



## Five Questions: Dwight Simmons

A series of informal Spruce customer interviews

Dwight and Sandra Simmons started Mountain Lumber 20 years ago. Their average customer is a two-homes-a-year custom builder in the beautiful mountains of Boone, North Carolina. We spoke with Dwight about his challenges and strategies for succeeding in a highly competitive market.

### Could you describe your business?

We are a "hometown" retail lumber yard focused on products and services for the custom builder. We have been very open to change and new and different ways of operating. We were the first in the market to open a millwork sales center, a door hanging facility, and a custom millwork shop. In a similar fashion, we embraced new technology with trusted vendors. We have a VOIP phone system with PRI on a

T-1 line connecting five different locations, Javelin layout design software, and the latest and best operating software in the business, Spruceware.net.

### How did you get started?

Interestingly, following a long streak of failures in other professions, a friend hired me at a building supply he owned "just to fill a position." As it turned out, I failed there also.... But had found something I loved to do. Needing a job, I then went to a second local building supply, and was released there also.... At that point, Sandra and I were ready to try it on our own, sink or swim. And to be honest about it, there were many struggles and points along this journey where we should have quit; but we would not give up.

Finally, after about fifteen years on our own, we found some help and guidance through Larry Adams, Jim Enter, and the Roundtable Program at the Southern Building

Material Association. Glen Hoy at Buck Lumber in Charleston, SC played a key role

in getting us on the right course, with his unwelcome highly vocal analysis of our operation....

**You're certainly not alone as an LBM dealer in the Boone, NC area. How do you compete?**

Our membership in Lumbermen's Merchandising Corporation and our manufacturing capabilities certainly provide us with some opportunities, but our greatest asset is our staff. There are seven local independents, two Lowe's stores, and recently a number of

*(Continued on page 3)*



### User Conference Issue!

The 2008 Spruce User Conference will be taking place November 10th and 11th at the Desmond. Don't miss out on the opportunity to brush up on best practices, learn about new trends, and enjoy brainstorming with your peers.

Invitation packets are going out soon, but you can find yours online by logging in at [www.spruce1.com](http://www.spruce1.com).

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## SprucePlus Features you can use

### Report helpful hints

When looking for a report with specific data, you can use the Headings option found in the function box on any of the Report Selection screens. First select the desired report, then select the Headings option. The system will display the Report's headings and any conditional filtering ("where clause").



To find reports that contain desired fields you can use the Search option found in the function box on any of the Report Selection screens. Once you select the Search option, the system will display a list of available fields for the file set you are under (inventory, customer, etc.) You can page through the field list, use the up and down arrows for the current list and select desired

fields by hitting Return on the field. You can select up to six fields. Once fields are selected you can take option (2) for search and the system will scan the reports on the system and will display the number of reports that contain the selected fields. You can then page through these reports. The system displays the heading information, where clause and notes for each report. If you find the report you want, just take the (2) Return option and you're ready to run the report. ☺



## Mark your Calendars! Spruce User Conference

Mon Nov

10

Tue Nov

11

### Attendee responses to last year's conference:

*"The location is fantastic and the format of the conference allows us to customize the seminars we go to..."*

*"Excellent. Very Convenient. Very Informative."*

*"Great Location."*

*"(I) enjoy accessibility to all company personnel."*

*"I learned a lot of new things."*

*"I enjoy hearing others speak about challenges that they have overcome...."*

*"A+"*

*"Excellent. Best conference ever."*

### User Conference Agenda **Become a better competitor!**

#### Monday November 10

Registration/Continental Breakfast 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

General Session 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Keynote Address – George Amedore Jr. 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Session 1 10:45 AM – 11:45 AM

SpruceWare.NET Release Notes Part I

Crystal Reports Integration

SprucePlus Release 21 Notes and Cool Features

Increasing Sales with BuilderWire for SpruceWare.NET

Installed Sales : Roundtable

Lunch 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM

Session 2 12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

SpruceWare.NET Release Notes Part II

Managing Trade Credit

Disaster Planning and Recovery

SpruceWare.NET Executive Dashboard

Credit and Lien Management : Roundtable

Session 3 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

SpruceWare.NET Accounts Receivable Training

SpruceWare.NET Software Cornerstones

EDI and Product Catalog Features

SpruceWare.NET Mobile Applications

Green Building and Certification : Roundtable

Session 4 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM

SpruceWare.NET Purchase Order Training

Maximize the efficiency of your truck fleet

Import/Export and Material Lists Features

Managing the technology within your company

Credit Card Processing, Settlement and Security

Cocktails in the King Street Courtyard, Desmond Inn 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Dinner in King Street Ballroom 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

