
The information and materials in this article are provided for general information purposes only and are not intended to constitute legal, accounting or tax advice or opinions on any specific matters. Laws and regulations change frequently, and their application can vary widely based upon the specific facts and circumstances involved. You, and not Intuit, are responsible for the applicability and accuracy of information as it relates to your specific situation.



Third-Party Software Spotlight: AdvancePro

Esther Friedberg Karp, MBA
Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor

Last month, I discussed the QuickBooks Marketplace, which is a treasure trove of add-ons that enhance the usability of QuickBooks. It's easy to get lost in there; I know because it's happened to me. Despite the fact that I loathe shopping, it's fascinating to see what is sitting on the virtual shelves of the Marketplace.

One of the neatest features of the Marketplace is that it gives the shopper the ability to search by industry or business need. That being said, I'll bet that you've encountered situations where you said (under your breath), "Boy, I wish QuickBooks could do *that*." Let's be fair, though – how much can you really expect from a package that runs less than \$200? Even if you're shelling out for Premier at under \$500, how much can you really expect it to do? You're already getting plenty of 'bang' for your QuickBooks buck.

So this month, I'm going to focus on an add-on that handles something I wish QuickBooks could do better: inventory. Yep, you're nodding your heads and rolling your eyes at the memory of trying to implement QuickBooks in an inventory or manufacturing environment.

For those of you not rolling your eyes, it's only because you haven't had the dubious pleasure of attempting it. Here's what you may not know regarding inventory tasks that QuickBooks cannot handle well or sometimes not at all:

FIFO inventory costing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• QuickBooks reports using Average Cost only
Serial number tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Important for service history information, i.e., furnaces, vehicles, electronic equipment
Lots numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Important for matching with items from the same lot or for tracking goods for factory recalls• Examples: fabric, yarn dye lots, medical supplies (Who bought the defective goods? How do you contact them to return the merchandise?)
Descriptions that can change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examples: damaged goods, obsolete goods
Expiry dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examples: milk, meat, over-the-counter medications
Warranty information, based on elapsed time from the purchase date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examples: bicycles
Location bins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To speed up order fulfillment (pick, pack and ship)• To facilitate proper and accurate inventory counts• To support insurance claims in the event of a

	loss
Multiple warehouse locations	
Back orders (either on purchase orders or on sales orders)	
Assembly that is more complex than 'light' assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: if any of the components of an assembled good change, you must create a new assembly item in QuickBooks. In other words, once there has been at least one transaction using the finished good, one cannot change the 'recipe' of raw materials making up a defined assembled good.
More than 10,000 items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: in clothing, each size, colour & style of garment would be a separate item: you'd be out of items before the next season! • Making a no-longer-used item inactive does not remove it from the 'count' of items being used by QuickBooks • You cannot delete items from the item list if they have been used in at least one transaction or have a balance

The bottom line is this: while QuickBooks is great for tracking the purchase and sale services, it is not designed to handle all the real-world needs a business may have for tracking inventory and manufacturing activities. And for \$200, I wouldn't expect it to.

This had been a pain point for me for many years, but recently I had the privilege of watching a demo of a very slick piece of software called AdvancePro, produced by [AdvanceWare Technologies Inc.](#)

My first order of business was to see if it worked with the Canadian versions of QuickBooks, and happily the answer is yes. My second order of business was to see if it worked; the answer to that is yes, as well.

