.4. That means you can enter notes with your classifications and print them on custom Crystal Reports. We've also added a couple fields to the time card tables that previously you had to calculate (or attempt to) using Crystal formulas. You'll now have the hours a shift is scheduled for and how many of those hours are scheduled to be paid readily available. Examples for BLIS 7.3 are additional options to add your own user programs (hooks), which are for the Physical Inventory Standard Cost Edit and A/P Void Checks.

These are just a few examples of the enhancements we've been working on in R&D for the past year or so. Be sure to check them out at Spectrum 2011 as well as all the other new features available to you in 4.4 and 7.3. ■

For the Love of Music

Mr. Robert H. Walker

Mr. Robert H. Walker started Walker Die Casting (then called Walker Metal Products) in 1958 in the basement of his grandfather's hardware store on the downtown courthouse square in Lewisburg. He and three employees operated a single compressed air, zinc die-casting machine and produced stay nuts for the furniture industry that weighed less than an ounce. In 1965 the company moved to its current location in the Lewisburg Industrial Park. Over time the company has grown to over 600,000 square feet with 500 employees operating 32 die casting machines producing high volume aluminum die castings, some weighing as much as 100 pounds.

Throughout that time Mr. Walker has always enjoyed a love of music. He sings in his church choir and enjoys bluegrass music. He plays the guitar and the upright bass and is a member of a local bluegrass band, "The Boys Down the Road." In 1990 (about the same time Walker Die Casting became a client of B&L Information Systems) the company built a new two-story office building. Almost without fail since the building's completion, every Tuesday night the front lobby of the office has been transformed into a bluegrass/country music "rehearsal hall" for Mr. Walker's friends and acquaintances. Sometimes, as many as twenty musicians (guitars, banjos, fiddles, mandolins, and Mr. Walker on the bass) can be heard with the distant sound of die-casting machines and trim presses in the background. Former and current employees as well as some vendors have often joined in "pickin' and grinnin'." The band rarely makes a public appearance anymore, but that doesn't stop the Tuesday night rehearsals.

Mr. Walker has long since turned the day-to-day operations of the company over to a younger crowd. All three of his sons are active in the company. John is President, Sam is Purchasing Manager, and Will is Traffic Manager. But, Mr. Walker is still there everyday, clicking his heels when sales are good. ■ Walker Die Casting, Inc., Lewisburg, Tennessee International Suppliers of Quality Aluminum Castings since 1958

Dear Brenda

Brenda Povlock
Vice President — Client Services

Odyssey

Dear Brenda,

We sell castings to customers and also to distributors. When we sell to customers they pay full price, but distributors get a wholesale price. I'm not sure how we're going to manage all those pricing tables because we have a lot of ship-to records that would need to be entered, and price increases are going to be excruciatingly painful. Is there any short cut to entering in all those ship-to pricing records for customers and distributors in the pricing file? Also, any suggestions for price increases?

Looking for a Short Cut

Dear Short Cut,

I may have just what you're looking for. We added a new option that will allow you to discount the full price of the casting. This is a simple discount percent applied to the product price list based on a customer and a product's price category. By listing the customer and associated price category in a new table called Customer Price Discounts and entering that category in the Product Master, upon entering a new customer order the current price defaulting is done from the pricing file and the discount percent, if applicable, is then applied to the selling price in the customer order. Set up is easy; the new table is under codes and is called Customer Price Discounts (see pic). It associates a customer with a price category and the discount amount. The price category is the same one used for price increases. Now enter the price category in the product master and when the next order for the distributor is entered, a discount will automatically be considered and the selling price adjusted. The discount amount will also be displayed in the customer order screen. Price increases will be a cinch because you will be doing the price increase against the normal full price of the casting.
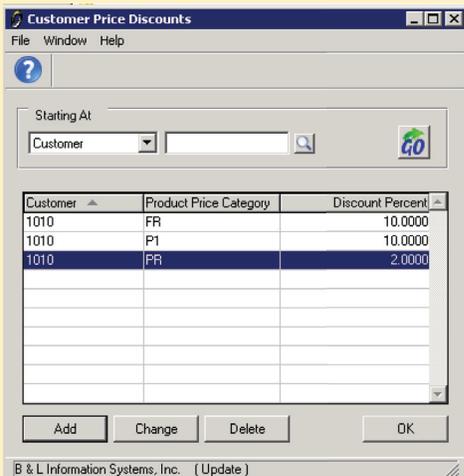
BLIS-400

Dear Brenda,

I need a way to change one operation we have in our product routings to a different operation number. We have it in a bunch of products, and I also have a bunch of shop orders out there that will need to be updated with this new operation. Could you help me figure out how to do that without hiring a bunch of temps?

Massive Help Wanted!

