S2K Enterprise Edition Software Overview

Transforming Business with Integrated Enterprise Management Solutions

IBM and VAI provide end-to-end, integrated enterprise solutions for the Wholesale Distribution, Manufacturing, and Retail industries. As leaders in the small and mid-sized market, we offer everything you need—world class applications, IBM's leading technology, and expert service and experience—to maximize your information technology investment. VAI offers a full suite of integrated applications that can be tailored to meet the specific requirements of your business. IBM provides leading on demand hardware specifically designed to help create a more optimized infrastructure and ensure that your business continues operating at maximum efficiency.

Distribution Management

Today, distributors must offer a broader product mix and meet more sophisticated demands from more suppliers and customers. Distributors also face increased competition to gain and maintain customer loyalty. This competition squeezes revenue, profits, and margins, making it harder to ensure profitability. Finally, distributors require powerful, yet easy-to-use information systems to help enrich customer service, reduce costs, and improve the quality of decision making.

With one of the most advanced customer service applications available today, VAI's powerful order processing application provides complete drill-down access to customer and item data. Users can access stock status information across all locations, view substitutions, complementary items, sales history, and use customer shopping lists for quick order entry.

With VAI's inventory management and purchasing applications, distributors can minimize the amount of inventory they have on hand and take advantage of advanced formulas to provide suggested purchasing recommendations. These state-of-the-art purchasing tools maximize your buyers' efficiency, enabling them to spend more time on profit-oriented tasks, such as reducing dead-stock inventory, increasing customer fill rates, negotiating pricing with suppliers, and reviewing product mix.

Manufacturing Management

More than ever, manufacturers are facing increased pressure from domestic and international competition. To effectively compete and ensure business growth, manufacturers are examining all aspects of their operations in order to minimize costs, maximize profitability, and open new markets. Manufacturers require modern, easy-to-use, cost-effective solutions that deliver a real return on investment.

Whether your business is a process or discrete manufacturer, make to stock or make to order, VAI provides the robust tools to help manage and analyze every aspect of your business. With our solution, you can integrate order processing with manufacturing for more timely shipments and increased accuracy. Automate and track the usage of material and labor through the shop floor to improve production time and reduce errors. Analyze current and future production and material requirements and enable users to plan more effectively. Use our sophisticated forecasting formulas to eliminate time-consuming manual processes and establish consistent and accurate forecasts. Spot situations where capacity is short or long and quickly resolve bottlenecks and shift production. And integrate inspection planning with purchasing and production to track product and process characteristics.

Retail Management

Transforming your retail business into an on demand business goes well beyond helping you set up shop online. VAI provides a complete turnkey solution that centralizes information across your entire organization. This empowers your customer service and management teams to locate and move merchandise more effectively, eliminate costly delays, and make more informed pricing and buying decisions. In addition, having your stores online and linked directly to a powerful, high-availability enterprise system can reduce customer wait time, minimize transaction costs, and enable you to adopt new solutions in a single store, across multiple stores, or throughout the supply chain.

This dynamic application is effective for both walk-in or on-account sales and provides complete integration with purchasing for special orders, direct shipments, warehouse management for deliveries, and e-business orders. With complete bar code scanning and an optional touch screen interface, users can access information at the touch of a key. Users can check stock across all locations, up sell complementary items, and view product images and unlimited user-defined item specifications. Additional features include password protection for returns and price changes, sales representative tracking, and cash drawer reconciliation.

E-Business / Portal Technology

VAI offers a suite of exciting e-business solutions that allow you to leverage the opportunities that the web provides. They can help you lower organizational costs by improving efficiencies in your business processes, help you increase sales by reaching your customers in new ways, and enhance productivity by making the right information and people available to your employees. With powerful e-commerce applications, you can empower your customers with new channels to buy your products or services, allow them to service their own accounts, and provide your company with valuable, real-time feedback to help you grow your business.

