

DATOW Software's PRODUCT GUIDE

DATOW Software is proud to offer to you, a Towing Professional, our extensive line of high quality computer products. Over 18 years of use and development have gone into making these programs the best available anywhere at any price. We offer the SU Series version for towing operations using one computer. The PROfessional Edition version is for the larger yards. This product guide contains a section that describes features that are common to all DATOW Software programs. Each program is also described in detail in its own section. These descriptions will help you to understand what these programs can do for you and to answer the most commonly asked questions. (The comprehensive description is more than 60 pages per program, and is available within the operation manuals.) We appreciate your taking the time to read this guide. We know you are busy, but time spent now investigating which computer programs you will trust your business to is time well spent.

Product Line

- . DATOW -- Lot Control (SU Series & PRO Edition)
- . Truck & Driver -- Dispatching, Truck Maint (SU Series & PRO Edition)
- . LS Lien Sale Processing (SU Series & PRO Edition)
- . A/R Accounts Receivable (SU Series & PRO Edition)
- . A/P Accounts Payable (PRO Edition Only)
- . G/L General Ledger (PRO Edition Only)
- . P/R Payroll (PRO Edition Only)

Experienced and Involved

DATOW Software is used every day in hundreds of tow companies. We count among our valued customers some very small companies that have only a few trucks. We also serve some very large companies with dozens of trucks and drivers. Our programs have been in use and constant development since 1980. We are a member and an active participant in the California Tow Truck Association. We always exhibit at the CTTA annual convention and we attend many chapter meetings each month. We advertise in various towing publications. Mostly, we rely on our good reputation and our existing clients to spread the word about how well our products help them to manage their towing business.

Use Before You Choose

We think of our programs as "employees" in your office. They are there to work for you 24 hours per day, every day. We insist that they give a good accounting of themselves and strive to be your "Employee of the Year"! Prove it to yourself. We offer fully operational demonstration versions of our programs. You can really put us to the test before you invest your time and money and trust with us.

Ready To Go

Our programs are delivered to you ready-to-go. In less than one hour, you will be "up and running". Of course, as time goes on you will take advantage of more and more of each program's capabilities. Isn't that the mark of a quality product? The ability to anticipate your needs and grow with you. You will probably never use ALL the features our programs offer. But you will be impressed with just how complete and well designed these programs are. We believe that we have anticipated your needs. If, however, you require some capability that we do not provide, we can modify and customize our programs for you.

Price vs. Cost

You may think that our programs seem expensive compared to some of our competitors' prices. But no one else can offer you a similarly priced program in the same class as ours. In the not-so-very long run, price is not nearly as important as the cost. An inexpensive program may seem like a bargain but the cost of those under-powered, under-supported, difficult to use programs can quickly add up. The price of an experienced professional employee with a proven track record and great references may at first seem high too, but as you have probably discovered for yourself, they are invaluable to your company. And a bargain. We hope that you will consider this when you make your decision.

Volume Discounts

Perhaps you own more than one towing company. Are you a member of a group? Do you know other tow yards that are considering getting a computer? We are able to offer discount pricing for volume purchases. Because our costs are lower when you order for more than one company, we can reduce our price. Call us for details.

Trade ups

Are you already using some other towing software? Congratulations!

You know that computers are a business necessity and you took steps to modernize your business. Maybe now it is time to upgrade. Perhaps the program you are using does not do what you need it to do. Is the program no longer being supported? Maybe your business is growing and your program cannot keep up with you. No problem. We have a competitive upgrade policy. Call us for details.

Cash or Charge

We understand that you may not be in a cash position to purchase computers and software right now. Even though computers are selling for record low prices and our programs are now available in our lower cost SU Series version, you are still facing a major expense. With insurance and all the other expenses you have, perhaps you feel that you cannot afford to computerize. We can work with you in establishing a payment schedule that you can live with. We even have a "Rent-to Own" plan! Again, please call us for details.

DATOW Software FEATURES

This section describes aspects of DATOW Software programs that are common to all of our programs. Special features that apply only to the PROfessional Edition version are detailed at the end of each program's description.

Modular Design

No need to buy more than you need. You can purchase any product individually and you can add any other program at any time. These programs are smart. When they start to run, they look around to see if their companion programs are present. If so, they take advantage of them. For example, Truck & Driver will get customer information from the Accounts Receivable (A/R) program if you have purchased it. If not, it will adjust itself and it will do things a little differently. Or maybe you do not have a storage yard, so you have no need for DATOW lot control at this time. Let your company's needs determine what you purchase, not some salesperson or marketing scheme that bundles it all together.

