



***EJournal
For NCR 2127***

Windows Release

V 3.50

EJournal for NCR 2127

User and Technical Manual for Windows 9x/NT/2000

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Introduction

About Vesper Software, LLC

Vesper Software, LLC was established to provide software solutions that fill the gaps in existing retail point-of-sale applications. Our "**Gap Technology**" focus allows retailers to leverage their current systems, while still being able to add leading edge capabilities to their in-store operations.

Why Use the EJournal Software?

Grocery stores are operating on tighter margins than ever; therefore retailers need to be even more creative in finding ways to cut costs. One method is to try to leverage existing technology, such as NCR 2127 registers, as much as possible. However, that often limits what information is available to the retailer, and in what format. The NCR 2127 register system is a strong and viable system, but as with all technology, the developers could not anticipate all the changes that have occurred in the retail industry. Retailers need more and easier access to their journal data, beyond that available on the second "journal" paper roll. Also, many retailers would like to add new technology to their current systems, such as thermal printers, but are unable to do so, because of the need to keep the journal information.

This limitation in the NCR 2127 presents difficult questions for the retailers. Should they incur the very large expense of upgrading their systems in order to have better access to their data? If they do, will they ever recoup their cost? Isn't there any way to get the functionality that is needed, without the high price tag?

Vesper Software, LLC developed the EJournal for NCR 2127 as one of our "Gap Technology" products. It provides, via software, the ability to store and access the information currently only available via paper. This provides retailers with the option of keeping their current front-end systems and while still being able to enjoy the benefits of better access to their data and the ability to utilize new technology such as thermal printers.

What Does the EJournal Do?

The NCR 2127 systems collect detailed information over the course of the day on the transactions that occur at each register. These data is written to the

second “journal” roll of paper at each register. This data can also be stored in the Item Data Capture (IDC) file on the Master register.

By using existing back office software, store personnel can pull the IDC file from the Master register back to a PC. Using the EJournal software, this file can be loaded into a database and a variety of reports generated.

The EJournal allows store personnel to:

- View information in a variety of formats, with the ability to specify how much data should appear on the reports
- Reconstruct receipt information (duplicate receipt).
- Validate how store-specific user exits are being utilized, and where the data is being stored.
- Identify checkers who would benefit from additional training.
- Replace existing receipt printers with faster and quieter single roll thermal printers, which can result in savings in paper and maintenance costs and lower decibel levels at the front of the store.

Installing EJournal

Technical Specifications

NCR 2127

NCR 2127 – version 3.51+ is supported.

Although NCR 2127 version 3.2(Y2K) is also supported, it appears that some information, such as item descriptions are not captured by the NCR 2127 as part of the IDC file.

The official name of the operating system is “NCR 2127 – 3000/4000”.

Minimum Hardware

- Intel Pentium
- 8 MB RAM
- 1X CD-ROM
- 150 MB of free disk space

Windows Operating System

Operating System Requirements:

- Microsoft Windows 95, OSR2 or later (see below)
or
- Microsoft Windows 98
or
- Microsoft Windows 2000
or
- Microsoft Windows NT Version 4.0 with Service Pack 3 (or later)

Windows 95

To determine which version of Windows 95 exists on a PC, follow these steps:

- In the Control Panel, double-click on 'System'
- Click on the 'General' tab
- Locate the version number under the System heading.
- The version number needs to be 4.00.950B or greater (4.00.1111 is a common version and is supported). 4.00.950 and 4.00.950A are not supported for EJournal because of software problems with these earlier versions of Windows 95.
- Windows 95 version 4.00.950B (also known as OEM Service Release 2 or OSR2) is an updated version of a product for PC manufacturers (OEMs) to pre-install in new PCs. At this time, Microsoft states there are no plans to make the features and fixes that are part of OSR2 available in a step-up, service pack or upgrade kit for Windows 95.

Windows 98 and Windows 2000

All versions are supported.

Windows NT 4.0

To determine which version of Windows NT exists on a PC, follow these steps:

- In the Control Panel, double-click on 'System'
- Click on the 'General' tab
- Locate the version number under the System heading.
- The value needs to be Microsoft NT Workstation version 4.x.x
- To determine the Service Pack installed check the blue screen that appears when the system is first turned on. It will list on the top line of the monitor the version and service pack installed on the PC. Service Pack 3 is recommended because of the numerous bug fixes included in it.

NCR 2127 Settings

On the NCR 2127 system, full Item Data Capture needs to be activated. Also, the store's back office software (or some other method) needs to be set up to pull the IDC file from the Master register on a daily basis, and then delete the IDC file from the Master register.

We recommend that a store verify that the register system can successfully run full Item Data Capture for at least one week prior to implementing EJournal.

Long-Term Data Storage

One issue that needs to be discussed during the planning stages for implementing EJournal is the long-term storage of the IDC files. Since the EJournal is a replacement for the second "journal" roll, then this data needs to be stored for the same length of time (or longer) that the paper rolls.

