



2008

Quick Start Guide

Support for this software is free and unlimited. We maintain 24/7/365 support services. If you have questions or need assistance, please submit a support request on our web site at <http://visualonline.net/SupportTechnical.htm>

Introduction

Visual Inventory is true web based software. It is a multi-user three tier client-server application.

Although Visual Inventory is a powerful, state-of-the-art inventory control system, it is very easy to use and intuitive. Follow the steps below very carefully to get started.

WARNING: Do not use the “Back” or “Forward” buttons on your browser to move between pages. Always use the application buttons instead.

About Users

- Each user must have a unique login account (User Name and Password)
- Users cannot share accounts. An account can be used by only one user at a time.
- You must have at least one Administrator and one Owner account.

About Roles

- Administrators create and maintain Owner accounts. Administrators can print inventory reports and have read-only access to all inventory data.
- Owners create their own inventory and other data. Owners have unrestricted access to their data (only).
- Clients are sub-accounts of Owners. Clients can access their Owners data but not data that "belongs" to other Owners. Client access is controlled by setting permissions for the Client.

IMPORTING DATA: For security reasons, we do not allow imports to the database if it is hosted on our servers. We will do an initial import for you at no charge but you will not be able to do this without our assistance.

Login as Administrator

STEP 1: Create Owner accounts:

You have been given Administrator login credentials (user name and password). Please login using this account and create additional Admin accounts (as required) and at least one Owner account. To do this, click “Users” then click “New User” and complete the new user form.

As a user account is created, you will need to assign the user to a “role”. There are three possible roles. Administrators can assign users to either “Admin” or “Owner” roles only. Owners must create their Client accounts.

1. Admin: Administrators are responsible for establishing and maintaining Owner (and Admin) accounts.
2. Owner: Owners “own” data. For example, each inventory item must have an Owner. The Owner does not necessarily “own” the inventory in the strict sense of the word but rather this is a way to segment inventory relative to login accounts as you will see later.
3. Client: **Only Owners can create Client accounts.** Think of a Client account as a sub-account of an Owner. Clients can access their Owner’s data but not data “belonging” to another Owner.

Note: Passwords must be at least 7 characters in length and must contain at least one non-alphanumeric character (such as “@” or “-“)

Do not forget your user names and passwords. Passwords are encrypted and we cannot retrieve them for you.

Login as an Owner

STEP 2: Create Client accounts (as required) for each new Owner.

After you have created at least one Owner account; logout as an administrator and login as the Owner.

When a new user logs in for the first time, the user will be required to complete the user “Setup”. This includes name, address, and e-mail information. Complete this record carefully; however, you will be able to edit this information at any time.

After you have completed the setup record for the current Owner, click “Contacts” on the Owner Menu and “Select” any one of the existing records in the Contacts Browser (it does not matter which record you select). Next, click “New Client” at the bottom of the screen (Page Down) and create a Client account for this Owner.

STEP 3: Complete the “Setup” (contact record) for new Clients.

When you create a new Client account, the system will create a partial Contact record for the user. Complete the Contact records for each new Client account. If you prefer, you can let the Client complete the record the first time he (or she) logs in. Only the “Name” is actually required, however, we suggest that you complete all fields. This includes name, address, and e-mail information. If the user is an Owner, you will also enter the starting values for the Order Number (Shopping Cart) and Purchase Order number. No two Owners should ever generate the same order number so separate the range of starting numbers by at least 10,000 for each Owner. In addition, you can check the “Order Notification” checkbox if you wish this Owner to receive email confirmation when orders are placed in the shopping cart. If the user is an Owner or Client, (as opposed to a “vendor” or “consumer”) you can also enter a “Markup.”

Markup is a decimal number used to compute the price (based on a markup of the cost) that the user will see in the inventory and shopping cart screens. If the Markup is “0” then the user will not see the cost at all. If the markup is “1”, the user will see Cost. If the Markup is a decimal number greater than “1” (e.g. 1.5), the user will see “Price” rather than Cost.

To delete a user account: If the user is an Owner or Administrator, use an administrator account to delete the user. If the user is a Client, use the Owner account to delete the address record in the contact details screen.

STEP 4: Set permissions for new Clients.

Click the “Permissions” button on the Owner Menu and set the permissions for each new Client.

