

How To: Inventory

Overview - Inventory

Aspect's inventory features can be broken into two parts: calculating your actual inventory cost and calculating your legitimate cost. Calculating your actual cost involves setting up your inventory items and entering purchases and inventory counts. Calculating your legitimate cost requires editing each menu item and entering the ingredients used to produce it.

Calculating your actual cost is the first step and it must be done before you can move on to calculating your legitimate cost.

To calculate your actual cost, you will first set up your inventory groups, vendors and items. Then you will enter your first inventory count. This will be your beginning inventory. Next, you will enter each invoice you receive after your first count. When you enter your second inventory count, this will be your ending inventory and you will have a complete period. This ending inventory will become your beginning inventory for the next period and you'll continue entering invoices and counts in the same manner.

Inventory Groups

Inventory items that you enter in Aspect will be organized into groups such as meat, dairy, produce, dry goods, etc. The first step in setting up your inventory is to define these groups. To do this, open the Navigator by clicking on the Lightning bolt. Select the Inventory Setup tab and then Inventory Groups. Aspect will create a number of default groups for you. The four top-level groups are Food, Bar, Operating and Group 4. Each group you enter will be a sub of one of these groups. For example, meat, dairy and produce will each be a sub of food. Liquor, beer and wine will each be a sub of Bar.

To add a group, click on the green '+'. Enter a name for the group and make it a sub of Food, Bar or Operating. Do not worry about entering a G/L code for the group.

Sales links are used to calculate the cost percentage of each group in the Cost Of Sales report. For example, food cost will be displayed as a percentage of food sales, liquor as a percentage of liquor sales, and so on. Each of your food groups will have one sales link for representing net food sales. If you are using an HSI system, the sales link will be named 'Actual Food'. On Aloha, it's called 'Net Food'. On other POS systems, it might be named 'Food Sales' or just 'Food'. Enter a sales link for the group and press Ok.

Enter sales links for your liquor, beer and wine groups in a similar fashion using 'Actual Liquor', 'Actual Beer' and 'Actual Wine' (or Net Liquor, Net Beer and Net Wine).

Make sure to edit each of the three main groups (Food, Bar and Operating) and enter sales links for these groups as well. The Bar group will have three sales links (liquor, beer and wine) since you will want to calculate bar cost as a percentage of total bar sales. The Operating group should have one sales link named 'Net Sales'.

If you would like more detail in your inventory reports, you can create additional groups to break down your inventory even further. For example, you might enter a group named Beer and make it a sub of Bar. Then, you might enter two more groups named 'Domestic Beer' and 'Import Beer' and make them

both a sub of 'Beer'. The Cost Of Sales report would then show totals for domestic and imported beer as well as a total beer cost.

Vendors

To enter vendors, select Inventory Setup in the Navigator and then select Vendors. Click on the green '+' to add a new vendor. The only information required is a vendor name. You may enter phone numbers and addresses if you desire but they are not necessary.

Inventory Items

After inventory groups and vendors have been entered, select Inventory Items from the Navigator to begin entering your inventory items.

To add an item, click on the green '+'. Enter a name for the item and assign it to an inventory group. Do not worry about the code. Enter the way that you will count the item. For example, '1 Case' or '1 Bottle'. You must also list at least one vendor that you purchase the item from. Do not worry about the vendor code. Enter a purchase size for the vendor and the price of the purchase size. Finally, press Ok.

When you press Ok to save the item, you may be asked to enter a conversion if the count size and the purchase size are different. If you count an item by the Bottle and purchase it by the Case, the program will ask how many bottles are in a case. You would enter 1 next to case and 12 (or 24 or whatever) next to Bottle. If you do not know the answer, you may press Cancel. However, Aspect will continue to ask for the missing conversion each time the inventory item is used in a calculation.

If you make a mistake entering the conversion, right-click on the item and select Conversions from the pop-up menu. Any size with a number next to it in this window must be equivalent to any other size with a number next to it. For example, a 1 next to Case and a 12 next to Bottle would mean that 1 Case is equivalent to 12 Bottles.

Continue adding new inventory items to build your inventory list.

Entering Inventory Counts

To enter an inventory count, select Inventory Maintenance in the Navigator and then Inventory Count. Pay close attention to the date that appears here. Inventory is always considered to be taken at the close of business. If you count Sunday night, you would enter Sunday's date. If you count Monday morning, you would still enter Sunday's date.

