

## HOW TO USE COLLECTIONS

The Collections module in Baseplan Enterprise provides accounts receivable staff and collection officers various functions to manage debt collection.

The information in the *Collection Summary* screen can be filtered by using specific filter criteria. Following from this, detailed customer account information will be displayed on the *Collection Details* screen. This screen provides collection officers an efficient tool to manage debt collection within one area of the system while communicating with the customer.

Included features are:

- Record communication history between collection officer and customer
- Create bulk email and letters
- Manage disputes
- Email / print customer statements / invoices
- View a snapshot of customer's account summary as well as detailed transaction history
- Drill down on customer invoices and associated rental contracts

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## COLLECTION SUMMARY

Typically, the Accounts Receivable staff in the business are responsible for managing debt collection. They are assigned one or multiple customer accounts depending on varied business practices.

**For example:** Customer account names starting from 'A' to 'D' to be assigned to Collection Officer 1.

It is expected that the collection officers will work mainly from the *Collection Summary* screen when contacting customers. This screen displays the customer overdue records and action details. Collection officers can use it as a To-do list for their daily activities.

1. From the Menu, select **Customers > Collections > Collection Summary**

The **Collection Officer** defaults to the logged in user.

2. Select the relevant filtering criteria in the *Selection Criteria* panel

### Selection Criteria

These filters determine the records that will display in the *Follow Up* and *Overdue* panels. The available criteria are:

#### Follow Up

Determines which balances display in the *Follow Up* and *Overdue* panels.

- **Show All** – Select this option if all the balances are to be displayed in the *Follow Up* and *Overdue* panels
- **Do not Show** – Select this followed by the aging to be applied to this option
- **Show only for Balances** - Select this followed by the aging to be applied to this option. If selected, follow ups for the current user's branch will be displayed regardless of who created the follow up.

#### Aging

Determines the aging range that will display in the *Follow Up* and *Overdue* panels

- **Include Aging** – Check this checkbox to include all aging periods
- Check the relevant number of outstanding days, i.e. **30 days +**, **60 days +**, **90 days +** and **120 days +**

Records will be filtered in a  $\geq$  basis. **For example:** When 60 days + is checked, records  $\geq$  60 days (90 days, 90+ days, 120 days and 120 days + will also be displayed).

- **Total Overdue** – Enter a value. All accounts with a total overdue greater than this amount will display.
- **Customer Name From / To** – Select the range of customers to be displayed or leave blank for all customers assigned to the Collection Officer.
- **Follow Up Date** – Displays all records outstanding up until this date

- **Include Special Customers** – If checked, special customers as defined in **Customer Master > Views > Options** will also be included in the *Follow Up* and *Overdue* panels.

### Sorting

The records can be sorted:

- **Alphabetically**
- **By Overdue Value**
- **By Credit Status**
- **By Credit Rating**

The *Follow Up* panel displays all the collection information for customer accounts that meet the criteria entered. Overdue items (items that were due to be followed up prior to the current date) are displayed in red. These are usually actioned first.

The *Overdue* panel displays all the customer accounts that are outside of their trading terms or over the credit limit. These can be followed up after the transactions in the *Follow Up* grid are actioned.

Right clicking any record in the *Follow Up* or *Overdue* panel allows the user to:

- View customer account summary by Month to Date, Year to Date, Last Year and All periods
- View customer account aging
- View collection details
- View customer record from the *Customer Master* screen
- View customer transactions
- Add or edit collection notes

Double clicking any record in the *Follow Up* or *Overdue* panel displays the *Collection Details* screen, allowing the user to complete the actions required for the follow up.

3. Click FILTER
4. Right click on the relevant detail line and select 'Collection Details'

## COLLECTION DETAILS

When accessed from the *Collection Summary* screen, the relevant record is displayed in the *Collection Details* screen.

The following information will be displayed:

### Aging Summary Panel

Displays the value of outstanding transactions for the following aging brackets:

- Current period
- 1 – 30 days
- 31 – 60 days
- 61 – 90 days
- 91 – 120 days
- 120+ days
- All periods
- Total for 31+ days

This panel also shows the credit available to the customer and the value of disputed invoices.

**Note:** The credit available is determined by subtracting the value of the outstanding transactions from the **Credit Limit** configured on the *Customer Master* screen.

### Collection Notes History Tab

Displays all the collection notes entered for the customer. Emails sent to the customer with account summaries and statements will also be displayed in this tab.

The following actions can be completed from this tab:

- **Emailing Account Statements** - Clicking the STATEMENT button allows the user to email a monthly account statement to the customer. Clicking this button opens the *Email Report* screen. The email recipient defaults from the **Email** field on the *Customer Master* screen. This can be changed, if required. The email text defaults from the parameter, **Email Body Used When Sending Invoices/Statements from Collection Details**.
- **Viewing Account Summary** – Clicking the ACCOUNT SUMMARY button displays the customer account summary for the current period.
- **Creating Collection Notes** – Clicking the ADD COLLECTION NOTE button allows the user to enter a new collection note for the customer.
- **Printing Collection Note History** – Clicking the PRINT COLLECTION NOTE HISTORY button allows the user to preview key information about the collection notes for this customer in the *Report Viewer* screen. This information can be printed, exported to Excel / PDF and faxed.

