LOADMASTER ENTERPRISE

Successful Invoicing

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Successful Invoicing

STAGES

The key stages to successful invoicing are –

a. Setting up the various parameters properly
b. Entering the information correctly
c. Running the invoicing option
d. Review the output for accuracy
e. Post to the accountancy package

NOTES

Critically important is the use of backups.

While Loadmaster is very tolerant of abuse (such as rebooting in the middle of an operation) you should not totally rely on it to totally work around issues.

It is recommended that you keep regular backups. These should be kept off site and available in the event of a major problem. Do not over-rely on an automated backup system.

You should backup your accounts package before posting data into it. It is far easier to restore a backup than reverse postings in the event of a problem.

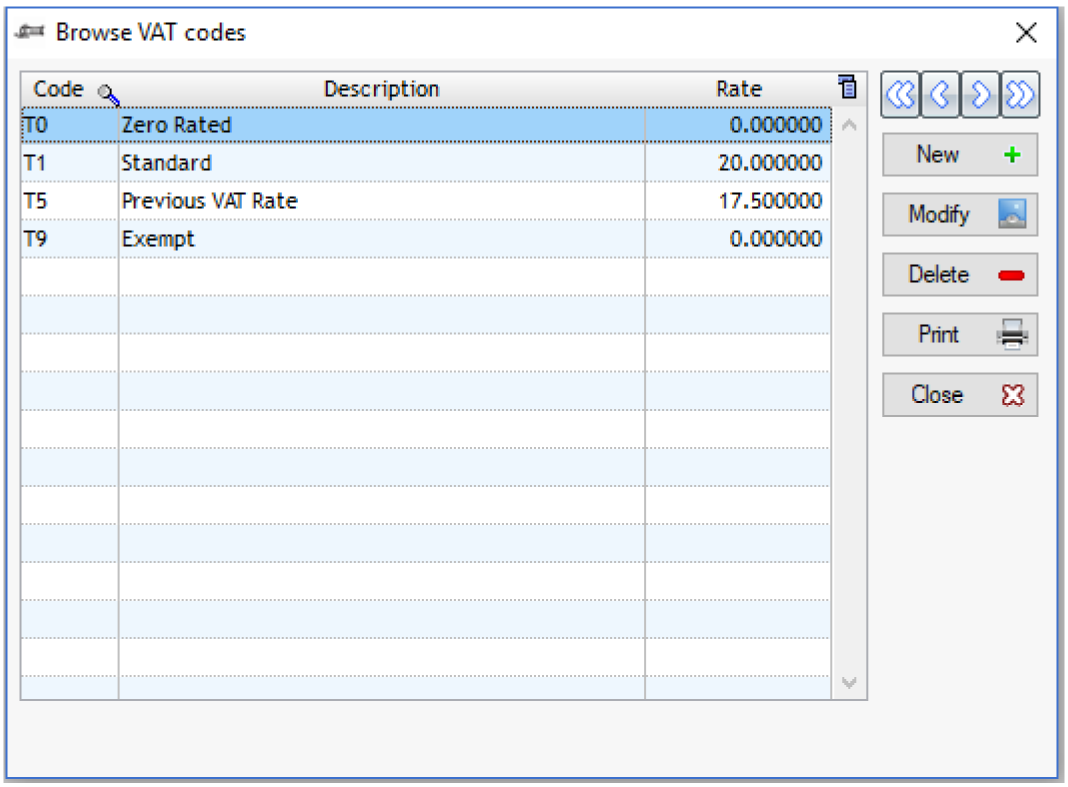
SETTING UP - VAT RATES

It is recommended that the first area that you set up is VAT rates. This is on the Setup menu in VAT Codes.