To print a worksheet to record your count, click on the binoculars and select the Inventory Worksheet display. The column labeled 'Record Count' will be underlined when you print the report, giving you a place to record your count. If you want to print a worksheet for a particular group of items (bar, food, etc.), click on the binoculars and then on the Custom button. In the middle of the screen, select the group that you wish to display and press Ok.

When you are ready to enter your count, click on the binoculars and change the display to 'Inventory Count'. Double-click on an item to enter the count for that item. When you press Ok, you will automatically be prompted to enter a count for the next item in the list.

You can enter multiple counts for an item by separating them with a comma or a space. For example '1 2 3' and '1,2,3' would both be interpreted as 6. You can also use the +, -, x and / symbols. For example, "2x24+16" would be interpreted as 64.

If you do not enter a count for an item, Aspect will use the perpetual inventory (what it thinks you should have) as the ending inventory. If an item is out of stock, enter a zero rather than skipping it. At any time, you can right-click in the inventory count window and select Initialize Counts. This will cause the program to enter a zero for all uncounted items. This ensures that a perpetual inventory is not mistakenly used as an ending inventory.

Your inventory count is not saved until you close the count window. When you close the count window, you will be prompted to save your changes. You will also see a warning if you have not entered a count for all items in the inventory.

Entering Counts By Area

When you enter an inventory count, you also have the option to record counts by area (walk-in, Bar, etc.) rather than just a total count. To do this, right-click anywhere in the count window and select Edit Counts By Area from the pop-up menu.

To add an area, click the New button and enter a name for the area. Next, add some items to the area. Locate an item in the drop-down list and press the button named 'Add item to area'. You can add entire groups to an area in a similar fashion.

When you've added all of the items that belong in the area, use the 'Move Up' and 'Move Down' buttons to organize the items in a particular order.

To print a count worksheet for the area, press the Print button. The worksheet will be underlined so you have a place to write down the count.

To enter counts, double-click on one of the items that you added to the area and enter the count. You will automatically be prompted to enter a count for the next item when you press Ok.

Counts that you enter here will be visible and can be edited in the main count window when you close the area.

Entering Invoices

Invoices are entered into Aspect to calculate the usage and update the price of each inventory item.

To enter invoices, select Inventory Maintenance from the Navigator and then click on Invoices. Press the green '+' to add a new invoice. Select the correct vendor and enter the invoice date, number and

amount. The due date, discount dates and payment information are not required. Press the Insert button to add each item received on the invoice. When adding an item, enter the total quantity purchased and the total amount paid for the item. When you press Ok, you will be prompted to enter the next item on the invoice. Press Cancel to stop entering new items.

The most common mistake made when recording invoices is entering the wrong size or entering the unit price instead of the total amount paid. To avoid these mistakes, you can have Aspect warn you when the price of an item changes by a certain percent. To do this, select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Inventory Settings. Enter a value after the line 'Notify when price changes by'. A value between 15 and 25 percent is usually sufficient to catch mistakes and large price changes while ignoring smaller changes.

If you need to record a credit invoice, enter it the same as a normal invoice but enter negative values for the quantity purchased and total price paid.

Importing Electronic Invoices From Your Vendors

Aspect imports electronic invoices supplied by Alliant, Sysco, PYA, Milton, Gordon's Foodservice, Nicholas Foodservice, Maines and Abbott. If you order from one of these vendors, you may receive an email containing the invoice information or your vendor may have a website on which you can view the invoice. (If you do not receive an invoice by email or if you cannot view your invoices on a website, you'll need to contact your vendor ask them to either email you an invoice or tell you how to view it online.)

To import one of these invoices, you need to be viewing it either as an email or on a website. Click on the Edit menu of the program you are using to view the invoice and select 'Select All'. Click on the Edit menu again and select 'Copy'. When you've copied the invoice, open the invoice list in Aspect by selecting Edit Invoices from the Inventory menu. Right-click anywhere on the window and select 'Paste Electronic Invoice'.

After a few moments, Aspect should recognize the invoice and open an import window. In this window, you'll select the Aspect inventory item that corresponds to each line item on the invoice. As you select each item, Aspect will record the vendor item codes and you will not have to match each item again the next time.

If you are importing from Maines, you'll need to create a receiving worksheet with the following columns - Item Number, Product Description, Unit Measure, Pack, Price, Quantity Ordered. It is important that the columns be added in this order. Click on the Display button, copy this receiving worksheet and paste it into Aspect as described above.