Dear Massive Help Wanted,

No need to hire temps, you can do it all yourself with the click of a few buttons. To do a mass labor routing change, just go to the product master menu. This would be either MAM111 for foundries or MAM110 for die casters. Option 6 is the Mass Change Labor Routing. The first screen prompts you for the type of change, which in your case would be a mass replace. Click OK or press enter, which will bring up the next screen, which has several prompts. You can change a specific group of castings by putting in a group code, change the standard, alternate or all labor routings, put in a specific range of products and then enter the old and new operation number. Notice there is also a check box to update shop orders

(see pic). All shop orders that don't have any production reported against them will be written to the Shop Orders Pending Rescheduling file where you can trigger rescheduling if desired. A report is also generated containing a list of shop orders that will be changed. Hopefully this is the Massive help you were looking for! ■
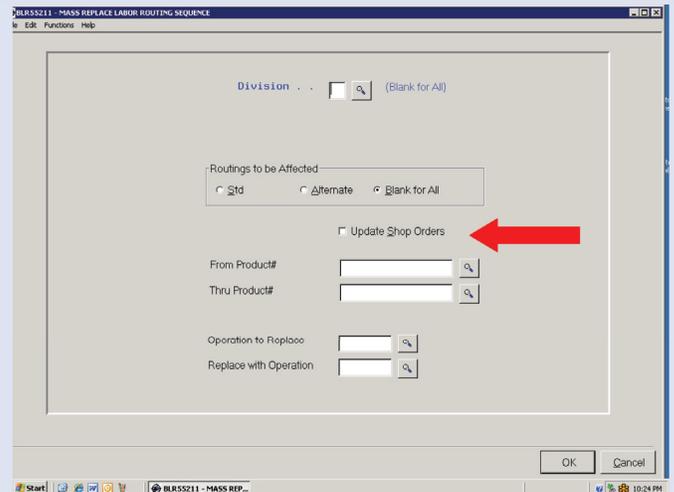
New Faces, Continued from page 1

Bryan Green, Intern - Bryan is a young man just out of college and has joined us as an intern in R&D. He earned a BS in Computer Science from Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Bryan is reporting to Doug Hinman, SVP – R&D, and will be working as a programmer on the new Odyssey User Interface project. Bryan lives in Stevensville, MI.

These are truly quality individuals, and we look forward to their direct involvement in making your B&L experience even better. ■

Regards, Phil

On The Horizon, Continued from page 2

This is just one of many enhancements you will see with the new user interface. You will not want to miss attending Spectrum!!! We will be demonstrating our new user interface that is currently under development. We are looking forward to getting your input on the new design and discussing changes you would like to see in the new interface. ■
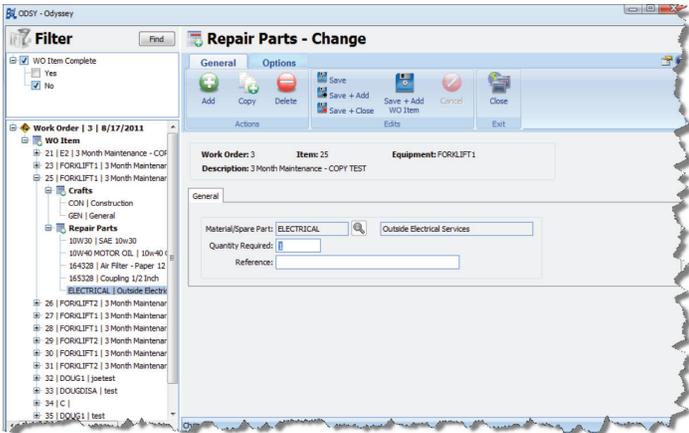
Screenshot #2

Going to Spectrum '11? See how you can get a free room night!

Act now! Thursday, October 20, is the cut-off date for the Early Bird registration for Spectrum '11, as well as for reserving a room at the Westin Riverwalk hotel. After that date, the price of Spectrum will increase to $850, and all rooms being held for us by the Westin will be released to the general public.

If you would like to be a panelist or the moderator of a roundtable at Spectrum '11, B&L would like to pay for one of your room nights at the Westin Riverwalk hotel, a $159 value! If you have knowledge or experience in one of the areas listed below, please email Brenda Povlock at **bpovlock@ blinfo.com** and include your phone number and which of the following topics you would like to assist with:

- Cost Estimating
- Controlling Scrap
- Lean Manufacturing
- Corrective Actions
- Standard Cost
- Controlling Products or Material Inventory

Register at www.blinfo.com/events.cfm; don't miss out on the most anticipated B&L event of the year! ■

Upcoming Events

Show/Event Name & Location	Date & Booth #
ICI 58th Technical Conference & Equipment Show, Covington, KY	October 9-12 Booth 127
NFFS Annual Meeting Amelia Island Plantation, FL	October 14-18
SPECTRUM '11 (B&L Annual San Antonio, TX Users Conference)	November 13-15

TRAINING - There are recorded training videos available on-line at no charge to customers on maintenance. For access to these videos you will need to sign up for the B&L Community. **Contact support@blinfo.com** for assistance. For any other training needs, contact **Brenda Povlock at ext. 321.**