It is not necessary to set permissions for an Owner because Owners have unrestricted access to their data and to program functionality.

Permissions are divided into six categories:

1. Inventory
 - a. Enable: If checked, the “Inventory” button will be visible on the Main Menu for the user.
 - b. Add: Enables the user to create a new record.
 - c. Edit: Enables the user to edit (change) records.
 - d. Delete: Enables the user to delete records
 - e. Update: Enables the user to “save” changes and new records.
2. Contacts (address records)
 - a. Enable: If checked, the “Contacts” button will be visible on the Main Menu for the user.
 - b. Add: Enables the user to create a new record.
 - c. Edit: Enables the user to edit (change) records.
 - d. Delete: Enables the user to delete records

- e. Update: Enables the user to “save” changes and new records
 - f. Add Client: Enables the user to create a new “Client” user account.
- 3. Common
 - a. Enable Editors: If checked, the “Editors” button will be visible on the Main Menu.
 - i. Add: Enables the user to add a new record in any of the editors.
 - ii. Delete: Enables the user to delete a record in any of the editors.
 - iii. Save: Enables the user to save new editor records.
 - b. Enable Permissions: If checked, the “Permissions” button will be visible on the Main Menu.
 - i. Update: Enables the user to “save” changes in the permissions.
- 4. Transactions
 - a. Enable Distribute: If checked, the Shopping Cart functions will be available to the user.
 - i. Ship To: Enables the user to select the “Ship To” address for a shopping cart transaction. By default, the user’s address will be selected.
 - ii. Markup: Enables the user to change the markup for a shopping cart transaction.
 - b. Pending Orders: If checked, the “Orders” button will be visible on the Main Menu.
 - i. Ship: Enables the user to ship orders.
 - c. Enable Order: If checked, the “Order” (inventory) button will be visible on the inventory browser page.
 - i. Order: Enables the user to order inventory.
 - d. Enable Receive: If checked, the “Receive” (inventory) button will be visible on the inventory browser page.
 - i. Receive: Enables the user to receive inventory.
 - e. Enable Transfer: If checked, the “Transfer” button will be enabled on the inventory details page.
 - f. Enable Kitting: If checked, the “Kitting” button will be enabled on the inventory details page.
- 5. Utilities
 - a. Enable: If checked, the “Utilities” button will be visible on the Main Menu.
 - i. Upload Pictures: Enables the user to select and upload digital images for an inventory item
 - 1. Save: Enables the user to save the image to the server.
 - ii. Upload Scans: Enables the user to Accept uploads from a remote data collection device.
 - 1. Process Scans: Enables the user to process an uploaded scan.
- 6. Histories
 - a. Enable: If checked, the “Histories” button will be visible on the Main Menu.
 - i. Distribution: Enables the user to view the distribution history

1. Delete: Enables the user to selectively delete the distribution history.
- ii. Order: Enables the user to view the order history
 1. Delete: Enables the user to selectively delete the order history
- iii. Transfer: Enables the user to view the transfer history
 1. Delete: Enables the user to selectively delete the transfer history
- iv. User Log: Enables the user to view the user logs
 1. Delete: Enables the user to selectively delete the user logs

STEP 5: Populate the editors

Select “Editors” from the Owner Menu and populate each of the editors with values that are appropriate for your business. The editors are used to create values for various “dropdowns” in the contacts and inventory data entry screens. Dropdowns enable you to select from a list of common values in order to avoid repetitive typing and to minimize data entry errors. This will become clear as you begin to add address and inventory records.

1. Carriers: The values you enter here will populate the “Ship Via” dropdown in the shopping cart.
2. Classes: These values will populate the “Class” dropdown in the contact details screen. You are free to create your own classes but two default classes (VENDOR and CONSUMER) are required and cannot be deleted or changed. Consumers are basically “customers” which can be selected in the “Ship To” dropdown of the Shopping Cart.
3. Locations: The values will populate the “location” dropdown of the inventory details screen. Locations typically refer to the building or warehouse that the inventory is in as opposed to the “BIN” which refers to the location in the building or warehouse. You can also create special locations for “Reserved” or “Repair”.
4. Units-of-Measure: These values will populate the UOM dropdown in the inventory details screen.
5. Department: These values will populate the Department dropdown in the inventory details screen. Departments are used to organize your inventory. You must create at least one department.
6. Sub Department: These values will populate the Sub Department dropdown in the inventory details screen. Sub departments are used to further organize your inventory. You must create at least one sub department.