We recommend a plan similar to the following be developed:

- 1) Have the back office software pull the IDC file from the register to a PC.
- 2) Rename the IDC file so that the date is part of the file name (e.g., IDC20000501.RAW for a file pulled on May 1, 2000). Our ReFile utility (see Appendix A) can be used for this step.
- 3) Store that file in a directory specifically used only for storing these archived files. Back up this directory on a daily basis to tape or some other long-term storage media. If possible, store this tape off-site.
- 4) On a regular basis (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly), write those archived files to a CD for long term storage. It would be best and easiest to make two copies of the CD; one for off-site storage and one kept at the store for use by store personnel. CDs are recommended for final storage because tape readers are becoming less common and may be not be available when an archived file needs to be retrieved.

With the above scenario, store personnel can always locate the appropriate file when research is needed, by checking the archive directory (step 3) or the appropriate CD (step 4). Since loading data only takes a few minutes, it will be quick and easy to generate a report of the needed information.

Installing the EJournal Software

Installation Instructions

EJournal is supplied on CD. The CD also contains this documentation (Ejrn1350.doc). To install the software perform the following steps:

1. **Only if the PC is running the Windows 95 operating system:** Click on the 'Start' button and select 'Run'. In the box, type in the following command (replace 'X:' with the name of the drive where the CD is located, e.g., 'E:')

X:\Utilities\DCOM95.EXE

Depending upon the PC, the PC may need to be re-booted after this step. The system will prompt you to re-boot if this is necessary.

2. **Only if the PC is running the Windows 2000 operating system:** Click on the 'Start' button and select 'Run'. In the box, type in the following command (replace 'X:' with the name of the drive where the CD is located, e.g., 'E:')

X:\Utilities\Jet35SP3.EXE

Depending upon the PC, the PC may need to be re-booted after this step. The system will prompt you to re-boot if this is necessary.

3. Click on the 'Start' button and select 'Run'. In the box, type in the following command (replace 'X:' with the name of the drive where the CD is located, e.g., 'E:')

X:\EJournal\EJSetup.EXE

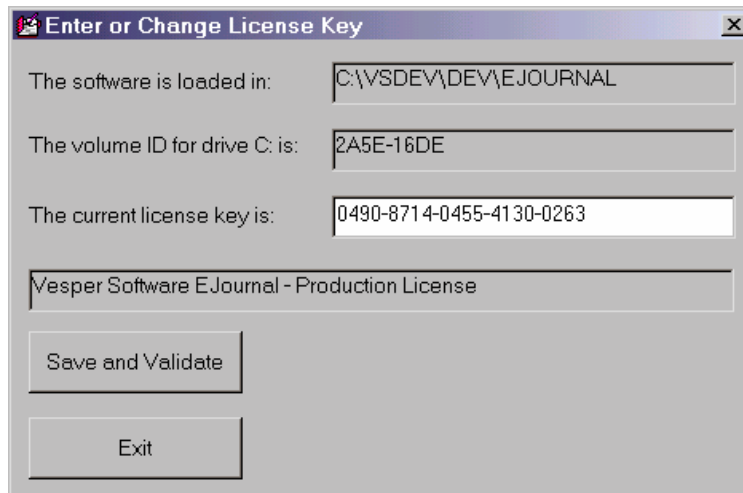
This program will start the installation of the EJournal software. Depending upon the PC, the first part of this setup process may be the installation of Microsoft's MDAC software, which may require the PC to be re-booted. If this does happen, the setup process will start up again automatically after the PC re-boots and the user signs in.

It is generally recommended that the software be installed in the suggested directory (\Program Files\EJournal).

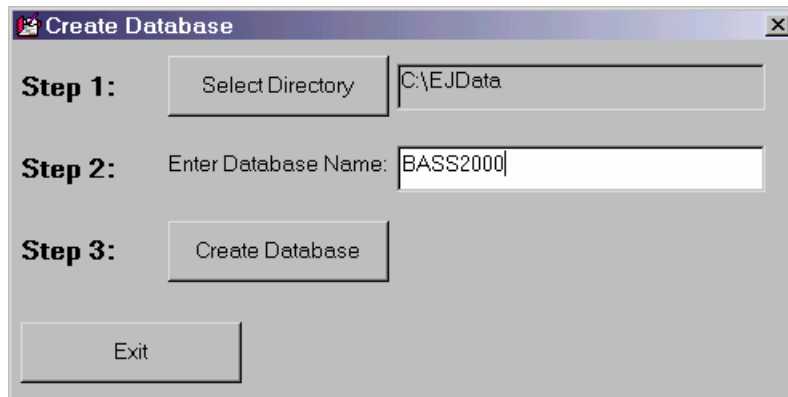
A desktop icon will be created as part of the setup process.

4. Contact Vesper Software for the license key for the PC on which the software is installed. Under the 'Utilities' menu, there is a choice called 'Enter License Key.' Either call or e-mail Vesper Software

(support@vespersoftware.com) with the volume ID that is displayed. Enter the license key and press the 'Save and Validate' button. This will display the status of the license key. Press the 'Exit' button when done.



