



Aspect Software, Inc.
Back-office software for restaurateurs

Aspect Software Users Manual

How To Inventory and Recipes / Menu Costing

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How To: Inventory

Overview - Inventory

Aspect's inventory features can be broken into two parts: calculating your actual inventory cost and calculating your legitimate cost. Calculating your actual cost involves setting up your inventory items and entering purchases and inventory counts. Calculating your legitimate cost requires editing each menu item and entering the ingredients used to produce it.

Calculating your actual cost is the first step and it must be done before you can move on to calculating your legitimate cost.

To calculate your actual cost, you will first set up your inventory groups, vendors and items. Then you will enter your first inventory count. This will be your beginning inventory. Next, you will enter each invoice you receive after your first count. When you enter your second inventory count, this will be your ending inventory and you will have a complete period. This ending inventory will become your beginning inventory for the next period and you'll continue entering invoices and counts in the same manner.

Inventory Groups

Inventory items that you enter in Aspect will be organized into groups such as meat, dairy, produce, dry goods, etc. The first step in setting up your inventory is to define these groups. To do this, open the Navigator by clicking on the Lightning bolt. Select the Inventory Setup tab and then Inventory Groups. Aspect will create a number of default groups for you. The four top-level groups are Food, Bar, Operating and Group 4. Each group you enter will be a sub of one of these groups. For example, meat, dairy and produce will each be a sub of food. Liquor, beer and wine will each be a sub of Bar.

To add a group, click on the green '+'. Enter a name for the group and make it a sub of Food, Bar or Operating. Do not worry about entering a G/L code for the group.

Sales links are used to calculate the cost percentage of each group in the Cost Of Sales report. For example, food cost will be displayed as a percentage of food sales, liquor as a percentage of liquor sales, and so on. Each of your food groups will have one sales link for representing net food sales. If you are using an HSI system, the sales link will be named 'Actual Food'. On Aloha, it's called 'Net Food'. On other POS systems, it might be named 'Food Sales' or just 'Food'. Enter a sales link for the group and press Ok.

Enter sales links for your liquor, beer and wine groups in a similar fashion using 'Actual Liquor', 'Actual Beer' and 'Actual Wine' (or Net Liquor, Net Beer and Net Wine).

Make sure to edit each of the three main groups (Food, Bar and Operating) and enter sales links for these groups as well. The Bar group will have three sales links (liquor, beer and wine) since you will want to calculate bar cost as a percentage of total bar sales. The Operating group should have one sales link named 'Net Sales'.

If you would like more detail in your inventory reports, you can create additional groups to break down your inventory even further. For example, you might enter a group named Beer and make it a sub of Bar. Then, you might enter two more groups named 'Domestic Beer' and 'Import Beer' and make them both a sub of 'Beer'. The Cost Of Sales report would then show totals for domestic and imported beer as well as a total beer cost.

Vendors

To enter vendors, select Inventory Setup in the Navigator and then select Vendors. Click on the green '+' to add a new vendor. The only information required is a vendor name. You may enter phone numbers and addresses if you desire but they are not necessary.

Inventory Items

After inventory groups and vendors have been entered, select Inventory Items from the Navigator to begin entering your inventory items.

To add an item, click on the green '+'. Enter a name for the item and assign it to an inventory group. Do not worry about the code. Enter the way that you will count the item. For example, '1 Case' or '1 Bottle'. You must also list at least one vendor that you purchase the item from. Do not worry about the vendor code but if you would like to enter in Invoices by code or do reporting by code, it is recommended you enter it in here. Enter a purchase size for the vendor and the price of the purchase size. Finally, press Ok.

When you press Ok to save the item, you may be asked to enter a conversion if the count size and the purchase size are different. If you count an item by the Bottle and purchase it by the Case, the program will ask how many bottles are in a case. You would enter 12 next to case and 1 (or 24 or whatever) next to Bottle. If you do not know the answer, you may press Cancel. However, Aspect will continue to ask for the missing conversion each time the inventory item is used in a calculation.

If you make a mistake entering the conversion, right-click on the item and select Conversions from the pop-up menu. Any size with a number next to it in this window must be equivalent to any other size with a number next to it. For example, a 1 next to Case and a 12 next to Bottle would mean that 1 Case is equivalent to 12 Bottles.

