

# Tools For Success

Volume II Issue 2  
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## Release 11i – It's Here!

### Visit the Oracle Applications Release 11i InfoCenter

Oracle has created an 11i information center on their metalink site to assist in installing or transition to Applications 11i. This link is current collection of release notes, 11i product alerts and technical articles. It should contain the most updated information on 11i

#### Documentation

Documentation for Release 11i is available from Oracle on their <http://docs.oracle.com> web page. Click on the ERP tab and scroll through the links to find the information you need!

#### Contact us for your 11i needs

Applications Consulting Specialists, Inc., has been actively working with a number of clients on producing project scopes, planning phases and capital assets requests for 11i upgrades and implementations. We've been conducting presentations, and we are working on one of the first 11i implementations currently underway.

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Update*

*Batch Billing*



## GOING GLOBAL: A MULTI-ORG SOLUTION FOR FIXED ASSETS

By: Peter Merrifield, Practice Director

### **Introduction**

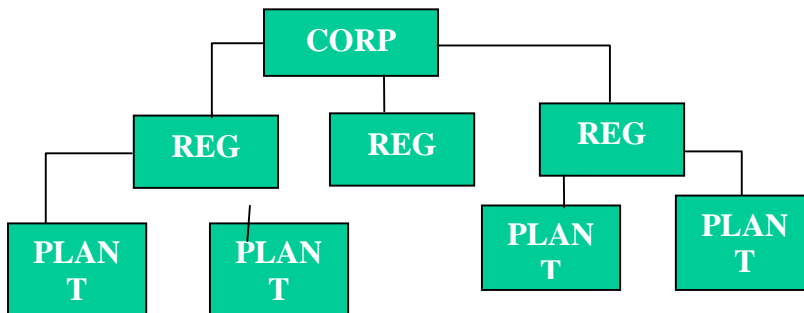
Oracle Fixed Assets has supported multiple Sets of Books and multiple Asset Books long before true multi-org functionality existed in any of the other sub-ledgers. Now that AP and AR allow for decentralization of responsibilities, many organizations are looking for similar functionality within the Assets Application. While the assets application is designed to support multiple Corporate and Tax Books, the access to asset control data is often greater than many customers would prefer.

A geographically decentralized organization often has multiple departments responsible for different groups of assets. Sometimes the areas of responsibility are split at more than one level of segregation. Often while the Finance department is responsible for Corporate Book assets, the Tax department maintains full control of the Tax Books. Further with responsibility divided among corporate and regional locations, the need for enhanced security increases. The capability and requirements necessary to build additional flexibility and security enabling decentralized organizations more freedom within their business structure is explained.

## Security Review

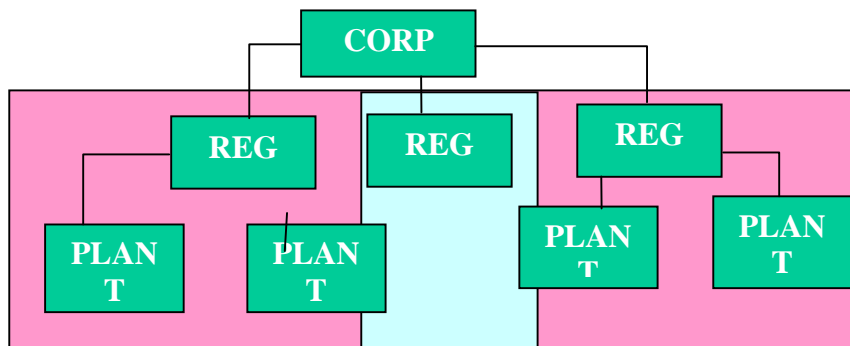
The following is a sample scenario for a Global Corporation requiring complex segregation

1. A Corporate Headquarters with Regional and Legal entity Assets
2. Corporate Assets are owned and maintained by the Corporate Finance Department
3. Corporate Tax Books are maintained by the Corporate Tax Department
4. Legal Entities throughout the world maintain assets at a plant level with Regional Oversight