Single Entry

DATOW Software programs interact with each other so that you only enter information once. For example, when you enter a call into Truck & Driver, that call's information transfers to the DATOW lot control program or to the A/R. Single entry means speedy operation, simplified use and training and less of a possibility for errors. The less typing, the better!

User Interface

All DATOW Software programs have a consistent use and feel. This means that each program, while doing different things, works the same way. So once you know how to work one program, you know how to work all the programs. You are up and running quickly. You reduce training time. Your business becomes more efficient.

On-line Manual Pages

Nobody reads manuals. We know that -- so we built the manuals right into the programs. No matter where you are in any program, you press a key and help is there. The program knows where you are and gives you information that is "tuned" to where you are. Computer people call this "Context Sensitive Help". Our customers call it "GREAT!".

In fact, our Smart Help was so well liked that we thought about ways to make it even better. (We are always doing THAT.) We came up with a feature we call Extended Help. It may not be a very clever name, but it sure is a clever and useful feature. Here's how it works:

When you ask for help, if you see a flashing yellow "+" sign at the end of the help, just ask for help again. Pages of additional information about where you are is shown to you.

You can even customize it, creating a personalized system that is just right for you. For example, "Location" help might contain abbreviations for some local streets or places. Vehicle Code Sections, Charge Information and Customer Lists are other good uses for this feature.

PickList Help is also available for many fields. This feature allows you to pick and choose an entry without having to type the entire entry and without having to look at a piece of paper. We provide you with all the tools you need to create, update and maintain these PickList files.

Extended Comments

In response to user requests for more space to write in additional information about a tow, we used the same approach we developed for Extended Help and came up with Extended Comments. Now you can keep virtually an unlimited amount of notes about a call or stored vehicle or customer. Using the editor that comes with MS-DOS, or your own favorite text editor, you can keep additional notes, directions, billing information or whatever for future reference. And you can recall that information whenever you want by simply bringing up that call or vehicle or customer and asking for Extended Comments the same way you ask for Extended Help. Fast and easy -- like all DATOW Software features.

The Need for Speed

Computers keep getting faster and faster. Even so, there are times when the program can help the computer to go even faster. We provide you with utilities to speed up your data access should it slow down, and helpful installation and operation options to really kick things into high gear. Your customers and your bottom line will notice and appreciate the difference.

Passwords

Not every DATOW user needs the sophisticated Password Access Control that our programs provide. If you do, rest assured that we have provided you with an easy to use yet powerful tool to allow or restrict your employees' activities. Multiple levels of access lets you maintain control of your computer system. And our Intrusion Detection can alert you to potential problems before they become a problem.

Backups

If you could make a photocopy of all your business records and do it for free in just a few minutes, wouldn't you do it? Well, that is what a computer backup does. Of course, we don't really photocopy onto paper; we use diskettes. Your DATOW Software programs come with everything you need to start doing backups from day one.

Nice Touches

For the noisy work environment or for those who are hearing impaired, we have added a nice touch called Visual Beep. This means that whenever the computer detects a problem (For example, you try to tell it there are 31 days in September.) it not only beeps, it also briefly flashes the screen. You can't miss THAT!

All our programs support either dot matrix printers or laser printers.

Other Free Goodies

When you purchase any DATOW Software program, you receive a few added programs at no additional charge. You get a master menu program that makes it easy to pick which program you want to use. You get a powerful financial tool to calculate loans and payments -- its called AMORTIZE. Some of our customers use it for installment sales of cars. Others just use it for personal loans. How will you use it? Let us know.

You also get a fun program called BIORHYTHMS. It is a lot like a horoscope, and it's just for fun. As the saying goes: "All work and no play ...".

We also include a program so that you can test a vehicle's VIN to see if it is a valid VIN.

And we include a program that helps you to calculate taxes. You can give this program an amount that includes the tax, give it the tax rate, and the program will calculate the original taxed amount as well as the tax. This "reverse" calculation, although it may see simple, is a good job for a computer.

Support

Towing is a 24 hours per day, 7 days a week business. So are we. You call and we are there with expert friendly assistance. Whether you pre-pay for support under a maintenance contract or just buy help when you need it, we are committed to serving you whenever you need us.

Upgrades

We at DATOW Software are always looking for ways to improve our programs. We do research. We participate in our State Association (The California Tow Truck Association). We continue our education by attending classes and seminars. We listen to our customers. As a result, we improve our programs. Upgrades are available on a maintenance contract or on an as needed basis. The choice is yours.