Cost Of Sales Report

When you have entered a beginning inventory, an ending inventory and all of the invoices in between, you will have your first Cost Of Sales report.

To open the report, select Inventory Maintenance in the Navigator and click on Cost Of Sales. Aspect looks for inventory counts that have been entered and prompts you to select a valid starting and ending

date. The beginning date will be the day after an inventory count. The ending date will be the day of an inventory count.

There are two default displays in the Cost Of Sales report. Click on the binoculars to select a display. The 'Cost Of Sales' display shows the actual cost for each inventory group as a dollar amount and as a percent of sales. The 'Actual Vs. Legitimate' display compares actual cost for each group against the legitimate cost. If you have not entered all of your recipe ingredients, the legitimate cost will be meaningless.

To learn more about a particular group, right-click on the line for that group and select 'Inspect' from the pop-up menu. A new window will open displaying the actual and legitimate cost for each item in the group. Click on the binoculars to select a display. The 'Inspect Cost' display shows dollar costs for each item. The 'Inspect Usage' display shows usages for each item.

You can inspect again by right-clicking on an item in the report and selecting 'Inspect'. A new window will open showing you detailed activity for that item over the period of the report. The 'Quantity Purchased' column shows any purchases recorded for the item. The 'Legit Usage' column shows the amount that should have been used each day. If you have not entered recipe ingredients, this column will be useless. The 'Perpetual On Hand' column displays the amount that should be on hand at the end of each day. It is calculated by taking the previous day's perpetual, adding any purchases and subtracting the legitimate usage. Whenever you enter an actual count, the perpetual is reset and begins calculating again from your actual count.

Inventory Extensions

The Inventory Extensions report should be reviewed at the end of each inventory period to locate any mistakes in the inventory. To open it, select Inventory Maintenance from the Navigator and click on Inventory Extensions.

Click on the binoculars to select a display. The display named 'Inventory Extensions' shows the usage and cost for each item in the inventory. The display named 'Actual Vs. Legitimate' compares actual and legitimate usages for each item. The legitimate cost will not be accurate if you have not entered ingredients for all of your menu items.

Take some time to familiarize yourself with the other displays as well. These can help you spot problems in your inventory and call your attention to price changes.

There are three types of errors you might find in the report - errors in price or purchases, errors in the beginning or ending inventory and errors in the legitimate usage. If the price or purchases for an item look wrong, right-click on the item to inspect it. Right-click again and choose Inspect Purchases to review the invoices that were entered. Double-click on an invoice to review and correct it. If the beginning or ending inventory count are incorrect, close the report and go back and correct your inventory count by selecting Edit Inventory Count from the Inventory menu. If the legitimate usage is incorrect, you will need to review the accuracy of the recipe ingredients you entered.

Exporting Invoices to an Accounting Package

For information on exporting invoices to an accounting package, check the topic named 'How To: Exporting Invoices'.

How To: Menu Costing

Overview - Menu Costing

If you have entered a few inventory counts and produced Cost Of Sales reports that look reasonable, you are ready to begin entering recipe ingredients into Aspect. When you enter recipe ingredients, Aspect will begin calculating legitimate usages for each item in your inventory. This will give you the information you need to determine how close your actual inventory cost is to your ideal cost.

Entering recipe ingredients is the biggest task that you will face and it is not necessary that you do it all at one time. For example you might start just by entering your beer recipes. Then you could begin comparing actual vs. legitimate for your beer items right away. Then you can add in the rest of your bar items and tackle the food last.

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Fluid ounces vs. weighted ounces

Simply put, there's a difference. When entering sizes in Aspect, make sure to use Ounce for weighted ounces and Fluid Oz. for fluid ounces.

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Entering recipe ingredients

To begin entering recipe ingredients, select Menu Costing from the Navigator and then select Recipes. You will see a list of all the menu items that have been imported from your POS system.

Double-click on any menu item. The menu item name, group, sale price and menu number all come from the POS system. DO NOT change them.

When you list the ingredients used to prepare the menu item, they will produce some quantity, usually one serving. This is the 'Gross Yield'. Practically every menu item will have a 'Gross Yield' and 'Serving Size' of 1 serving. The only exceptions will be batch recipes.

To begin adding ingredients, click on the Insert button. Select an inventory item and enter the quantity that should be used in the recipe. The 'Description' field is not required. Some quantities can be confusing and the description is used to further explain why you entered '.16 each' for example. You might enter 'one slice' in the description.