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### Employee Snapshot: Chris Gallelli **Each issue, we briefly profile a Spruce employee.**

**Name:** Chris Gallelli

**Tenure at Spruce:**

3 Years (greenhorn).

**Education & Prior Work**

**Experience:** BS in Electrical Engineering; MBA, Union College. Was a Database Developer for GE and Matthew Bender Associates, later becoming a Development Manager and a Database Administrator at Alltel.

**Main Duties:** Chris is a SQL database guru at Spruce,

working to improve SpruceWare.NET's speed and reliability through performance tuning, database administration, database programming and occasional .NET development.

**When he's not writing**

**SQL:** He's writing about SQL. Chris's workaholic tendencies have resulted in the co authorship of two books, *SQL Server 2000 Unleashed* and *SQL Server 2005 Unleashed*. He's currently working on a third—you guessed it, *SQL Server 2008*

*Unleashed.*

Chris also enjoys soccer, golf, bass fishing, travel and biking. He lives with his Wife, Laura; two daughters, Rachael, 16, and Kayla, 13; and two male dogs that help maintain some balance.

**Favorite quote:**

"I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it"

(Thomas Jefferson) ☺



*Chris's book flap mug*



## User Conference Agenda *Continued from page 2*

Tuesday November 11

Registration/Continental Breakfast

8:30 AM – 9:15 AM

Session 1

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

What Gauges are you reading to keep your business tuned up?

Crystal Reports Integration

Seljax

Green Building and Certification : Roundtable

Session 2

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Managing the technology within your company

SpruceWare.NET Software Cornerstones

SprucePlus Release 21 Notes and Cool Features

Installed Sales : Roundtable

Lunch

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Session 3

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

SpruceWare.NET Manufacturing Module

SpruceWare.NET Executive Dashboard

Award winning Rental management software from Solutions by Computer

Credit and Lien Management : Roundtable

Session 4

1:45 PM – 2:45 PM

EDI and Product Catalog Features

Import/Export and Material Lists Features

SpruceWare.NET Mobile Applications

Credit Card Processing, Settlement and Security

### HOW TO REGISTER

Invitation packets are being mailed out shortly, one per company. You can get additional copies through our website.

Go to [spruce1.com](http://spruce1.com)

and log in through the

“Customer Support”

menu option, then select

“User Conference”

for a description and the

entire invitation packet.

Not registered for the Spruce website yet? It's quick and easy, and we do not ever sell our customer's information.

From the login page or from this document, just click on the link labeled

“Fill out a [short form](#) to request an ID”

## Five Questions **Dwight Simmons**

*(Continued from page 1)*

“hungry” regional and independent dealers working our market. All of us have similar products, prices, and service capabilities. The difference maker then, is the trust and respect our staff has, or can develop with the customers in our market.

Additionally last December, we made a decision to be the market leader in Green Building products and practices. We promptly completed the Certified Green Dealer program, and have since participated in a regional project, Cliffs Cottage, promoting sustainability and located at Furman University. The project was built to obtain the highest



level of LEED certification, and will be featured in Southern Living for the next several months. Also we have two LEED Accredited Professionals and one Certified Green Professional on staff; and have obtained our Forestry Stewardship Council Chain-of-Custody ID number. We are working with several different local organizations to promote Sustainable and Energy Efficient construction. This effort has made a positive impact on our business.

Operationally, the name of the game today is productivity, efficiency, and speed. That can only be accomplished through a computer system that provides information and history that can

be used to evaluate results, and make necessary changes...you can not operate on judgment alone, or on information alone; it takes both.

**All SpruceWare.NET users owe you a debt of gratitude for being a beta testing site. But many of them think the only logical explanation is that you're crazy. Are you?**

We were so excited to be chosen as a test site; to be asked to play a small role in the development of a product that will benefit our industry for many years to come. The officers and staff at Spruce were so accessible and helpful, that this was a “walk in the park” (mostly!).

