

Editors Note

Welcome to 2011 and our third edition of *embraceTALK*. The New Year heralds change, challenges and exciting new projects. Samantha Blignaut has once again picked up the reins as Projects Director and in this issue *TALKS* about our professional Projects Team, a team that understands best business practice in terms of delivery and implementation of solutions, a team that strives to deliver beyond solutions...

Some of our Embrace partners have already embraced and successfully upgraded to our leading edge, Release 13 and are enjoying the many associated benefits. Special Release 13 courses have been scheduled for the month of May. See the dates listed under *academy TALK* and to avoid disappointment, diarise and reserve your seat soon. Another important May date to diarise is our next ACS-Embrace User Forum, scheduled for the 11th May.

Our Special Feature focuses on one of the many new suites of programs in Release 13, which manages the process of returning stock to your supplier and dealing with the subsequent claims process. This additional control makes the process simpler and more efficient.

It is with great pride that we present our case study, which showcases the D&A Group of Companies and John Lachenicht - Chief Operating Officer of the D&A Group talks about a 23-year partnership with ACS-Embrace. The D&A Group was one of our very first clients and we recently celebrated this significant milestone at a special anniversary lunch. ACS met their many business requirements back then and we continue to meet their changing business requirements today. We look forward to meeting all their, and your, business requirements for the next 23 years and beyond...

I leave you with an interesting definition of Progress – "Every year it takes less time to fly across the ocean and longer to drive to work".

Jeanette



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Left: Key members of the Projects Team

From the desk of our Projects Director - Sam Blignaut

Our professional Projects Team is the driving force behind the successful implementation of our ACS-Embrace Business Solution. Our dedicated team consists of Project Managers, Business Analysts, Industry Specialists, Programmers and Trainers. They have a wealth of experience and expertise and are responsible for new user (first time) Embrace Business Solution Implementations, as well as new Embrace module implementations, upgrades and business re-engineering projects at existing sites. Our track record shows that we understand best business practice in terms of delivery and implementation of solutions.

A well-planned implementation, where the business requirements and processes are clearly defined, understood and agreed to by all parties at the start of the project, is critical to the success of any project, no matter how big or small.

An ERP implementation is a business transformation process. Clear project goals must be developed whilst realistic timelines, budget and scope must be agreed between business and the team delivering the solution. All these factors need to be understood and supported from the top board level management down through the organisation to ensure all stakeholders buy into and keep focused on the goals. The successful implementation of an end-to-end business solution can drive huge improvements in the effectiveness of any organisation.

One of the most overlooked aspects of a technology initiative is managing the impact on the organisation and resistance to change. Ideally, a change management program should be followed, to educate, prepare and motivate those impacted by the change. The key is to focus on 'why' this is being done. Why is your project critical to your organisation's mission, how does it fit into the overall strategic plan and how will it help you to be more successful?

"The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress" – Charles Kettering

The ACS methodology that drives our projects and steers us along the road of success includes:

- **Formation of the Steering Committee**
Regular meetings, with all parties, to ensure that the project remains on time and within budget
- **Assessment**
Includes the Needs Analysis, Gap Analysis and Scope of Work
- **Build**
Includes the configuration and setup of the system, data conversions, customisation specification and development.
- **Test**
User acceptance testing
- **Training**
The content and extent of the training requirements flow from the needs analysis phase. ACS designs the training courses to suit client specific business requirements.
- **Implementation**
Includes the Cut Over, Final conversions, Go-live, Handholding, Day-end and first Month-end.
- **Post Implementation Review**
Feedback from the client, evaluate deliverables, compare budget, evaluate feedback and project closure report.

We are constantly reminded that an overwhelming majority of global IT projects are completed over budget, past the required deadline and outside the original scope. Best practice project management ensures that if we successfully initiate, plan, execute and close out our projects - our metrics will illustrate improved results.

At ACS, we strive to deliver beyond solutions. Our highly motivated and qualified Project Team have a wealth of experience, business knowledge and a proven track record, to ensure our projects are successful and measurable.