You are free to use any sizes you like when adding ingredients. If the program does not know how to convert from one size to another it will pop up a window asking you for the conversion.

Using batch recipes

Any menu item in Aspect can be used as an ingredient (batch recipe) in another menu item. To allow a menu item to be used as a batch recipe, right-click on the menu item and select 'Recipe Options' from the pop-up menu. Turn on the checkbox labeled 'Allow this recipe to be used as a batch recipe' and

press Ok. When you go to insert an ingredient in another menu item, you will see the batch recipe included in the list of inventory items with the word '(batch)' after it.

You will probably want to enter new menu items for batch recipes that you make in-house such as dressings, sauces, plate setups, etc. To add a new menu item, press the green '+'. Enter a name for the menu item and assign it to a group. Do not enter a menu number or price for the menu item since it is not coming from the POS system. You will need to enter a gross yield and serving size. The gross yield is the quantity that the ingredients you enter will make, for example, 5 gallons. The serving size is not critical. It is the size that you typically serve the item by, for example, 1 Ounce. The cost of each ingredient will be displayed in terms of the serving size.

If you will be adding your own batch recipes, it is a good idea to create a batch group so you can keep them all together. To do this, close the recipe window and the Navigator. Select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Recipe Groups. Press the green '+' to add a new group and name it 'Batch'. Then, when you return to your recipes, any new batch recipes you enter can be assigned to this group.

Entering substitutions

If you have menu items on your POS system that can be used to swap one side item for another, there is a way to record that in Aspect. Suppose that you have a menu item named 'Sub BP' which indicates that a baked potato was substituted for french fries. The ingredients for this menu item would be -1 Serving of french fries and 1 Serving of a baked potato. Notice that you can enter a negative amount for the ingredient quantity.

Fixing mistakes

When you enter recipe ingredients, you will most likely make some mistakes. These will be apparent when you begin comparing actual and legitimate usages for your inventory items.

Often it is helpful to be able to display all of the menu items containing a particular ingredient. To do this, click on the binoculars and press Custom. To the right of the word 'Contains', select the inventory item you are interested in and press Ok. The filtered display will now show only those menu items containing that inventory item. Make sure to set the display back to 'All' when you have finished (or somebody else will come along and wonder where all the menu items went).

FAQ: Inventory and Menu Costing

The price of one of my inventory items is wrong. How do I fix it?

Errors in price are almost always due to an incorrect conversion for an item or to an invoice that has been entered incorrectly. To correct a price, follow these steps:

Select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu. Locate the item in question and double-click on it. Verify that the purchase size and count size are correct and press Ok. Do not worry about the price that appears here. Prices are determined by invoices you enter and changing the price here will have absolutely no effect.

Right-click on the item and select Conversions from the pop-up menu. Verify that the conversions for the item are correct. Any size with a number next to it must be equivalent to any other size with a number next to it. For example, you might have 1 next to case and 12 next to bottle. This means that '1 case' is the same as '12 bottles'. Correct any mistakes and press Ok.

Right-click on the item again and select Inspect from the pop-up menu. Set the date to inspect the last two or three months. When the inspect window opens, right-click anywhere on the window and select Inspect Purchases from the pop-up menu.

You will see a list of all the invoices that have been entered for this item. The column on the far right displays the unit price recorded on each invoice. If one of these is incorrect, double-click on that line and correct the invoice. Be aware that if you edit an old invoice, you will likely change your beginning inventory value for the current period.

If you do not see any invoices in the window, then you need to back out and inspect again from an earlier date.

Do not make this a habit, but as a last resort, you may force the price of an item by entering a dummy invoice. For example, you could add an invoice on which you purchase 10 units for \$100 and then -10 units for -\$100. The net result will be zero since you are backing out the inventory as well as putting it in. This will give the program an invoice to look at to determine the price. You will need to enter a quantity that is large enough to account for the inventory currently on hand. For example, if you have 6 units on hand, your invoice must add and subtract at least six units. You could add and subtract 1000 units. It really doesn't matter as long as you cover the amount that you have on hand. The price will take effect on whatever date you enter for the invoice.

Finally, to make sure that every thing is up to date, select Update Perpetual from the Inventory menu and update your inventory from the date of your beginning count.

Why are some items missing from my Inventory Extensions Report?

By default, Aspect does not display inventory items that have no activity. That is, items with the same beginning and ending inventory and no purchases will not be displayed in the Inventory Extensions Report. The idea is to eliminate dead inventory from the report.