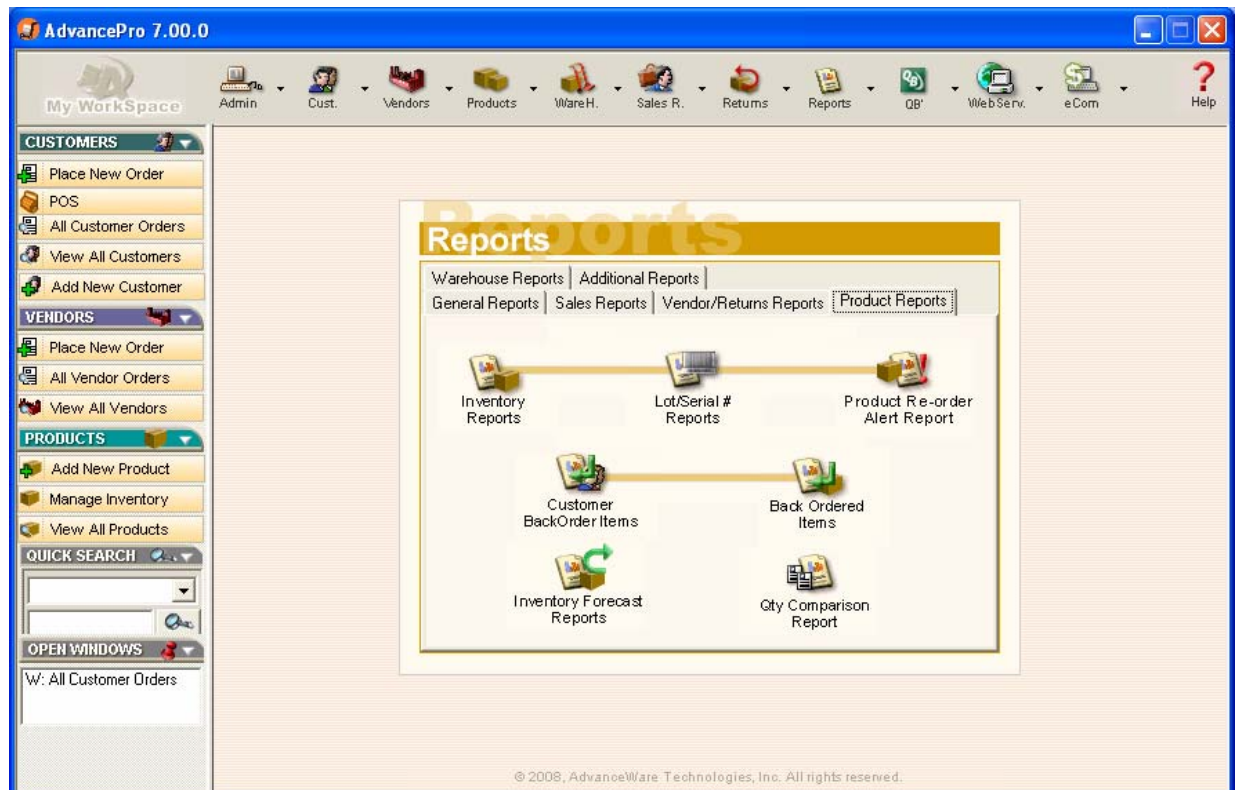
In fact, a client of mine had outgrown the inventory tracking needs of QuickBooks. They had several of the business needs listed above that QuickBooks could not address but we didn't want to take them off QuickBooks. Data conversion to a new system is painful, and the only issue QuickBooks was not handling was their inventory. Enter AdvancePro.

Here are some of the features of AdvancePro:

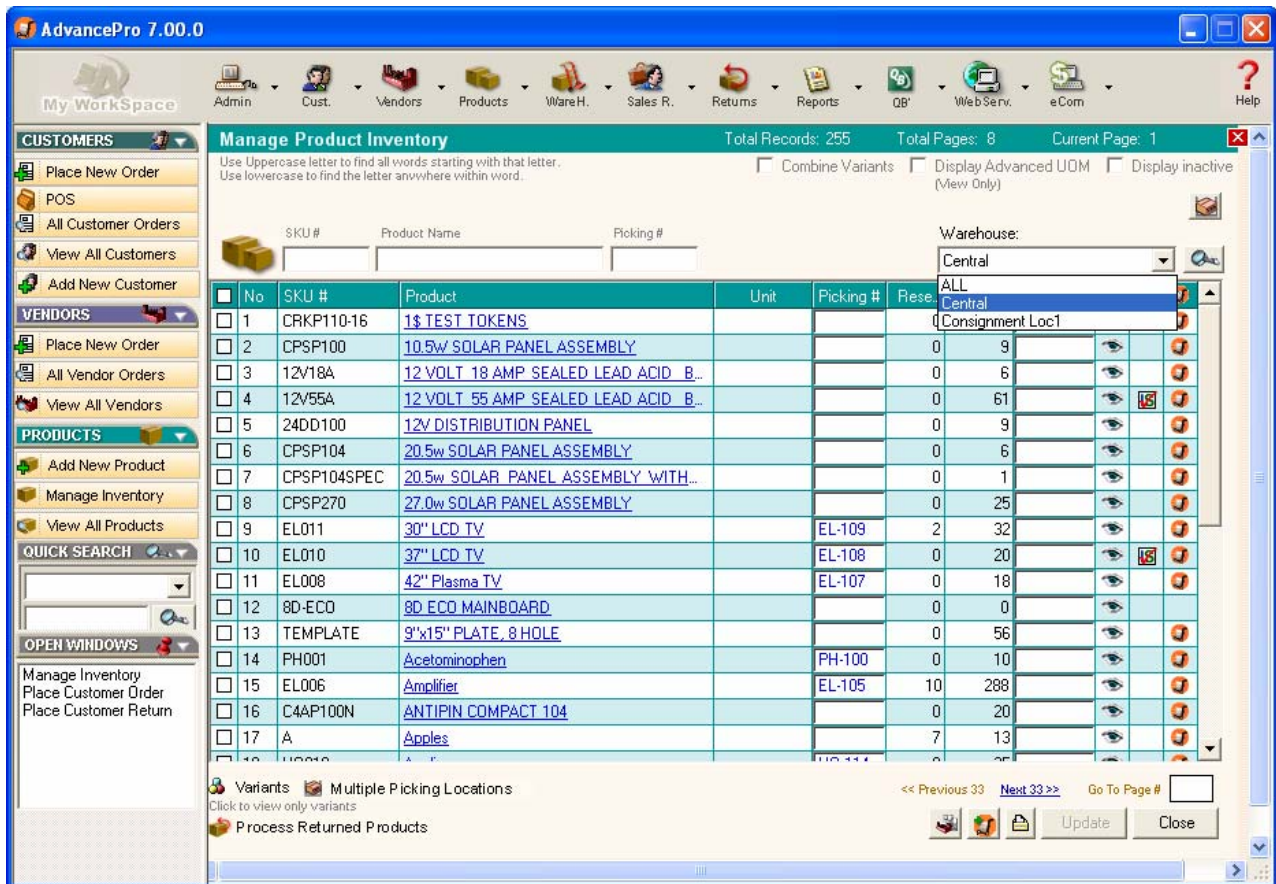
- Lets you choose your inventory costing method, including FIFO
- Lot serial numbers are assigned to items as they are received and shipped
- AdvancePro reports on any serialized item number to find out where it is