A well-implemented system provides a solid foundation for the growth and success of your business.

— **Samantha Blignaut**

Academy TALK

ACS-Embrace Version 13.0 Upgrade Training

If you have not yet attended any of these sessions, do not miss out in the month of May.

Experience for yourself, the new features and improved functionality of your business solution at these detailed, step-by-step presentations, where you will:

- Learn how to use the new features
- Appreciate the improved functionality
- Discuss the implementation of these new features.
- Understand the added value they will bring to your organisation

Module	Days	May
Financials	1	16 th
Purchasing	1	17 th
Service	1	18 th
Sales	½	19 th
Utilities	½	19 th
Rental & Maintenance Contracts	1	20 th

Don't delay, book your seat today!

Partner Update

Pro Solutions Human Capital Management is skilled at implementing the most appropriate payroll and HR solutions by thoroughly understanding the business priorities and corporate culture of our clients. We provide smarter solutions across the following range of products, services and disciplines:

- Employee Management
- Outsourced payroll
- Human Capital Management
- E-Recruitment
- Talent Management
- Technical Requirements Analysis
- Software Configuration and Development
- Technical Support and Service Desk
- Hosting and Infrastructure

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Special Feature

Non-Conformance, Returns to Supplier and Supplier Claims

Embrace 13.0 sees the introduction of a new suite of programs to manage the process of returning stock to supplier and dealing with the subsequent claims process.

There are many reasons stock may be returned, including

- damaged stock
- stock oversupplied
- incorrectly supplied (product received is not the one ordered)
- redundant stock

The new Return to Supplier system caters for the end-to-end handling of the return process, namely

- raising of a non-conformance document, recording the stock as damaged and preventing the sale or issuing of the stock to be returned
- the printing and sending of a non-conformance document to the supplier
- traceability in the warehouse of the damaged goods to be returned, by a non-conformance document, referring to a specific goods received note
- processing the physical return of goods to the supplier, including processing the picking note and despatching the relevant stock back to the supplier
- ability to receive new stock, either in full or partial replacement of the returned stock
- process suppliers claims in the event that supplier invoices have already been settled and credit notes need to be issued by the supplier

The **Non-Conformance Entry** program is used to start the Return to Supplier/Claim process for both inventory and non-inventory items. The original goods received note, processed during the purchase order receipting process, identifies the applicable stock. The details from the original goods received note are available to assist the operator when raising the non-conformance document and the non-conforming stock is taken out of the available stock and transferred into damaged stock.

The **Return to Supplier** process can be handled as a one-step or two-step process. The two-step process would require the supplier to respond to the non-conformance document, instructing us how to handle the stock transaction. There will be instances where the supplier will not want the stock to be physically returned, and the instruction may be to dispose of the stock on the suppliers behalf. In the event that the stock is to be returned, the picking note will be produced and a Return to Supplier document raised to process the physical movement of stock back to the supplier.

The processing of claims is done in the **Claims Administration** program. The claims raised are not restricted to the actual supplier related to the goods, and the system caters for claims to be raised against third parties. Goods may have been damaged in transit and the claim is not raised against the supplier of the stock but against a third party transport operator. The administration program reflects all of the subsequent transactions processed that relate to the original claim. In the event that the claim is not settled in full, the system will raise a claim and variance entries are posted to the General Ledger.

The **Claims Enquiry** program gives visibility into all aspects of the claim, including the original non-conformance document, the receipt of any replacement goods, together with any credit notes issued by the supplier.

The additional control introduced by this set of programs makes the managing of the Return to Supplier process simpler and more efficient.

Embrace drives the D&A Difference

Since 1952, the D&A Group of Companies have operated as a leading supplier in the Automotive Industry. Operating as Leyland South Africa between 1952 and 1986, when it was the subject of a management buy-out and became Associated Automotive Distributors (Pty) Ltd and subsequently D&A Power Products (Pty) Ltd (D&A) in 1999. The company had the agency for Landrover, as well as parts and aftermarket parts.