Requirements defined include the following Security/Segregation needs

1. Global Access to Asset Information at the Corporate level
2. Security Access to asset data by Geographic Region
3. Security Access to asset data by 'Asset Grouping' for tax books
4. Security Access to asset data by individual book for Tax and Plant needs



### Result

Because the security sought is not supported, atypical enhancements will be necessary. A goal of minimal customization is a high priority; however, with an extremely decentralized environment, some modifications are realized as being acceptable. All but one piece of the solution presented is supported through standard supported application functionality. Semi-modular sql\*plus programming code is written to incorporate security into shared user forms which allow data updates. The program code is flexible enough to allow for growth and also designed to be minor and straightforward enough to be repeated during an upgrade or patch application.

In the end, the solution satisfies the needs of the global environment. The modifications are reasonable. Decentralization is feasible, without significant concern about data security.

## **Standard FA and Multi-Org Review**

### ***FA Standard Functionality***

Oracle Fixed Assets allows for multiple Corporate, Tax and Reporting Books to be defined. Some of these Asset Books will post to a General Ledger Set of Books while others may be strictly for reporting and tax purposes. Access to the data within the different books is not restricted through standard Oracle functionality.

Fixed Asset Data is separated by Asset Book but is not secure by Asset Book. All users with access to a given form can access any of the books and therefore all the data within the book. Security can be achieved through the use of Menus and Responsibilities that restrict access to certain Forms and Functions. However, if a user has access to a Form or Function, any Asset Book and therefore the Asset Data can be modified. The lack of restricted access to the various Asset Books makes it difficult to decentralize the Fixed Asset Function.

### ***Standard Multi-Org Functionality***

Org Setup - In Release 10.6 and 10.7 the architecture of the financial subledger application was modified to support multiple Operating entities within a single database instance. Because there are differences in this architecture, we will focus on the more recent 10.7 and beyond design. In essence, tables have been segregated between transactional and non-transactional definitions. Those tables that may be directly tied to a transaction have been modified to include an Organization ID. Invoice, Payment, Site level information tables all have this additional attribute. Views have been created which display data to different responsibilities based on the 'Operating Unit' definition.

Segregation of Data – In subledgers like AR and AP the Transactional data and some of the setup is segregated by Operating unit. The MO:Operating Unit Profile Option must be assigned to a Responsibility by the System Administrator. The Responsibility will give the user access to only one Operating unit regardless of how many Operating units are defined. If a user needs access to more than one Operating Unit multiple Responsibilities must be assigned to the user. All transactional data and some setup within the Operating Unit are secure by Responsibility. Fixed Asset data and much of the setup is segregated by Asset Book. However, all the Asset Books and its corresponding data are accessible by the users if the user has access to the form.

Postings – Subledgers like AR and AP require each Operating Unit to post transactions to its associated General Ledger Set of Books independently of the other Operating Units. Similarly, Fixed Assets must run the Journal Entries Program for each Asset Book that requires transactions to be transferred to the General Ledger.

Shared Data - The subledgers like AR and AP have very limited shared data between Operating Units. Header level Vendor and Customer information is shared and several pieces of the set up information are also shared. Fixed Assets also shares some setup information between the books. The Assets Application also shares data between a Corporate Book and its related tax and reporting books. Assets and related asset information from the Corporate Book can be copied each period to related Tax and Reporting books. However, data cannot be shared between non-related books.

## **Bringing the Requirements Together**

The security definitions listed above do not currently exist through Release 11 of Oracle Fixed Assets. A consolidated solution has been defined utilizing supported Descriptive Flexfields, Site Specific Profiles, Value Sets, Menus, Responsibilities and some minor form modifications. Because these customizations are still more than what a standard implementation, a custom application is also recommended.

Now that the functionality differences are clear between the Multi-Org Apps and the Standard Assets environment, the knowledge exists to merge the requirements into a technical design. Our goal is to create an environment functionally similar enough to Multi-Org to allow for the Assets departments to make use of similar organizational and business structures. Complex customizations could be made to include identical Multi-Org profile options and fields to the system; however, that could be unnecessary effort that might not create the ideal result either.