If you want to display these items, open the report, click on the binoculars and press the Custom button. Turn off the checkbox labeled Active Items Only and press Okay.

I entered my inventory count on the wrong day. How do I fix it?

You will need to rename a file. If you are unsure about how to do this, talk with your system administrator.

Inventory counts are stored in a file with the name mm-dd-yy.cnt. For example, a count entered for

11/30/02 would be stored in 11-30-02.cnt. These files are located in the store directory, usually 'store1'. You first need to select Edit Inventory Count from the Inventory menu and determine which day the count was mistakenly recorded on. Let's say you entered the count under 12-01-02 and you meant for it to be under 11-30-02. You can rename the file 12-01-02.cnt to 11-30-02.cnt to correct the problem. If a file named 11-30-02.cnt already exists, you will need to delete it before you can rename the file.

After renaming the file, select Update Perpetual from the Inventory menu and update your inventory from the date of the count.

Why do I get an error whenever I try to open a particular inventory count?

Earlier versions of Aspect created a backup file as an inventory count was entered. The idea was that if the power went out or the computer locked up, this backup file could be restored when the program was loaded again. In reality, these backups were unnecessary and actually caused problems in some cases.

If you are unable to open a particular inventory count, there may be a backup file that is causing the problem. You will need to delete this file. If you do not know how to delete a file, speak with your system administrator.

The file is located in the Aspect folder and it begins with the letters CF. There may also be a file in the store directory beginning with CF. Delete both of these files and the inventory count should open properly. If you have missing counts, they will need to be entered again.

Why doesn't the beginning inventory value for this week match the ending value for last week? Or, Why has my beginning inventory changed?

The value of your inventory on hand on a given day is calculated by multiplying the quantity of each item on hand by the price of the item. When the value of all of the items are added together, you have the total value of your inventory on hand. Once Aspect calculates the prices and value of your inventory on a particular day, it will never do it again for that day unless something changes that would cause the value of the inventory to change. There are two things that would cause the value to change - modifying an inventory count on or prior to that day and modifying an invoice on or prior to that day.

For example, if you enter a count for March 31 and look at a cost of sales report, the ending inventory value you see there for March 31 will never change unless you edit an invoice or a count on or prior to that day. Even if you change the conversions for an item, the value for that day will not be affected unless you modify a count or invoice on or prior to that day.

There is one exception to this - if you select Update Perpetual from the Inventory menu, you can manually force Aspect to recalculate a day. This could cause the inventory value for that day to change if you have modified any conversions since the day was originally calculated. The reason is that Aspect will recalculate the day using the current conversions, not the old ones.

In short, your inventory value will not change for a particular day unless you modify an invoice or a count on or prior to that day or unless you select Update Perpetual and tell Aspect to recalculate that day.

If you want to ensure that an inventory value is not mistakenly altered at a later time use passwords to protect Edit Inventory Count and Edit Invoices. Passwords can be set up that will allow users to modify current data but not data that is more than some number of days old. This will eliminate the possibility of changing a count or an invoice. You should also password protect Update Perpetual to ensure that it is used only by someone who understands its purpose and effects.

When should I use the Update Perpetual menu option?

First, it is never necessary for you to use this option. Aspect keeps everything up-to-date automatically as

invoices and counts are entered and as new information is imported from your POS system each day.

The purpose of this option is to let you make changes in recipe ingredients and conversions retroactive. Normally, when you change a conversion or recipe ingredient, these changes take place from that day forward. Nothing in the past will be affected. However, there may be times when you correct a mistake and you wish to recalculate a prior period after the correction.

Be aware that if you use this option you will be recalculating the inventory value for each day starting with the date you specify. If you specify a date on or earlier than your last inventory count, you will likely change the beginning inventory value for the current period.

How do I record a waste sheet or spill sheet in Aspect?

Variances in your actual and legitimate cost are due to many factors including waste, theft, over or under portioning, failure to ring things up, ringing things up incorrectly and failure to verify deliveries. Waste is only one of these. If you can explain some or all of a variance by pointing to a waste sheet, that is beneficial. But, Aspect does not use waste as a reason to increase the legitimate cost.

If you want to record waste, you can add new menu items into Aspect like 'Waste - Draft Beer'. Select Edit Sales Mix from the Inventory menu after importing from your POS system each day and enter the number of each menu item wasted. These items will be added into your legitimate cost like any other menu item.

