

## **Internet Commerce and Local Foods: Computer Systems**

Before you get started with this software, here is an overview and questions to ask first to make sure it will serve your purposes.

### **What is Open Source?**

- Where the source code of software that is made available to the general public with relaxed intellectual property restrictions.
- Anyone can use and modify the source. If they do, cannot close the source.
- Can share features back with the community. Has led to a great deal of collaboration.
- GPL – General Public License – not 'free' – osCommerce and the Co-op software are both released under the GPL

### **Overview of Co-op Software**

Set up to work on an order cycle:

- Co-op software set up on an order cycle
- Producers add and edit products at any time – inventory, photos, descriptions
- Admins screen product changes, then make the product changes live to public
- Order opens, customers order over a week or two. Anything left in your cart when the order closes is considered an order
- When order closes, producers log in and enter weights and mark stock
- Route managers remind customers on their routes to pick up their orders
- Invoice payments posted from previous cycle
- Customer and producer invoice totals are saved "finalized"
- Customer and producer invoices generated as PDFs and printed for delivery day
- Delivery day!
- Adjustments entered

Features not typical of standard shopping carts:

- Delivery route lists
- Product labels
- Weights can be entered to calculate product price (2 pounds of tomatoes)
- Adjustments – taxed and non-taxed
- Membership maintenance, shares can be purchased online
- Aging reports
- Customer balances carried forward and applied to next cycle's invoice
- Future delivery options – installments, deposits for pre-purchase, items appear on both that invoice and noted on delivery invoice
- Webpages for producers

### **Overview of osCommerce**

- Typical shopping cart, click, buy, and get. Always open.
- Default is one central shipping and payment processing, and one producer
- KS River Valley Brokerage has decided to use it for wholesale buyers and to be a clearinghouse for local products, not processing money
- KS customized features:
  - Separate logins for producers
  - Producer deals directly with customers

### **Questions to ask yourselves**

- Order cycle system or order always open?
- Who are your buyers?
- Who fulfills your orders – producers direct to customer or co-op the go-between?  
What kind of distribution system will you use?
- Who will handle the money?
- Will you allow for weight-affected products? (price calculated after order place and item is weighed)
- What kind of financial interface do you want?

### **Main Differences in Software approaches**

	<b>Co-op software</b>	<b>Default osCommerce</b>	<b>KS osCommerce</b>
Ordering	Cycle system	Always open	Always open
Weight-affected products	Producers enter weights before invoice totals final	N/A	N/A
Order fulfillment	Co-op fulfills	Co-op	Producer
Money processing	Co-op processes	Co-op	Producer
Sales tax	Yes, Co-op files	Yes, Co-op files	No, producers file
Payments tracked in the system and Balances carried forward	Yes	No	No

### **Deciding what you want to do with the Data**

### **What kind of financial interface do you want?**