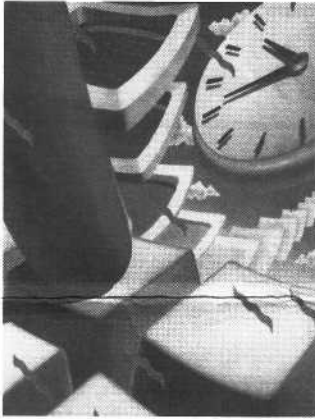


Preparing for the Year 2000...

(continued from page 1)



who have found it convenient and profitable to continue with CSI. Please be advised that Equis has not yet given us the details from which we might make it possible for customers to reach beyond the year 1999 with their format. We are awaiting their input and hope to get the necessary information soon so MetaStock users can continue to enjoy CSI's superior data quality, world-wide scope and unparalleled longevity.

The imminent effects of year-2000 compliance do not hinge solely on January 1st, 2000. There is another problem that could further affect those who must write date-dependant software. Leap years are programmed to occur every four years, 24 times per century, not 25 times as you might expect. Century years are leap years only if they are exactly divisible by 400. The year 2000 is one such leap year. It will have a date of February 29th unlike the years represented by the centuries 1700, 1800, and 1900.

This arrangement was decreed by Pope Gregory, who replaced the Julian calendar with the Gregorian calendar we use today. The Julian calendar (named for Julius Caesar) supported leap years every four years including every century. You might consider the Gregorian calendar as a correction to the Julian calendar in that it dictates the absence of leap-year treatment of century years which are not a multiple of 400.

The Gregorian calendar has been used in most countries since 1582, although England continued to use the Julian calendar until 1752. It was then, after consistently remaining behind the balance of the world by one day, that they finally converted. The British observed a leap year in 1700, whereas the balance of the world followed Pope Gregory's advice and did not observe the century leap year. Let us hope that all who program for the year 2000 and beyond use the

same convention this time.

We at CSI expect our customers to cross the threshold into the year 2000 without any problems. That is, assuming your computer, third party analysis software, phone system and credit card still work ♦

Bob Pelletier

Paying Annually Can Make a Difference

Some of our customers elect to prepay for service annually to take advantage of pricing discounts. This saves paper, bookkeeping staff expense, postage, etc., and allows us to pass the savings on to you. If you are currently on a month-by-month pricing arrangement and would like to consider a prepayment package, please see our current pricing information or speak with one of our marketing representatives.

If you are near the end of a prepayment term, our automated accounting system will alert us to offer you the opportunity to extend your data retrieval subscription for another year. We'll mail you a brief form, which allows you to continue or change your preferences. Any time you elect to renew a subscription term, you receive one full year of price increase protection on the level of service elected. This procedure covers both QuickTrieve and Unfair Advantage renewals.

At the end of your current prepayment plan, you will automatically be billed for another like period. At that time users can switch to our month-by-month billing cycle if they prefer.

How much can you save by prepaying? Here is an example: The Unfair Advantage World Markets database is priced at \$64 per month

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Refining Unfair Advantage's Computed Contract Generation Capability

To make it easier for users to build computed contracts, a number of changes and improvements have been added to Unfair Advantage. These changes affect Perpetual Contract® calculations, Nearest Future contract calculations and Back- and Forward Adjusted calculations. Only the Gann contracts remain unaffected. In all the affected computed contract forms, one can now specify the roll forward date relative to the last day of the month.

The capability that existed prior to this improvement was to identify a roll-forward day relative to the first day of the month. Adding a roll-forward date relative to the end of the month is very useful for users who would like to focus on the first notice day which is often calibrated by counting from the month end.

The option to compute a Perpetual Contract that is weighted by open interest has been expanded to permit weighting by volume.

The Nearest Future Contract calculation now permits rolling when the next most distant contract overtakes the current contract as a function of either 1) volume, 2) open interest, 3) the first of the pair, or 3) when both values show the necessary strength. In addition, when the desired field overtakes the earlier contract and one of the fields is represented as zero, the program will only roll when the alternate field confirms the rolling. The Nearest Future Contract logic can now accommodate up to 15 months forward in a hexadecimal form: 0,1,...,8,9,A,B,C,D,E,F.

An important change affecting Nearest Future and Back- and Forward Adjusted calculations that was also made has to do with the natural reporting delay that may be in place because volume and open interest are reported late for most commodities. In this event, the user now has the choice of 1) rolling a day later when the information is known or 2) rolling

early on the day before the information is known. Based upon the commodity and user preferences, only one of these rolling rules would be appropriate.