Continue adding new inventory items to build your inventory list.

Entering Inventory Counts

To enter an inventory count, select Inventory Maintenance in the Navigator and then Inventory Count. Pay close attention to the date that appears here. Inventory is always considered to be taken at the close of business. If you count Sunday night, you would enter Sunday's date. If you count Monday morning, you would still enter Sunday's date.

To print a worksheet to record your count, click on the binoculars and select the Inventory Worksheet display. The column labeled 'Record Count' will be underlined when you print the report, giving you a place to record your count. If you want to print a worksheet for a particular group of items (bar, food, etc.), click on the binoculars and then on the Custom button. In the middle of the screen, select the group that you wish to display and press Ok.

When you are ready to enter your count, click on the binoculars and change the display to 'Inventory Count'. Double-click on an item to enter the count for that item. When you press Ok, you will automatically be prompted to enter a count for the next item in the list.

You can enter multiple counts for an item by separating them with a comma or a space. For example '1 2 3' and '1,2,3' would both be interpreted as 6. You can also use the +, -, x and / symbols. For example, "2x24+16" would be interpreted as 64.

If you do not enter a count for an item, Aspect will use the perpetual inventory (what it thinks you should have) as the ending inventory. If an item is out of stock, enter a zero rather than skipping it. At any time, you can right-click in the inventory count window and select Initialize Counts. This will cause the program to enter a zero for all uncounted items. This ensures that a perpetual inventory is not mistakenly used as an ending inventory.

Your inventory count is not saved until you close the count window. When you close the count window, you will be prompted to save your changes. You will also see a warning if you have not entered a count for all items in the inventory.

Entering Counts By Area

When you enter an inventory count, you also have the option to record counts by area (walk-in, Bar, etc.) rather than just a total count. To do this, right-click anywhere in the count window and select Edit Counts By Area from the pop-up menu.

To add an area, click the New button and enter a name for the area. Next, add some items to the area. Locate an item in the drop-down list and press the button named 'Add item to area'. You can add entire groups to an area in a similar fashion.

When you've added all of the items that belong in the area, use the 'Move Up' and 'Move Down' buttons to organize the items in a particular order.

To print a count worksheet for the area, press the Print button. The worksheet will be underlined so you have a place to write down the count.

To enter counts, double-click on one of the items that you added to the area and enter the count. You will automatically be prompted to enter a count for the next item when you press Ok.

Counts that you enter here will be visible and can be edited in the main count window when you close the area.

Entering Invoices

Invoices are entered into Aspect to calculate the usage and update the price of each inventory item.

To enter invoices, select Inventory Maintenance from the Navigator and then click on Invoices. Press the green '+' to add a new invoice. Select the correct vendor and enter the invoice date, number and amount. The due date, discount dates and payment information are not required. Press the Insert button to add each item received on the invoice. Each item can be added by name or by vendor ID. When adding an item, enter the total quantity purchased and the total amount paid for the item. When you press Ok, you will be prompted to enter the next item on the invoice. Press Cancel to stop entering new items.

The most common mistake made when recording invoices is entering the wrong size or entering the unit price instead of the total amount paid. To avoid these mistakes, you can have Aspect warn you when the price of an item changes by a certain percent. To do this, select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Inventory Settings. Enter a value after the line 'Notify when price changes by'. A value between 15 and 25 percent is usually sufficient to catch mistakes and large price changes while ignoring smaller changes.

If you need to record a credit invoice, enter it the same as a normal invoice but enter negative values for the quantity purchased and total price paid.

Importing Electronic Invoices From Your Vendors

Aspect imports electronic invoices supplied by Alliant, Sysco, US Foodservice, Shamrock, PYA, Milton, Gordon's Foodservice, Nicholas Foodservice, PFG, Maines and Abbott. If you order from one of these vendors, you may receive an email containing the invoice information or your vendor may have a website on which you can view the invoice. (If you do not receive an invoice by email or if you cannot view your invoices on a website, you'll need to contact your vendor ask them to either email you an invoice or tell you how to view it online.)

