

# A & B Supply of Central Florida Builds on a Solid Foundation with the aSa Complete Rebar Solution

*“To succeed, you will soon learn, as I did, the importance of a solid foundation.”*

*- Alan Greenspan, (Retired) Chairman, Federal Reserve*

Aaron Adams, co-founder of A & B Supply of Central Florida, learned long ago the importance of building on a solid foundation. In the world of construction, this means combining the strength of concrete with the flexibility of rebar. In the world of business, it is more difficult to define. Aaron, who co-owns A & B with his brother, Anthony, conducted a thorough search for the right software solution. After testing several different products, he decided that aSa's Complete Rebar Solution™ would provide A & B with the most secure foundation upon which to build their business. aSa's position as an industry leader and a growing company were two of Aaron's deciding factors, “(aSa is) the biggest presence and is the leader in the industry. You're a growing company, like ours, so you know where we're coming from,” he says.

Since A & B implemented aSa systems, the company has increased fabrication by more than 30 percent. This has enabled A & B to take on more diverse projects, such as the Eastern Orbiter Processing Facility at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center. This facility will be the processing facility for a new Ares spaceship, which will replace the current Atlantis, Discovery, and Endeavor space shuttles in 2010. “It's an interesting project,” says Aaron, “because the blast panels, alone, require 500 tons of all weldable rebar.” While A & B does not have the capacity of larger fabricators, Aaron says, “Our small size lets us react fast and provide excellent customer service.” He adds, “Because our systems are all integrated, it allows us to accommodate our customers well.”

The fabricating company began with several temporary software solutions in place. Through this experience, Aaron

quickly came to appreciate the concept of a single solution provider and began his search for a turn-key system. In talking to aSa's Frank Zambotti, director of Systems Integration, and others in the rebar industry, Aaron learned that aSa provides a rebar and financial software solution that uses a single set of databases. He points out, “Any time you buy software, you want to see what you're buying.” To see aSa software in action, Aaron participated in an online demonstration with Kim Ley, aSa's manager of Business Systems, and visited aSa at the World of Concrete.



*Taking off. A & B has grown significantly, allowing the company to handle projects like a new facility for NASA that will process Ares spaceships.*

Satisfied that aSa e<sup>x</sup> with Rebar Financials was the best solution for his business, Aaron decided to implement aSa software throughout the company. With hardware, rebar software, financial software, training, and support all supplied by aSa, there would be only one place to call for any need. According to Aaron, “I spoke to some of your references. Most of them only used some of the Rebar Financials products, not all. I realize the value of having everything integrated. You do not have to call two different companies

when you do need help with something. I don't know why you would do it any other way.”

Having a single database set to store data is critical to the accuracy, consistency, and speed at which aSa e<sup>x</sup> handles information. According to Aaron, “(The whole picture – CAD to Bar List, to financials – it's all integrated. Everything flows to everybody correctly.” This enables the entire A & B team to work as a cohesive unit. Data is stored and used in a consistent manner between modules and departments, so communication is easier, notes Aaron.

Aaron points out that with all of their hardware and software provided by aSa, support is always one phone call away. “I am glad you sell Dell computers,” says Aaron. He shares his experience with a recent hard drive failure on a server configured with a RAID array, “(Dell-certified technicians) were out here the next day and took it apart and replaced the

part. I don't think he even had to turn it off; there was no down time. Since we are a smaller fabricator and do not have the resources of the big guys, we cannot afford to have any downtime.” aSa exclusively sells Dell computers. All aSa-supplied Dell PCs come with standard three-year, next business day support contracts in order to provide customers with the best in both software and hardware solutions.

During the initial implementation, aSa Applications Consultant Justin Swanson

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*Aaron Adams, Co-owner  
A & B Supply of Central Florida  
Apopka, Florida*

performed the installation of a complete computer network, including two servers, CAD stations, and Zebra thermal tag printers. He trained personnel on reinforcing software modules. Brad Grace, a consultant in aSa’s Business Applications Group, trained employees on the Rebar Financials system. While aSa offers flexible training options, including training CDs and remote webinars, Aaron found that the most effective means of training many people at once was having aSa trainers visit his office in person. He explains, “There’s nothing like having the guy in the office – I’m glad we did it the way we did.”

After A & B employees had a chance to use aSa software for a while and become very familiar with the tools, Brad returned for specialized training. He explains the difference he often finds in users’ attitudes during the initial training and follow-up training. “During the initial training, they are just interested in learning how to get the software to complete specific tasks. During the follow-up training, they are interested in how they can get the most out of the system,” says Brad. The difference follow-up training makes is dramatic, and it helped Aaron and his employees build their fabricating business. According to Aaron, “I wanted, as a new fabricator, to lay a good foundation. I think I accomplished what I was trying to do.” □

## aSa New Feature Highlights

*Available now: easier imports, automated bid proposals, and enhanced miscellaneous item tag functionality.*

Each new release of aSa software contains a wealth of new enhancements. The following are a few highlights from our last two service packs.

**New Import Browser.** Importing information into your aSa database is now easier and more flexible than ever. A new preview window lets you view and select exactly what data you would like to import. For example, a file to be imported contains multiple customers, jobs, items, and control codes. Click Browse Import File(s) to view the file’s contents in an easy tree-view format. Next, use check boxes to select or de-select the data that you want to import. You can even change data — rename jobs, assign new control codes, and more — before you perform the import. The newly enhanced Import was released in Service Pack 5, November 2006.

**Job Proposal Wizard.** Until recently, you could use aSa Rebar Financials’ Job Pricing application to easily develop bid values for your potential contracts, but then you needed to copy those numbers into your bid letter for submittal to the contractor. Beginning with the release of Service Pack 4, July 2006, job proposal letters and job acknowledgement documents are generated automatically by aSa software ... without changing your company’s default letter format. Simply create a template in Microsoft Excel, then use aSa’s handy wizard to select your customer and pricing scheme. A new Excel document is automatically generated with data from your aSa database — such as customer name and address, project description, and bid value — filled in for you.

**New Miscellaneous Item Tag Functionality.** Using aSa Production (SP4 and newer), you can generate bundle tags not only for your rebar items, but for mesh and other concrete accessories as well. aSa Material Tracking and Bundle Inventory modules support miscellaneous item tag functionality beginning with SP5. This means, for example, that you can scan tags to verify that rolls of mesh were loaded onto the correct trailer for shipment with the right order.

**MicroStation XM Compatibility.** Beginning with the Service Pack 5 release, aSa CAD/Detailing integrates with MicroStation V8 XM Edition, the newest version of Bentley Systems’ flagship CAD application. SP5 may be installed for use with V8 2004 as the standard install or with V8 XM for beta-testing. In 2007, XM will become the new standard for CAD/Detailing.

**Coming in ‘07.** Later in the year, aSa releases will include a completely new Shape Manager application. Similar in look and feel to the current Shape Manager screen, the new tool allows you to design shapes in 3D, create smarter rules for dimension calculations, and much more. Also on the horizon is compatibility with new mobile hand scanners. The new scanners use Pocket PC technology and feature better hardware components than the current scanners. They also support web service-based scanning, which will allow truck drivers and placers to record status information in your aSa database live from the field.

**Free to Subscribed Clients.** aSa software updates are free to clients enrolled in the aSa Software Subscription Service.