STEP 6: Create contact records for vendors and consumers

Click “Contacts” on the Owner Menu and setup your contacts. Create records for each of your vendors and consumers (customers). The “Class” dropdown selection determines the type of address record.

To add a new contact record, open the contacts detail screen by clicking “Select” for any record in the browser. In the details screen, click “New Contact” to create a new contact record. Use an existing record as a template and change only the required fields. Be sure to set the “Class” to indicate the type of contact record you are creating. Finally, click “Update” to save the new record.

Contact records for “Vendor” will populate the vendor and alternate vendor dropdowns in the inventory data enter screen. You must have at least one vendor. In order to print a purchase order, you must supply complete vendor information. Contact records for “Consumer” will populate the “Ship To” or “Consumer” dropdown in the Shopping Cart.

WARNING: Once you enter a “Name” for the contact record, this name cannot be edited. In order to change the name, you will need to delete and then re-create the record. If the record happens to be a Vendor, you will not be able to delete the record if inventory records exist with this vendor.

STEP 7: Create inventory records

To add a new inventory record, open the inventory detail screen by clicking “Select” for any record in the browser. In the details screen, click “Add New” to create a new inventory record. If at least one inventory record already exists, you can use this record as a template and change only the required fields. Finally, click “Update” to save the new record.

This is by far the most time consuming (and critical) aspect of setting up your software. Before you begin, give careful thought to how you want to organize your inventory data. Here are some things to consider:

1. Consider whether or not you want to organize your data into departments and sub departments. Doing so will enable you to group, track, and analyze inventory records by these fields.
2. Item numbers should never be the same for more than one record unless the locations are different (This is critical). Give thought to how you want to create your item numbers.
3. The Cross-Reference field is for the vendor’s item number if different from yours. The Cross-Reference will print on the PO (as will your item number) so that your vendors will know what you are ordering.
4. Carefully consider the MIN/MAX numbers for each item. These numbers will determine optimal stock levels. When On Hand drops below the Minimum, the item will be added to the order report with a suggested order quantity necessary to bring On Hand back up to the Maximum level set for the item. If the Maximum is 0, when the On Hand quantity reaches 0, the item will be deleted. This is useful for non-inventory or one-of-a-kind items. This deletion occurs only during a distribution (shipping) transaction.
5. Values for the “On Order” and “Back Ordered” fields are maintained automatically by the system. You cannot enter values for these fields.

6. The “Comment” field is useful for notes relating to the inventory item and is searchable from the “Search For” dropdown in the Browser.

To record serial numbers for an item, check “This item is serialized”. After the item record is saved (Update), the “Serials” button will become visible. Click this button to record serial numbers for the item. The “Serials” button will be available only if the item is “serialized”. Notice that the quantity On Hand will always equal the number of serial numbers recorded for the item.

To designate an item as a kit, check “This item is a kit”. To add an item to the kit, click “Add to Kit” on the details screen. To view the bill-of-material for an item, click “Kitting” at the top of the details screen. This button will be visible only if the item has been designated as a kit.

NOTE: Serialized items cannot be kits.

NOTE: Kits cannot be ordered. They must be assembled.

WARNING: Do not use the apostrophe (‘) or quote (”) character in any data field (inventory or contacts) because doing so will cause an error.

About the Browser: The Inventory Browser will show the first 500 inventory records (sorted by Item Number and Location). Use the “Search” function to view a specific record or group of records.

About the Searching: If you select a search field then click “Search” with nothing in the “Target” field, the return will be sorted in order of the selected field. Searches will return all matching records even if there are more than 500.

Reports will always reflect the data in the grid.

Advanced Search: The advanced search capability of the software will enable you to search on multiple fields and to link these fields with “and/or” logical operators.

For example, you can locate all records in location “01” where the description contains either “wire” or “board”. To do this, select “Location” in the Field 1 dropdown, “Equals” in the Condition 1 dropdown, and type “01” in the Target 1 textbox. Finally, select “and” from the Logic 1 dropdown.

Next, we can setup the second condition. Select “Description” from the Field 2 dropdown, “Contains” from the Condition 2 dropdown, type “wire” in the Target 2 textbox, and select “or” from the Logic 2 dropdown.