"That was when we selected ACS as our business partner and implemented Embrace as our business solution. We believe that this partnership has contributed to the growth and success of our business. Today the group has a staff complement of 420 and a turnover rapidly approaching R1 b. The Embrace MRP 11 (Manufacturing) module was developed with us and was based on our specific requirements. Our business has continued to diversify, grow and evolve, while Embrace software has continued to evolve alongside us to give us the sophistication and customisation capabilities we need to grow our business and meet our ever-changing requirements," says John Lachenicht, Chief Operating Officer, D&A Group.

D&A has branches and warehouses countrywide. Major franchises within the business currently include: Allison Transmissions; Thelma Retarders; Global Components; AD Master Parts. Operations based in the Cape include: AAD Truck & Bus (Nissan Trucks), a UD Nissan Commercial Vehicle operation with links to three separate workshops; a panel beater in Ep-ping; Nissan passenger cars in Milnerton, MAN

Trucks in Port Elizabeth, Kwela Logistics (Pty) Ltd in Cape Town and Johannesburg, and Cabs Car Hire (Pty) nationwide.

"ACS understands and Embraces the key performance factors driving our business," added Willie van Wyk, Divisional Managing Director of D&A Power Products (Pty) Ltd. *"The automotive business industry becomes more complex and demanding every year. Competition is tougher and customer expectations higher. Embrace enables us to meet these expectations. Another big plus is that the software is flexible, can be customised easily and cost-effectively, without restricting our upgrade path. The ACS-Embrace support staff listen to us and give us what we want, allowing us to use the software the way we want to! This is what gives us our difference, our competitive edge and enables us to service our customers better."*

"We recently upgraded to the latest version of Embrace, which included a rewrite of the Workshops Module. Wow – This was a quantum leap! We are a Jobbing Shop. Huge volumes go through our workshops. Every vehicle is different. This means there are no standard parts, e.g. a cooling pipe, a cable tie, a bolt, etc. We use bolts in service as well as sales. This makes BOM (Bill of Material) maintenance in MRP labour intensive," continued Willie van Wyk.

"Upgrading to the latest version, with the enhanced Service Module, has changed our lives. The whole



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FAQ (Frequently Asked Question)

Q How can I see the General Ledger account description on screens where it is not displayed? I used to be able to see it in most places in Embrace, but since version 12, it has disappeared and only the account number displays.

A To cater for expanded General Ledger key structures, the account number field had to be increased in size. The account description was increased from 30 to 40 characters, which meant there was no longer sufficient space on the screen to put the account description adjacent to the account number. An expanded hint was implemented against all fields containing General Ledger account numbers that will now show the full hint and then below it the General Ledger account description. To view this hint, simply move your mouse cursor over the General Ledger account number and the hint will display. This functionality is only for edit boxes, while grid data normally has a **Toggle** button, which will toggle the display between account number and account description.

Q When using the Embrace cross-referencing system it appears to need a whole word or words to be entered with the exact correct spelling. What if I am not sure how the word is spelt, or only know a part of the word?

A If you only know the first part of the word, you can enter that part with three dots directly after it. The system will then

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Embrace User Tips

It is often far easier to edit an existing number or code than re-type the whole code if only the last few digits are different from your previous entry. This is easy enough to do when your previous entry is visible in the field, however in some instances, it is not visible, e.g. when capturing a General Ledger Journal.

Item	Account Number	Debit Amount
1	AC01-6516-0000 Printing & Stationery	1,234.65
2		

A full stop is entered

Item	Account Number	Debit Amount
1	AC01-6516-0000 Printing & Stationery	1,234.65
2	AC01-6516-0000	

Previous entry appears

Item	Account Number	Debit Amount
1	AC01-6516-0000 Printing & Stationery	1,234.65
2	AC01-6517-0000 Services	

Entry is edited to the next account number in the journal

The solution is simple. Just enter a full stop and press Enter and the previous entry will appear in the field. You can then edit it by using your **Left Arrow** key, **Right Arrow** key or the **Home** key, to go to the beginning of the field or **End** key to go to end of the field. Characters to the left of the cursor can be deleted using the **Backspace** key and characters to the right of the cursor can be deleted using the **Del** or **Delete** key.

