



## Five Questions: Tom Handley A series of informal Spruce customer interviews

### You can quote me

Our customers have been the driving force behind our unblemished record of continuous growth since 1985. Customer feedback, testimonials, quotes, and references are the key to the strength of our company, and that strength helps everyone with Spruce software. If you have an experience, a point of view, or a comment—good or bad—and you don't mind sharing it, please take a few minutes to send it to us at : [feedback@sprucecomputer.com](mailto:feedback@sprucecomputer.com)

Perched as they are between Lake Ontario and the Tug Hill Plateau, the cities of Oswego and Fulton sometimes get 25 feet of lake effect snow in one season. Burke's Home Center has helped people stay sheltered there for four generations. We discussed what makes it work with Tom Handley, co-owner.



### Could you describe your business?

Burkes Home Centers primary business is retail sales. We have two locations, Oswego, NY and Fulton, NY. Our Oswego store has been open since 1926 while our Fulton store was purchased in 1987. Both stores operate as home centers. They offer a full line of building materials and a complete hardware line to support those sales. Our customer mix varies in each store. But in both cases our contractor sales account for over

50% of our business. We have a professional inside and outside sales staff who are dedicated to working with our customers. Whether they are selling a gallon of paint, a few windows, or a complete house package you will always get their best effort. Burkes is a family owned business and are currently in our fourth generation. We are committed to continuing to serve our local communities with strong products, competitive pricing, and great service.

### How did you get into the business?

The business was first started by my Great Grandfather in 1926. Eventually my father, William Handley, took over ownership and ran it for 25 years. My brother Chuck and I were always working when we were younger and both of us eventually decided to make a

career out of it. I first worked here when I was 12. I continued to work part time throughout High School and College. After college I took a job in another field but was lured back after a couple of years. That was 1987 and I have been here ever since.

### Who is your typical customer?

I guess the only typical thing about our customer base is that they are local. We sell about 90% of our products within our own county. We sell to many different contractors. Some specialize in certain areas while most will take on pretty much anything. We also have a great base of consumers and a strong industrial group of accounts.

### Why did you choose Spruce?

It was really an easy choice. Our first computer system was actually *(Continued on page 4)*



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## 100 and Going Strong Spruce signs its hundredth SpruceWare.NET customer

Spruce Computer Systems recently announced its 100<sup>th</sup> SpruceWare.NET software contract. Chic Do it Best Lumber and Hardware is the 100<sup>th</sup> user of Spruce's latest information management system for lumber, hardware, and building material dealers. Chic is based in St. Peters, MO and has branch

locations in Warrenton, MO and Wentzville, MO.



"Chic Do it Best Lumber and Hardware is a well-respected member of the greater Missouri community," said Rob Fitzpatrick, President of Spruce. "We are pleased to have them as partners, and we believe as they do that SpruceWare.NET will help them continue their strong growth well into the future."

Chic is an industry leader already, and with SpruceWare.NET they will have access to the most modern Windows tools available. Moving from their Activant Version 2 system will put them at the front of the pack in terms of what their software can do for them, starting with robust information access and streamlined customer communications. We anticipate that their return on investment will be very high!





## Holiday Hours

Spruce's offices will be closed on Thursday, January 1st. Standard emergency support procedures will be in place. Have a happy holiday season and a spectacular new year!

“Perhaps it should have been our first choice”

## Welcome to the Spruce Family Thanks to all our newest partners

### Argonne Lumber and Supply

Argonne, WI

### Avis Building Supply

Avis, PA

### Carolina Millwork & Building Supply

Hickory, NC

### CHIC (County Home Improvement Center)

St. Peters, MO

### Elitsac Building Materials

Castile, NY

### Gustafson Lumber Inc.

Hinckley, MN

### H & H Lumber Co.

Superior, WI

### Home Supply Company Inc.

Louisville, KY

### Lincoln Village Hardware

Lincoln, MI

### Maquoketa Lumber Co.

Maquoketa, IA

### Mulherin Lumber Company

Evans, GA

### Poplar Building Materials

Poplar, WI

### Rossi Building Materials

Fort Bragg, CA

### Starr Lumber Co., Inc.

Alva, OK

### Tashman Screens and Hardware

West Hollywood, CA

## User Conference Lowdown Unexpected changes proved successful

The 2008 Spruce User Conference had a big surprise in store this year—in-person attendance was looking scant so we decided to alter the format and make it an online conference. You, our customers, were telling us that, while the economy isn't necessarily hurting you badly, it is making you keep a close eye on spending. The online format wouldn't have been our first choice, but we were happy with the results, and perhaps it *should have* been our first choice. We had fully as many companies attend as last year, and more people attended from each

company because of the small time commitment and because the conference was free for all attendees.

