June 2022

Wordware Bits & Bytes

Our quarterly newsletter

NEWS

WE'RE BACK

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Highlights and things to know

TO OUR CUSTOMERS:

What a ride it has been these last three years. A major competitor went out of business which caused floods of customers to land in our lap and then there was a pandemic. We've really seen it all: some good, some bad. You may have noticed the amount of turnover in the industry right now. It's hard to keep up with all the new names and faces but what we can say is that we love our customers. Wordware Inc has been working hard to build the platform and grow by leading the pack with innovative technology. We've been refining the parent experience, sign-on methods, banking, and transactions as well as partner integrations. We'll get into some fun technical features later, but first I want to thank you for sticking with us through it all. Our mission is to make your job better and easier by providing you with good tools and a helpful support team. I hope we are succeeding in that mission for you.

CONTENTS

- Wordware Inc. History
- A Letter from our CEO
- Knowledge Base
- Ticketing System
- New Pinpoint System
- Deleting Student Photos
- Health-e Pro Integration
- Department Spotlights

I want to tell you about it all at once but there is simply too much to tell. We have some great new fee products that are coming out, Student Fee Simple, Invoice and billing, Tuition, Childcare, Menu Planning, Inventory, and more. Many of our products are 100% in-house but we also leverage partnerships with great companies like Health-E Pro which makes the best nutrition and menu planning software on the market. In the Single Sign-on Space, we have OMNID, PowerSchool, Skyward, and Classlink. This, of course, builds on our Databridge integration list which includes over 35 Student Information Systems manufacturers.

Then we have partners like Affinety Solutions with Athletics. Vend-ucation for vending machines and lunch service integrations are available. We also have K12 Underwriters which brings insurance and gap coverage directly to students and a lineup of additional partners that want to come on board.

Over the years there has been only one major reason we've lost customers and that is due to the shimmer and shine of an all-in-one system. All-in-one systems can seem like the key to the universe but in practice, they very often solve one problem by creating problems elsewhere or taking a solution away from another area. They generally fall very short. I often equate this to a swiss army knife. You know, those knives that have a cork opener, can opener, screwdriver, saw, and so on. They work great in a pinch and save you the trouble of carrying many tools around but would you ever want to assemble that 329-piece desk that you just bought from the office furniture store with a swiss army knife? No. The proper job requires the proper tool and it's the same with software for schools.

Wordware Inc has some of the best food service front-of-house products available on the market that can run on just about any equipment, fast, accurate, and easy to learn. We also have a Free and Reduced management system that is more efficient than anything else we've seen but we are missing back-of-the-house, menu planning, and Inventory. We've been working to solve that problem and we did and then some.

As an example, a typical all-in-one system will have two flavors:

SIS with Food Service Point of Sale built it. (this is missing back of the house, less than stellar FR management system)
Food Service System Suite with Point of Sale, Free & Reduced, Menu Planning & Inventory (this is missing an SIS integration therefore not technically all in one)

So based on the above example, neither one is an all-in-one solution where number one is missing the back of the house and number two must rely on an SIS integration for student data so where does that leave parent login and FR applications and payments?

I also must point out that the quality and usability of the suites are really important? What good is a great front-of-house system that is tied to a very poor back-of-house system? Don't let the shimmer of all-in-one promises fool you, the devil is in the details.

Since Bits & Bytes are normally dedicated to the food service side of things, some of these items may seem out of place but from a big picture perspective, we needed to put our efforts into really solid integrations and products for schools that would allow us to compete as a full line software solution.

We are not a Student Information System, our primary focus is high-quality and feature-rich applications that work like the proper tool for the job. Secondly, we assure our products all integrate together and into any SIS. So here is an example of our shiny all-in-one:

1. Product Offering
   a. SIS integration with DataBridge
   b. SSO integration for Parents with multiple SSO options
   c. Food Service POS
   d. Food Service Free and Reduced
   e. Online Applications
   f. Menu Planning →Inventory
   g. Tuition Management
   h. Child Care
   i. Student Fee Simple
   j. eStore (eCommerce for schools)
   k. eTickets (sell general admission or reserved seat tickets)
   l. mPOS DistPOS (In-person cash, check, and credit card stations)
   m. Consolidated Finance and Reporting
   n. Single account and funding source for parents to pay.

We bring much more ALL to the ONE

And we are bringing this message to Bits & Bytes so you can be aware of it and bring this message to your administrators.

We've also established a new customer success department which will be there for you to demonstrate, train, deploy or assist with any of these new products.

Read on for more information....

Wordware Inc. History

Karen Knight

I knew the founder of Wordware very well. Her name was Carolyn Meinhardt. She was a MN native, incredibly intelligent and a member of MENSA. In the early 90's, she designed and wrote the computer program for a Lunch Cashier System she called Wordware.