*Editor's note: Mountain is online at [mountainlumbercompany.com](http://mountainlumbercompany.com).*

→ “You can not operate on judgment alone, or on information alone; it takes both.”

Is there something you'd like to see in SpruceNews?  
Let us know—we're always looking for ideas.  
[news@sprucecomputer.com](mailto:news@sprucecomputer.com)

## Delivery Driving you Mad?

With fuel prices skyrocketing, now is the time for you to consider an add-on that can save you considerable miles. DQ Technologies' Order Delivery Tracking Software. Load balancing, GPS tracking with route optimization, and in-depth analysis of delivery profitability are a few of the ways it saves. Add that to the key improvements in operational efficiency (including immediate access to the status of every delivery by everyone in your

organization, without pestering the dispatcher) and the cost justification becomes surprisingly straightforward.

ODT is an available option for SprucePlus. The integration into SpruceWare.NET is even tighter—it's simple for everyone to access, and order status is automatically updated at Point of Sale when it changes in ODT.

If you have 10 or more delivery

vehicles in service, you will probably improve your bottom line by investing. Studies have shown that up to 90% of companies are not monitoring their fleets or the costs associated with their delivery business, and most are wasting in excess of 15% of operational budgets on inefficient practices.

For more information, visit [www.dqtech.com](http://www.dqtech.com) or call Charlie Hansen at (210) 408-6092.

## Charging for Delivery Driving you Mad?

Charging for delivery is becoming more and more accepted due to high fuel prices. Once you decide to charge, though, you have to decide *how* to charge.

SpruceWare.NET can help!

There are three key decisions determining the effect of delivery charges: whether to hide the delivery charge or not, whether to make it fully automatic or not, and whether to make it taxable or not. Here are a few ways SpruceWare.NET lets you assess delivery charges.

**Set up a unit of measure (U/M) for a delivered price for given items.** This gives you granular control over delivery charges for each item in your inventory, letting you, for example, charge more for the items that cost you most to deliver. Your customers won't necessarily know they are being charged more for the delivery, either. You can make it almost fully automatic for customers you normally deliver to, since you can set them up with a default U/M; you can also set up an alternate SKU for the delivered U/M. On the downside, you either

have to assume sales will be delivered or they won't, and salespeople would have to manually change each line item if the assumption is wrong. Store margins will be artificially increased because there is no way to map the increase to a different GL account. Sales tax on the transaction will also be increased.

**Set up adjustment codes for delivery.** This is much easier to maintain than unit of measure pricing because there is no need to do anything at the item level. Salespeople don't need to remember to change each item, either. But they do need to remember to select the adjustment code when closing out the transaction, and customers will see the charge as a separate line item within the invoice body. GL is handled by setting up the adder appropriately. Sales tax is optional.

**Use a price level.** If you set specific items up to have a specific "delivered" price level, your work will be similar to that in-

involved in a delivered unit of measure, though the item maintenance is a simple matter of adding a price for the selected price level in the inventory database. Delivery will be "hidden" within the invoice pricing, delivery charges can be tweaked (and must be maintained) at the item level, and store margins and sales tax will increase. You can make the delivered price level a customer's default, or the salesperson needs to remember to do a reprice to the delivered level before closing out the transaction.

**Add one or more delivery SKUs.** You could do this by zip code (DEL12110, DEL12205, etc. would allow easy lookup), mileage (DEL50=50 miles), type of truck, etc. This method will allow you to add the item with its associated price when you like; the item(s) can be in their own group and mapped to their own GL accounts, though any affect on margins will be reflected on Point of Sale reports. Customers will see the line item on their invoices. The item(s) can be set up as non-taxable if desired.



“Charge more for the items that cost you most to deliver.”

Log in!  
[SpruceI.com](http://SpruceI.com)

Spruce Computer Systems  
9 Cornell Road  
Latham, NY 12110

Phone: 800-SPRUCE1  
Fax: 518-783-6685

Type	“Hidden”	Automatic?	Taxable?	Maintenance
Unit of Measure	Yes	Optionally per customer if delivery is normal for them	Yes	High (manual updates at the item level)
Adjustment Code	No	No	Optionally	Low
Price Level	Yes	Optionally per customer if delivery is normal for them	Yes	Medium to High (set it and forget it or manual)
SKU	No	No	Optionally	Low