The legitimate usage (or perpetual) of one of my inventory items is wrong. How do I fix it?

To view the legitimate usage and perpetual for an item, select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu. Locate the item in question, right-click on it and select Inspect from the pop-up menu. Set the date to inspect the last month or two.

The legitimate usage for the item is displayed for each day in the column named 'Legit Usage'. The perpetual appears in the next column. The legitimate usage is the amount you should have used based on your sales. It depends on the recipe ingredients you have entered. The perpetual is the amount of inventory you should have on hand at the end of each day. It is calculated simply by taking the previous day's perpetual, adding anything that was purchased and subtracting anything that was sold. Each time you enter an actual count, you override the perpetual and the next day's perpetual is based on your actual count.

If the legitimate usage appears incorrect, then a recipe might be entered incorrectly. If the legitimate usage appears too low, then you may have failed to include the item in a recipe.

To see which recipes account for the legitimate usage, right-click on a particular day and select Inspect Legitimate. The resulting window displays each of the menu items that contributed to the legitimate usage. If something appears incorrect, then you need to select Edit Recipes from the Inventory menu and correct the problem. If a menu item is missing, then you need to add the inventory item to the ingredients for that menu item.

If the perpetual appears incorrect, you need to look at the counts that have been entered, the purchases and the legitimate usage. The perpetual depends on all of these things. You may have entered a count incorrectly or an invoice may have been left out. There might also be an error in a recipe causing the legitimate usage to be too high or low.

Why does the word 'incomplete' appear next to the date when I open a Cost Of Sales Report or Inventory Extensions Report?

If you skip an item when entering an inventory count, Aspect will use the perpetual inventory (what it calculates you should have) as the ending inventory for that item. An Incomplete message indicates that a

count was not entered for one or more items on that day. If you want to record a zero ending inventory, you need to enter a zero rather than skipping the item.

You may have items like operating supplies that you do not count. Skipping these would cause the Incomplete message to appear. To address this, right-click in the inventory count window and select Initialize Counts from the pop-up menu. This will cause Aspect to enter a zero count for all items that have not been counted. It will not overwrite the counts you did enter.

Another way to approach this is to select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Inventory Settings. Turn on the checkbox labeled 'Initialize Inventory Counts'. This will cause the program to automatically fill in zeroes for all items when you open an inventory count for the first time. However, you would not want to use this feature if you do daily counts on some inventory items because it would keep resetting the perpetual to zero on those items that you do not count every day.

How do I record a credit invoice?

A credit invoice is entered exactly like a normal invoice except that you use negative amounts for BOTH the quantity and the dollar amount.

How do I record deposits on draft beer kegs?

To record deposits on draft beer kegs, create an inventory item named Draft Beer Keg and assign it to the Beer group. When you pay money for a deposit, enter it just as you would a normal inventory purchase. For example, enter 3 kegs for 30 dollars. When kegs are picked up, enter them as a credit invoice. For example -3 kegs for -30 dollars. It is important that you enter both the quantity and dollar amounts as a negative number when a keg is returned.

If the price of your keg item is negative when you look at the item in the report, it means that you have entered an invoice incorrectly. To check this, select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory Menu. Right-click on the keg beer item and select Inspect. Select a starting and ending date and press Okay. When the Inspect window opens, right-click and select Inspect Purchases. You will see all of the invoices that have been entered containing the keg beer item. The far-right column displays the count-by price. This price should be the amount of your keg deposit (for example, \$10 or \$15) and it should always be positive. If one of the prices is incorrect, double-click on that invoice and correct the entry.

When you count inventory, count your kegs just as you would any other inventory item.

Can I record non-inventory invoices in Aspect?

Aspect is not really designed for this, but yes, people do it all the time. You will need to add a dummy inventory item into Aspect to record the purchase.

Suppose you want to record your electrical bill in Aspect. You would first need to create an inventory group like 'Utilities' and make it a sub of the operating group. Next, add an inventory item named 'Utilities - Electrical' and assign it to the 'Utility' group. You can then record your electrical bill just like any other invoice. Because the purchases are going into the Operating group, they will not affect your food or bar cost.

I've been entering invoices in Aspect but when I select Edit Invoices, they're all gone. Where did they go?

Click on the binoculars and Custom. The starting and ending dates to be displayed appear in the middle right of the screen. These should normally be blank. If there are dates here, you will only see the invoices that fall in that date range.