She had the vision of students being able to enter an ID number at the point of sale and having all students in a family eat out of the same combined meal balance. Carolyn travelled all around the USA in her RV motorhome demonstrating and selling the software to many schools. She had an office and a fairly large call center and training building on her farm in rural Dassel, MN, where the business was headquartered for many years. Carolyn is pictured here, on the righthand side.

Carolyn passed away on April 11, 2022 at the age of 72.

I started my career at Wordware under Carolyn, so I've been here longer than anyone else. I love the growth and changes I've seen over the years, especially under David's direction and I know Carolyn was proud of what the company had accomplished under his reign.

Something unique about me is, I have had Multiple Sclerosis for over 28 years. I owned a large restaurant/bar/ballroom/catering service at the time of my diagnosis and for health reasons, had to sell my business. Working from home for Wordware allowed me to get back into the workforce, despite my mobility & disability issues. It has been exciting to see the company evolve into more than just a food service cashier program.

A Letter from our CEO

David Belford

With great enthusiasm and excitement, I would like to officially announce the merger of Wordware Inc. and EduTrak LLC. We have been partnering together for several years and have many common customers, as well as complimentary products.

When I took over Wordware Inc. in 2013 it was in desperate need of a rewrite. The product had great features, purpose, and loyal customers but was running on some very antiquated technology. Technology is what I live and breathe which is why Carolyn Meinhardt contracted our firm originally. Before acquiring Wordware Inc, My Global Data Inc assisted Wordware with development. We eventually became the entire Wordware development team and then eventually became the proud owners of Wordware Inc.

Over the years, we successfully replaced the original Lunch Cashier System, which was running on outdated Alaska codebase and Dbase backend, with a modern framework that can run on any

HTML5 browser. We did such a good job of this that several other companies in the education space wanted to work with us, either as their development arms or as partners in the space.

If you think about it, Food Service is just as central to the operation of a school or district as the Student Information System. It needs all the students' data and demographic information, it needs to comply with NSLP and state agency's requirements, and it needs to interface with parents for things like making payments and applying for benefits, and so on. Because of all of these needs, our system was built to handle Data Bridging, syncing, data encryption, and security and also built to integrate with other systems. It's the perfect platform for products in addition to Food Service, products like fee collection, eCommerce, Community Ed, Athletic/Activities, Ticketing, Tuition, and Childcare.

Over the past several years, we've been building and building, building so much that we have never really taken the time to focus on sales and marketing. Traditionally, our sales have come from great customer referrals and website listings or partners. We have never turned on the gas or hired a sales and marketing team.

Now that we have completed many of our feature and product initiatives, it's time to bring these products to market which is why I am so excited about our merger with EduTrak LLC. I will be stepping down as CEO and stepping up as co-CEO of EduTrak LLC. with Brent Kauth as the other co-CEO. Brent will be heading up our outward marketing and sales strategies as well as managing strategic partnerships and finance and I will continue to manage the tech, development, and operations.

Over the years there have been so many confusing names, My Global Data, Wordware, SmartSchoolK12, EduTrak, and more. Finally, we can clear everything up and become one unified package under the name EduTrak LLC and the EduTrak Connect platform.

Over the next 12 months, we will be shifting our branding, links, and emails over to the new name, but we won't be shifting any people. All the same people and personnel you have grown to know, and love will be right here, working with you.

I love being part of a small and growing company like this. Everyone's contributions mean so much and make a real difference. We can listen to our customers and their needs, and literally, build solutions around those needs in record time. It's rewarding for our whole team. So I would like to say thank you to all, employees and customers. Let's get ready for what comes next!

This next phase is going to be exciting.

David Belford
CEO
Wordware Inc.

Knowledge Base

Introducing our new Knowledge Base! Get quick answers to commonly asked questions.

Our tech support team is available to assist you Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Central Time. There are three ways to get help with your questions: the new, searchable Knowledge Base, by phone or by ticket/email.

Our new searchable knowledge base can be accessed by going to the Wordware District Site > Support tab > Contact Support. Click on the Knowledge Base icon at the top of the page. Here you will find an ever-growing set of FAQs, video tutorials and step-by-step instructions for various topics. Just type a keyword or two in the search bar to locate the article you wish to view.
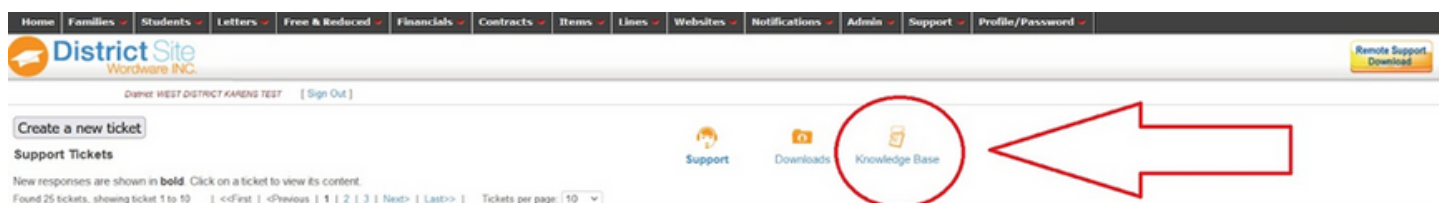
Our phone number is 800.934.2621. When you call, be sure to have your TeamViewer remote support tool up and ready, with the ID number available.