No	Lot #	Serial #	Vend Serial #	Status	Vend. Ord. Ref #	Cust. Ord. Ref #	Vend. Ret. Ref #	Cust. Ret. Ref #	Cust. WH Ord. Ref #	Warehouse	Exp. Date
Product Name: CD player											
SKU # EL001											
1		kjopghtrs54		Shipped	91	419	0	0	244	Central	4/7/08
2		123456789		Shipped	91	419	0	0	244	Central	4/7/08
Product Name: 12 VOLT 55 AMP SEALED LEAD ACID BATTERY - SOLAR VERSION											
SKU # 12V55A											
3		A-1		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
4		A-2		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
5		A-3		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
6		A-4		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
7		A-5		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
8		A-6		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
9		A-7		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
10		A-8		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
11		A-9		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
12		A-10		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07
13		A-11		Shipped	0	370	0	0	227	Central	11/5/07

- Barcode scanning
- Reporting on back orders, lot numbers, re-order prompts



- Multiple warehousing and tracking of transfers between warehouses



- Customer reminders
- Special pricing for product categories and for customer groups
- E-commerce
- EDI
- Freight calculators
- Tracking numbers on invoices that you can view online

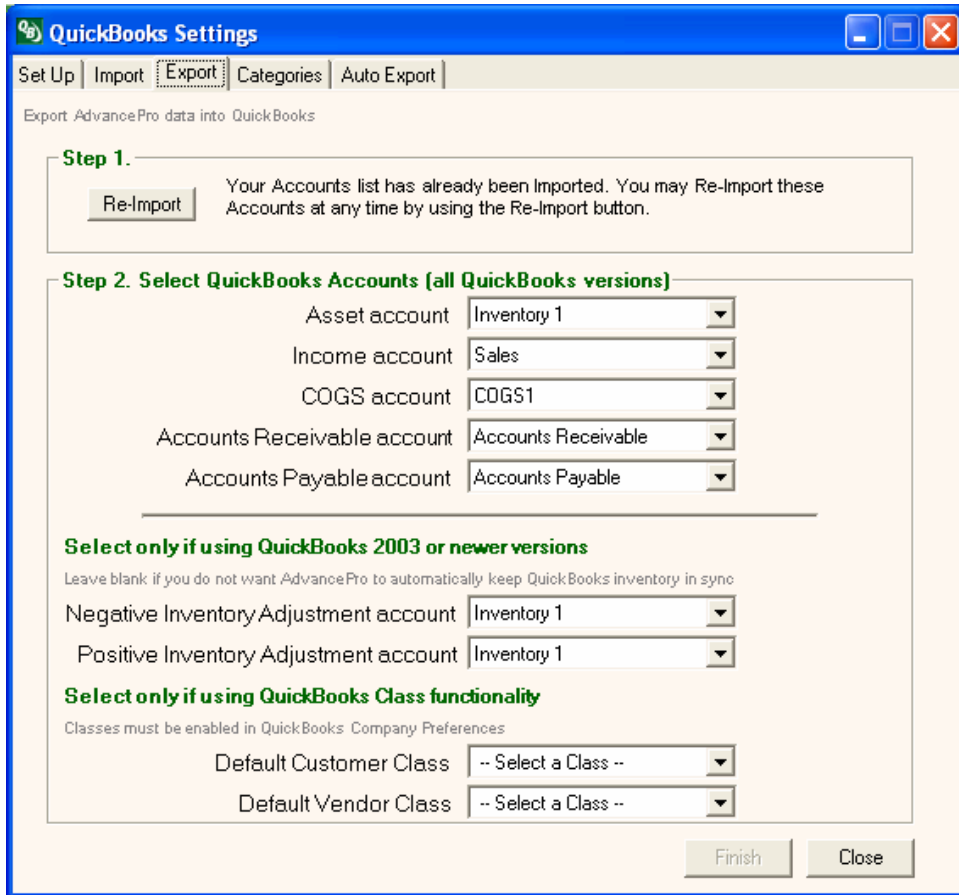
AdvancePro's most important feature is that it imports and exports information to QuickBooks. This is very helpful if AdvancePro is handling a client's entire inventory list, leaving the details of the items out of QuickBooks.