Why do I get an error whenever I select Edit Invoices from the Inventory menu?

Aspect will record up to 16,000 invoices. If you been using Aspect for a number of years, you may have reached that point. Select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Pack Records and Pack Invoices. This routine is used to purge invoices prior to some starting date. If you purge invoices, you will NOT be able to get them back.

How do I export invoices to an accounting package?

Refer to the topic named 'How to: Exporting invoices'.

Can Aspect export invoices to...?

Refer to the topic named 'How to: Exporting invoices' for a list of the accounting packages that Aspect currently exports to.

If you want to export to a package not in this list, first find out if that package can accept an import file. If so, then ask the people who support that package for a sample file and some documentation describing the file. When you have this, email the sample file and documentation to Aspect@aspect-software.net.

How do I include a batch recipe in my inventory count?

Select Edit Recipes from the Inventory menu and right-click on the batch recipe. Select Recipe Options from the pop-up menu and turn on the checkbox labeled 'Include On Count Worksheet'. Enter a count size for the recipe and the inventory group that is should appear under on the worksheet.

How do I record a substitution in a recipe like french fries instead of a baked potato?

Suppose you have a button on your POS system named 'Sub FF' and that this button indicates that french fries were served instead of a baked potato. You would edit this menu item in Aspect and enter 1 Serving of french fries and -1 serving of baked potato. Note that you can use a negative value when adding an ingredient to a recipe.

If I change the ingredients in a recipe, when does this take effect?

Changes in a recipe will take effect for future days beginning with the next import you do from the POS system.

If you make corrections to a recipe and want those changes to be retroactive, select Update Perpetual from the Inventory menu. Set the beginning date as desired and make sure to turn on the checkbox labeled 'Calculate legitimate usages'. Be aware that recalculating your inventory like this may change the value of your beginning inventory. It is best to update from the day after your beginning inventory count. For example, if you count on Sunday, select a Monday as the starting date.

Why is there always a variance between my actual and legitimate usage for batch recipes that I've included on my count worksheet?

The actual usage for a prepped item is meaningless. The item is included in your inventory count only to record the ending inventory value. Because there are no purchases for the item, the usage will often be negative. But, what really counts is the value of the inventory on hand. In order to obtain a usage, you would have to make an entry in Aspect every time you made a prepped item. There are other packages available that let you do this, but most people feel that it's not worth the work.

You will also find that there is no legitimate usage for batch recipes. This is because legitimate usages are always calculated for inventory items, not prepped items. For example, if you prep 25 pounds of

potatoes, and count these as 'Cooked Potatoes' rather than 'Potatoes', Aspect would show you as being short 25 pounds of potatoes when in fact there is a wash between the two items.

The actual and legitimate cost you see in the Cost of Sales report will be calculated with complete accuracy despite this. You just have to remember that there may be 'washes' between some of your inventory items and your prepped items. To minimize this, try to keep your prepped inventory as low as possible on the days that you count inventory.

How do I change the conversions for an item (or batch recipe)?

Select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu, right-click on the item and select Conversions from the pop-up menu. To change the conversions for a batch recipe, select Edit Recipes from the Inventory menu, right-click on the batch recipe and select Conversions.

Any size with a number next to it in the conversion window must be equivalent to any other size with a number next to it. For example, a 1 next to Case and a 12 next to Bottle would mean that 1 Case is equivalent to 12 Bottles.

An easy way to view the conversions for all items is to click on the binoculars and select the display named Conversions.

How do I record a 'loss factor' for prepared items like roast beef?

Suppose you find that the weight of an item decreases by 15% when it is cooked. Add a batch recipe to Aspect named something like 'Cooked Roast Beef'. Enter roast beef as the ingredient and an ingredient quantity of 10 pounds. In the Gross Yield for the recipe, enter 8.5 pounds. This means that it takes 10 pounds of the uncooked item to produce 8.5 pounds of the cooked item. Use this batch recipe as the ingredient in your other menu items instead of the original inventory item.

Why do I get a message about batch recipes that loop back on themselves?

Batch recipes are menu items that can be used as ingredients in other menu items. If you receive this message, it means that a menu item is trying to use itself as an ingredient. The message will give you a clue as to which menu item is causing the problem. It can get a little complicated if you have batch recipes that include batch recipes and so on. Regardless, you need to correct the menu item.

Can I import inventory items into Aspect?

