



## Five Questions: Mike Lockwood

A series of informal Spruce customer interviews

“I learned from an “old school” lumber yard owner...”

Texas City, TX is a bustling deepwater port (the 8th largest in the country) about 37 miles from Houston. Just one of the oil refineries there, a BP facility, produces 4% of the gasoline needs of the United States. We spoke with Mike Lockwood, General Manager and Owner of Hoffman Lumber, about doing business there.

### Can you tell us a bit about Hoffman Lumber and how you got started there?

Hoffman lumber is a full service lumber yard that's been in business since 1955, primarily serving home builders, contractors, municipalities and the petrochemical industry. Located near multiple Big Box stores, personalized service, years of experience and going the extra mile has set us apart from the local competition.

I went to work for a local lumber yard when I was 17 years old (1971), just out of high school. I was going to the local community college for my architectural degree at night and realized I enjoyed serving the public more. The daily challenge of helping others build or rebuild their residential and commercial dreams was very appealing to me. I

learned from an “old school” lumber yard owner who had been in business since 1946. The lessons I learned during those 13 years are being passed on to my employees and customers today.

### Your company went live on SpruceWare.NET in May. How have things gone for you since?

Having used other lumber and hardlines software systems before, it took me a few months to “adjust my mindset” to the SpruceWare.Net software. We are all creatures of habit; I used the Activant software for 7 years prior to making the decision that Spruce would be a better system. Now that we have been on the systems for about 3 months, my employees (including myself) are recognizing the cutting edge technology of SpruceWare.Net.

### Hurricane Ike made headlines for the destruction it brought your area (just over the causeway from Galveston) one year ago. How was Hoffman Lumber affected?

Hoffman Lumber suffered some damage. We had to replace a large

portion of our roof. We rolled up our sleeves, put it into another gear and prepared ourselves to help others get their life back to some form of normalcy. One year later and we are still working toward that goal.

### What advice do you have for people converting to SpruceWare.NET?

One of the biggest reasons I decided on SpruceWare.Net is its cutting edge technology. Not an old system that has been reworked and refaced to work with the Windows environment. Finding pdf (System) stored Documents is incredible, talk about a time saver! Being able to import other Windows files, pdfs, Excel, Word, etc is a breeze. It is as close to being a Paperless Environment as you can ask for.

### Anything else you think Spruce users would be interested in knowing?

The software is really simple to use. At first I thought the system was too simple. I told myself...“I think I made a mistake in purchasing the software; it's too easy to use. Surely it will not do what I thought it would do.” But as time went on, I started to see the massive amount of history (data) stored and the amount of man hours saved in accessing that data, I knew I made a wise business decision in purchasing SpruceWare.Net.



“A Friendly Place to Trade”

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## Online User Conference Coming Soon!

See page 3 for a preview, and mark your calendars for November 9-13



## Deep Green SprucePlus features you can use

### Consolidated Access by Divisions

For multi-branch locations, there is a feature available to create divisions of operation within your company. This is done from the SET CONS DIV B R A N C H E S screen located under *Utilities* and the *Initialization* #2 menu. Divisions are represented by a one character division code. Divisions are only used for display purposes. There are no special division files.

A new field, CONS DIVISION CODE, exists under the *Add* and *Modify* functions under the *User ID* menu. This field may be used in three ways:

1. if blank, the user is allowed normal consolidated inquiry as permitted by their security and can also enter any division code that has been set up

2. if a specific division code is assigned, the user is not allowed consolidated inquiry but is allowed inquiry for branches within their assigned division using the B R A N C H E S functions

3. if an asterisk (\*) is used, the user will be prompted to select ANY division for inquiry but will not be allowed consolidated inquiry.

The following inquiry screens include options for division lookup:

- *Totals Inquiry*
- *AR/COD Totals*
- *Sales Analysis Reporting and Inquiry* (under the *Backroom Applications/Inventory* menu)
- *Purchase Order Item Inquiry*
- *Tracking History.*
- *Inventory* (and most *Special*

*Inventory*) *Add* and *Modify* functions allow division codes to be used as a shortcut to a branch list when choosing SAVE, BRANCHES functions. Division codes are also available for use with Sale Pricing and Price Changes when saving for specific branches.

Due to the variety of application function, specific prompts may or may not appear. Prompts for division lookup only appear if division codes are set up. These prompts vary. In some cases, division codes are not specifically prompted for, but may be entered in place of a branch (or list of branches).

### Order Archive

The system allows the storage of deleted or purged customer orders in an Archive file. On the Order Status screen, the archived orders are accessed via the ARCHIVE option in the function box. This allows you to select an

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“...allows you to select an order that has been deleted or purged and will display information about the order ...”



## Upcoming Trade Shows Hope to see you there

Date	Show	City, ST
Oct. 10-12, 2009	Do it Best October Market	Indianapolis, IN
Oct. 22-23, 2009	LACN Convention	San Diego, CA
Nov. 4-6, 2009	Western BMA Annual Conv.	Portland, OR
Jan. 22-26, 2010	Guardian Bldg Products Show	Las Vegas, NV
Feb. 3-5, 2010	Northeastern RLA LBM Expo	Boston, MA
Feb. 3-4, 2010	SBMA Bldg Prod Buying Show	High Point, NC
Feb. 25-27, 2010	Orgill Spring Dealer Market	Orlando, FL





## Idea Mill Registration emails coming soon for Spruce's 2009 online user conference

**Get ready** for a great lineup of informational seminars as we get ready for our 2009 Spruce User Conference. The conference will take place the week of November 9th-13th. Like last year's conference, this will be an all-online gathering, but we've made significant improvements:



- All of the seminars are set up for unlimited attendees
- You won't have any conflicting seminars because none of the seminar times overlap

We've got a great lineup of topics, including:

- ✓ Successful e-marketing
- ✓ PCI Compliance
- ✓ Funding options in a tough economic climate
- ✓ SpruceWare.NET & SprucePlus informational seminars
- ✓ Partner presentations by BuilderWire, Solutions by Computer, BlueTarp, and DQ Technologies

### SpruceWare.NET TimeSaver



You can enter percents for deposits on customer orders. For a full deposit, just enter "100%" in the deposit amount field; for a partial, try "50%".