The Back- and Forward-Adjusted calculations currently can address contract splicing by making back adjustments with respect to opening prices, closing prices and the differential from the close on one day and the open on the next. It was pointed out by Mr. Philip York of QBL in Australia (pyork@qbl.com.au) that in all of these cases there is a flaw in the Unfair Advantage machinery that can cause a real price gap to disappear. The gap that is lost depends upon whether one will focus on the gap in price for the old contract one moves from, or the gap in price for the new contract into which rolling will occur. The newest release of Unfair Advantage gives the user the added capability to include the gap that may be present in either the old contract or the new contract.

Of course the user can specify whether his output on any of the computed series is to be detrended or presented in raw form. File naming conventions have also been updated, but no existing file names will change. In other words, everything is upward compatible and will not affect any file names already used. These enhancements are available to all current UnfairAdvantage subscribers through our website at <http://pcweb.csidata.com/ua/ua.htm>. We welcome your comments and suggestions on this program via email. Please write to us at: uafeedback@csidata.com. ♦

*Keeping
You
Posted...*

*An excellent source
for information on
Year 2000 Compliance
is www.year2000.com*

Tech Talk

Each month in this column, our Technical Support staff presents issues of interest to many CSI customers in a question-answer format. This month they address the important topics of duplicate series in a portfolio and redistribution of data.

Q. *Is it possible to get duplicate data from CSI?*

A. QuickTrieve can download multiple portfolios (which are lists of desired commodities, stocks, indices and options) in a single call. Although it is not possible to have the same contract or security two times within a portfolio, it is possible to get redundant data from among various portfolios. For example, a user might download two fixed portfolios which contain overlapping data sets.

Similarly, a custom portfolio might hold some contracts that are also included in a fixed portfolio the customer is receiving. This might be desirable in cases where both contract-level and total volume and open interest are required for some contracts, or for users who deliberately track multiple portfolios. Developers, brokers, advisors, etc. often wish to monitor progress on customer accounts which tends to introduce redundant data items.

Unfair Advantage cannot download duplicate contracts, but if a user downloads with both UA and QuickTrieve, there can be duplicates only in the commodity area. In any case, the option of whether or not to receive duplicate data lies with the user.

Q. *How can I tell if I have duplicate data within my various portfolios?*

A. If you use QuickTrieve, just look at your daily data-distribution report. This report shows everything that was received in your download and clearly labels duplicate data as DUPL. A data listing typically displays on your screen during the distribution process unless you have reconfigured the software for a different approach. If you don't see a data listing or an option to make a printout, please adjust your User Constants to enable

this feature. We recommend reviewing your data listings often to weed out unneeded market series.

Q. *Do I have to pay for duplicate data I get from CSI?*

A. That all depends. In many cases, our broad pricing categories and generous prepayment plans make incremental differences in portfolio size inconsequential. However, if your duplicate data series (or any other data) should push your service into the next higher pricing category, our normal charges would apply. You can control whether or not you receive duplicate data and are responsible for payment for all data you order.

Q. *I use several different analysis programs for market timing. Do I have to download a different portfolio for each one?*

A. No. Both QuickTrieve and Unfair Advantage can support more than one format from a single data retrieval session. In QuickTrieve, your Master Path list determines which formats are updated during distribution. In Unfair Advantage, the Portfolio Manger takes care of it.

Q. *I would like to put the data I get from CSI on my home page on the Internet. It is an important part of the trading recommendations I give my clients. Is this permissible under CSI's service agreement?*

A. Actually, no. Sorry, but you'll need to discuss this application with a CSI marketing representative to negotiate a new contract as a commercial user. Redistribution of CSI data is strictly prohibited under our standard Data Retrieval Service Agreement form.

Q. I recently reinstated my account with CSI after many years away from the markets. I now use QuickTrieve 4.06 and am wondering if manual end-of-year file extensions are still required for my continuous contracts.

A. NO! Some of our long-time subscribers will remember the chore of creating new, longer files for each continuous series and then moving data into those files. Several years ago QuickTrieve was upgraded to include automatic file extension for continuous contracts, so this year-end task is no longer necessary. ♦

Paying Annually...

