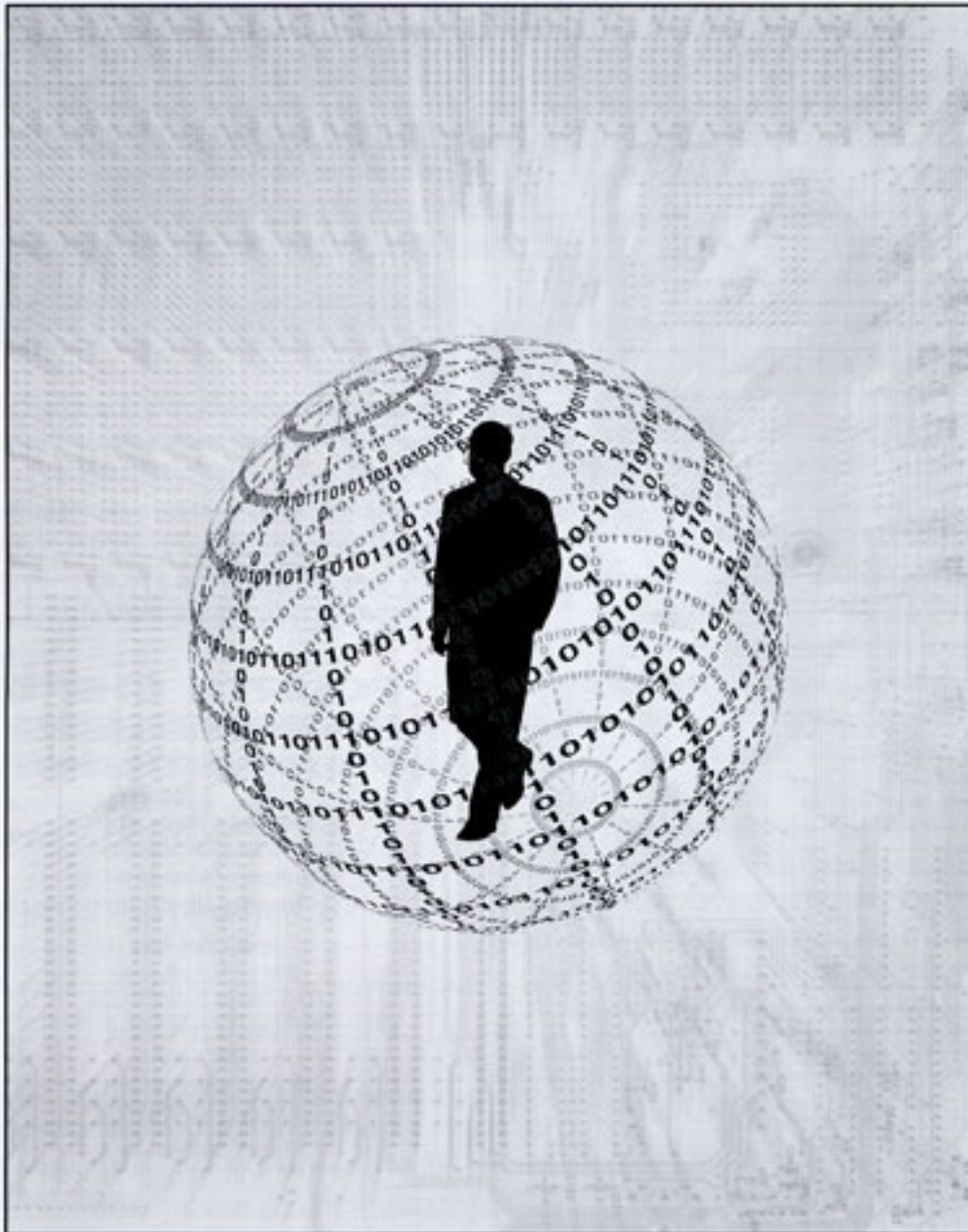


**FOURTH SHIFT**

# Customer Update

Volume 3 1999



Fourth Shift Internet and EDI based e-commerce solutions are making it more efficient for manufacturers to do business with their trading partners.