Also, we offer upgrades from our SU Series of programs to our PROfessional Edition. You may only need one computer now, but when your business grows, you need to know that your computer software will grow with you. Our upgrade products ensure that your investment in software and training is secure. And your SU Series purchase price is applied 100% towards the purchase of an upgrade to our PROfessional Edition.

References

What business could survive and prosper if not for its good name and reputation? We rely on our customers to refer new business to us. We treat them with respect and pay attention to their needs. We encourage you to ask us for the names of some of our clients, and you can ask them about our products and our support. We are confident you will like what you hear.

Technical "Stuff"

DATOW Software programs require MS-DOS 3.1 or better. One fixed disk with at least 15 Meg free and 512K RAM. Laser printed lien sale forms require an HP III or better type printer. All other programs work with any laser printer. Pre-printed CA lien sale forms require a wide carriage dot matrix printer. Color monitors are required. DATOW Software is available on either size of High Density diskettes.

Export Reports: Output is quoted data, comma delimited fields, CR delimited records. Also known as SDF (Standard Data Format). Microsoft's EXCEL calls this CSV (Comma Separated Values).

Additional technical information is available in the README file that is on the installation diskettes. During installation, you will have the opportunity to print it, or you can print it at any time. The Operation Manuals are also available by printing files supplied on the program diskettes. We include batch files to simplify that task.

Networks: The PROfessional Edition runs well on all networks. We are particularly impressed with Windows (Workgroups V3.11 or 95 or NT)

Windows: All DATOW Software products execute under Windows. In fact, that is an excellent way to become even more productive and efficient. For example, some users run mapping programs while using our dispatching program. For them, finding an address is just an "ALT- TAB" away from anywhere.

Remote Access: Some of our clients take advantage of the multi-user capability of the PROfessional Edition version of our programs to perform remote access of the data. This means that you can have a computer at home or at a remote release site or even at your night/weekend dispatch location and it can have on-line access to the data. A phone line, modems and remote access software are required.

AlphaNumeric Paging: Our Truck & Driver program supports this inexpensive way to get many of the advantages of digital dispatching at a small cost. Again, our "Once is Enough" approach means that you never have to re-type information.

AutoCall: For AAA Contract Stations in Southern California we support the automatic capture of dispatch information from the DRC. This information is then available to become a Truck & Driver call with just one keystroke. Less typing. Less errors. More profits.

Future Developments

We at DATOW Software are constantly improving our products. We keep abreast of industry changes and implement our customers' suggestions. We fine tune our programs. Besides this ongoing work, we anticipate the following changes in the future:

- . Remote dispatch. Many companies are trying to convince us (and you!) that their mobile data terminals are the only way to go, but we just are not convinced yet. We continue to evaluate and will offer it to you when the time is right and this ability is affordable. Until then, our Alpha-Numeric Autopage feature is a very low cost way to perform computer dispatching to the truck.

- . AVL. Automated Vehicle Locators are going to be a part of our mobile solution. We tend to favor the GPS approach. Watch for that technology to explode in the near future as chip sets become available and as Digital Signal Processing overcomes the inherent weakness of the antenna (poor S/N ratio for small inexpensive antennas). This will be a consumer electronics type item, like calculators, VCRs, CDs and the like.

- . Digital Dispatch: There is currently an effort underway to standardize the way clubs and other dispatch services send call information to the tow company. We are involved in this effort and we will support the system that is developed.

- . Deficient Liens: As the laws become stronger in this area, we will be offering an additional service to collect those bills. We currently offer this service to California clients, and hope to expand to many other states in the near future.

DATOW -- Lot Control

OVERVIEW

DATOW -- Lot Control is a computer program to track all vehicles that enter your storage yard. Charge information and other details about the vehicle are instantly available. A release invoice is made when the vehicle is released. Reports help you to manage your business.

In short, it does everything you need it to do to manage your storage lot(s).

Entry, Retrieval and Release

Each vehicle is assigned a sequential LOG number by the program. Once entered into the system, the vehicle can be retrieved by that LOG number or by the PLATE (or ANY part of the plate), VIN (or ANY part of the VIN), YEAR, MAKE, MODEL, DATE-IN (exact or on-or-before), Income Code (e.g. CHP, PPI, local police, etc.) and/or IC# (internal control number -- usually the CALL number). Also, Color, Model, Location, Released To Name, Released To ID, Invoice Number - In short, nearly any way that you can think of looking for a vehicle!