5. Create the working database. Under the 'Utilities' menu, there is a choice called 'Make Database'. Select a directory for the database, provide a name for the database and press the 'Create Database' button.



Installation is now complete.

Notes and Cautions

All other applications should be stopped prior to installing the EJournal software. This includes virus-scanning software, Office toolbars, etc. This is because the software may update some shared system programs. If those programs are in use, the EJournal install process cannot update them, an error will occur and the install may not complete successfully.

In some circumstances, an error installing URLMON.DLL may occur during installation. This is due to an issue with some versions of Internet Explorer.

Click on the 'Ignore' button for this error and the installation of the EJournal software should continue.

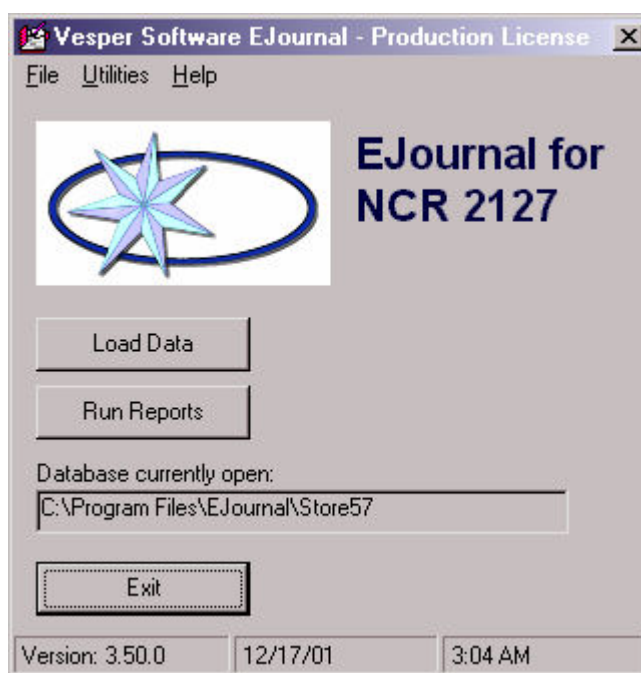
Using EJournal

Selecting a Database

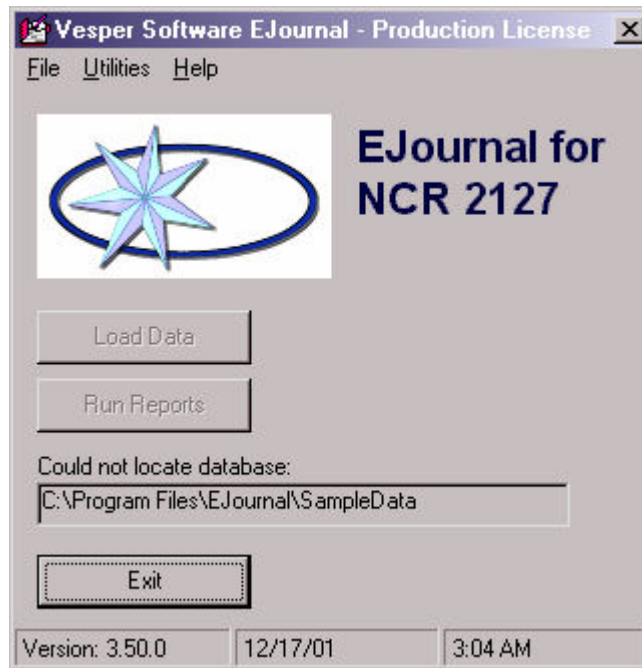
The first step in either loading data into an EJournal database or running a report on that data is to select a database.

When EJournal is started, the database last used is opened automatically. If that is not the correct database, the user can go to the 'File' menu choice and see if the desired database is on the list. Only the last four databases accessed are on that list. Otherwise, the user can use the 'Select Other Database...' choice on the 'File' menu to locate the desired database.

If the database that has been chosen is valid, a screen similar to the following is displayed (note the phrase "Database currently open" above the name of the database that will be used for loading or reporting):