Yes. You will need to create a text file using Excel or notepad. There are seven columns that should be included in the file. The order of the columns is not important, but the spelling of the column titles is. Spell them exactly as they appear below.

'Name' - the name of the inventory item.

'Group' - the group the item belongs to.

'Count Size' - the way that the item is counted, for example, '1 each'. Do not use abbreviations when listing the sizes. For example, use 'pound', not 'lb'. Also, any sizes you use must exist in Aspect before you import the file. Select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Inventory Sizes to see a list of sizes in Aspect or to add new ones.

'Vendor 1 Name' - the name of one vendor that supplies the item. Don't worry if you purchase the item from more than one vendor. Aspect will learn that as you record invoices.

'Vendor 1 Size' - the size that the item is purchased by. The same rules apply here as for the count size.

'Vendor 1 Factor' - the number of 'count sizes' in a 'purchase size'. For example, bottled beer would have

a factor of 24 indicating that there are 24 bottles in a case.

'Vendor 1 Price' - the price of the purchase size.

When you have created the list, make sure to save it as a CSV file if you created it in Excel. Open the file in Notepad and add the line 'Aspect import file' as the very first line. Your file should look something like:

Aspect Import File

Group,Name,Count Size,Vendor 1 Name,Vendor 1 Size,Vendor 1 Factor,Vendor 1 Price

Beer,Budweiser,1 Bottle,Beer Vendor,1 Case,24,12.00

Produce,Lettuce Head,1 Each,Produce Vendor,1 Case,12,15.00

To import the file, select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu in Aspect. (You will need to create at least one inventory group and one vendor in Aspect before you can open the inventory items). Right-click anywhere in the inventory item window and select Import from the pop-up menu.

Can I import recipe ingredients into Aspect?

No. You can import inventory items into Aspect, but there is currently no way to import recipe ingredients.

Why are my inventory items assigned to a 'Default' group?

Inventory items cannot be assigned directly to a group that contains sub groups. For example, the main Food group contains many sub groups like meat, dairy, produce, etc. Items cannot be assigned directly to the Food group. Instead, they must be assigned to one of the sub groups.

Each time you open an inventory report, Aspect checks to ensure that all items are assigned to a valid group. If one is not, it is assigned to the default group and you need to edit the item to assign it to the appropriate group.

A common cause of this is adding sub groups to groups that already contain items. For example, if you have a beer group with items assigned to it and you decide to add domestic beer as a sub group, suddenly all of the items assigned to beer can no longer be assigned to that group. Instead, they would need to be assigned to domestic beer.

If you see items assigned to a default group, select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu and double-click on each item as necessary to correct the group assignments.

What are 'Count Groups'?

Count groups are used to group several items from different inventory groups together. The most common use is to include some high cost items like steaks, seafood, beers, etc. into a count group named 'Daily Count'. Then the various reports (Inventory Count, Inventory Extensions, etc.) can be filtered using the binoculars to show just those items. This is useful if you want to count certain items each day without wading through all of the items.

To create count groups, select Inventory Setup from the Inventory menu and then select Count Groups. Enter names for up to 10 groups. You will probably only need one or two.

To assign items to a count group, select Edit Inventory Items from the Inventory menu. Right-click on an item and select Count Groups from the pop-up menu. Check each group that the item should belong to.

For an example of how you can filter reports to a particular count group, click on the binoculars and press Custom. Select a count group from the drop-down list in the middle labeled 'Count Group'. If

you've assigned any items to this group, they will appear in the list when you press Ok. Aspect remembers that last display selected in each window, so be sure to set the count group back to 'all groups' before you close the window. Otherwise, somebody else may come along and wonder where all of the inventory items went.

Can I use Aspect at the store but enter my invoices (or inventory counts) from my office (or home)?

No. Information in Aspect is updated daily with information from your POS system. You cannot enter data into Aspect at two different locations at the same time because there would be no way to combine the information contained in the two copies of Aspect.

If you really want to enter invoices and counts from the office, consider using PcAnywhere to dial into the store and enter the information into the store's computer that way.

Can I use Aspect at the store but enter my recipes from my office (or home)?

If you want to enter your recipes into Aspect during the initial setup from someplace else, read the topic named 'If you have more than one store...'. It's possible, but you will need to take responsibility for copying some files to and from the store. If you do this, make sure that the store does not add any new inventory items or menu items while you are working on the files. When you are done, copy the necessary files back to the store.

If you need to make additional changes in the future, you will need to again copy the current files from the store, do your work, and then copy them back.