Once retrieved, the vehicle may be released or information about the vehicle may be modified. (These functions are Password controlled as to both access and extent.) Up-to-date Storage charges are automatically applied to CURRENT vehicles and TOTAL CHARGES are automatically calculated as additional charges (mileage, stand-by, etc.) are added.

Release Invoice

Upon release, CHANGE is calculated if the operator enters an amount received greater than the TOTAL. A negative number is calculated and applied if the amount received is less than the TOTAL (as in the case of a Lien Sale or a surrendered Title). When a vehicle is released, information about the person it was released to and the employee who released it is maintained. A release invoice is printed and a sequential invoice number is assigned (or you can allow for the manual entry of an invoice number). The release invoice is printed on a half or a full page of paper. If a full page is used, you may print any text you choose on the lower portion of the page. Some users print a coupon for a discount off future services. Up to 3 release invoices may be printed at time of release. A duplicate invoice may be printed if authorized by the password/access control assigned to the operator.

Reports

Extensive reports on CURRENT, RELEASED, INCOMING (both current and released) and ARCHIVED vehicles are available in both printed and on- screen formats. Legal requirements for DOJ (Dept. of Justice) and LOG BOOKS are supported. DATOW also features the ability to export information to other programs. In this way, you can create charts, graphs and customized reports using programs like Excel or Lotus123.

(See "Technical stuff" for more details.)

Accounting

Released vehicles may be posted to the Accounts Receivable (A/R) program so that accurate totals of cash received at the release window is tracked. Although a rare occurrence, vehicles may also be released to Charge Accounts. An invoice is generated in the A/R so that all the customer's transaction(s) will appear on the A/R's monthly statement. A printed report is automatically generated to provide an audit trail.

Additional Features

DATOW supports the automatic inclusion of a third fee (in addition to TITLE SEARCH and LIEN SALE) called COST OF SALE if the date of release is on or after the lien sale clear date. The time of release is automatically entered into the vehicle record (with operator override capability, of course) and printed on the release invoice. Vehicles on police HOLD may not be released until the operator specifically changes the Yes to a No in the HOLD field. The Yes flashes yellow if the vehicle is on HOLD to alert the operator that a police release is required.

Released vehicles may also be accessed for viewing or modification.

An easy-to-use on-line archive capability ensures fast access to any vehicle EVER entered into the system.

User assigned charges may be automatically applied to each vehicle for Lien Sale Costs. Legal Owner Notifications are also automatically printed with a special charge applied as per California Vehicle Code. Other states often have similar needs, so this capability is useful for our users nationwide. You can easily modify this letter to suite your own needs, or we can help you.

City or County fees can be automatically added to the vehicle's charges. Also, special reports show you exactly how much you must remit, with the ability to exclude from the calculation the fees that were NOT collected because the vehicle was not redeemed.

PROfessional Edition

DATOW PROfessional Edition is a fully multi-user program, which allows more than one person to operate it at the same time. In cases where two or more vehicles are entered simultaneously, each vehicle will receive a unique and sequential LOG NUMBER. In cases where two or more users are attempting to change information about the same vehicle, the first user to store the changed information is successful. The other user is advised of the event, refused permission to make the change and automatically presented with another opportunity to effect the change while being shown the new, updated information that was just entered by the other user. Record locks are never performed in the human time domain, but only are applied by the program in the computer's time domain -- usually a few hundredths of a second! This eliminates many of the problems found in programs developed using standard database managers such as Dbase. A Dbase user may be locked out for extended periods of time while another user is accessing the data or where the "death" of a user results in orphaned locks or deadly embraces. These conditions, while rare, do occur and will cause other towing programs we have examined to lose data, crash, hang or in some other way require the intervention of a human manager to clear the condition or reset the computers.

TRUCK & DRIVER

OVERVIEW

Truck & Driver (TD) is a computer program to track all tows and other services you provide. It also supports Truck Maintenance and Driver Performance tracking and reporting. It is linked to the Accounts Receivable (A/R) and to DATOW, so that information entered into TD can be electronically sent to the other programs and TD may access the other programs' data.

Dispatching

TD's Dispatch Screen displays and color codes all calls that are currently active, up to 150. (The system will support up to 30,000 calls before purging is required.) A call may be waiting to be dispatched (displayed as a RED line of information), waiting for 97 (YELLOW) or waiting for 98 (GREEN). An active call may be accessed by using arrow keys to point at it or by entering the CALL NUMBER. When an active call is accessed, its current status determines where the cursor is placed within the call's detail screen. Times are automatically stamped into the call as it progresses.