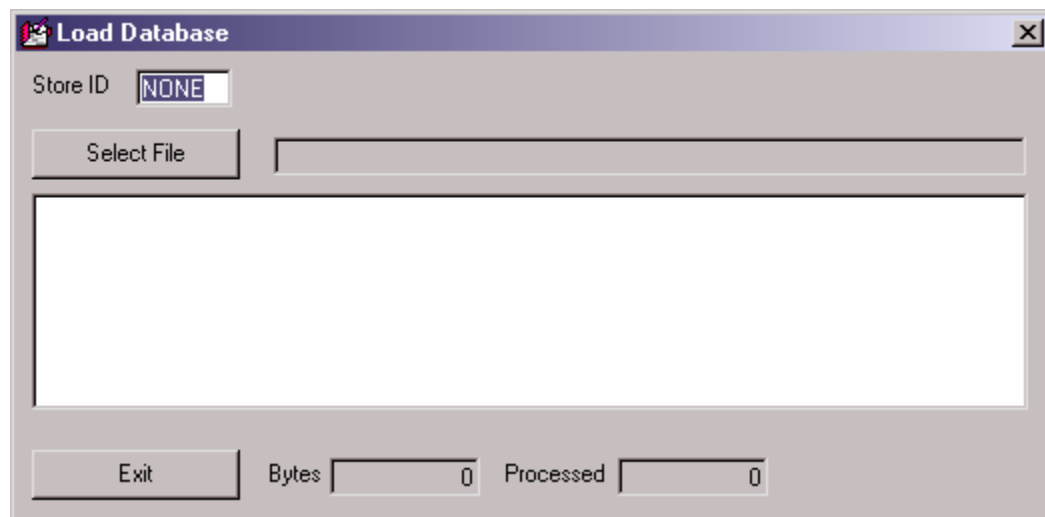
If the database is not valid (e.g., the database was deleted), a screen similar to the following is displayed (note the phrase "Could not locate database" above the name of the database):



If a valid database is not open, the user will be unable to load data or run reports, therefore those buttons are disabled, as is the 'View or Delete Batches' choice under the 'Utilities' menu.

Loading Data

Data from an IDC file must be loaded into an EJournal database before reports can be run. To do this, select or create a database and then press the 'Load Data' button. The following screen will be displayed:

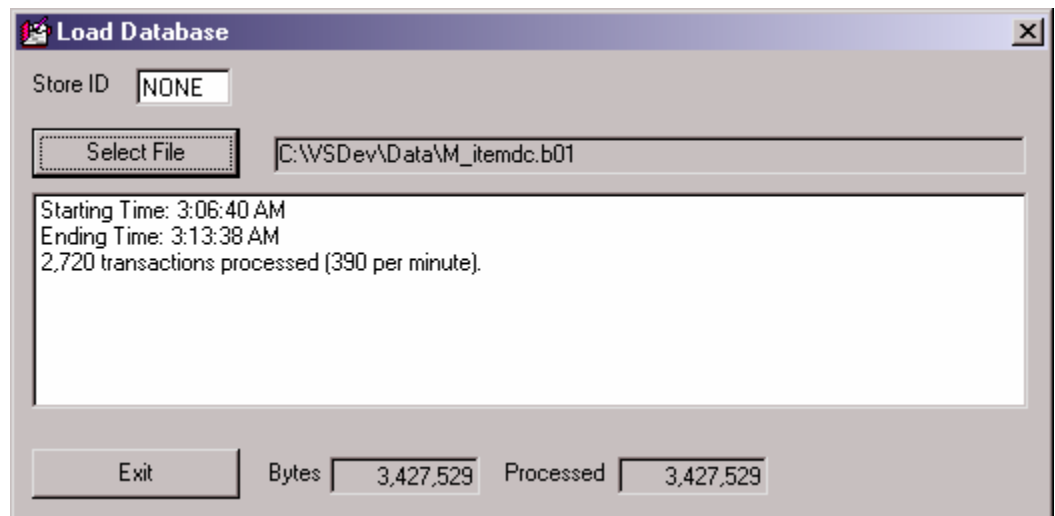


If there is a need to differentiate data from different stores, a store ID can be entered, otherwise the default of 'NONE' can be used. The store ID can be up to 4 letters/numbers.

The next step is to select an IDC file to process by pressing the 'Select File' button.

Loading data typically takes only a few minutes, depending upon the speed of the PC. The user can monitor the progress of the load by comparing the 'Bytes' value (size of the IDC file) with the 'Processed' value.

When the load is complete, the screen will look similar to the following.



It is possible that the screen will display a message such as "Unsupported transaction" with some number after it. If this happens, please contact Vesper Software and we will add support for that transaction, if you can send us the IDC file that was being processed. Currently supported transactions are (see the NCR 2127 documentation for a complete description of these item codes):

2000	2130	2200	2201	2205	2210	2211	2216
2217	2220	2221	2222	2226	2227	2230	2231
2235	2240	2245	2250	2256	2260	2277	2291
2297	2298	2320	2331	2334	2400	2405	2410

Using Command Line Parameters

EJournal allows users to specify command line parameters (CLPs) which can control how EJournal will operate. Typically the CLPs will be used in a

scheduled environment or provided as part of the command line in a desktop shortcut.

No CLPs are required for EJournal to run.

If any CLPs are used, the first parameter **MUST** be a Store ID. If the store does not need to use Store IDs for their business, then any value can be entered. We recommend using NONE as a default value. Store IDs are alpha-numeric (max. length of 4 characters).

CLPs can be upper or lower case.

The remainder of the CLPs can be in any order.

