

B & L NEWS

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Enterprise Software for Metalcasters

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Innovation is Key to New Business

Sivyer Steel Corporation is in the business of helping save lives. Sivyer's website talks about having customers in the construction, mining, transportation, pump, power generation, steel, aerospace, agriculture, demolition, scrap and solid waste recycling industries. There is nothing on the website about saving lives. How does a foundry that is almost a century old and one of the first large steel foundries in the country get in the business of saving lives? In one word, innovation.

Due to the escalated violence against U.S. troops in Iraq & Afghanistan, the U.S. Army needed to respond quickly to the growing demand for armored vehicles. In June 2007, the U.S. Army announced it would commercially procure a unique protective steel armor known as P900. Each foundry producing P900 would be required to qualify for its ballistic and production schedule capabilities. Sivyer Steel and sister company, Waukesha Foundry, responded.

The P900 armor is comprised of one or more cast metal plates of predetermined thickness which have slotted holes of various size and designs. The holes in the plates were previously formed by being punched or drilled. There were many disadvantages to these methods: a hole created by punching or drilling was limited by

The key was to design molds and cores that would create an angled, perforated piece of armor. This design has resulted in a patent for Waukesha Foundry and two pending patents for Sivyer Steel.

Sivyer Steel received their contract to produce P900 March of 2008. A new molding line was put in place. The molding line was staffed by personnel with no foundry experience, trained by Sivyer Steel for this project; they began pouring by the end of the month. As of July 31, 2008, they have managed to exceed the quality and delivery standards set by the government.

We would like to thank Sivyer Steel for sharing as much as possible for this article. B&L would like to invite any of our clients that would like to share their successes with our readership to submit articles to Sandy Warren at B&L.



Sivyer Steel's P900 Molding Line in Operation.

the thickness of the steel plate and created sharp edges and excessive amounts of waste of steel plate (up to 60%).

The entire staff at B&L would like to salute both Sivyer Steel Corp. and Waukesha Foundry for their efforts to protect our troops. ■

B&L Customers Receive Various Awards and Certifications

J. Walter Miller, Lancaster, PA, received ANSI/ISO/ASQ Q9001:2000 certification

Ryobi Die Casting (USA) Inc., Shelbyville, IN, recently received top honors for quality from Toyota Motor Engineering & Mfg. North America, Inc., Erlanger, KY. The award acknowledges suppliers who have met Toyota's highest standards in quality and delivery.

Cartland Foundry Co., Inc., Terre Haute, IN, received a 2008 Governor's Workplace Safety Award for advancing occupational safety and health. This award is given for best practices in eliminating job-related accidents and illnesses. ■

Congratulations to all of you for your achievements!



Doug Hinman, Manager, R&D

Odysey version 4.2 is currently in development. A major enhancement will allow organizations to manage multiple facilities (divisions, plants, etc.) under a corporate umbrella. Odyssey already has the ability to create multiple independent companies. You can also consolidate General Ledgers from several companies into another company for financial reporting. The new feature is designed for corporate structures where each facility is largely independent except cash is controlled at headquarters. The official name for this setup in Odyssey is Inter-company With Centralized Cash.

Each facility in this setup is an Odyssey company and is termed a plant. The consolidated company is termed headquarters. You can create an inter-company structure for several plants and still have other Odyssey companies that are stand-alone. This feature is obviously meant to handle larger organizations with multiple business units, which is something we are seeing more and more. Some of the features of the new inter-company structure include the following:

- Each plant has its own General Ledger
- All plant ledgers are consolidated into the headquarters G/L
- Cross-plant financial activities are "washed" thru inter-company accounts you define
- All cash activities (A/P check writing, A/R cash receipts, collections) are done at headquarters
- Headquarters can access Open A/R, Open A/P, Sales History for all plants

Plants can do business with each other as well. For example, plant 1 can be a customer of plant 2 (which means plant 2 is a supplier to plant 1). This relationship is defined in the Customer Master and Supplier Master tables. Plant 2 still bills plant 1 like other customers except Odyssey will handle this activity as an inter-company transfer. Once parts are received at plant 1, headquarters can automatically clear the A/R and A/P from both plants without any actual cash activity.

BLIS 7.0 was recently released and features several important enhancements. The ability to create and manage master containers in the Container Inventory module is one of the most significant. Others include billing surcharges monthly and tracking castings on hold at outside suppliers. A new feature sure to be popular is the ability to specify the initial menu each user accesses when they start up BLIS.

It's important to note that you must be at V5R1 or higher of i5/OS to install release 7.0. Our internal i5 is at V5R3 and V6R1 is already available from IBM. Going from V5 to V6 requires an internal object conversion process much like moving from CISC to RISC several years ago. The affect on BLIS is that all programs must be recompiled. We will provide utilities for this. However, as of this writing we are still investigating V6R1 compatibility for BLIS-GUI, BLIS-MPC, and BLIS-MMI. These products rely on 3rd party software outside the control of IBM and B&L. ■



This column is intended to educate users and point out features that may be new to the software. Hopefully, you find it worthwhile. Of course, for any questions or support issues you may have, please contact us at support@blinfo.com, or (269)465-6207, ext. 829.