Right clicking a record in the *Collection Notes History* tab allows the user to:

- View Collection Note History in the *Collection Note* screen
  - View Email Log for emails sent to the customer with invoices/statements
5. Right click on the relevant collection note and select 'View Collection Note History' to open the last collection note that is yet to be completed, i.e. the **Done** checkbox is unchecked.

**Note:** This is the stage at which collection officers may call the contact displayed on the collection note.

6. Edit the note or enter a new collection note as described in the '[Collection Notes](#)' section of this document

### Transactions Tab

Displays all the transactions for the selected customer, including credit notes, unapplied payments and outstanding invoices.

The **Dispute** checkbox can be checked for invoices that are under dispute.

**For example:** A collection officer contacts the customer regarding debt collection. However, the customer claims that they have been overcharged.

This will display a separate screen asking the user to select a reason for dispute. These reasons are configured in **Customers > Configuration > Reasons** for the **Module** 'DBTDispute'. The **Dispute** checkbox will now be checked on the *Customer Invoices / Credit Notes* screen with the reason code in the adjacent field.

Right clicking a record in the *Transactions* tab allows the user to preview the invoice or credit note in the *Report Viewer* screen.

The following actions can be completed from this tab:

- Sending invoices – Selecting the relevant outstanding invoices and clicking the SEND INVOICES button allows the user to email the invoices to the customer. Clicking this button opens the *Email Report* screen. The email recipient defaults from the **Email** field on the *Customer Master* screen. This can be changed, if required. The email text defaults from the parameter, **Email Body Used When Sending Invoices/Statements from Collection Details**.
- Sending invoices and statements - Selecting the relevant outstanding invoices and clicking the SEND INVOICES WITH STATEMENTS button allows the user to email the selected invoices along with a separate attachment for the account statement listing all the outstanding transactions. The email recipient defaults from the **Email** field on the *Customer Master* screen. This can be changed, if required. The email text defaults from the parameter, **Email Body Used When Sending Invoices/Statements from Collection Details**.
- Forecasting a payment date – Selecting an outstanding invoice, entering a date and clicking the adjacent FORECAST PAYMENT DATE button adds the date to the invoice detail line in the *Transactions* tab and to the *Collections Details* panel on the *Customer Invoices / Credit Notes* screen.
- View relevant balances – Clicking the ALL BALANCES button displays all the customer transactions, including paid invoices and payments. Clicking the BALANCE <> 0 changes the view to display only the outstanding transactions.

Emails sent to customers can be viewed from **Utilities > View Emails**. All Invoice and Statement attachment file names are timestamped in this screen to ensure unique file names are saved, so that Invoice and Statement reports can be viewed at a later date.

### Rental Contracts Tab

Displays the rental contracts created for the customer. Clicking the ALL CONTRACTS button displays all the rental contracts in the system for the customer, including cancelled and posted contracts. This view can be changed to display only the rental contracts in **Status** 'DELIVERY' and 'CURRENT' by clicking the ACTIVE CONTRACTS ONLY button.

**Note:** This tab is used for information purpose only.



## CREATING COLLECTION NOTES

Collection notes can be created from any of the following areas in Baseplan Enterprise:

- Customers > Collection Notes
- Customer Master > Actions > Collection Notes
- Customer Invoices / Credit Notes > Views > Collection Notes
- Collection Details > Collection Notes History tab
- Customer Bulk Mail Merge > Actions > Send and Add Collection Notes
- Collection Summary > Follow Up or Overdue panel > Right click menu > Add / Edit Follow Up

After following up with the customer, the collection officer may need to edit the existing collection note or add a new one:

1. Click **ADD NEW** on the *Collection Note* screen
2. Select the **Invoice No.** this collection note is being added for

**Date Entry** will default to the current date.

3. Select the **Reason**
4. Enter further details of the follow up in the **Comment** field
5. Select the **Action Code**, if required

Once the collection note is saved, this action code will also default in the **Action Code** field on the *Customer Master* screen.

**Next Follow Up Date** will default by adding the value of the parameter **Number of Days for Collection Note Follow Up** to the **Date Entry**.

**Note:** If this is simply a note and does not require following up, leave this field blank and after saving the note check the **Done** checkbox. The system will consider the note to be completed and will not display it the *Collection Summary* screen.

**Reminder Recipient** will default to the **Email** configured in the *Users* screen. This is the email address that the follow up reminder will be sent to.

6. Check **Suppress From Report**, if this collection note should not be printed on the Collection History report

This can be used if the report needs to be shared externally and certain collection notes contain details/comments that are not to be displayed to the customer or debt collection agency.