Available CLPs:

/d dname	Used to specify the database that should be used, where dname is the name of the Microsoft Access database (e.g., c:\EJ\September)
/f fname	Used to specify the file containing transactions to be loaded, where fname is the name of the file (e.g., c:\EJData\today.raw). IF THE /f PARAMETER IS USED, EJOURNAL ASSUMES THAT THE USER WANTS TO AUTOPROCESS THE FILE. With this parameter, EJournal starts, processes the file and then closes (unless there are errors such as an invalid license, which will stay displayed on the screen). When using this parameter, it is recommended that the /d parameter also be provided to ensure where the data is loaded, otherwise the last database opened will be the one where this data is loaded.
/s dirname	When a user chooses to load data, the default directory that is displayed when starting the search for the data file to load is the directory where the EJournal software was loaded. This parameter allows a different directory to be the starting point for finding data files to load.

Some examples of an EJournal command line using CLPs:

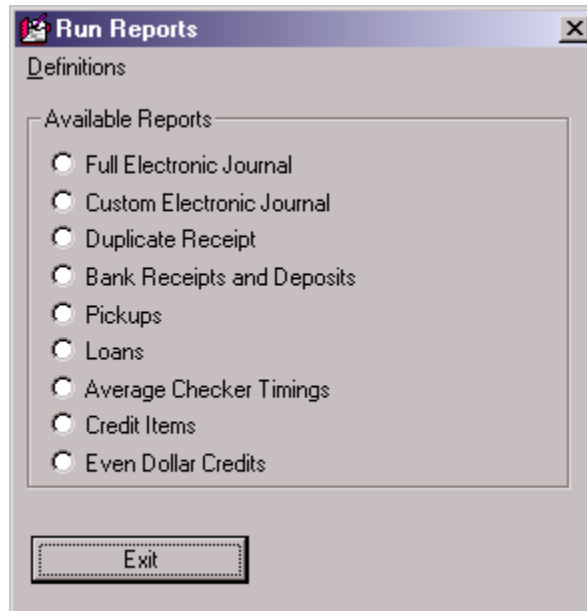
```
C:\Program Files\EJournal\EJournal.exe 3422 /s C:\EJData
```

```
C:\Program Files\EJournal\EJournal.exe NONE /d C:\EJFiles\September
```

```
C:\Program Files\EJournal\EJournal.exe NONE /d C:\EJFiles\Sept /f C:\EJData\today.raw
```

Running Reports

The 'Run Reports' button allows the user to select which report to run and what data should appear on that report. The following shows the report screen:



From this screen, the user selects which report to run. The next chapter describes how the user will select what data should appear on the report.

The following describes the reports that are available.

Full Electronic Journal Report

The Full Electronic Journal Report lists every field for which information was collected for each transaction selected. It is a comprehensive list of values being collected by the NCR 2127 and can be used to research customer questions, review how user exits are being utilized, etc.

Custom Electronic Journal Report

The Custom Electronic Journal Report is a subset of information on the Full Electronic Journal Report and lists those fields of primary interest when researching customer issues. It can be used as a starting point for further research or as a tool for answering simpler customer questions. Store personnel can customize which fields are displayed on this report via the **'Add/Delete from Custom Electronic Journal'** choice on the 'Definitions' menu. These settings are maintained until the user changes them.

Duplicate Receipt Report

The Duplicate Receipt Report is a very brief look at a transaction, similar to that generated by the register. It can be used as a starting point for further research, used to provide a customer with a copy of their receipt, or as a tool for answering simpler customer questions.

Bank Receipts and Deposits Report

This reports lists all the bank transactions that have occurred (2298 transactions) by store, batch and type of transaction.

Pickups Report

This report lists all the pickups from cashiers over the course of the day. It can be used to assist in balancing the cashier drawer at the end of the shift.

Loans Report

This report lists all the loans made to cashiers over the course of the day. It can be used to assist in balancing the cashier drawer at the end of the shift.

Average Checker Timings Report

This report lists the average transaction, lock and tender time by checker and by lane. This report can be used to determine if individual checkers need additional training. The averages are broken down by lane due to the expected differences in the express lane.

Credit Items Report

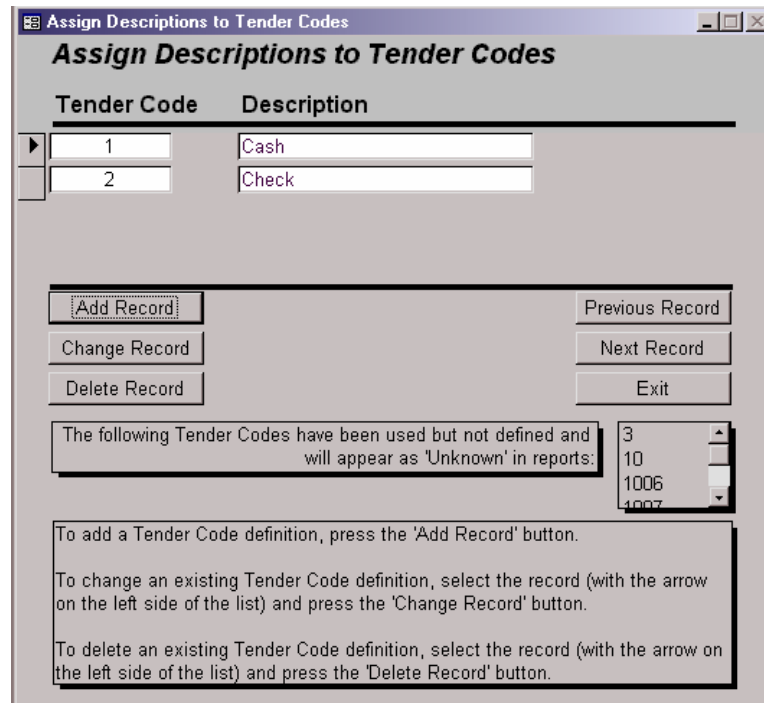
The Credit Items Report lists those transactions containing voids, corrections, returns, cancels or refunds.