Odyssey

Dear Brenda,

I need to run our A/R Trial Balance on a regular basis, and each time I go into it I have to change a few of the parameters, such as age based on due date and clicking the radio button for the Detail report instead of Summary. Is there a way to change the defaults so it comes up with my parameters whenever I run it, thus saving me some clicks?

Dodging Every Possible Click

Dear Dodging,

Each saved click helps prevent carpal tunnel, so we are more than happy to help! There is a way to set up defaults for a report, and it's by user so different users can set up the same report with different defaults. Here are the steps:

- 1) Go to the report and set the parameters as if you were going to run the report.
- 2) Click on the properties box (as shown in Figure 1 in red).
- 3) Find the parameters you changed and check the boxes next to them, or you can do what I do which is click the button to check all (as shown in Figure 2), then click Save. This will save the parameters so the next time you run this report the parameters will come in as you saved them.

Note: To set report back to the original defaults, click the properties box, click the uncheck all box and click save.

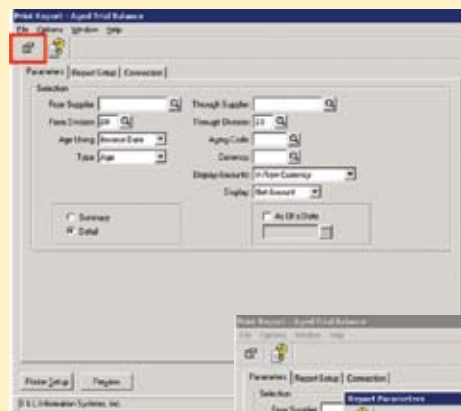


Figure 1

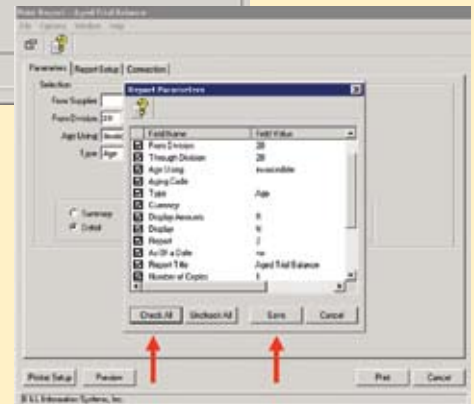


Figure 2

BLIS-400

Dear Brenda,

Sometimes we have quality issues arise at a supplier location. The system is great in that it tells us how many castings are in outside inventory at the supplier location, but it doesn't tell us how many are held due to these quality issues. Right now I have sticky notes plastered all over, and at times it feels like its raining paper because they keep falling off my wall. Do you have any suggestions on what we can do in the system so that we know how many good castings versus bad are at the location?

Seized From Beyond

Dear Seized,

If you would have asked me a few months ago, I would have given you some long-winded, work-around solution, but in BLIS 7.0 we have just put in an enhancement that you'll love. You can now put outside inventory on hold for a vendor using the RA/Hold module. Now when you add an RA/Hold item you will have a new choice (see Figure 1) to enter a vendor hold item. The automatic transfer to & from hold production transactions will affect outside inventory, and you can scrap inventory right from the Outside Inventory Receipt screen. You can easily track what's on hold in the RA/Hold module as well as see the quantity on hold in the Work with Vendor Screen (see Figure 2). So, free up that wall and hang a nice picture on it! ■



Figure 1

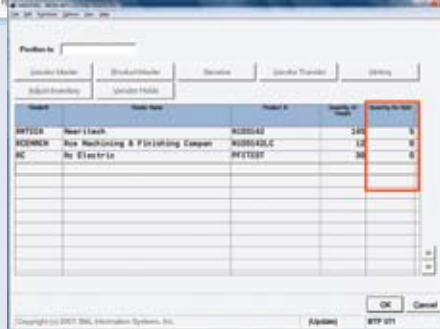


Figure 2



Frankly Speaking

Encore article by Frank Roorda, B&L Business Consultant

REASONS TO USE AN ALTERNATE ROUTING

The purpose of the labor routing is twofold. First, the labor routing is used to describe the steps necessary to make a casting, and secondly, the labor routing forms the basis for costing.

Whether you are using Odyssey or BLIS-400 for your ERP needs, both systems allow you to have multiple routings. There are many reasons for this. To explore why we might create additional routings, let's begin by discussing the life cycle of a product. Most products begin in the quotation process. When the quote is developed, a labor routing is assigned to it. The labor routing forms the basis for the costs that make up the labor and overhead. If the quote is accepted by the customer, then it can be converted into a product using the Quote To Product Conversion program. The labor routing is converted from the quote to the product at the same time.

After a product has been in production for a while, certain differences can appear. For example, the performance rate might be slower, scrap might be higher, operations that were designed to be performed in-house are contracted out, etc. In other words, the real routing no longer matches the quote. Does this sound familiar? Generally, for those clients utilizing the standard cost system, once a standard routing is established, that routing is frozen. The rates and routing steps are generally not changed in a standard routing until the beginning of a new year, or whenever it is that the accounting department is prepared to revalue the casting(s) that have changed.