AdvancePro will handle size, colour and style matrixes so that you can track every permutation of style, colour and/or size properly. Also, AdvancePro knows which vendors have to send backordered shipments *to* you and which customers are due some backordered shipments *from* you.

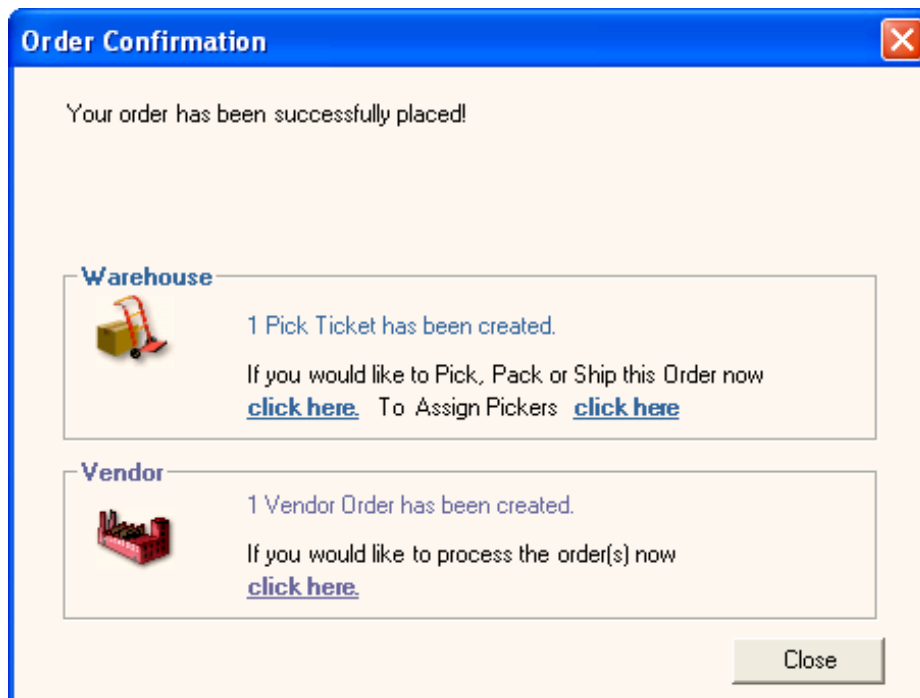
The screenshot shows the AdvancePro 7.00.0 software interface. The main window is titled 'EXPORT TO > QuickBooks'. It features a table with the following data:

Items To Export	Qty
Customers	53
Vendors	21
Products	236
Sales Reps	2
Carriers	0
Payment Terms	0
Payment Methods	0
Currencies	0
Tax Items	0
Invoices (Shipped Customer Invoices)	29
Payments Received	0
Credit Memos (Received Customer RMA's)	3
Bills (Received Vendor Orders)	2
Vendor Credit Memos (Shipped Vendor RMA's)	0

Below the table, there is an 'Export Progress:' label followed by a progress bar. The interface also includes a sidebar with navigation options like 'CUSTOMERS', 'VENDORS', 'PRODUCTS', and 'QUICK SEARCH'.



Order fulfillment is also a breeze with AdvancePro:



There's a lot else I could show you, but this software is really worth a look. Everyone has different needs when it comes to inventory tracking, and the AdvanceWare people are quite motivated to show you how customizable the software is to meet these needs.

At \$999 (U.S.) for 1 user, it is well worth the investment. Plus, it will enable your client to keep using QuickBooks for all the other features they love. They'll save a ton of money over converting and migrating to a heavy-duty, expensive accounting package.

My client is happy. They know where all their stuff is coming from, where it is now, and where it's going. That makes me one very happy ProAdvisor.

If you have a third-party add-on you've used successfully, I'd like to hear about it; I'll write about the success stories. You can contact me at esther@e-compubooks.com.