Even Dollar Credits Report

The Even Dollar Credits Report lists those transactions containing credits, returns or refunds for an even dollar amount (e.g., exactly \$3.00). This allows stores to track potential issues of checker training or fraud.

Report Code Definitions

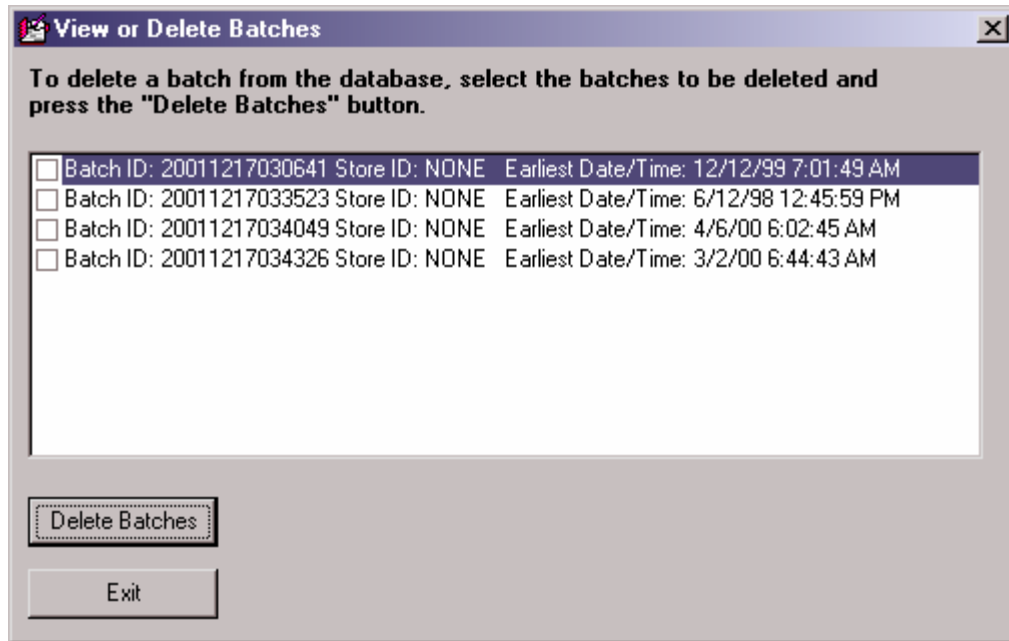
NCR uses codes, instead of descriptions for tender types, media types, etc. In order to make the reports more readable; store personnel can define those codes by selecting the appropriate choice under the 'Definitions' menu. There are three code types that can be defined: media types (used for bank transactions, pickups and loans), tender types and transaction types. The screen for defining the tender types is shown below:



To make it easier, a list of undefined codes that have been found in the currently open database are shown on the screen.

Viewing or Deleting Data from the Database

Under the 'Utilities' menu, there is a '**View or Delete Batches**' choice. This allows the user to view what data has been loaded into the currently opened database and to delete any of the batches, if desired.



In order to delete a batch; click on the checkbox by the appropriate box and then press the 'Delete Batches' button. Multiple batches can be deleted at the same time. This process is irreversible – deleted batches cannot be restored, the data would have to be reloaded from the IDC files that are being saved.

Maintaining the Database

The EJournal uses Microsoft Access 97 to store the data that is loaded. Microsoft recommends that an Access 97 database not exceed 100MB in size. During the planning stage for implementing EJournal, store personnel should discuss how the databases are to be used and maintained. One possible scenario is to create a database for each week or month. Older databases can be deleted as needed to free up disk space, since the data can be re-loaded at any time from the IDC files.

Selecting Data & Displaying Reports

Introduction

When a user selects a report, the next step is to determine which records are to appear on the report. The screen similar to the following appears when a report is selected.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Select Records for Report". It features three columns: "Field", "Operator", and "Value". The "Field" column lists various data points such as Store ID, Batch ID, and Transaction numbers. The "Operator" column lists comparison symbols like =, >, <, etc. The "Value" column has an empty input field. Below the columns is a large empty text area. At the bottom, there are buttons for "Clear List", "Run Report", and "Exit". An "Add to List" button is located between the Operator and Value columns.

From this screen, the user determines what data should appear on the report. Not all options listed under 'Field' are available for every report.