Ticketing System

Our ticketing system is also a great way to get a quick answer to your questions. The ticketing system can be accessed by going to the Wordware District Site > Support tab > Contact Support.

With the new District Site upgrade, you will notice the ticketing system has changed slightly.

You will no longer need to choose a category and sub-category when you create your ticket. Instead, you will choose a pipeline. When we reply to your ticket, you will receive an email with our response. You can now respond to us by replying directly to the email, rather than by going back to the ticketing system.
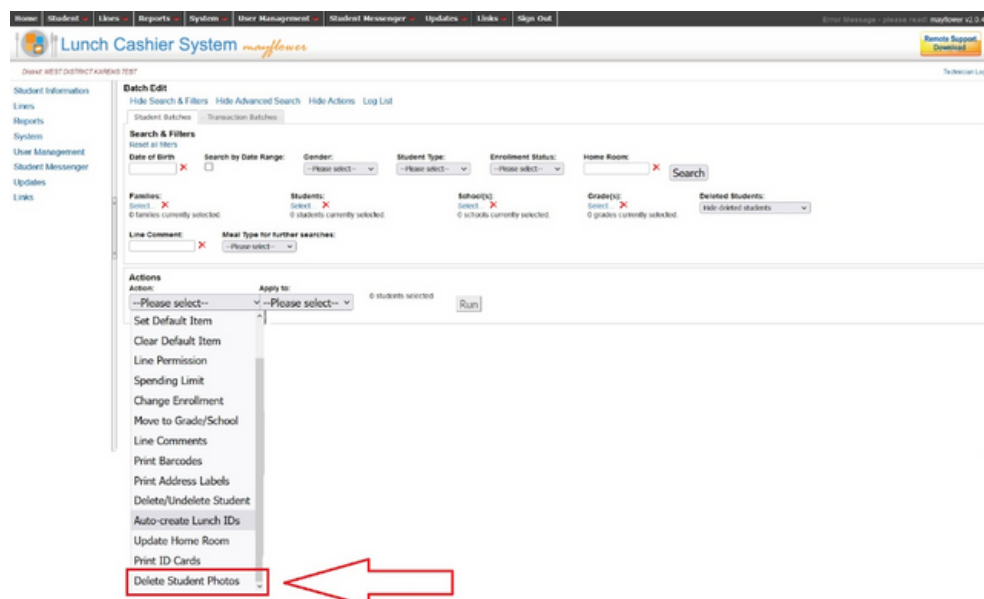
New Pinpoint System

With our new Pinpoint system, your families now have an option to receive their email/text/voice low balance notifications in English, Spanish or French. When families sign in to the Family Site, they will have the option to select a language. Pinpoint allows you to completely customize and personalize your message content.
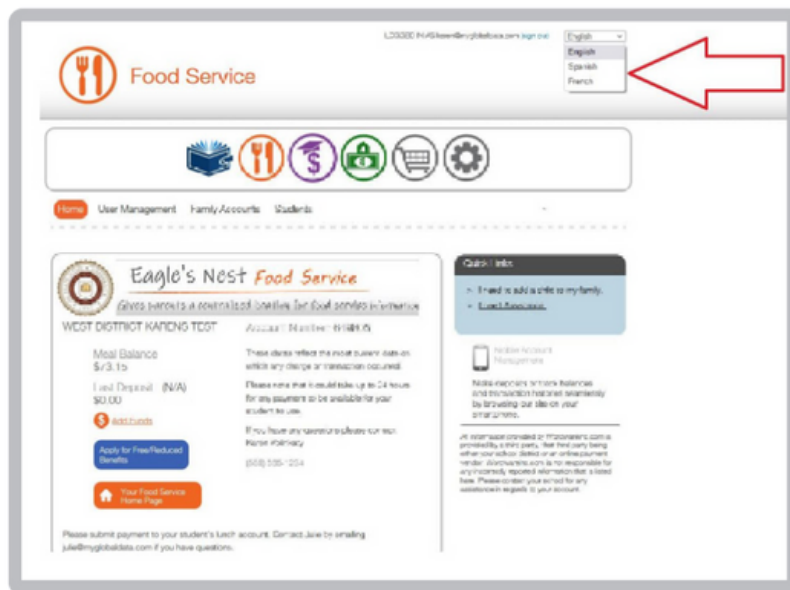
For more specific information about customizing your low balance templates for each notification type and language, check out our Pinpoint set-up instruction guide found here: Link

Deleting Student Photos

We have added the option to easily delete student photos. This feature can be found in the LCS1000 > Student tab > Batch Edit > Student Batches.

