

# FlexAbility™ Data Collection



## *The flexible data collection solution for Microsoft® Business Solutions - Solomon®*

FlexAbility is a versatile, automated data collection solution designed to integrate seamlessly into the Microsoft® Business Solutions - Solomon® and JAAS® Advanced Manufacturing Software (JAMS) suite of business applications.

In today's competitive market environment, businesses understand the need to control operational costs, enhance productivity, reduce inventory and shipping errors, and to optimize shop floor operations. The FlexAbility Data Collection solution manages and tracks the movement of inventory from receiving and labeling through to picking and shipment. With labor and production reporting capabilities, FlexAbility allows businesses to streamline daily data collection activities, simplify data entry and track warehouse and shop floor transactions in the most efficient manner possible.

## The FlexAbility Advantage

Using wireless communications and bar code technology, FlexAbility provides for updates to inventory, purchasing, production, order management, payroll, project and production labor applications.

With product verification, shop floor managers can now significantly reduce inventory and shipping errors, resulting in improved customer satisfaction. With an automated picking process, employees simply scan in customer orders to quickly identify and locate inventory items to ensure an efficient shipping process and an accurate product shipment. By automating the inventory management process, businesses now have the ability to minimize safety stock levels, improve back order conditions, improve inventory accuracy and reduce the time needed to conduct physical inventory counts. Faster input of data, back order notifications, bar code label generation and lot/serial input all contribute to a more efficient supply chain execution.

To further enhance shop floor productivity, FlexAbility offers a solution to track employee time and attendance—eliminating the manpower and mistakes associated with conventional time cards and reducing payroll costs and errors. With FlexAbility Labor Reporting, managers can now track costs by Production Order and Operation Step or by Project and Task to help streamline the production process from operation start through operation end.

A screenshot of the FlexAbility software interface. The window title is 'FlexAbility'. The menu bar shows 'Menu' and 'poRcp'. The main content area is titled 'P.O. Receipt' and contains the following fields:

- Date: 5/27/2003 7:27:00 PM
- PO #: 000020
- Part #: HON-675L-Q
- 600 Series Wide Lateral Five
- Qty: 5 U/M: EA
- # Labels: 0
- A 'Receive' button at the bottom.

Delivering data from various data collection devices to Microsoft Solomon's software applications and SQL Server database, FlexAbility allows businesses to automate their entire warehouse and manufacturing environment in an effort to:

- **Optimize Productivity**
- **Reduce Costs**
- **Tighten Controls**
- **Minimize Errors**
- **Improve Customer Service**

## The FlexAbility Architecture

Built from the ground up using Microsoft® technologies exclusively, the FlexAbility architecture allows managers to run their business the way they need to rather than trying to fit the constraints of the software. By leveraging the open architectures of Microsoft applications—including Windows 2000, Windows CE, Crystal Reports and SQL Server—FlexAbility can be customized and extended to create custom solutions to meet specific business needs.

Using Microsoft Windows CE technology, CE devices capture data at the original point of origin and post transactions directly to Microsoft Solomon's SQL Server database—either through the use of wireless technologies or batch mode. Data collected is posted directly to Microsoft Solomon and available for viewing in standard Solomon screens. This is accomplished through FlexAbility's base foundation—the FlexAbility Posting Manager—which posts data from SQL tables to Solomon transactions using Transaction Import, the Solomon Object Model, and SQL Stored Procedures.

What's more, the Microsoft Windows CE 32-bit operating platform supports a broad range of intelligent devices, from enterprise tools such as industrial controllers, handheld and industrial pocket PCs to fixed-base and mobile devices. Businesses simply select the device that conforms best to their specific business environment.


The true power of FlexAbility lies in its customizable scripting language that allows businesses to modify the behavior of FlexAbility transactions to match specific business rules and processes. Its open architecture allows users to:

- **Tailor Screens, Reports & Labels**
- **Modify Transaction Rules & Validations**
- **Customize Transaction Scripts**
- **Create User Interfaces To Fit Business Processes**
- **Develop New Add-On Business Applications**

## Flexible Solutions

For:

- **Purchasing**
- **Inventory**
- **Production**
- **Order Management**
- **Project**
- **Time & Attendance**



The screenshot shows a software window titled "FlexAbility" with a menu bar containing "Menu" and "iIss". The main content area is titled "Inv. Issue" and contains several input fields and a button. The fields are: "Date:" with the value "5/27/2003 7:05:00 PM", "Item:" with the value "HON-672L-L", "600 Series Wide Lateral Two" (likely a product name), "From Loc:" with the value "02B04", "Qty:" with the value "5" and "U/M:" with the value "EA", "Reason:" with the value "MARKETING", and "Cost:" with the value "300". At the bottom of the form is a button labeled "ISSUE".