To import one of these invoices, you need to be viewing it either as an email or on a website. Click on the Edit menu of the program you are using to view the invoice and select 'Select All'. Click on the Edit menu again and select 'Copy'. When you've copied the invoice, open the invoice list in Aspect by selecting Edit Invoices from the Inventory menu. Right-click anywhere on the window and select 'Paste Electronic Invoice'.

After a few moments, Aspect should recognize the invoice and open an import window. In this window, you'll select the Aspect inventory item that corresponds to each line item on the invoice. As you select each item, Aspect will record the vendor item codes and you will not have to match each item again the next time.

If you are importing from Maines, you'll need to create a receiving worksheet with the following

columns - Item Number, Product Description, Unit Measure, Pack, Price, [and](#) Quantity Ordered. It is important that the columns be added in this order. Click on the Display button, copy this receiving worksheet and paste it into Aspect as described above.

Cost Of Sales Report

When you have entered a beginning inventory, an ending inventory and all of the invoices in between, you will have your first Cost Of Sales report.

To open the report, select Inventory Maintenance in the Navigator and click on Cost Of Sales. Aspect looks for inventory counts that have been entered and prompts you to select a valid starting and ending date. The beginning date will be the day after an inventory count. The ending date will be the day of an inventory count.

There are two default displays in the Cost Of Sales report. Click on the binoculars to select a display. The 'Cost Of Sales' display shows the actual cost for each inventory group as a dollar amount and as a percent of sales. The 'Actual Vs. Legitimate' display compares actual cost for each group against the legitimate cost. If you have not entered all of your recipe ingredients, the legitimate cost will be meaningless.

To learn more about a particular group, right-click on the line for that group and select 'Inspect' from the pop-up menu. A new window will open displaying the actual and legitimate cost for each item in the group. Click on the binoculars to select a display. The 'Inspect Cost' display shows dollar costs for each item. The 'Inspect Usage' display shows usages for each item.

You can inspect again by right-clicking on an item in the report and selecting 'Inspect'. A new window will open showing you detailed activity for that item over the period of the report. The 'Quantity Purchased' column shows any purchases recorded for the item. The 'Legit Usage' column shows the amount that should have been used each day. If you have not entered recipe ingredients, this column will be useless. The 'Perpetual On Hand' column displays the amount that should be on hand at the end of each day. It is calculated by taking the previous day's perpetual, adding any purchases and subtracting the legitimate usage. Whenever you enter an actual count, the perpetual is reset and begins calculating again from your actual count.

Inventory Extensions

The Inventory Extensions report should be reviewed at the end of each inventory period to locate any mistakes in the inventory. To open it, select Inventory Maintenance from the Navigator and click on Inventory Extensions.

Click on the binoculars to select a display. The display named 'Inventory Extensions' shows the usage and cost for each item in the inventory. The display named 'Actual Vs. Legitimate' compares actual and legitimate usages for each item. The legitimate cost will not be accurate if you have not entered ingredients for all of your menu items.

Take some time to familiarize yourself with the other displays as well. These can help you spot problems in your inventory and call your attention to price changes.

There are three types of errors you might find in the report - errors in price or purchases, errors in the beginning or ending inventory and errors in the legitimate usage. If the price or purchases for an item look wrong, right-click on the item to inspect it. Right-click again and choose Inspect Purchases to review the invoices that were entered. Double-click on an invoice to review and correct it. If the beginning or ending inventory count **is** incorrect, close the report and go back and correct your inventory count by selecting Edit Inventory Count from the Inventory menu. If the legitimate usage is incorrect, you will need to review the accuracy of the recipe ingredients you entered.

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Inventory Item Usage Projections Report / Menu Item Sales Projections Report

These two reports are under the inventory menu named "Inventory Item Usage Projections Report" and "Menu Item Sales Projections Report".

They are nearly identical. The item one shows average legitimate usage for each inventory item each day of the week. For example, users can see the average number of tomatoes used (legit, not actual) on Tuesday over the last three weeks. If they key projected sales into Edit Daily Sales, they can also see the projected number of tomatoes used each day of the upcoming week.

The menu item report is exactly the same thing but it shows the average number of each menu item sold and the projected number sold for the upcoming week.