## What is e-commerce?

Many people equate e-commerce with Internet shopping services such as amazon.com. However, e-commerce is much, much more than shopping services. In fact, consumer-to-business transactions account for only 12 percent of e-commerce business. 88 percent of e-commerce transactions – such as those completed by manufacturers that are managing the supply chain – are business-to-business.

See inside article  
*"Managing the Supply Chain with E-commerce"*



This continues to be an exciting time for Fourth Shift. We are the system of choice for a growing number of manufacturers who want a complete NT-based ERP solution and Internet access to data. Publications such as *Start Magazine*, *Managing Automation*, and *Manufacturing Systems* are recognizing us for our technological and business accomplishments. We had a very strong and profitable first half of 1999 and are geared up for the next millennium.

In the next millennium, we believe customers will want a strong business enterprise backbone, tightly integrated functionality, and a single-vendor, single-support source. Customers will also want Microsoft technology and connectivity as well as Internet and e-commerce capabilities. Fourth Shift will meet these demands.

We recently purchased Computer Aided Business Solutions, Inc, developer of VisiBar and VisiWatch. This strategic acquisition extends Fourth Shift's product reach - including extensive consumer to business, business to business, Internet, and e-commerce capabilities - into a fast growing segment of the industry. We believe it is the strongest product offering in the middle market.

We are continually introducing new applications to our already functionality-rich ERP suite. These applications include solutions for advanced planning and scheduling, customer care and employee care. To support these products, we have one of the strongest Customer Support programs in the industry. We also offer a broad range of Professional Services including e-commerce integration.

In addition to strengthening our core business, which is providing ERP solutions to growing manufacturers world wide, Fourth Shift is working to expand customer relationships. We recently established eStar Solutions to provide IT and business development services to manufacturers throughout the Asia-Pacific region. eStar Solutions will also provide valuable insight and resources to US manufacturers wanting to expand into Asia. The company inherits Fourth Shift's experience setting up companies throughout Asia over the past fifteen years.

Soon we will be releasing Fourth Shift 7, a high performance product that capitalizes on the latest Microsoft technologies and extends the depth of an already broad product line. Most important, Fourth Shift 7 will make it easier for you, our customers, to manage your operations productively and profitably.

We are ready for change so that you will be also.

## Fourth Shift Named One of the Hottest Companies of 1999 by *start Magazine*

Fourth Shift was named one of the "Hottest Companies of 1999" in the July issue of *start running Windows in manufacturing and engineering magazine*. The list includes some of the fastest growing and innovative companies in the computer industry, particularly software for manufacturers.

"Fourth Shift is dedicated to giving its customers the very best in the latest technologies such as Windows NT and SQL Server," reported *start*. "One of Fourth Shift's outstanding features is its thin-client interface, providing manufacturing data via Internet or dial-up connections."

The publication also took note of revenue growth. 1998 was the hottest ever for Fourth Shift, with revenues up 30.4%. "With the market taking a significant hit, many competitors turned in revenue losses. Fourth Shift began 1999 as one of the highest growth companies in the industry," the magazine reported.

## FOURTH SHIFT

When you're ready for *change*

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**We welcome your comments and suggestions for the Customer Update**

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# Managing the Supply Chain with E-Commerce

Item Number	Description	Current Quantity	Allocation	List Price	Order Quantity
02882	PACKAGED CONNECTOR BBS	10	4	\$10	
02883	PACKED REC. PARTS	10	0	\$10	
02884	PUSH-ON BUSHING BBS	10	10	\$10	
02885	ROAD WHEEL ROAD BBS	10	10	\$10	
02886	ROAD WHEEL PLANNING TABLES	1	0	\$100.00	
02887	PACKAGED STATOLOGY BBS	0	0	\$100	

E-commerce is the use of computer networks among trading partners to communicate and transact business. This includes Internet shopping services, but it also includes the gathering and dissemination of information over the Internet and Intranets. It includes interpersonal communication through email and chat lines. In addition, it includes the extension of the business to the supply chain through EDI, email and the Internet – creating a virtual enterprise.