Health-e Pro Integration

Julie Lindem

We are excited to announce our integration with Health-e Pro Menu and Nutrition planning software!

We have extensively researched the menu-planning and nutritional software offerings, and we couldn't be happier partnering with this best-in-class solution! They care as much about serving their customers as we do, so the fit could not be more perfect.

Our first stage of integration includes Parent Portal access to the menu, importing of your Health-e Pro menu items into our system, with links to the nutritional information, along with the ability to add these items to your Point of Sale.

If you would like to see how Health-e Pro Software can make your life easier, please click on the webinar link below!

https://help.wordwareinc.com/health-e-pro-menu-planning-webinar

Syncing Health-e Pro Items and Nutritional Information

Customer Service Department Spotlight

Harrison Defries has been at Wordware for seven years. Featured in a previous Bits & Bytes issue, Defries works as Support Department Manager. He describes his job as "working with all the support technicians- making sure that they have the tools that they need to do their job really well. Some of it is training, some of it is interface and customers, some of it is problem-solving. I also somewhat work as a liaison between support and development when there's questions about if something should work differently or if there's a bug- things like that. [I also] help with setups and I help schools integrate their systems with ours".

This time of year marks the beginning of the busiest season. An average day begins with reviewing new tickets and then mainly working on those tickets- troubleshooting and problem-solving. Every day the support team does two stand-ups. Here, they meet and talk about current individual, team, or company projects. If there are tickets that are complex or have many solutions, the team works together to find the best possible solution.

Another part of Defries' day is attending development meetings as often as possible to "understand what kind of pressures they're facing or what new products are coming down the line- it's really helpful for me to know what's going on there".

Being at these meetings also gives Defries an opportunity to be the voice for customers and give insight into the needs of a customer. He also spends a lot of his time training and meeting with others one-on-one in the department. He says, "Having met a lot of people here, I kind of know what people are good at and where things go so if I can't solve it, I at least know how to give people direction on who they should talk to, to get things solved" .

One of Defries favorite parts of the job is problem-solving, "I really enjoy when I can sit down and work on a problem and I just get a chance to tinker with things and to figure out how something works". Another one of his favorite parts of the job is helping others grow into leaders for their position. He says, "I think everybody has a lot of strengths and a lot of tools and so helping them figure out a way that they can help the company grow has been really rewarding for me [...] I really love working with people to figure out what that's going to look like for them and for us has been helping as a team".

A specific project that has been in the works is the Hubspot. This new feature is a great step forward for the customer service team and most helpful for customers. Read more about the Knowledge Base and where to find it on page 6.

Customer Success Department Spotlight

Our Customer Success Department is a new department, managed by Stan Buss. Stan graduated from the University of Saint Thomas in 2018 and recently joined the Wordware/EduTrak team this April. "Some of the initiatives [of the department] are to be more proactive rather than reactive". It is all about building relationships with schools and customers so that there is always a point of connection- even when there is no specific issue. Sometimes customers will have features in their modules that they are not aware of and that is what Stan is here to help with. He says his job calls him "to make sure they're getting the most out of the product that they're using".

Being a fairly new department, Stan is able to be flexible in his position and help out in other areas. He explains, saying "It morphed into customer success and also kind of a project management aspect. That's something that I do- organizing, making sure schools and customers are going through the pipeline".

What's your favorite part of your job?
"I've said this to quite a few people- that a lot of people join a new company and they're like 'This is awesome! The people I work with are awesome! It feels [like a] supportive environment!'

but it's actually surprising the month I've been here it *does* feel like that. The people I'm working with are great people and they're super supportive. They're always there to help and people can say that at other jobs but here it feels actually real. So far, it's been a really great place to work and it's only been a month."

What's something that you're looking forward to?
"I'm looking forward to getting fully into the groove of things, making a good start to this recently created department and making sure everyone's getting what they need. My previous roles have been pretty customer-centric so I think that only benefits me in the sense that I actually do care about what the customer gets. Other companies might not put too much of a focus on the customer- just really, their bottom line. But I do actually care for a customer as a customer not just another number."

Contact our Customer Success Department through Stan Buss (stan@myglobaldata.com) for more information.

Has a Wordware District Site user left your district? Please let us know so we can disable their account access to the Wordware District Site.