The analysis first focuses on the desire for segregation. Reviewing the question of where security is needed and how to break it down best is straightforward. The core focal point for Asset information is the Corporate Book. Legal entity reporting is often done at this level. Maintenance is usually done at this level. Depreciation runs (Posting) is also done at this level. Additionally, like ORG\_ID in the Multi-Org applications, BOOK\_TYPE\_CODE is part of the primary key in many of the FA tables. This similarity should make the goal reasonable to achieve.

### ***FA Customized Functionality***

The customization requires several functional setup steps and some programming to modify the asset forms. Access to the System Administrator and Application Developer Responsibilities will be required. A forms programmer will also be required to make the necessary modifications to the Asset forms.

The Book Controls Descriptive Flexfield must be defined to reflect the desired security controls. This descriptive flexfield will be populated on every book that is defined in the asset system. Multiple segments can be used to achieve different levels of security. Some planning should take place to decide on the proper number of segments for the flexfield and the valid values that will be used for each segment.

A custom Profile Option will need to be defined using the Application Developer Responsibility. This Profile should be defined on the custom Fixed Asset Application. The Profile will be the link that ties the custom forms to the Flexfields added to the book definition.

Each of the custom forms must be registered using the Application Developer Responsibility. The forms must be registered on the custom Fixed Asset Application.

Separate Responsibilities will need to be defined and attached to the users that will need access to the Fixed Asset Subledger.

The custom Profile Option must be populated by the System Administrator on each of the Fixed Asset Responsibilities that are requiring security. The value for the Profile corresponds to the values that are defined for the value set used in the Book Controls Descriptive Flexfield. The value that is populated on the Profile will determine the access that the user will have in the Fixed Asset Subledger.

### *Special Note*

There should always be at least one Global user defined for the application super user. This responsibility should continue to use the Standard Oracle provided Application Forms. The Global user should maintain the Fixed Asset Setup, coordinate Depreciation Runs and Journal Entry transfers, and resolve any Fixed Asset issues. Beyond other functions, this responsibility will provide an outlet to determine if any errors being experienced are the result of customization or an Oracle supplied bug.

Patches and Upgrades need to be reviewed carefully. The original customizations will not be wiped out by a patch or upgrade because the custom forms were renamed and a custom application was used. However, if the form versions or functionality changes during a patch or upgrade, the customization will need to be reviewed and reproduced in the new version of the forms.

### *Conclusions*

More and more Corporations are attempting to support multiple entities and multiple tiers of their organizational structure through an enterprise suite. The flexibility of the Oracle Applications design allows for enhancing the security to support these needs with minor custom development. The design presented here allows for Plants and Tax Departments to have tight restrictions to specific book elements; regional leads access to plant data under their authority; and global super users the flexibility to manage, review

### **About the Author**

Peter Merrifield is a Practice Manager with Applications Consulting Specialists, in St. Petersburg Florida. He has been working with the Oracle Applications for over seven years as a consultant, developer, and project manager and has participated in over a dozen applications implementations. He can be contacted via email at [pmerrifield@acsi-usa.com](mailto:pmerrifield@acsi-usa.com) or phone 727-822-3000.

## **Industry Happenings**

**Oracle OpenWorld** Over 400 technical, education, and hands-on sessions at this 5-day conference, October 1-5, 2000 in San Francisco. The exhibit hall will hold over 300 of Oracle's valued strategic partners, and a technology campground, where you can get your technical questions answered by Oracle developers and product managers. There is a fee to attend the conference sessions, however, an exhibit hall pass is free. Full information on this conference can be found on Oracle's website: <http://www.oracle.com/openworld/index.html?content.html>

**Oracle Application World** Oracle's first Application World is scheduled for February 20 – 23, 2001 in New Orleans, LA. According to Oracle, this conference is expected to welcome over 12,000 guests, offer 250 breakout sessions, fill an exhibit hall with over 250 exhibitors having already signed up, have over 150 products demonstrations, and have over 200 of Oracle's most strategic partners demonstrating the latest in e-business innovations. Applications Consulting Specialists will be found in booth #205, come see us!