7. Check **Branch 'xx' Only** if only collection records for the user's default branch are to be included in the Customers Collection History report
8. Check **Include Zero Balance**, if fully paid transactions are also to be included in the Customers Collection History Report
9. Click SAVE in the toolbar
10. Click the PRINT COLLECTION HISTORY button, if required
11. Check **Done**, when no further action is required for this collection note

A Reminder Service nightly routine can be used to send emails to customers as soon as a specific number of days has lapsed past the due date of a customer invoice. This threshold is configured in the parameter **Number of Days from the Invoice Due Date after which Reminder Emails are Sent Out**. After this email is sent, Reminder Service automatically adds a collection note in the system with the **Done** checkbox checked. This collection note will have a PDF invoice attached. The attachment can be found at the location specified by the parameter **Location of the PDF File to be Saved when Sending Invoices/Statements (Collection Details)**.

*This function requires the Reminder Service step 'Overdue invoice reminder' to be enabled. Please contact your Baseplan Account Manager for more information.*

### Assigning Collection Officers to Customers

After a collection officer has been configured in the *Collection Officer Master* screen, the following procedure can be used to assign them to the selected range of customers.

1. From the Menu, select **Customers > Collections > Procedures > Assign Officers to Customers**

**Info:** This operation will assign all the Collection Officers to Customers. Continue?

2. Click YES

**Info:** "Assignment of officers to customers was successful."

3. Click OK

## CUSTOMER BULK MAIL MERGE

This procedure can be used when communication is to be sent to a group of customers.

1. From the Menu, select **Customers > Collections > Procedures > Customer Bulk Mail Merge**
2. Select the relevant range of customers from the **Customer Code From / To** drop down lists
3. Alternatively, select the division or officer range from the **Division Code From / To** and **Collection Officer From / To** drop down lists, respectively

Customer accounts can also be filtered by **Credit Rating** or **Credit Status**:

- Credit Status 'Overdue' – **Credit Not OK** displayed on the *Customer Master* screen
  - Credit Status 'Normal' – **Credit OK** displayed on the *Customer Master* screen
4. Select the relevant **Action Code**
  5. Click FILTER

This will display all the customers that match the selected filtering criteria.

6. Select the relevant customers or click the SELECT ALL button if all the customers are to be included in the mail merge

You can also select **Actions > Select Disputed Accounts** for selecting only the customers with disputed invoices.

The following actions can then be completed by the user:

## Create Letters

Users can create templates and send letters based on these templates, to the selected customer accounts.

1. Select **Actions > Create Template**

This will open a blank Word document allowing the user to create templates for various letters.

2. Save the template to a location that can be accessed when running the mail merge

3. Select **Actions > Create Document**

This will immediately create letters for all the selected customers.

**Info:** “Collection note has not been saved. Do you want to add the collection note?”

4. Click YES

This will add a new detail line to the *Collection Note History* tab on the *Collection Details* screen as well as a new note to the *Collection Note* screen, recording that the letter has been sent to the customer.

**Info:** “Mark all selected customers as complete?”

Clicking YES will check the **Done** checkbox on the newly added collection note.

## Export to Excel

1. Create a mail merge template and save it to a folder that can be accessed by the user

2. Select the relevant customers in the *Customer Bulk Mail Merge* screen

3. Select **Actions > Export to Excel**

The exported list can then be used to create a mail merge outside the Baseplan application.

## Mail Merge Emails from Baseplan Enterprise

Email templates created in Baseplan Enterprise can be used to send emails immediately with the Bulk Mail Merge procedure, instead of using MS Word for the mail merge process.

1. Select the relevant customers in the *Customer Bulk Mail Merge* screen
2. Select **Actions > Send and Add Collection Notes**

Emails will be sent out using the email configured in **Utilities > Configuration > Email Configuration** for the **Type** 'Customer Mail Merge'. This email template is linked to the **Action Code** selected on the *Customer Bulk Mail Merge* screen by the **Email template id** field on the *Action* screen.

**Note:** Ensure that the email template has been marked **Active** in the *Email Configuration* screen.

When sending out the letters, the method of delivery and recipient will be determined by the **Reminder Delivery** field on the *Customer Master* screen for each of the selected customers:

- If Reminder Delivery is 'Email', then the email will be sent to the customer's (billing) Email address
- If Reminder Delivery is 'Fax', then the letter will be sent to the customer's (billing) Fax number
- If Reminder Delivery is 'Manual', then the letter can be printed

If the parameter **Default Electronic Method on New Customers** is enabled, then when a new Customer Master record is saved without a value in the Reminder Delivery field the system will:

- Set Reminder Delivery to 'Email', if the customer has an email address regardless of fax number
- Set Reminder Delivery to 'Fax', if the customer has a fax number but not an email address
- Reminder Delivery to 'Manual', if the customer has no email address or fax number

Rejection / Bounce back emails and faxes, may be sent back to the **From** email address configured in the email template on the *Email Configuration* screen.

The following message is displayed after selecting **Actions > Send and Add Collection Notes**:

**Info:** "Collection note has not been saved. Do you want to add the collection note?"

3. Click YES

This will add a new detail line to the *Collection Note History* tab on the *Collection Details* screen as well as a new note to the *Collection Note* screen.

If the filtered **Action Code** is linked to the **Admittance Status** '2 – Welcome Letter', then the following message will be displayed:

**Info:** "Mark all selected customers as complete?"

4. Click YES

This will update the **Admittance Status** on the Customer Master to 'Complete'.

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