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Trendy News

Tribute to FTA2000's 1st Customer

Three years ago in September of 1999, MerrillSoft was pleased to release the first version of *FTA2000*. The foundation in which *FTA2000* was built upon was to produce a world class LIMS solution that would allow Oil Analysis Laboratories to increase their volume and build their revenue without increasing personnel costs; allowing them to compete with independent laboratories. In order to achieve this goal, *FTA2000* had to be reliable, user friendly, fast, and provide extreme data integrity. Along with this foundation, MerrillSoft has a company goal to achieve the highest level in customer service and satisfaction possible.

Our first customer was *Johnson Machinery* with lab manager Steve Albanese running the show. Johnson Machinery had been running MerrillSoft's DOS version of SOS3000 since 1989. So off we were writing a conversion program and then installing and training the lab staff to go "*live*" with *FTA2000* v1.0. The conversion went smooth and *Johnson Machinery* was up and running on Monday morning.

Johnson Machinery processes approximate 30,000 samples per year with a two person lab staff. Steve Albanese, the lab manager and Larry Fish the lab tech.

Johnson Machinery's Steve Albanese, lab manager, building his modeling portfolio. Not pictured: Larry Fish (someone had to run the lab!)

Of course with a first release of any software there is always room for improvement. MerrillSoft relied heavily on Steve Albanese to provide suggestions and make recommendations for improvements for the next release. He didn't let us down. The suggestions started pouring in and we could barely keep up with him.

As far as MerrillSoft's goal to create a world class LIMS solution, we knew we were on our way. Steve Albanese stated that "it is a very user friendly system that has performed practically error free since September, 1999". As far as data integrity, he stated that "any minor errors or bugs are fixed within 24-48 hours. There has never been any major loss of data or corrupted data".

One area that we knew we must concentrate on was to ensure rapid response time. Therefore, choosing the software in which *FTA2000* was developed with was very important and had to be the first decision. Laying out the groundwork can either make or break your application The software chosen was rated the number one software for database retrieval, making it the perfect base to build our world class software, *FTA2000* upon. Steve Albanese reassured MerrillSoft that we made the right choice when he stated "speed on the system is very good, there is never a wait for a screen change".

As far as print speed, MerrillSoft had to devise a way to build the reports rapidly and send them to the printer in the quickest amount of time. When all was completed on this task, *FTA2000* reached premium expectations. *FTA2000* is capable of sending 100 PPM to the print spooler allowing users to print at the fastest printer capability speed.

Steve's final comments were that "MerrillSoft uses customer suggestions for updates and new releases" and that "FTA2000 has served Johnson Machinery's Fluid Analysis well".

MerrillSoft is very thankful to Steve Albanese and *Johnson Machinery* for all their assistance. We appreciate our customers suggestions and always welcome them. MerrillSoft would like to extend their gratitude to not only *Johnson Machinery* and Steve Albanese, but to all of our customers for assisting in making *FTA2000* the world class LIMS solution that it is today. Keep sending us those comments and suggestions!

Be sure to check out *FTA2000* v4.0 at the Dealer Advisory Group Conference to see your suggestions *come to life*!

Future FTA2000 Family Members

MerrillSoft will be traveling to Eugene Oregon immediately following the Dealer Advisory Group Conference for the installation of *FTA2000* at *Pape Group.* Fred Stauffer has been working diligently with MerrillSoft to cleanse his data and prepare for the conversion.

We would also like to welcome *Syracuse Supply Company* to the *FTA2000* family. MerrillSoft has also been working with Mike Osterhaudt to cleanse his data and will be traveling to New York for a scheduled conversion in late September following *Pape Group*.

Look what's coming...
FTA2000 v4.0

FTA2000 v4.0 is packed with many of the suggestions that have been gathered for quite some time along with our own ideas. There are so many enhancements and not near enough room to go through them all, so a brief listing will give you an idea of some to the things in addition to version 3.0 capabilities that you can expect from *FTA2000* v4.0.

- Supports up to 5 alternate addresses and a billing address
- Assign up to 3 account reps for notification of results
- Supports Canadian addresses
- Provides security profiles based upon login ID
- Supports user defined wear tables for make/model or specific equipment
- Additional graphs added to reports
- Warranty indicator
- Quick look expanded to last 10 samples
- Level 1 Coolant built in
- Component Tracking
- Enhanced website for both dealers and customers

These are just a few of the new features that have been packed into *FTA2000* v4.0. Be sure to stop by our booth at the conference and check out the latest release of *FTA2000*, you won't be sorry.

MerrillSoft's Business Alliances

In keeping with our commitment to provide tools necessary for our customers to be competitive in the oil analysis industry today, MerrillSoft has joined alliances with the following businesses, Dell Computer Corporation and the Maintenance Resource Superstore.

Dell Computer Corporation can offer dependable and reliable computer equipment at a reasonable price while the Maintenance Resource Superstore offers training material and a reference library related to the oil analysis industry.

Simply go to *SampleResults*.com and click on the links to access these resources.

We've Been Busy ...

During the last few months we've been busy upgrading our network to provide more redundancy and reliability. We have installed a new web server to include dual power supplies, faster hard drives, faster tape backup, and dual processors for better performance and reliability.

We have also upgraded our firewall to provide a more secure site for all our customers and their customers.

Our commitment to our customers shows we will continue to upgrade our network to provide the fastest and most reliable network that we can.

Sample Kits

If you haven't heard, now's the time to listen. MerrillSoft has been working very hard to put together a sample kit for our customers and be able to offer it at a competitive price. We have succeeded and there is a 10 sample kit and a 50 sample kit that will be available 4^h quarter 2002. These sample kits include a sample bottle with label, a mailing bottle with dealer logo and/or shipping label, a nice attractive outer box with tuck in flap, an information sheet on how to take a proper sample with dealer information, and optional tubing. These sample kits provide a very professional look at an affordable price.

A test kit will be available for show at the Dealer Advisory Group Conference. If you are not attending and are interested in seeing the test kit, let us know and we can make arrangements for your viewing.

Lab Supplies

MerrillSoft's philosophy on lab supplies follows our company mission statement of providing excellent customer service for our customer base and giving them the edge to compete in the marketplace. MerrillSoft believes in bulk purchasing to allow for lower prices to all, regardless of the lab size.

By using this technique, we are able to "pool" our buying power and therefore offering lower pricing. With the addition of more dealers we were able to obtain a lower cost for our custom envelopes and we passed the entire savings onto our customers. We encourage you to compare your pricing with what MerrillSoft can offer.

Conferences

MerrillSoft will be at the **D**ealer **A**dvisory **G**roup (DAG) Conference in Peoria, Illinois from September 9^h – 11th. Please stop by our booth to see *SampleResults*.com in action and to check out the new features of *FTA2000* v4.0. We look forward to seeing you there!