

Annual Check-Up

Say "Ahh" - Part 1

As we wind down another calendar year, I hope those of you with December year-ends are making time to get your **inventory, accounts receivable and accounts payable** in order. To have a reliable analysis of your annual financial performance, make sure these G/L account balances are correct in your books and records. If you have any questions on how to accomplish this, please email [me](#) and I'd be glad to offer some assistance.

A quick note to our **AIMsi** Software users. In an effort to verify the accuracy of their inventory records, several retailers are planning an inventory count in the later part of January when it's a bit quieter in the store. If this is your plan, it's important for you to understand how to record any inventory corrections and how to report the year-end inventory to your accountant. Here's the challenge. Once you receive or sell anything after 12/31/09 into the new year, you won't be able to generate a report of your 12/31 inventory without running multiple reports. Again, if you would like to discuss how this specifically affects you, feel free to contact [me](#) for some guidance.



Although all of the topics mentioned above are vitally important to a proper close of your 2009 accounting records, try not to feel overwhelmed or even discouraged. This is a wonderful time to get recharged, assess how far you've come, and make plans for the future. Despite a challenging economy, the 2010 year can be very exciting "if" you plan for profits! Below is a short list of items for you to address prior to the end of the year, as well as some future planning you could do. While some of these tasks can be done anytime during the year, it's most important that you in fact do them and do them regularly.

Items to Review Prior to Year End:

- Review your Accounts Receivable and write off any uncollectible debts.
- Review your Inventory to make sure it's accurate, both in item count and costing.
- Make sure all Accounts Payable invoices are entered.
- Personnel reviews - unless you are giving regular feedback, it may be a good time to discuss 2009 performance and set goals for 2010.
- Check on any year-end bonuses that should be paid or accrued.
- Check on all insurance policies and make certain they are up to date. Maybe it's time to shop around to see if you've got the best rates possible.
- Review loan rates with lenders; perhaps they too can be reduced to save money.

Items For Future Thought

- **Financial** - generate a financial forecast for the upcoming years, and tie that forecast to individual sales goals to meet your expectations.
- **Marketing** - Develop a strategic marketing plan to help support the forecasted revenues.
- Review your marketing and advertising contracts. Many retailers are finding success by advertising online.
- Claim your online listings and domains (Google Maps, social media, etc.)
- Update your web site (addresses, contact info, links, copyright and/or privacy policy) and keep it fresh.
- Make sure you're able to update and promote your web site yourself. Free software has made it possible for every web site to be edited without a web editor.

These items can save your company money and give your staff specific targets to hopefully increase sales and profitability. To quote Brian Littrell, "**Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars.**"