Each call's detail screen contains information about the vehicle to be towed or serviced, locations of the tow (FROM and TO), customer information, call information (TIMES RECEIVED, DISPATCHED, 97, 98), Trouble codes, Dispatcher, Mileage (your truck's odometer), call back Name and number, invoice (driver's ticket) number, financial information (amount of the TOW, MILEAGE, DOLLIES, STAND-BY, etc.), and more. When a new call is entered, the A/R is checked to ensure that this customer has not exceeded an optional credit limit or been placed on credit hold. The customer's name, telephone number, address, rate structure and comments are also transferred automatically to the call, color coded and displayed.

A Dispatch Ticket may be printed at any time for any call. This is useful for those times when a driver is in the office. The dispatcher does not need to orally give the call to the driver. You can just hand it to him! Some customers use this Dispatch Ticket to replace the traditional handwritten call slip or call log.

Real Time or Not

While we recommend that you use Truck & Driver as a "real-time" dispatching aid, you may find that you prefer to use it in an "after-the-fact" way. That is, you may choose to just enter the information into the computer AFTER the driver turns in the tow ticket. No problem. Truck & Driver will work either way.

Retrieval

After a call is completed, it may be accessed in various ways, including CALL NUMBER, PLATE or Purchase Order (with our exclusive "SLIDING SEARCH" capability), DATE, CUSTOMER, INVOICE NUMBER, YEAR, MAKE, and other ways.

Sometimes you need to retrieve information about a stored vehicle while you are dispatching. Just press one key (we call this a Hot Key) and you can quickly answer a telephone inquiry about a stored vehicle or even release it. No need to stop what you are doing or leave someone on hold.

Additional Features

A call may be CANCELED (22'd) at any time. A CANCELED call may be re-activated.

Timed calls are also supported. Suppose you get a call for service for next Tuesday. You can enter the call now. Next Tuesday, at the time you specify, that call will start to flash to remind you to dispatch it.

The current status for each Truck and each Driver is available at anytime via a hot-key and a pull-down list. This status is automatically updated or can be manually updated.

When a driver is assigned to the call, his/her name and 2 telephone numbers (home and page) are displayed. The program remembers which truck each driver used last, and defaults to that truck for each new call assigned to each driver. For a truck, the type and equipment is displayed.

Multiple Calls may be created at one time using our Pre-Allocate feature. This is useful for situations where an answering service handles calls after hours or on weekends, and you enter the calls into the computer the next day. A variation of this feature allows you to specify an existing call as a template and duplicate or "clone" that call. This is useful for club operators or for multiple call situations.

Reports

Extensive reports allow access to call information based on Truck (one or all), Driver (one or all), Income Code (or range), Customer ID (or range), DATE (or range), Status (Posted, Unposted, Both, Canceled) or IN YARD (yes, no, both). Income, Expenses, Repairs and Scheduled Maintenance reports are also available. Most reports can be in either Summary or Detail mode and may be sent to either the screen or a printer. Screen reports can be displayed a line at a time, a page at a time or non-stop. Some reports allow for just totals, if that is all you require. Our ReportView feature allows you to see the detail of an on-screen report item even while you are in the report.

Driver Info

Information maintained for each driver includes DL#, SS#, DOB, Hire Date, two telephone numbers and other items pertaining to that driver. Number of Calls handled, Income and Expenses for the current period, the prior period and year-to-date are automatically maintained. Each driver can be assigned two invoice number ranges or "books" that are used to make sure the invoice number assigned to a call is the correct one. You can disable this feature or the dispatcher can override the warning in the event that a driver uses another driver's invoice.

Truck Info

Information maintained for each truck includes Plate, VIN, Value, type of equipment and other information useful to your insurance agent. If you enter the truck's odometer reading in a call (an option) its mileage figure is instantly updated in that truck's record. Number of Calls handled, Income and Expenses for the current period, the prior period and year-to-date are automatically maintained.

Expenses

Expenses, both recurring (gas, oil) and non-recurring (transmission, engine, etc.) are easily entered into the system. While not mandatory, this information is useful in determining the cost to operate your company. Scheduled items, such as tune-ups, brakes, etc. are also a part of this system, and can be scheduled by time and/or mileage. A scheduled maintenance report helps you to plan for these events. Many insurance companies offer discounts if a written schedule of maintenance is available.

Accounting

Completed calls may be posted to the Accounts Receivable (A/R) program so that accurate totals of cash received by your drivers in the field and charges to your customers are tracked. This posting may be performed either in batch mode at the end of the day, week or month or a completed call may be "Hot Posted" immediately from TD to A/R. This hot-posted call/invoice may also be edited, printed and even marked as paid (with full A/R transaction tracking).