To setup condition 3, select “Description” in the Field 3 dropdown. Select “Contains” from the Condition 3 dropdown and type “board” in the Target 3 text box. Finally, select “Done” in the Logic 3 dropdown.

Wait! If you execute this search now, the software will return all records where the location is “01” and the description contains “wire” or where the description contains “board”. In other words, records will be returned that contain “board” in the description regardless of the location! We need to group the last two conditions so that the software will return records that contain location “01” and contain either “wire” or “board” in the description. This is accomplished by checking the “Group 1 & 2” checkbox.

Transactions

Order

Ordering inventory is Vendor specific. After you select the vendor, the data grid will be populated with all inventory related to this vendor.

The “Suggested” quantity will be automatically populated with the suggested order quantity. The suggested Order will be the quantity needed to bring On Hand back up to the Maximum for each item where On Hand is less than the Minimum.

To create an order quantity for any item, click the “Select” button for the item and click “Update” to populate the “Order” quantity with the “Suggested” quantity. You can also change the order quantity by changing the quantity in the “Order” textbox before clicking “Update.”

Click “Order All” to accept all suggested order quantities. You can still edit the order quantity by clicking “Select” then change the quantity in the “Order” textbox and click “Update.”

The “Reset” button will restore original Order quantities.

The “Order” button will generate an order for this vendor and (optionally) print a Purchase Order. The PO will include all items with a quantity greater than “0” in the “Order” column of the data grid.

The details of each order transaction will be recorded in the Order History file.

To print a PO for this (or any other) order, click “Histories” on the Main Menu. Next, click “Order History” and click “Select” for the desired PO number. Finally, click “Print PO”.

NOTE: The return address on both the PO and the Packing slip show Visual Online Data address information. We will change this to show your company name and address at any time, however, doing so will terminate your 90 day guarantee period. When you are ready to make this change, send us an email with the exact information you would like.

Receive

While ordering inventory is “vendor specific”, receiving inventory is “purchase order specific”. First select the PO number that you wish to receive. Doing this will populate the data grid with all items in the selected PO.

Notice that the Receive quantity is equal to the Order quantity by default. If you wish to receive a quantity less than the order quantity for any item, click the “Select” button for the item then change the quantity in the text field. Click “Update” to accept the change. You can do this for any item in the PO. Notice that you can also change the Cost. The Cost for the actual inventory item will be replaced with the weighted average of the original cost and the new cost.

The “Reset” button will restore the original quantities for the selected PO.

The “Receive” button will receive the Purchase Order and adjust (increase) the On Hand quantity for each inventory item in the PO.

If you receive less than ordered for any item, a backorder will be created. You cannot receive more than was ordered.

When receiving serialized inventory, a blank serial number record will be created for this item. The “Lot Number” field will contain the PO Number. You must edit the serial numbers for this item and enter the correct serial numbers for the received items.

The Purchase Order will not be cleared until all ordered items have been received.

The details of each receive transaction will be recorded in the Order History file

Direct Receive

This function will enable you to receive inventory without first ordering it.

Distribute

Distributing inventory is a two-step process. First, the “Shopping Cart” is populated with items and the order is submitted. The second step involves shipping the order from the “Orders” (Pending Orders) menu.

Items can be added to the cart from the inventory details screen. Enter the quantity then click the “Add to Cart” button.

Items can also be added to the cart directly from the Shopping Cart (Current Order) screen by selecting the item from the “Item” dropdown. If the item selected exists in more than one location, you will also need to specify the location for the item.

Once all items have been added to the cart, select the “Ship To” or “Consumer” name, the “Ship Via” name (Carrier) and click “Submit to send the order to the Pending Orders file.

If the user is a Client and has permissions to both “Add” and “Update” Contact records, then the user will be able to select the “<Add New>” option from the “Ship To” dropdown and create a new address record on-the-fly. Owners always have this option.

In order for an “Order Confirmation” to be sent to the Owner, the “Order Notification” checkbox must be checked in the Owner’s contact record. In addition, valid email addresses must exist in the contact records for both the Owner and the User placing the order.

The “Submit” button will be disabled unless the user has “Ship To” permissions.

The details of each distribution transaction will be recorded in the Distribution History file.

Pending Orders

To access pending orders, click the “Orders” button on the Main Menu.

