



Vigilant Reviews

VIGILANT POINT OF SALE GOES WINDOWS

by Alan Salmon

Vigilant Business Software is a major player in both Canada and the U.S. in the point-of-sale market, and their newly released Vigilant for Windows (VFW) provides small and mid-sized retailers with a complete front and back-end automation solution by combining the power of Microsoft Sequel Server with a feature-rich retail application.

VFW is completely scalable and includes built-in redundancy, barcode scanning, and many other modern features designed for maximum control in a variety of retail environments.

The architecture in Vigilant for Windows breaks new ground and its three-tier design allows for easy customization to meet the specific needs of the retailer.

It uses the industry standard MS Sequel database which provides a great deal of power, high functionality and tight security. It features unlimited fiscal periods and short/long years which are flexible and easy to change. The company setup provides for regions, divisions, departments and profit centres.

Vigilant for Windows is a complete package that includes multi-channel retail, point-of-sale and invoicing, inventory management, customer relationship management, accounts receivable, accounts payable and a general ledger. In addition, Vigilant for Windows handles sales taken through EDI or e-commerce. This enables a company to do business no matter where or how the sales are made.

The program is easy to use, and handles sales, returns, layaways, rentals, special customer or product pricing, selling and redeeming gift certificates, handling exchanges, charge sales and credit notes.

Hardware integration is a key issue in the point-of-sale environment. Vigilant for Windows is designed to work seamlessly, right out of the box, with hundreds of name-brand POS terminals and peripherals. This enables VFW to take advantage of all the functionality in receipt printers, scanners, scales, and other peripherals.

If you are using a cash register or desktop-style keyboards at the checkout, you can create a custom keyboard configuration. In many cases, Vigilant for Windows can be configured to emulate the keyboard on the current cash register or POS system, and this will significantly reduce staff training time.

With Vigilant there is little training involved. In fact, the screens are designed with "balloon help" to walk you through the entering of a transaction. At each point in the process it tells you what to do next. Vigilant supports multiple foreign currencies throughout the system, in addition to the default domestic one. This enables multi-currency acceptance at the point-of-sale, with the option of providing change in the domestic or the foreign currency. Customers and vendors are

designated with their appropriate currency. Conversion rates can be changed periodically to reflect currency values. Based on the conversion rate at the time of posting, values are recorded in the general ledger as converted domestic amounts.

Speed is the key to a successful POS operation. With Vigilant for Windows, key information — such as quantity on hand, back ordered, committed and on-order from a supplier — is available at a glance when inventory is being entered. Also, items can be entered through the keyboard entry of the product code, a “look up” with an advanced search routine, or simply by scanning a bar code.

At the cash register, Vigilant for Windows provides a fast fuzzy search capability that lets you find a customer or inventory item almost instantly, even if the database contains thousands of entries.

Type in part of the client’s last name, hit the space bar, type in part of their first name, click OK and up will come that particular customer. The same process works with inventory items.

POS payment options include cash, cheques, credit cards, foreign currency as well as gift certificates and coupons. Split tendering is allowed as well as an easy way to accommodate “deals.” Once the bargaining is done, a fixed amount “deal” such as \$1,000, which includes all taxes, can be identified within Vigilant’s tendering system. Once the sale is confirmed as finished, the system will recalculate the actual sale from the ending point of \$1,000. This eliminates the need to do a manual re-calculation and reconciliation of the receipts and taxes.

Sizing is a huge issue in the retail business. Vigilant for Windows provides a three-dimensional size and colour matrix. This means that products can be scanned right down to the size and colour of a style. As a result, different sizes of the same style can have different prices that will be recognized at the register. Another example is multiple package sizes. For example, a product such as pop that has one bar code can be sold as a single item or a six-pack and Vigilant will apply the correct pricing at the point-of-sale.

Additional features include the ability to scan and record serial numbers during the sale for warranty tracking or the recording of serial number when you’ve received the inventory in the purchase order module. You can also sell packaged “kits” that combine various inventory items into one “finished” product.

Vigilant for Windows is an integrated system so all information is updated at the time of processing the sale, including inventory levels, the customer master file, and financial information arising from the sale. As a result, extensive reporting is available as to the type of receipt, time of day sales are made and by whom, for how much, what was purchased and what commissions were earned by which sales rep.

With its powerful Microsoft SQL database and state-of-the-art architecture, Vigilant for Windows breaks new ground in the point-of-sale software market. It is a viable cost effective solution for any small- to mid-sized retail operation.

Pricing: A single-user licence is \$1,295. A three-user network licence is \$2,995. Additional two-user packs are \$495.

Pro: A state-of-the-art multi-user point-of-sale solution that provides high functionality at a very cost effective price.

Con: Missing multi-site polling to transfer information between stores. This should be available shortly.

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