## The FlexAbility Modules

The following shows the relationship of the FlexAbility functions as they relate to the Microsoft Solomon and JAMS transactions that they automate:

- Purchasing**           ⇒ PO Receipt
- Inventory**            ⇒ Issue – Receipt – Transfer – Physical Count
- Production**          ⇒ Material Picking & Release – Production Move/Completion
- Order Management**   ⇒ Picking – Shipment
- Production Labor**    ⇒ Operation Step Start/End – Indirect Start/End

### Purchasing

The FlexAbility Purchasing module handles the processing of vendor receipts by validating items received against purchase orders, vendor lot/serial information capturing and item specific bar-code labeling. Receiving can be done by purchase order item, purchase order line or from a printed receiver.

### Inventory

With FlexAbility Inventory, shop floor employees have the ability to automate inventory issues, receipts and adjustments. Inventory Move allows for the easy movement of inventory items between bin locations and Inventory Transfer between sites can also be automated. What's more, FlexAbility improves inventory accuracy and reduces inventory count times and costs with the Physical Count and Cycle Count applications.

### Production

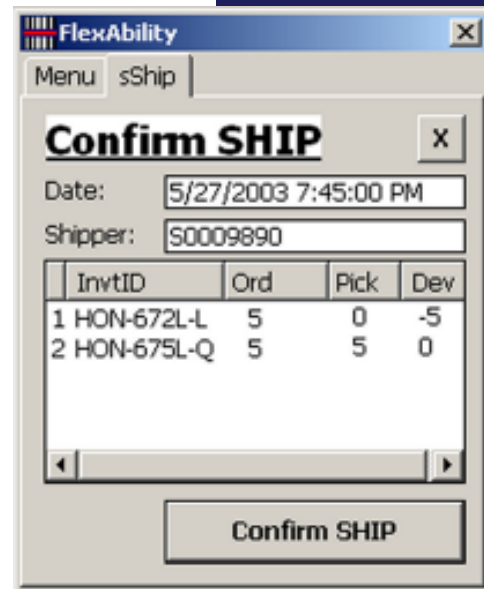
The FlexAbility Production module tracks the quantity and status of products as they move through each operation step in the manufacturing process. The automated Material Picking and Release process allows shop floor employees to maintain a current and accurate list of materials used against production orders. With Production Move & Completion, it's easy to see where an order is in the production process and how many products have been completed or scrapped at any given level.

### Order Management

With Material Picking, pickers can now select the correct product for each customer order quickly and efficiently. Inventory items may be picked by location for multiple orders, single orders or in location sequence from a printed pick list. Once loaded and ready for shipment, shipping labels are generated for completed orders and FlexAbility Order Management automates the verification of final product shipment to the customer.

### Production Labor

For businesses required to track labor by job, FlexAbility Production Labor integrates seamlessly with JAMS and Microsoft Solomon's Work Order and Project modules to allow employees to clock in and out at each Step of a Production Order or each Task of a Project with bar-coded Employee IDs and bar-coded production orders—making it easy to report production. The Production Labor module requires FlexAbility Time & Attendance.



## **FlexAbility Time & Attendance**

With FlexAbility Time & Attendance, manual time keeping is replaced with an automated time and attendance tracking system that ties directly into Microsoft Solomon's Payroll. FlexAbility Time & Attendance allows businesses to develop their own unique set of rules to meet specific time and attendance requirements and to:

- **Eliminate Manual Keying**
- **Improve Accuracy & Productivity**
- **Reduce Administrative Overhead**
- **Reduce Payroll Processing Time and Expense**
- **Manage Employee Hours and Overtime**
- **Maintain Employee Information in One Place**

More than just a payroll solution, FlexAbility Labor Reporting enables an employee to report time to each Step of a Production Order or each Task of a Project. FlexAbility Labor Reporting interfaces directly with Microsoft Solomon's Project and Work Order modules and JAMS to provide automated job costing capability.

## **The FlexAbility Alliance**

Our experienced staff and our partners can help you manage all phases of your FlexAbility Data Collection implementation—including hardware selection, installation and configuration, training and ongoing support. For the best hardware solutions, we have partnered with several industry-leading vendors to provide you the highest quality in today's data capture technology. Some of our partners include Symbol, Intermec, Texas Instruments, HHP, Zebra, 3Com, Eltron, Unitech and BarTender among others.

## **The Coalition Connection**

Coalition Computing Corporation was founded as a consulting and programming services company in December 1993. With a team of 12 professional employees, we deliver comprehensive IT solutions to businesses with services ranging from application design and custom programming to complete systems integration and ERP management.

A Certified Microsoft Business Solutions Partner for over eight years, we have developed in-depth expertise in Microsoft Business Solutions technologies and as a Solution Developer, we continue to evolve our own solutions to meet the unique business needs of our customers.

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