The Orders Grid will be populated with all available orders. To ship an order, click “Select” on any line item in the data grid for the order number you wish to ship. The data grid will now show only items in this order number.

If you wish, you can print a “Pick List” for the order to help in pulling the inventory from stock. When the warehouseman returns the Pick List, re-open the pending orders file and select the order. Use the Pick List to correctly enter the quantities to ship. If you ship less than were ordered, a backorder will be created for the item.

NOTE: A “Packing Slip” can be printed after the order is shipped. On the Main Menu, click “Histories” then click “Distribution History” and “Select” the desired order. Finally, click the “Packing Slip” button to print a packing slip for this order. The return address on both the PO and the Packing slip show Visual Online Data address information. We will change this to show your company name and address at any time, however, doing so will terminate your 90 day guarantee period. When you are ready to make this change, send us an email with the exact information you would like

Serialized items will be shown in red text. To ship a serialized item, click “Select” on the line item. You will now notice that the available serial numbers for this item are displayed in the Serials Grid. Click “Ship” on the serial number that you wish to ship. Because serialized items are unique, you will need to repeat this process to ship each serialized item in the order.

WARNING: Once you click the “Ship” button on the Serials Grid, the selected serial number will be permanently selected. You cannot reverse this selection. For this reason, you will be required to confirm each selection.

If you select a line item in the Orders Grid that is not serialized, the quantity to be shipped will equal the quantity ordered (by default). You can change this by entering the

quantity to ship in the “Ship” field and then click “Update”. Once updated, the quantity to ship will remain until you specifically change it and again click “Update”.

When you click “Ship” all non-serialized items in the selected order will be shipped. If you wish to not ship an item, you must set the “Ship” quantity to “0” for the item and click “Update”. When you are sure that the “Ship” quantity is correct for each item in the order, click “Ship”

The “Reset” button will cause the Orders Grid to be populated with all available orders.

Transfer

Items can easily be transferred from location to location. The locations available in the “Transfer To” dropdown are created in the Locations Editor (see “Editors”).

Serialized items will require that you select the correct serial number to transfer by clicking the “Serials” dropdown in the inventory record.

The details of each transfer transaction will be recorded in the Transfer History file.

Utilities

Upload Pictures

This utility enables you to upload item pictures to the server. The images will appear on the inventory details page for the item.

Upload PDF

This utility enables you to upload item PDFs to the server. The “PDF Available” icon will appear on the inventory details page for the item if an associated PDF exists. Click the icon to view the PDF.

Upload Scans

Barcode labels can be printed for inventory items by selecting the “Barcode Export” option in the Report Viewer of the Inventory Browser. Once the report is open, export the report to an Excel format and from Excel to a tab delimited text file. Most barcode printing software will read the ASCII file to print the actual barcodes.

There are a number of excellent scanners available today with features too numerous to mention. We recommend “Scan Online” for all barcode hardware because they provide high quality scanners which are pre-programmed to work with our software. Their contact information can be found below.

When you have scanned your barcodes, open the “Upload Scans” utility and start the download from the scanner.

When the download is complete, click “End Scan” then choose the processing mode by clicking the appropriate button. There are four options for processing the scan.

1. **Cycle Count:** Will replace the quantity On Hand (inventory) with the quantity associated with each item in the scan.
2. **Mixed:** If the quantity associated with an item is negative, the quantity will be subtracted from the quantity On Hand for each item in the scan. If the quantity associated with an item is positive, the quantity will be added to the quantity On Hand for each item in the scan.
3. **Distribute:** The scan will be added to the shopping cart to be distributed like any other shopping cart transaction.
4. **Receive:** Will add the quantity associated with each item in the scan to the quantity On Hand in the inventory. This transaction is not associated with a purchase order.
5. **Transfer:** Will enable you to transfer the contents of the scan to a selected location. You cannot transfer a scan to more than one location.

Histories

Visual inventory tracks both item and transaction histories in the history browsers. You can also print reports from these browsers.

If you search for specific information in the browser, the report will reflect the data displayed in the data grid.

Reports

All reports can be exported to either PDF format or to an Excel spreadsheet. From either the PDF display or Excel, the report can be e-mailed or saved to disk.

For technical support

Scott Bigler

Support Supervisor

Visual Online Data

865-322-6280

<http://www.visualonline.net>