With VAI and IBM portal technology, you can allow people to interact with your company in a personalized way. This comprehensive portal solution helps you provide employees, trading partners, and customers with a web site on which the information and applications they need have been consolidated and organized for easy access and use. As such, the entire supply chain can quickly execute business processes across critical applications and can collaborate with other users to make faster decisions. By providing industry-leading portal solutions for your on demand business, VAI and IBM help you improve employee productivity, cut costs, and strengthen relationships with your customers and trading partners.

Financial Management

VAI's integrated financial modules give you the information needed to tighten control over payables and receivables, improve cash flow, and react to business cycles. Accounts payable provides a three-way match of purchase orders, receipts and invoices, and conditional e-mail options alert buyers of accounts payable invoice discrepancies. Global customer aging inquiries and collection reminders take the guess work out of follow-up and collection calls, and conditional e-mail options alert managers of customer credit issues as they happen. All transactions post to the General Ledger and include detail account drill-down capabilities to view specific transaction history. The comprehensive "Information Center" provides a snapshot of the overall financial status of the company and the financial report writer allows users to create an unlimited number of financial reports based on user defined parameters.

Warehouse Management

VAI's Warehouse Pro application enhances productivity and improves overall warehouse efficiency. This powerful application provides both paper-based and radio frequency (RF) processing for inventory receiving, put-away, movement, picking, and order shipment verification. The order manager screen allows managers to view and select orders and warehouse transfers for individual or wave picking based on a myriad of sort criteria. Using technology to automate the picking and shipping process, users can locate and pick items more efficiently and accurately, increasing fulfillment speed. This results in greater throughput and increased inventory turns, better on-time delivery, and significantly, reduced expedited freight costs. Integrated EDI features provide automatic UCC-128 label printing and electronic advance ship notices. Cycle and physical counting programs help gauge the accuracy of current inventory records. And with real-time integration to your enterprise system, Warehouse Pro enables accurate and efficient tracking of goods throughout your entire facility.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Improve your bottom line by strengthening customer loyalty with VAI's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions. This dynamic suite of applications can help you cost-effectively identify, acquire, develop, and retain your most profitable customers. With one central database, Contact Management provides an enterprise-wide view of all interactions with customers and prospects. From the Sales Team Dashboard, users can generate quotes and track specific opportunities, review account information and history, and create to-do lists to flag follow-up activity. Marketing Automation provides the ability to automate marketing campaigns to the contact database. For your mobile sales team, SalesLinx provides the ability to download data from the main server to a laptop, enabling remote access to customer, prospect, item, and sales order information. When used in conjunction with VAI's CRM portal technology, your sales team will be working at maximum effectiveness, whether they are working locally, remotely, or online.

Service and Repair

Designed to manage service calls and equipment repair, this module provides the ability to enter and track a service request, review technician workloads and assign work, track service codes, and record the labor and parts used to fix equipment. Integrated billing options allow users to backorder parts, automatically generate preventive maintenance work orders and invoices, and create detailed invoices for all repairs. Available inquiries and reports allow users to view open and completed service requests, service calls by technician, the detailed history of all service calls by item, and a complete list of maintenance contracts by expiration date.

ADVANCED FEATURES

VAI offers a host of advanced features that can extend the value of your enterprise management system and improve employee productivity. They include:

Work Flow: The Work Flow Alert feature supplies today's management with the tools required for successful business-making decisions by providing automated, timely information through text-based messaging or external event-driven e-mails.

Job Scheduler: The Job Scheduler provides users with the ability to process reports and other events at specified times and intervals throughout the course of organizational business cycles.

Desktop Integration: VAI's software provides complete integration with PC-based productivity products, such as Microsoft Outlook®, Excel®, and Word®. This integration ensures the flexibility to utilize desktop applications while taking advantage of the power, reliability, and security of VAI's Enterprise software.

Business Intelligence: Through rich data analysis and data mining capabilities, powerful Business Intelligence (BI) tools enable you to provide all of your employees with critical, timely business information tailored to their specific needs.

EDI Integration: VAI's EDI interfacing capabilities, with several translator software packages and Value Added Networks (VAN), offer businesses inbound and outbound mapping capabilities, forward/storage systems for trading partner transmissions and fast response, and error-free, efficient handling of accounting transactions.

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