*If you want to make sure all your coworkers get user conference invitations, make sure they are on our email list! Send a list of names with email addresses to [userconference@sprucecomputer.com](mailto:userconference@sprucecomputer.com)*

## The Text Big Thing Sending Text Messages from SpruceWare.NET

The ability to **send Text Messages** as notifications to customers and salespeople has been built in to SpruceWare.NET since day one—it's a matter of combining the recipient's cell phone number with their carrier's SMS Gateway. Here are email addresses for the most common carriers; for an exhaustive list, check out Wikipedia at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_carriers\\_providing\\_SMS\\_transit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_carriers_providing_SMS_transit)

Carrier	Email to Text address
Verizon	number@vtext.com
AT&T	number@txt.att.net
Sprint	number@messaging.sprintpcs.com
Nextel	number@messaging.nextel.com

## Employee Snapshot: Randy Caves Each issue, we briefly profile a Spruce employee.

**Name:** Randy Caves

**Tenure at Spruce:** 10 Years. Randy works out of Spruce's Wisconsin office in Waukesha.

**Education & Prior Work Experience:** Bachelor's in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Before that, worked in Software Support at an insurance agency and as General Manager at a petroleum distributorship.

**Main Duties:** Training new users on

SpruceWare.Net and providing software support for existing users

**When he's not imparting SpruceWare.NET wisdom:** Randy enjoys fishing, playing drums and undertaking home repair projects that are beyond his skill level.

**Favorite quote:** "That's My Story And I'm Stickin' To It" (Jimmy Buffett, from the album *Off to See the Lizard*)

**Favorite Book:** *The Enemy* (a Jack Reacher Novel) by Lee Child.




*Randy on the horn*

**Log in!**  
**Spruce I.com**

Spruce Computer Systems  
9 Cornell Road  
Latham, NY 12110

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

## SpruceWare.NET TimeSaver



You can open Crystal Reports directly through the software. Just set a custom reports pathname for your user ID and set the station to have custom reports access, then put reports in the report directory with prefixes (PS for Point of Sale, etc., as detailed under *Custom Library* in the SpruceWare.NET Help).

## Big Thinking The difference between hearing a good idea and implementing it

When I was a kid, I spent three summers working at my Uncle's Polled Hereford farm in rural upstate New York. It was great, but toward the end of the first summer, a hired gun with a small combine showed up to destroy my peace.

The oat fields needed combining. We got a hay wagon - yes, an old wooden flatbed beast - and laid out cardboard boxes all around it and partway up the sides. When the combine filled up, I drove the wagon over and waited while the combine operator emptied the oats into the wagon. Then I drove it over to the barn and *shoveled* the oats into a storage bin there.

The morning after that first day, I dreaded getting up. The job was filthy, hot and sweaty. I survived, but I thought I might have been happier if I'd been trampled by a bull just badly enough to sideline me for those three days.

Early the next summer, I was shown how to proportion various grains in the grain mixer (a PTO-powered funnel-shaped contraption that hooked up to my Uncle's tractor). It wasn't until later that summer, when the dreaded combine was starting its first trip across the front oat field, that it struck me that the grain mixer didn't have to *mix*. It could hold as much as the combine could hold, it could be pulled by the tractor to the grain bin in the barn, and it could empty those oats using a beautiful PTO-powered auger.

I approached my Uncle with my obviously brilliant idea. His first reaction was "no, we don't want to do that."

Fortunately for me, I really *really* didn't want to shovel 15 quarter-wagonloads of oats in a 100 degree barn in 95% humidity. I pressed my case, and finally my Uncle said, "Well, OK, you can try it." I did try it, and it worked. As an employee, I was happier and safer,

and I had more time to do other chores between combine loads.

If you're a manager, you will be repeatedly tempted to leave well enough alone. If you're a good manager, you will consider the pros and cons of ideas before saying "no, we don't want to do that." Good ideas don't always sound as good when they're from a new employee and they would mean changing something that's worked just fine in the past, but they're still good ideas.

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it" is a form of thinking small. Nearly every innovation that people have ever come up with replaced a workable but more difficult way of getting the same thing done.

Step back from your daily duties, take a deep breath, and think big when you hear a new idea. If you don't, you can't reach your true potential, no matter how good you are at your "normal" duties.



## Deep Green

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order that has been deleted or purged and will display information about the order, including: the original expiration date, deletion date, and sales ID of the person who deleted the order. If the delete was done by a Month-end purge routine, "EOM" will be displayed as ID. The Archive file must be set up on the system to be active. There is a

small fee involved in setting up the feature.

## Gift Cards

There is a special parameter (screen 3) for gift cards which allows a set minimum amount to be left on a gift card when a gift card amount exceeds the transaction total. The parameter amount determines whether a prompt appears asking the user if the unused card amount should

either remain on the card (for future use) or be given back as change.

There is also another special parameter used in conjunction with gift cards that allows linkage in the close-out screen of point of sale to the gift card screen. This allows the sales clerk to easily issue the customer a gift card (store credit) in place of cash back. The card amount is defaulted to the return amount in the gift card screen. In POS, access this option by choosing the SELECT then CARD RTN function from the close out screen in Sale/Order/Quote. 