**SCOUG Training Days** July- Dallas, August-Tulsa, <http://www.scoug.org>

**OAUG Fall 2000 Conference** Honolulu, Hawaii, October 22 – 26, <http://www.oaug.org>

## DBA SUPPORT

ACS offers remote and on-site upgrade technical support by experienced database administrators. Many of our DBA's have extensive industry background through Oracle database 8x along with functional application knowledge. Our DBA services include:

- ◆ Database Administration through maintenance contracts
- ◆ Assistance in establishing Oracle databases
- ◆ Database monitoring and tuning
- ◆ Database security and integrity
- ◆ Database development
- ◆ Oracle exports, backups & restores
- ◆ Installation and documentation of the production Oracle software
- ◆ Troubleshooting of data integrity problems or server problems
- ◆ Stage and roll to production Oracle patches and version upgrades
- ◆ Stage and roll to production application database changes
- ◆ Monitoring of Alert Logs and correct any Oracle event
- ◆ Administration of Oracle security and auditing
- ◆ Performance tuning
- ◆ Assistance to on-site DBA's with scheduled PM tasks, table spaces, indexes, queries, the programming of the stored procedures, problems with the application, performance tuning for application and server, Oracle configuration

- ◆ Assist on-site developers with initial database design, tables & database structures to support the applications, creating optimal queries for the application.
- ◆ Create the indexes for the database, understanding all the data needs of an application, QA the programming of the Stored Procedures, support problems with the application, monitor Space usage growth patterns, monitor Oracle trace files, monitor Oracle NET80 listener files, rebuild indexes, and UNIX scripting.

### **Welcome Fritz Eichelberger**

ACS welcomes Fritz Eichelberger to our sales team as a National Account Manager. Fritz is excited and "looks forward to working within the Oracle arena to bring the best possible solutions to clients, while building long-lasting successful relationships."

Fritz has over 10 years of experience advising Clients on developing and meeting strategic goals in the areas of Distribution, Telecommunications and Internet. He is married to a lovely wife named Maria, has an adorable Shih Tzu named Mika!

*Our Mission is to provide high quality applications consulting solutions that drive business with highly skilled and experienced people, committed to exceed expectations by a total focus on customers and ethics, and dedication to employees.*

## **Batch Billing using the Receivables Interface and AutoInvoice**

By: Charlie Merrigan, Senior Consultant

The Oracle Order Entry to Oracle Accounts Receivables interface moves shipping information from Order Entry to Receivables for invoicing. Order Entry passes individual shipped order lines into the interface and AutoInvoice creates the order lines as invoices. A single sales order can result in a number of invoices in Accounts Receivables.

However, many customers would like to receive a single bill per purchase order. This allows the Payables process for the customer to be more efficient and, consequently, will speed payment of bills. A single invoice also allows for an easier cash application process for your own Accounts Receivable department. In addition, billing becomes simplified with a single generation of all invoices for the customer.

ACS has worked with one of its valued clients to develop a solution for this issue – Batch Billing. Batch Billing allows the user to determine the billing cycle for individual customers. Customers can be billed on a time or an order completion basis. This method of billing allows the customer to process less invoices, speeds payment, and simplifies the cash application process. As a result, customers are more satisfied with the level of service.

The Batch Billing customization is contained mostly within the Receivables Interface process. Site level information is marked as batch billing. The customer's site level shipped order lines are held in the interface. Billing for non-batch billing customers continues to flow normally. Once the users decide to batch bill the customer classification, they run a number of Concurrent process, including AutoInvoice, to create the batch billing invoices within the Accounts Receivable system. Custom Reports and Forms have been developed to display and print the Batch Billing invoice information.

**For additional information, please give us a call!**

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