These reports would probably best be used for prepping. For example, the user can tell how many baked potatoes they need to cook or how much bread to bake, etc.

Exporting Invoices to an Accounting Package

For information on exporting invoices to an accounting package, check the topic named 'How To: Exporting Invoices'.

How To: Menu Costing

Overview - Menu Costing

If you have entered a few inventory counts and produced Cost Of Sales reports that look reasonable, you are ready to begin entering recipe ingredients into Aspect. When you enter recipe ingredients, Aspect will begin calculating legitimate usages for each item in your inventory. This will give you the information you need to determine how close your actual inventory cost is to your ideal cost.

Entering recipe ingredients is the biggest task that you will face and it is not necessary that you do it all at one time. For example you might start just by entering your beer recipes. Then you could begin comparing actual vs. legitimate for your beer items right away. Then you can add in the rest of your bar items and tackle the food last.

Fluid ounces vs. weighted ounces

Simply put, there's a difference. When entering sizes in Aspect, make sure to use Ounce for weighted ounces and Fluid Oz. for fluid ounces.

Entering recipe ingredients

To begin entering recipe ingredients, select Menu Costing from the Navigator and then select Recipes. You will see a list of all the menu items that have been imported from your POS system.

Double-click on any menu item. The menu item name, group, sale price and menu number all come from the POS system. DO NOT change them.

When you list the ingredients used to prepare the menu item, they will produce some quantity, usually one serving. This is the 'Gross Yield'. Practically every menu item will have a 'Gross Yield' and 'Serving Size' of 1 serving. The only exceptions will be batch recipes.

To begin adding ingredients, click on the Insert button. Select an inventory item and enter the quantity that should be used in the recipe. The 'Description' field is not required. Some quantities can be confusing and the description is used to further explain why you entered '.16 each' for example. You might enter 'one slice' in the description.

You are free to use any sizes you like when adding ingredients. If the program does not know how to convert from one size to another it will pop up a window asking you for the conversion.

Using batch recipes

Any menu item in Aspect can be used as an ingredient (batch recipe) in another menu item. To allow a menu item to be used as a batch recipe, right-click on the menu item and select 'Recipe Options' from the pop-up menu. Turn on the checkbox labeled 'Allow this recipe to be used as a batch recipe' and press Ok. When you go to insert an ingredient in another menu item, you will see the batch recipe included in the list of inventory items with the word '(batch)' after it.

You will probably want to enter new menu items for batch recipes that you make in-house such as dressings, sauces, plate setups, etc. To add a new menu item, press the green '+'. Enter a name for the menu item and assign it to a group. Do not enter a menu number or price for the menu item since it is not coming from the POS system. You will need to enter a gross yield and serving size. The gross yield is the quantity that the ingredients you enter will make, for example, 5 gallons. The serving size is not critical. It is the size that you typically serve the item by, for example, 1 Ounce. The cost of each ingredient will be displayed in terms of the serving size.

If you will be adding your own batch recipes, it is a good idea to create a batch group so you can keep them all together. To do this, close the recipe window and the Navigator. Select Inventory Setup from the Settings menu and then Recipe Groups. Press the green '+' to add a new group and name it 'Batch'. Then, when you return to your recipes, any new batch recipes you enter can be assigned to this group.

Entering substitutions

If you have menu items on your POS system that can be used to swap one side item for another, there is a way to record that in Aspect. Suppose that you have a menu item named 'Sub BP' which indicates that a baked potato was substituted for french fries. The ingredients for this menu item would be -1 Serving of french fries and 1 Serving of a baked potato. Notice that you can enter a negative amount for the ingredient quantity.

Fixing mistakes

When you enter recipe ingredients, you will most likely make some mistakes. These will be apparent when you begin comparing actual and legitimate usages for your inventory items.

Often it is helpful to be able to display all of the menu items containing a particular ingredient. To do this, click on the binoculars and press Custom. To the right of the word 'Contains', select the inventory item you are interested in and press Ok. The filtered display will now show only those menu items containing that inventory item. Make sure to set the display back to 'All' when you have finished (or somebody else will come along and wonder where all the menu items went).