If you can't change the steps in the standard routing, how are you supposed to create shop orders that accurately reflect how a job is to be run? This is where the alternate routing concept comes to the rescue. You might need more than one routing to properly account for cost and a different routing to account for the current engineering process. By doing this, you can always maintain a routing that represents the way a given product is costed. This is called a Standard Routing. The other routings would reflect the way the job is to be scheduled.



Figure A - BLIS-400 Routing List

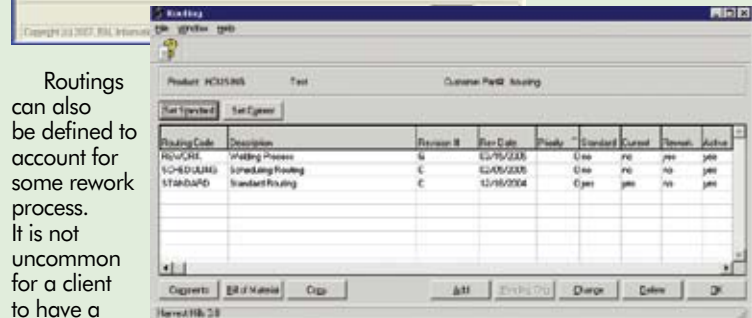


Figure B - Odyssey Routing List

Routings can also be defined to account for some rework process. It is not uncommon for a client to have a predefined series of steps that might occur when they perform rework. For example, if cracks are found in an x-ray, there could be an extensive series of steps that a casting goes through to weld the casting. This is generally called a "Rework Loop." The Rework Loop can be documented in complete detail using a rework routing. The rework steps would be assigned routing sequence numbers that are higher than the highest routing sequence number found in the standard routing. Why is that? We do this because the routing sequence steps defined for a rework are generally considered to be non-standard steps. In other words, the steps are not part of the standard cost of a product. I am told that QS auditors love it when clients set up their rework processes in the system since it creates traceability of the process. Best of all, those steps are part of the system and not buried in some spreadsheet or Word document outside of the system.

Another reason to define a separate routing for scheduling versus costing is security. For some reason, accountants running a standard cost system do not like it when engineers are allowed access to the routing that controls the cost. I am told that engineers don't always like accountants, so it seems like a fair trade off. Either BLIS-400 or Odyssey will finally help bring peace to the office by allowing these routings to be separately securable. The standard routings can be secured so that only the accounting department can get into

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them to make changes. The engineers can look at the standards all day long, but they can't touch them.

A final reason you might want to utilize the alternate routing capability within BLIS or Odyssey deals with tooling. Tool configurations can be defined in either system such that they will actually call out for a specific routing code. For example, when a product is run as part of a family tool instead of a single part, perhaps the process changes such that it necessitates running the product with a different process.

In the example shown, when this tool configuration is selected for use in scheduling, the system will automatically choose the correct

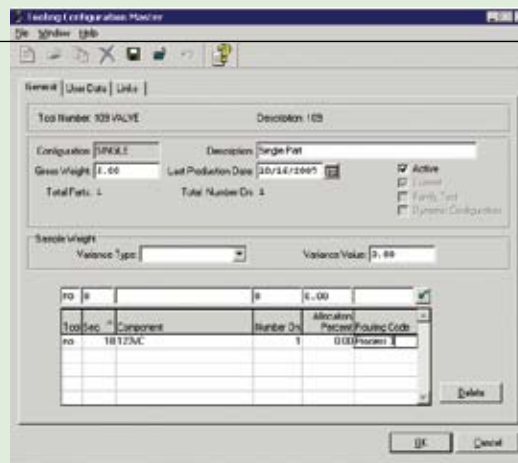


Figure C - Odyssey Tool Configuration tied to a specific labor routing

labor routing. This means that all of the routings steps, process comments, etc. are automatically brought into the shop order without having to do anything else. This is an important feature, and again one that the QS auditor should like since nobody really needs to remember which process to use; it all happens automatically when the correct tool configuration is chosen.

I hope you can find a good use for these important features within your BLIS-400 or Odyssey implementation. As always, if you need help implementing any of the concepts discussed within this article, contact your B&L project consultant for advice. ■

B&L Welcomes New Client

Sivyer Steel Corporation
Bettendorf, IA
Foundry - Odyssey

Schedule of Events

Date	Event	City,State
Oct. 11-15	NFFS Annual Meeting	Coeur d'Alene, ID
Oct. 20-21	World Conference on Investment Casting	Dallas, TX

For a schedule of free seminars about Odyssey software, go to www.blinfo.com and click on Media Center.

Friends & Family

B&L Street Cleaners

Several B&L employees (and friends) recently participated in a road clean-up session, picking up cans and other debris along Rambo Road (the road on which B&L is located) as well as a small portion of Red Arrow Highway in Bridgman. Pictured are participants (Patrick McCrevan, Joan Warren, Sandy Warren, Jerry Nagel, Phil Laney, Taylor Burkhart, Tom Burkhart, Lori Hnanicek, and Rosa Cox – taking photo is Dick Laney who also participated). ■