Field Definitions

Field	Definition
Store ID	This is the value that was displayed on the screen during the time data was being processed. It is the identifier for a specific store. If the database only contains values for one store, no value is necessary in this field. If the database is a centralized database for multiple stores, this field can be used to limit the records that are included on the report.
Batch ID	This is the batch ID that is generated by processing data. It is possible to view existing batch IDs via the Database Reports /

	Existing Batches report.
Checker ID	This is the checker number associated with a transaction. In the database, checker numbers are also referred to as operator IDs.
Lane Number	This is the lane number associated with a transaction.
EJ Transaction Number	This is a number generated by processing the file from the NCR 2127. It is the placement of the transaction within the batch.
Receipt Transaction Number	The number that is displayed on the bottom of the receipt if the 2127 is programmed to display a transaction number on the receipt.
Date of Transaction	This is the date or date/time time the transaction started.
Tender ID	This is the numeric code for the tender used in the transaction (e.g., 1 = Cash)
Sales Total	This is the total amount of the sale.
Shopper Card ID	This is the card number for the store's shopper card program. Leading zeroes must be included in searches.
Account Number	This is the account number if a customer used a credit or debit card for the transaction. Leading zeroes must be included in searches.
UPC	The UPC of the item purchased.

Selecting Records

The user selects data for the report by specifying a combination of field, operator and value. The fields are defined above. Not all reports have all fields available. The user should highlight the appropriate field. Next, the user should highlight the appropriate operator (equals, greater than, etc.). Then the user specifies a value and presses the "Add to List" button to add the criteria to the report box. Examples of valid criteria are:

Store ID = 0023

Checker ID = 50

Lane Number one of 10,50

Store ID <> 0025 (not equal to)

With the 'one of' criteria, enter the appropriate values, separated by commas.

Quotations are not needed when entering text data.

After each entry is made, press the "Add to List" button to add the criteria to the report box. The user can repeat the process multiple times, in order to restrict the report as needed.

If an error is made, the user can select the "Clear List" button to remove all criteria and begin again.

When all appropriate information has been entered, the user should select the "Run Report" button, which will begin processing the report.

If the user chooses not to run the report, the 'Exit' button will return the user to the Reports screen.

Notes on Using Dates in Selection Criteria

Transactions are marked by NCR with the date and time (to the second) they occurred. A typical start date/time would be 3/4/99 10:58:15.

Dates can be entered in any Windows-recognized format. The following are examples of valid entries for Date of Transaction:

3/4/99

3-4-99

3-4-99 10:52

03/04/1999

March 4, 1999 10:52:15 AM

3/4/99 22:45

In order to make searching by dates and times easier, the following rules are used by EJournal:

- If the user enters Date of Transaction = date only (no time portion), then records for that day will be returned.
- If the user enters Date of Transaction > date only (no time portion), then records after that date will be returned.
- If the user enters Date of Transaction < date only (no time portion), then records prior to that date will be returned.
- If the user enters Date of Transaction = date and time (with or without the seconds portion), then records for that minute will be returned.
- If the user enters Date of Transaction > date and time (with or without the seconds portion), then records after that date and time, including the following days, will be returned.
- If the user enters Date of Transaction < date and time (with or without the seconds portion), then records before that date and time, including prior days, will be returned.

Notes on Using UPCs in Selection Criteria

Leading zeroes do not need to be entered.

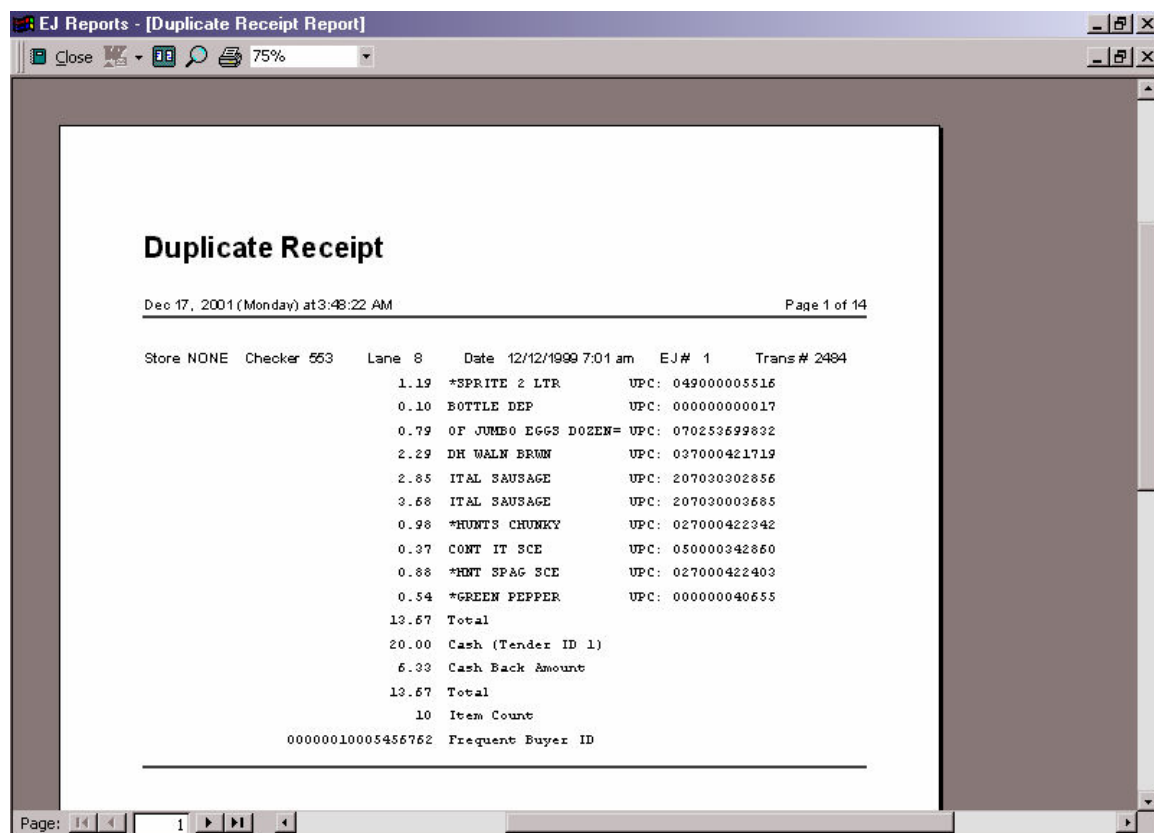
UPC is currently only available as a selection criteria for the Duplicate Receipt Report