Based on the evaluations we received, which were overwhelmingly positive, we'll probably keep the online conference format in the future. We may also add a separate in-person conference which would move about the country each year and which would be geared toward owners and managers—stay tuned!



### Congratulations to:

- Barbara Trammell** (Bayview Building Materials)
- Brian Rollston** (Murray Lumber Co.)
- Doug Wathen** (Thriftway, Inc.)
- Janice Wilson** (Siewers Lumber & Millwork Co.)
- Karol Anderson** (Peter Lumber Company)

Each won a Spruce Land's End down vest, the result of a drawing held from all submitted conference evaluations. Thanks to everyone who gave us feedback.

## Employee Snapshot: Dan Grady Each issue, we briefly profile a Spruce employee.

**Name:** Daniel J. Grady

**Tenure at Spruce:** 6 years

**Education & Prior Work Experience:** Hobart College,

BA in History. Worked for Dataline and CSD (then worthy competitors!) in positions from help desk to trainer to sales. Went to Page Digital for a while before coming to Spruce.

**Main Duties:** Sales, Mountain Region (home base: Denver).

**When he's not convincing**

**potential partners that SpruceWare.NET is da**

**bomb:** Rides a Harley Davidson Fat Boy. Damages his knees playing hockey. Loves the outdoors: skiing, hiking, swimming, etc. Also enjoys being entertained by his 4 year old daughter, Avery.

**Favorite quote:** "There are two kinds of people in the world, those who believe there are two kinds of people in the

world and those who don't." (Robert Benchley)

**2nd Favorite Quote:**

"Some say this economy could mean the end of the world. If it doesn't end, now is a good time to invest in superior technology; if it does, it doesn't matter what you do." (Anonymous)



Dan at the top of Mt. Torres, CO (14,267 ft)



## Eyes Wide Shut **Having the best software doesn't mean you can ignore the basics**

So you have the latest and greatest software, SpruceWare.NET. You're a cutting edge company with the processes and efficiencies to prove it. Here's our advice: don't ever forget the basics, starting with data back-ups!

Each server should be equipped with the necessary backup software and hardware (such as a tape drive, for example) capable of backing up all the SpruceWare.NET data maintained in the SQL database (minimally).

Backups need to be done on a daily basis. Although backups are almost always automated, it's still necessary for someone (a representative or employee of your company) to be checking backup log files and rotating media daily in order to verify that your data is

protected. Again, this should be done each and every day. In addition, we suggest users do independent month-end backups and a year-end backup each year that is kept off site.

If your server were to fail, it could be necessary to restore some or all of your data from a tape or other media. This is the wrong time to find out that backups have not been completing successfully!

If you are not the person responsible for checking the backups, please make sure that someone is checking backups now and on a regular basis. Some companies check their own backups, others may hire an outside company. In

either case, media needs to be changed manually by someone at the server location; this cannot be done remotely. If no one is checking backups, and you don't know how to check or do a back-up, contact your company's IT administrator or consultant for assistance as soon as possible.



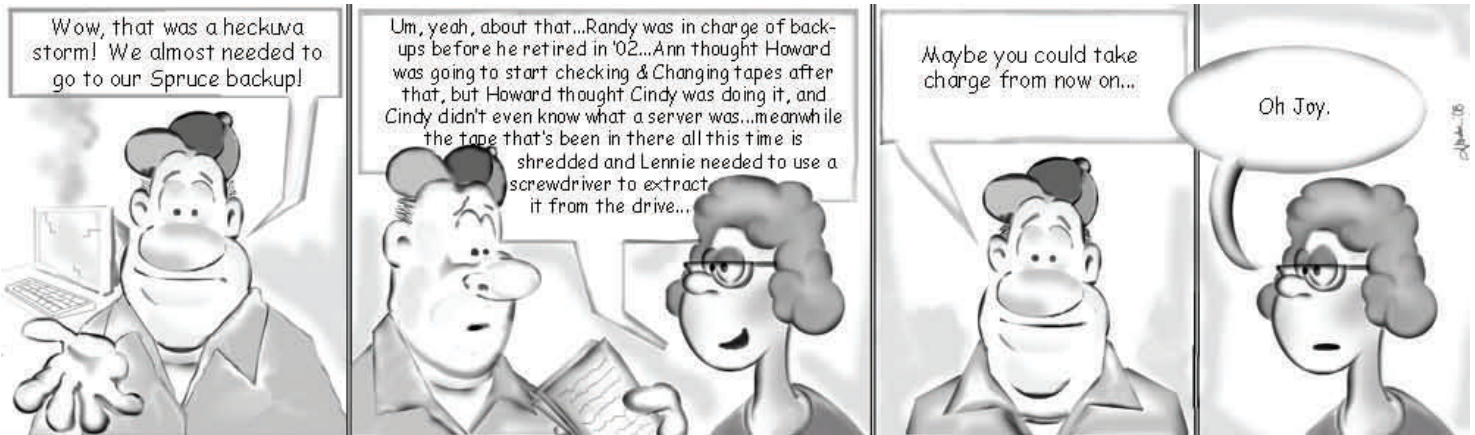
The media used for backups (tapes, etc.) should be rotated over a period of at least one week (labeling the media by weekday works well).