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when paid monthly, but just \$39 per month when prepaid for a year of service. For full details on available prepayment packages, please see our web site at www.csidata.com or mail us the Product Summary request form on page 8 of this Journal. ♦



Market Statistics Update

ADDITIONS TO THE COMMODITY DATA BASE

Commodity: NSW Electricity
 CSI commodity #: 494 Symbol: YNE
 Exchange: SFE (Australia)
 Unit of measure: AUD/MWH Contract size: 500 Megawatt Hours
 Contract size: 500 Megawatt Hours
 Delivery months: 1-12
 1st day on file: 970929 CSI point value: AUD 5.00
 Conversion factor: +2 Newspaper/CSI price: 16.90/1690
 Limit (price): None Max months forward: 12

Commodity: Victoria Electricity
 CSI commodity #: 495 Symbol: YVE
 Exchange: SFE (Australia)
 Unit of measure: AUD/MWH Contract size: 500 Megawatt Hours
 Delivery months: 1-12
 1st day on file: 970929 CSI point value: AUD 5.00
 Conversion factor: +2 Newspaper/CSI price: 16.90/1690
 Limit (price): None Max months forward: 12

ADDITIONS TO THE COMMODITY DATA BASE con't.

Commodity: DJIA Index
 CSI commodity #: 496 Symbol: DJ
 Exchange: CBT (Chicago Board of Trade)
 Unit of measure: Points Contract size: 10 X Index
 Delivery months: 3,6,9,12
 1st day on file: 971006 CSI point value: \$10.00
 Conversion factor: +0 Newspaper/CSI price: 8112/8112
 Limit (price): None Max months forward: 12

DELETIONS FROM THE STOCK DATA BASE

3016	AHT	Aircoa Hotel Partners LP Cl A
6443	AEF	Alliance Global Environment Fund Inc
5182	AMH	Amdahl Cp
18285	AMCI	American Medserve Cp
11343	ASX	American States Financial Cp
2811	AMRI	Amrion Inc
11101	LYX	Atlantic Richfield Co 900% Exch Notes 1997
8198	BPILF	Basic Petroleum International Ltd
7902	BWI	BioWhittaker Inc
6855	BLYDY	Blyvooruitzicht Gold Mining Co ADR
18999	BLGMY	Buffelsfontein Gold Mining Co
7862	CLD	Caldor Cp
9339	CSH	Capsure Holdings Cp
8919	CARD	Cardinal Bancshares Inc
9435	CTL0E	Cattlemen's Inc
4645	CDAT	Control Data Systems Inc
7127	CRI	Core Industries Inc
1860	DSYTC	Dorsey Trailers Inc
3305	EQE	Equisure Inc
8642	FFFG	FFO Financial Group Inc
8717	FMBC	First Michigan Bank Cp
7795	FOHA	Frederick's of Hollywood Inc Cl A
11073	FOHB	Frederick's of Hollywood Inc Cl B
8801	GIDL	Giddings & Lewis Inc
8811	CHIK	Golden Poultry Co
8826	GRTR	Greater New York Savings Bank
13231	HANB	Hanson Plc Cl B Wt
4165	HVFD	Haverfield Cp
8872	HECHA	Hechinger Co Cl A
8873	HECHB	Hechinger Co Cl B
15861	IGYN	Imagyn Medical Inc
12075	INTE	Interactive Group Inc
9007	ISO	Isomedix Inc
4500	KRYS	Krystal Co, The
1069	LFI	Levitz Furniture Inc
2769	MIDI	Midisoft Cp
13070	MXT	Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter, Discover & Co
4243	NSSX	National Sanitary Supply Co
15179	ALES	Nor'wester Brewing Co
1639	NUMR	Numar Cp
5563	OM	Outboard Marine Cp
29414	RFMCW	RF Management Corp Cl A Wt
29415	RFMCZ	RF Management Corp Cl B Wt
18364	RONCP	Ronson Cp 1200% Conv Pfd
8159	SECP	Security Capital Cp
4424	SRGN	Seragen Inc
5419	SFD	Smith's Food & Drug Centers Inc
12720	SOLQC	Solv-Ex Cp
9845	SONZ	Sonoco Products Co Cum Conv Pfd Series A
11420	SDX	Stampeder Exploration Ltd
6402	SUA	Summit Tax-Exempt Bond Fund LP
29130	SESIZ	Superior Energy Services Inc Cl B Wt
29327	TXL	Texoil Inc
1329	TVLIW	Tivoli Industries Inc Cl A Wt
3686	TPN	Total Petroleum (North America) Ltd
5224	UNC	UNC Inc
7518	U+B	US Airways Group Inc Dep Pfd (Rep 1/100 Shr Of Cum Conv)

Holiday Schedule

CSI will be closed for voice communication on Thursday, November 27th for the Thanksgiving holiday. Data will be available as usual for those markets that remain open and the CSI host computer will be accessible throughout the holiday. Happy Thanksgiving!