If the “one of” criteria is used, all sales that contain ANY of the UPCs specified will be displayed.

Processing the Report

While the report is processing, a blank screen is briefly displayed. The hourglass indicates that the report is processing.

Displaying the Report



Once the report has completed processing, it is displayed on the screen. The user has the option to page forward and backward through the report or jump to either the first or last page, by using the four arrow buttons.

The options in the tool bar at the top of the screen accomplish the following:

Close – exits the report and returns the user to the reports menu

Office Links – exports the report to MS Word or MS Excel

Two Pages – displays two pages of the report at a time, side-by-side

Zoom (magnifying glass) – enlarges the portion of the report under the cursor

Print – prints the report

Zoom (percentage box) – enlarges the report to specified sizes

Notes and Cautions

Multiple reports cannot be run at the same time.

Use care when selecting data for a report. It is possible to select criteria that contradict each other, causing no data to be found. The criteria are joined together with the **AND** operator. Reading through the criteria while adding “and” between the rows can help the user make sure the correct records will be selected.

Try not to make queries too broad. Any report can be run without entering any criteria. With many reports (e.g., the Average Checker Timings Report), this will not cause a problem. However, with the Journal Reports, this can generate a report containing many thousands of pages and take time to process. This could also use up the temporary space on the PC processing the report, causing various errors.

If no data is found for the report, a message indicating no data was found appears on the report.

The criteria specified for the report appear on the bottom of each page of the report (except for the Duplicate Receipt report).

ReFile Utility

Vesper Software's ReFile utility is designed to help simplify the process of renaming IDC files. The program is designed to be run from a command line or from within a scheduler. It does not display a screen and requires a number of parameters:

Day offset – this is the first parameter and indicates how what date is to be put on the file. It can be a positive or negative number (e.g., +3 or -4). If a positive number is used, the file is dated in the future. If a negative number is used, the file is dated in the past.

Input file – this is the second parameter and must be enclosed in double-quotes. This is the name of the file to be renamed.

Output directory - this is the third parameter and must be enclosed in double-quotes. This is the name of the directory where the file is to be copied or renamed. This parameter can include the start of a file name as well.

Output file format – this is the fourth parameter and must NOT be enclosed in double-quotes. This is the format for how the date should appear in the final file name. The format can include the following choices:

yy – use the two digit year

yyyy – use the four digit year

mm – use the two digit month

dd – use the two digit day of the month

Output file extension – this is the fifth parameter and must NOT be enclosed in double-quotes. This is the file extension that will appear in the final file name.

/R – This indicates that the utility should rename the file (the original file name will no longer exist). If this parameter is missing, a copy is performed. This parameter can be anywhere on the command line but it is best to include it as the last command line parameter. Either /r or /R is acceptable.

Sample ReFile command lines:

ReFile.exe +5 "itemdc.raw" "c:\datastore\idc" yymmdd raw /R

On January 10th, 2002, this will take the file itemdc.raw and rename it to c:\datastore\idc020115.raw

ReFile.exe -1 "itemdc.raw" "c:\datastore\" yyyymmdd idc

On January 10th, 2002, this will take the file itemdc.raw and copy it to c:\datastore\20020109.idc

ReFile.exe +0 "itemdc.raw" "c:\datastore\2002\idc" mmdd raw

On January 10th, 2002, this will take the file itemdc.raw and copy it to c:\datastore\2002\idc0110.raw