This provides a short buffer period if a back-up problem isn't noticed right away. It's also a very good idea to regularly store at least one recent back up off-site for greater protection against fire or other catastrophe.

## Home (page) Improvement

### Spruce's upcoming website redesign

Look for upcoming changes to Spruce's website—we're reorganizing and more clearly stating who we are and why we're a leader in the Lumber, Hardware, and Building Materials software world.



Andy Beisler

## Say Hey! **Trade shows we'll be attending this quarter**

Date	Show	City
Jan 21-23, 2009	Do it Best Winter Conference & Expo	San Diego, CA
Jan. 22-24, 2009	<a href="#">WRLA Prairie Showcase</a>	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
Feb. 4-6, 2009	<a href="#">NRLA LBM Expo</a>	Boston, MA
Feb. 11-12, 2009	<a href="#">SBMA Building Products Buying Show</a>	High Point, NC
Feb. 17-18, 2009?	PAL Show	Orlando, FL
Feb. 19-21, 2009	<a href="#">Orgill Spring Dealer Market</a>	Orlando, FL



Log in!  
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“Our Spruce  
Computer is our  
lifeline.”

## ...Plus More! SprucePlus Release 21 Highlights

### SprucePlus Rel 21 Highlights

**New AP “Vendor on Hold” feature** - Under Vendor maintenance you can now enter an “H” to put a vendor on hold. Once this is set to H, no AP billings invoice, receipts or purchase orders will be allowed to be entered for the vendor.

**New fields on the Order Deposit Audit History screen.** *Point of Sale, Customer Orders, Order Deposit History.* After selecting an order and a deposit transaction, the system displays detailed deposit information. New fields for this screen will include the complete deposit payment breakdowns where applicable: Credit card type, card number (4 digits), authorization code, checking account number, check#, miscellaneous payment type, gift card number along with dollar amounts paid on each.

**New Quote Inquiry screen:** *Point Of Sale, File Inquiry, Quote Inquiry.* You can access the quote via the quote number, quote

ID or account number. The display screen is similar to the Customer Order Status screen. There is also an option to print a quote from this screen.


**New GL Statement Option**—The GL financial statements can now be run to display the report on the screen when completed.

**New Hot Key feature** – Fax Status. This new Hot Key will Display data similar to the standard Fax Status selection in the Office function box option.

**New feature: Delivery Item Required.** When a delivery date is entered on the closeout screen of a sale or customer order the system will check the items entered for the transaction to verify that a delivery item was entered. If a delivery item is not found, the system will not let the transaction be processed. The user will be placed in the function box. To

complete the transaction they will need to take the Invoice option to return to the invoice item screen to enter a delivery item.

**New sub-screen in invoice retention inquiry screen** – *Point of Sale, File Inquiry, Invoice Inquiry, Invoice Retention.* After an invoice is displayed on the first page, you can select the PAYMNTS option in the function box to display the complete details of the payments made at the time of the sale on the invoice. This will include, where applicable: Credit card type, card number (4 digits), authorization code, checking account number, check number, miscellaneous payment type, gift card number along with dollar amounts paid on each.

For complete details on these features or for the complete list of all Release 21 features see our web page. 



## Five Questions: Tom Handley

(Continued from page 1)

from Spruce Computers. That was back in the 80's. We had actually switched to the CS2000 only because we wanted to be tied closer to our co-op, Do it Best. When they announced that they were doing away with CS2000 we knew we would be back with Spruce. Their people and support were always second to none.

We went live with SpruceWare.Net in March 2007 and have never looked back. We feel it has been a great investment and is certainly helping to pay for

itself. The advancements over our older system allow us to better track costs, locate errors, and reduce time. The document feature and the customer special order feature are two key items for us. We use these everyday and find they have been great for helping us maximize our business.

Our Spruce Computer is our lifeline. I can not think of any function I perform at work that does not include using Spruce. We use it for point of sale, building orders, customer special orders, general ledger, forecasting, reporting, and on and on!

**Lake effect snow and Oswego go hand in hand. Do you sell anything besides shovels and generators this time of year?**

The old snow question! Yes we do get belted with more than our share of snow every year. If you look out my front door to the North you can see the culprit, Lake Ontario! Winters can be challenging. While not snow plowing we do get a chance to sell some interior products. We do very well with drywall, insulation, kitchens, paint, and hard surface flooring. But we are always looking for another niche so if anyone has another idea please let me know! 