When either method of posting is performed, an invoice is generated in the A/R so that all the customer's transactions will appear on the A/R's monthly statement. If an invoice number is entered into the call, that number (usually a driver's tow ticket number) will be used by the A/R. Otherwise the A/R will assign an invoice number to that transaction. A printed report is automatically generated to provide an audit trail. Calls that indicate that the vehicle was stored in your yard are not sent to the A/R. Instead, an option is given to the operator to send these calls to the lot control program -- DATOW. They will go to the A/R from DATOW when the vehicle is released.

Single Entry

This ability to send Calls to DATOW (lot control) is very useful for tow operations that store vehicles. Information only needs to be entered once, usually during dispatch. When the call completes, the dispatcher can "Hot Post" the call into the yard. Information is instantly available for access should the police or owner call or come to redeem the vehicle. Our "Extended Hot Post" feature allows the operator to easily add information into the lot control program's data that the dispatch program does not -- items such as VINs, Keys, etc. DATOW will then tell TD which LOG # was assigned to that stored vehicle as another cross reference.

The hot-post to A/R feature is a handy tool for those tow operators that wish to immediately generate a computer invoice for a service. Some of our clients have found that by sending that invoice, or even an interim statement, to the customer immediately after the service is performed (either via fax or by sending it out with a driver) results in a quick payment.

Other Features:

Truck & Driver also supports exporting of data to other programs. Some customers like to use Microsoft's WORD (which is included at no charge in many computers) to create 3 dimensional charts and graphs that show at a glimpse the business you do.

Truck & Driver has the ability to warn the dispatcher that the ETA for a call is about to expire. You simply assign that call to a Zone, and if the call has not been 97'd before the ETA for that zone is reached, that call will flash on the screen.

Truck & Driver supports Alpha-Numeric pages. With just one keystroke, selected call information is sent to the paging company's computer. The driver now has all the info needed to service the call, without the dispatcher having to read it over the radio and without the driver needing to write it down. Fast, efficient and easy. We even support up to 10 different paging "patterns". That is, you can send different information for a commercial call than you send for a Public Agency call. One keystroke is all it takes.

PROfessional Edition

Truck & Driver PROfessional Edition is a multi-user program. The explanations about DATOW's multi-user capabilities apply to TD as well. There is one notable exception. Twice per minute, TD checks to see if any new information has been entered by any other user on the system. This means that more than one person can be entering calls for service or updating call status at the same time, and within thirty seconds that information will appear on all users' screens. When things get busy, this is a very handy capability.

We have also found that in many of our installations the owner or manager will have a computer on his/her desk that is "tuned" to the dispatch screen. If too many RED calls are building up and GREEN calls are not getting cleared, it is time to find out what the problem is.

LIEN SALES

OVERVIEW

Lien Sales is a computer program to process vehicles through the Lien Sale Process. It is a step-by-step procedure that allows vehicles to be in various stages of processing. It uses a laser printer to generate high quality forms. Although it is designed to comply with California liens and Nevada liens, it can be easily adapted to handle most other states as well.

VIN and Value

This step prints a report of all vehicles that have been in your possession for the number of days you specify. This report is actually a worksheet that helps you to verify VINs and license plates and assign a value to that vehicle. Assigning a value to the vehicle prevents it from being printed on future VIN & VALUE reports.

Automated DMV Printout Information

Vehicles that have been valued are then eligible for printout requests and Registered Owner information entry. The LS program will generate a report and an optional data file which aids in the requesting of RO, LO and Interested Party information from the DMV. For California, we can electronically process your requests overnight and provide you with a special program to automatically insert the RO, etc. information into your computer. A DMV accepted printout is also created. When the information is inserted, it checks to make sure that the VIN you have matches the VIN DMV has, that the year, make and other information matches and it warns you when it does not. Also, it can be told to automatically insert information you did not know, such as year or plate or VIN.

This program is so smart, that it checks for duplicates and only puts in a name and address if it isn't already there. It will even try to find a ZIP for a Transferee (California DMV doesn't keep a ZIP for them.) New 17 digit VINS are checked for validity.

We are a California DMV approved Information Vendor, so we handle your requests for information ourselves. We do not just refer you to someone else. This enables us to support you better. If you already have a California Commercial Requester Account, we can begin servicing you immediately. If you do not, we can assist you in obtaining this required license. For other states, we allow manual entry of RO, etc. information.