FAQ Continued...

return everything starting with the letters entered. The dots can also be placed in front of the word or in the middle depending where the unknown letters are. If you wish to search on a part of a Product Number and not the product description, you can use single backslashes instead of the three dots. For example:

- **AB...** will return all words starting with AB like "Abbreviated Beverages" and "Ablution Supplies"
- **...ING** will return all words ending with ING like "Belting Supplies" "Computing Services"
- **VABC** will return products with "ABC" in the product number like "ABC123" and "XYZABC999"

Last word

"All of the progress of civilization is due to the constructive thinking of people. The record of history is brilliant with the deeds of men and women who said, "I can", while it is silent for the most part concerning those who said, "I can't." Positive people believe that it is better to fail in carrying out a project than to not fail because they have not tried." – the Royal Bank of Canada Monthly Letter

The difference between "try" and "triumph" is a little "umph"!

embraceTALK

Executive editor:

Jeanette Teles

Design and layout:

Daniel Gloyne

process is now fully automated," added Mariënta Pfänder, Operations Manager of the Allison division at D&A. "We used to capture all the information for each job manually, onto a spreadsheet and take it to finance for approval, then on completion of the job, the spreadsheet would go back to finance and the job would be invoiced there. Now we can open the job, close the job and invoice immediately. We have taken out an entire step. The system keeps serial numbers so we can track whether the part is under or out of warranty. We then open the job, assign labour, parts and outwork. We can even drill into outwork. The system keeps a full service history of all our products and gives us the lifetime cost of each product.

We have a full 'Bill of Material' (BOM) set up on the system as a Job/Fault Code for each job. A "regear" job has 74 parts. We used to manually book out each part, per line. Now we book out one Job code. This saves us hours every day and eliminates errors. We automate MRP by putting the fault codes into sales.

The reports from the system are very good and give management useful information. We get a WIP report weekly and can see the breakdown by job and by customer. Management is able to track the full WIP amount and verify it with regular stock counts.

We now have less paperwork as well as huge time and cost savings. Our Embrace software solution has paid for itself many times over. We can recommend Embrace as the perfect business solution." - Mariënta Pfänder.

"The system has helped us to reduce dead stock", continued Willie van Wyk. "The stock is lying there but under a different part number. The system recognises this and recommends it. Parts ordering has also been simplified and made more efficient. The system gives us suggested orders based on stock availability, lead times, 12 months usage and quantity discounts. We can, at any time, scroll through the order, see what stage it is at and what the current ETA is. This is a



Celebrating a successful 23 year business partnership:
From left to right: Riaan van Wyk (IT Manager-D&A); Jeanette Teles (Account Executive-ACS); John Lachenicht (Chief Operating Officer-D&A Group of Companies); Steve Wookey (Managing Director- ACS)

volatile business. The system interrogates every item. Even though we have been able to reduce our overall stock holding, we need to ensure that we have stock of every item. We cannot afford to lose a sale.

We need a good system that gives us the right information, so that we make the right decisions and get it right. Embrace is right for us!" says Willie van Wyk.

"The biggest benefit to me", added John Lachenicht, "is that Embrace is fully integrated, fully on-line and real-time. This gives me full visibility throughout the group with access to records, information and reports timeously. The information is accurate and can be viewed in a format that enables us to make key business decisions quickly.

The Embrace software is user-friendly and screens can be customised to suit the requirements across the different divisions, companies and the more than 150 individual users currently working on the system. Because Embrace is a fully integrated end-to-end business solution, we do not have any 'bolt on' or extra third party software. ACS is our one-stop shop, one supplier, with a leading edge solution. We have been using the ACS-Embrace business solution for 23 years. The solution met our decision criteria then, it meets our decision criteria today and I have no doubt that Embrace will continue to meet our decision criteria in the future."



ACS House
370 Rivonia Boulevard
Rivonia
Tel: 011 275-2000
Fax: 011 275-2233
E-mail: talk@embrace.co.za
Website: www.embrace.co.za