Fourth Shift offers a wide range of e-commerce solutions to help manufacturers manage the supply chain. These solutions include Net UI, EDI integrated with barcode-based data collection, and WebPartner.

**The Net UI thin client interface** enables the Internet to replace the LAN as the backbone of the network. It provides high performance remote access to the Fourth Shift system from anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day.

**Fourth Shift EDI** automates the exchange of purchasing, invoicing and shipping information between trading partners and integrates this data with the Fourth Shift ERP system. It is a business-to-business, computer-to-computer supply chain management solution requiring little human intervention. EDI is a very efficient and accurate method of transacting business, especially when combined with barcode scanning, because it eliminates redundant manual data entry. The Fourth Shift integrated EDI/barcode data collection solution meets the stringent requirements of the automotive and consumer products industries.

*From customer service to order entry to vendor inquiries . . . Fourth Shift WebPartner can be customized to fit the special needs of your business.*

**Web Partner** is an Internet-based self-service center for customers as well as sales and customer service representatives. Customers can check the status of and view shipment activity for their orders. If customers need assistance from a customer service representative, WebPartner provides contact information and allows the customer to send an email to the representative directly from the application.

Security precautions are provided to protect the confidentiality of customer data and prevent data from being modified.

**Customized e-commerce solutions such as order entry and vendor inquiry.** As a service of Fourth Shift Integration Services, WebPartner can be customized for order entry. It is a viable way to extend a company's storefront to the web. Customers automatically receive an emailed verification of their order. The customization takes into account the manufacturer's special requirements.

Integration Services can also add vendor inquiry services to WebPartner. Vendors can see what is forecasted for their products, review opened purchase orders for their company, and check on whether items shipped have been received.

## If you purchased Net UI, you already own WebPartner!

Bundled with Net UI for a complete Internet e-commerce solution, WebPartner allows you to set up a customer service site on the web. It can be customized to include order entry and vendor inquiry services. For more information about how WebPartner can benefit your company, call your Client Business Solutions Group Representative at (612) 851-4880.

## Fall Conference in Las Vegas is a sure bet for your future

Whether you know your way around like a pro, or are a first time user, the Fourth Shift International User Group Fall Conference will provide a way for you to meet and interact with other users, as well as Fourth Shift's professional staff. No matter where you are in your career, the Fall Conference will help you and your company reach its full potential.

The Las Vegas Conference includes 68 sessions arranged in seven flights, designed to provide something for everyone. 18 hands-on sessions allow you the opportunity to learn by doing. Highlights of this conference include discounted

pre-conference training sessions, free consulting, enhancement review sessions, advanced hands-on classes and discussions, Fourth Shift "how to" presentations, updates on product and technology, user case studies, customer product exhibitions, networking opportunities, and prize drawings.

## To Win You've Got to Get in the Game!

***Two round trip tickets to anywhere in the U.S., including Hawaii or Alaska!***

Courtesy of Navigant International, some lucky Fourth Shift user at the September Conference will go home with two round trip tickets to anywhere in the U.S! All customers attending the Conference will be eligible for the drawing.

*Navigant International is a full service travel agency serving 19 US cities and London. For more information, visit their website at [www.navigant.com](http://www.navigant.com).*



## Check out [www.fsiug.com](http://www.fsiug.com) for Fourth Shift User Group information

The Fourth Shift International User Group website contains the complete Fall Conference Catalog as well as job postings, tips and tricks, and helpful links. The website developers are also putting together a listing of local user groups worldwide. The website currently lists the New England User Group (Northeast US), Front Range User Group (Rocky Mtns US) and the San Diego User Group. If you are involved in or are interested in starting a local user group, please email [generalinfo@fsiug.com](mailto:generalinfo@fsiug.com).