

A Little TLC Goes A Long Way

Your computer system is an important and integral part of your business. You've come to rely on it to perform some of the most important retail functions; selling items in POS, running your sales reports, placing orders with your vendors etc. When something goes wrong, it can be crippling, but the good news is that many problems are avoidable with a little TLC (Tender Loving for Computers).

Retail STAR equips you with the ability to find out if anything is wrong before it becomes an issue. The Alert function in the Utilities menu, for example, will tell you if there are problems with your scheduled backups or your SQL Performance. And in Schedule STAR, the Comm Logs provide notification if there are problems with polling. Check these logs regularly, and if there are any problems, you can nip them in the bud before they turn in to major issues. Of course, help is just a phone call away; 1-800-949-1470, option 6.

If you have Microsoft Outlook at your remote stores, you can configure them to automatically email the remote store logs to you for review. This is done in the Program Setup function in the Utilities menu.

System maintenance is another important component of owning and operating your computer infrastructure.

You should keep your systems free of non-business related software like games and music, as these can effect performance. Also, use shortcuts on your desktop rather than placing large files there.

The free space on your hard disk drive is also very important. As a general rule, it should always be at least three times the size of your database. And speaking of the database, you can use the Database Reorganize Utility to keep your database as efficient as possible.

Something that is particularly destructive is a computer virus. Fortunately, there are several very good anti-virus programs available that can help combat the threat. It's important that you run an anti-virus application, and keep it up to date with the latest updates.

Finally, keeping your hard disks tidy and organized helps Windows operate efficiently. This process is called 'defragging', and can be performed by using the Disk Defrag tool, found by right clicking on the drive letter from My Computer, and selecting 'Properties', then 'Tools'. You should defrag your hard disks on a regular basis.

A Little More on Polling...

The Importance of Checking Polling Logs

Checking your nightly communication passes at the main and all remote stores is very important in a multi-store environment. Every night, your StarComm Scheduler runs communications between all your stores. After communications has finished, information entered at the main location and remotes is readily available at all locations.

The STAR Scheduler provides you with logs that contain data about each night's communication passes. You should check these logs to make sure that the communication that was scheduled to run the previous night did, in fact, complete successfully. In order to check these logs, follow this simple procedure:

- On your main server, find the Scheduler icon in the system tray (located on the bottom right of your screen).
- Double click on the Scheduler icon, and the Scheduler window will appear.
- Click on the button labeled 'Comm Logs'. The logs will contain all the data necessary to determine if communications was successful.

You will see the dates and times of each communication pass listed on the left of the screen, and the details of each pass on the right. Information provided includes an indication of whether communications was successful or not, and if any pass failed, which store failed and on which pass.

If you find failures in your communication logs, please contact Retail STAR Technical Support, and a technician will be able to assist in remedying the problem. Call 1-800-949-1470, and selection option 6 from the menu.

Helpful Hint

Deciphering Report STAR Columns

Have you ever wondered what all those columns are for in Report STAR? Here's how you find out!

1. **Go to Report STAR**
2. **Click on the Columns (Inventory) tab**
3. **Select the column on the left side and right click on the name. You will see what that specific column represents.**

Try it for yourself, you may find reports you never knew existed!