Forms

We currently support California forms for Under \$300, under \$2500 and over \$2500. Other States' forms can be added. Call and ask for details.

Forms can be printed one at a time, in a batch mode or even for released vehicles. This is useful for those times when the buyer loses their paperwork. We can even re-generate an entire lien sale form package for a vehicle released years ago. However, if all you need is the information about the sale, that is also available with one keystroke.

Ever need just a blank form? Laser customers can create a blank form at any time. Laser users can also tell the program to print all forms for one vehicle at one time. Or you can specify which form to print for all vehicles. The choice is yours.

Support Paperwork

We also create the additional paperwork that goes into a lien sale. We print a For Sale List, which makes it easier to inform the public which vehicles you have coming up for sale. A special option for the For Sale List allows it to include Under \$300 vehicles that you can only sell to a dismantler. This report can be sent to dismantlers who normally purchase from you and it will act as a sales tool.

We print a Postal Certificate for the US Postal Service to stamp. You then make a copy of it and attach it to the vehicle packet. No more filling out lots of little forms or using the Firm Book of Mailing. A variation on that report lists all parties no matter how notified and is useful for in-house record keeping.

Mailing labels are supported. For our laser customers -- no need to handle labels. We print the address directly onto a plain #10 business envelope!

You Maintain Control

Our LS program will automatically calculate the soonest legal lien clear date. You can adjust it by simply selecting a different mailing date or a different number of days to wait until the sale date. Storage calculations automatically adjust. The system also inserts other required information such as mailing date and executed dates. It is smart enough to detect which boxes to check based on the type of authority under which the vehicle was obtained and whether or not the RO is known.

Charges Automatically Applied

When a step is performed in the LS program, it automatically applies a charge to the vehicle. You set the charges. Many cities or police agencies prefer that the lien charges be applied in pieces as the work is performed. (In fact, California law now requires that you charge no more than \$35.00 until you have the lien papers in hand.) So when you request title, a charge is applied. Another charge goes against the vehicle when the paperwork is processed. A third charge can be applied when the lien clear date is reached. This is a fair approach and one that has been well received.

Additional Features

In addition to a Registered Owner and a Legal Owner, LS also supports up to four Interested Parties per vehicle.

When you print the lien sale forms, you can enter a USPS Certified Mail Number. This number is then assigned to each vehicle in that batch and prints on the Certification of Lien as a "DMV Bulk Mailing #".

Each RO, LO and Interested Party has a place to record a unique Certified Mailing Number, in the event you choose to send Certified notices to a party.

If you release several vehicles at one time, perhaps due to a lien sale, you can Batch Release them to a common Release To: party. This is a speed feature.

The For Sale List can be printed in LOG # order or by MAKE, with a double space option. This is handy for use during a sale to record bids and the buyer of the vehicle.

Right for You

If you thought that lien sales were too complicated, too risky or just too time consuming, THINK AGAIN. Even if you have never before performed a lien sale, you can. We will train you and guide you through each step. It's as easy as 1 - 2 - 3.

Part of our job is to keep informed of changes to the lien sale laws and procedures. So when changes happen, and they always do, we are ready for it. New or modified laser forms and program changes can be sent to you right over the telephone line.

Agent Version Available

This program is so powerful, it is used by Lien Sale AGENTS to perform lien sales for other companies. If this is an interest of yours, contact us for details.

PROfessional Edition

The main difference between the SU Series and the PROfessional Edition for the Lien Sales program is that the PROfessional Edition is a multi-user version. For example, one user can be running lien sale forms while another is printing a VIN & Value report. The dispatcher may continue to enter calls and vehicles may be entered or released while lien sales are being processed.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

OVERVIEW

The Accounts Receivable (A/R) program is a computer program to track invoices that are owed to you. Invoices are automatically generated by Truck & Driver and/or DATOW during POSTING. Invoices may also be manually entered from within the A/R program. Customer Statements are printed, and extensive reports as well as mailing labels and even remittance slips and payment coupons are part of this program.

Invoices

Most of the invoices that the A/R will track and process are created automatically by Truck & Driver and by DATOW. Each of those two programs knows how to send billing information to the A/R, so you don't have to re-enter call and release billings. However, you can easily enter a new invoice directly into the A/R, or edit an existing invoice. Invoices are printed on plain paper on either a dot matrix or laser printer. Custom invoices can be ordered as well as pre-printed invoices.

Payments

Payments received by you from your customers are entered into this program. Entering a payment is fast and easy. You simply choose the customer whose account you are paying, put in the check number and the amount of the check. The program ensures that this check has not been entered before, so you cannot accidentally double-post a check. Then the program shows you all the unpaid invoices for that customer, and you use your arrow keys to pick and choose which invoices you are going to pay. The list of invoices is shown to you in either date or invoice number order, which makes it easy to choose. It even shows you how many invoices are open and the balance on the account. Our ReportView feature allows you to see the entire detail of an invoice as you are paying it.

A single payment can easily be applied to thousands of different invoices. You can even partially pay an invoice. Our AutoPay feature can really speed things up as it pays all open items, oldest first, up to the funds available. As you pay an invoice, our special "Funds Available" display shows you how much money you have to apply. Any funds left over can be saved as an Unapplied Credit. An audit trail is printed during each payment session for your records.

Reports

Many reports are available. Aged Trial Balance, Transactions, Customers, Labels, and even a Collections report is just a few keystrokes away. Many customers just give these reports to their accountant. We developed this program with the guidance of accountants and CPAs, so you can rest assured that all the reports you will need are available.

Statements

Customer Statements are a special kind of report. While most reports are intended for your use, the Statement is sent to your customer. The Statement shows your customer their activity with you, each open item, their balance and, optionally, where their payments were applied. We produce a high quality Statement that you will be proud to send to your customers.

You have numerous options when you print the Statement, including "Good/Bad" messages that conditionally print based on that customer's status. Many of our clients use this feature to send special holiday or event messages, such as "Have a Happy and Safe 4th of July!", or "Your account is PAST DUE." The program will print the appropriate message. Also, aging information can be printed or suppressed, aging windows can be adjusted, and interim or individual statements can be printed at any time.

Additional Features

Proper accounting requires that errors be offset. The best way to do that is by using Credit and Debit memos. We support that approach, and make it easy for you to correct errors without overstating or understating your income.

Suppose you sell a vehicle to someone and they are going to pay you over some period of time. We support automatic billing, which creates an invoice each month without you having to do it. Also, you can print a payment coupon book to make it easy for your customer to remember and to pay your bill. A variation of the payment coupon book is the remittance slip that you can include with your mailing.

Customers and products can be added "on-the-fly" when and as you need them.

The program remembers on which customer you are working. For example, as you switch from invoice generation to payments to query, the program guesses that the customer you want is the one you just worked on. This makes it easy and fast. Which is why you want to computerize in the first place!

You can Query a customer at any time. This means, you can look at a customer's account and see, in one place, the last time you billed that customer, how much it was for, the last payment posted, the last 13 months of activity, past invoices and which payments were applied and, of course, all open items. We even make it easy to print this information on paper -- one key and it is done. Our ReportView feature allows you to see the detail of any transaction, even from years ago.

Each service or product you sell is tracked and totals are maintained. You can even let the program subtract from inventory as you sell an item. If you are running low on batteries or No Parking signs or any other item you stock and sell, you can get a report to tell you what you need to re-order.

Extra programs to re-sort, re-number, or even to clear out old activity are included. This type of program is called a Utility and A/R comes with everything you need.

You can go to A/R by choosing a menu item in either DATOW or Truck & Driver. (From the dispatching screen, A/R is just one keystroke away!) When you exit from A/R, it remembers where you were when you chose it, and returns you to that program. Of course, password access control applies here too.

A mini G/L (General Ledger) is part of A/R, so you can see your activity at a glimpse. It is not a full G/L since it does not do balance sheets and P & Ls. It does give you the information that your CPA will require. We do offer a full G/L, but very few towing operations require it. With our full G/L, summary journal entries that are created by the A/R can be posted to the G/L at the end of each accounting period.

Although rarely required in a towing company, we have the ability to assign each customer and/or invoice to a salesperson, so that proper credit or commissions can be calculated.

Extended Comments allow you an unlimited area to write any additional information about each customer. For example, you could use this area to keep track of collection efforts, special billing or delivery instructions, or any other information related to that customer.

Discounts can be established for each customer on a per product basis. You can specify that a customer will automatically receive a discount, either a fixed amount or a percentage, for certain products or services only and not for others. Both DATOW Lot Control and Truck & Driver use this feature during posting, so you can better control all aspects of your billing.

Mailing labels and even envelopes (on a laser printer) are available. And you can even print "reverse" labels or envelopes, so that you can include a return envelope with your statement.

A/R also supports Export of reports to other programs.

PROfessional Edition

The PROfessional Edition of A/R supports multiple companies. It is useful for operations that have a body shop, a repair facility or some other business in addition to the towing operation.

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