The fields here are -

a. Code
b. Description
c. Rate

If following a Sage style system then the screen may look like this -

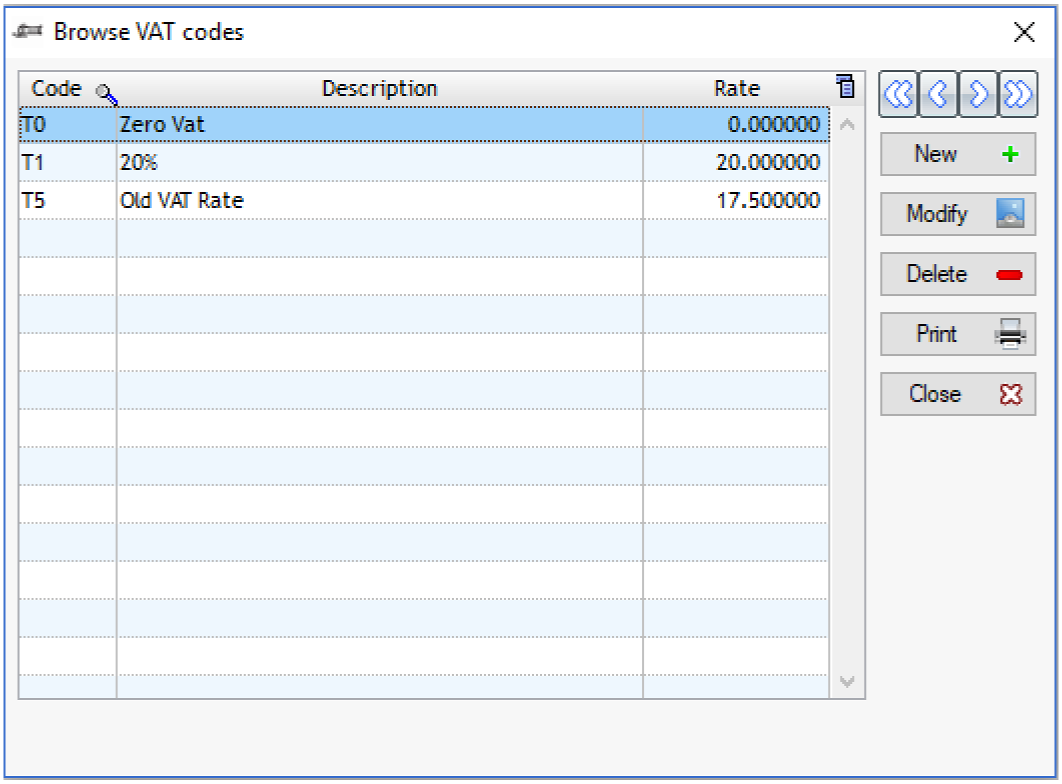


You can add the other Sage codes as you wish or need.

If using Sage, then the code used to post is the one in the Code field.

If using Xero, then the code used to post is the one in the Description field. This must match the description used in Xero exactly, including Upper and Lower case letters.

So, if using Xero the Browse VAT codes may be similar to this -



You should use whatever is the convention for you accounts package.

You can have up to 99 different VAT codes.

You will must select your default VAT code in Global Parameters so it knows what to use if nothing else is specified.

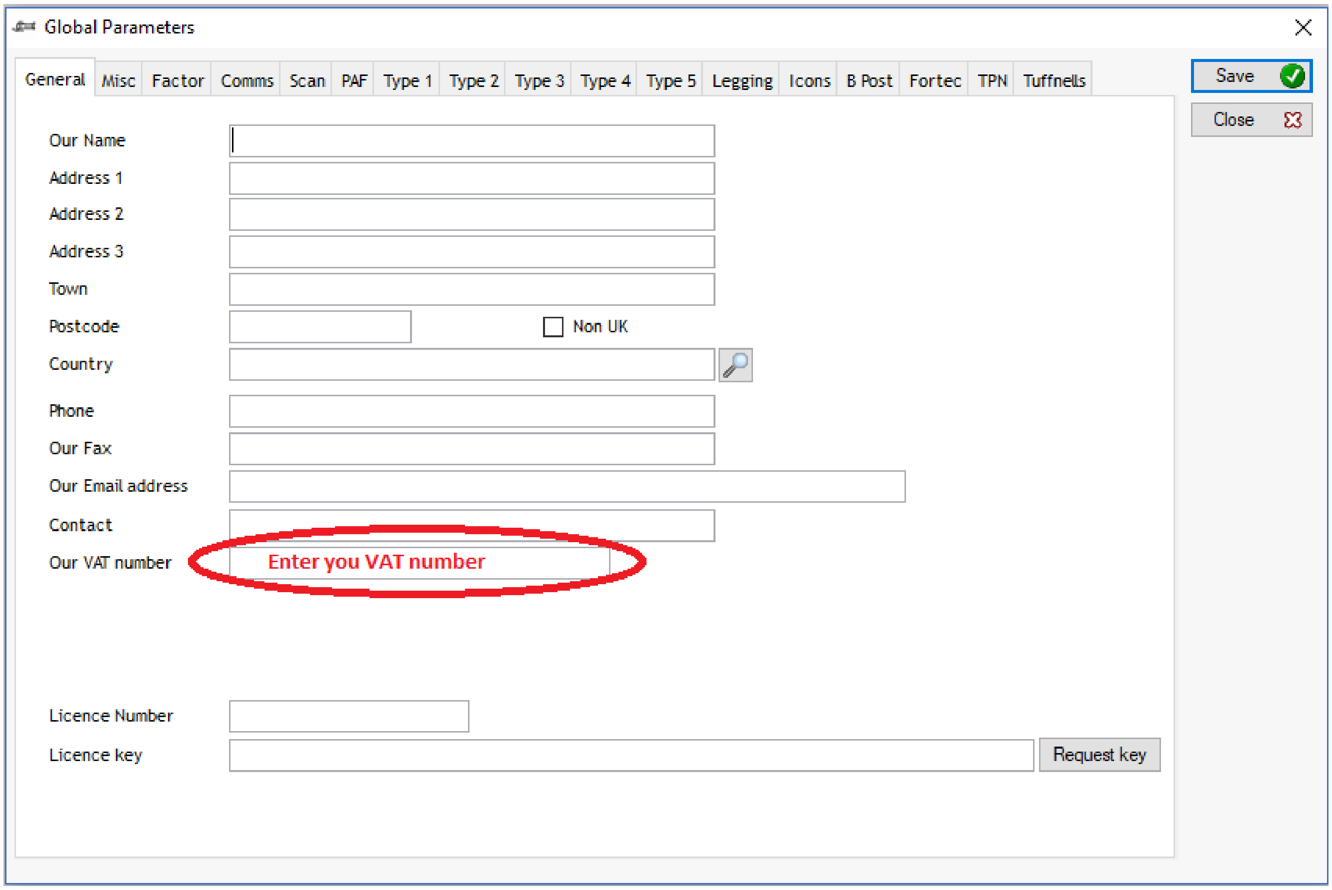
There is a further option on very account where you can choose a different VAT rate for that individual customer. If this field is blank then the program assumes it should use the default VAT rate from Global Parameters.

You can alter individual jobs to use different VAT rates as well.

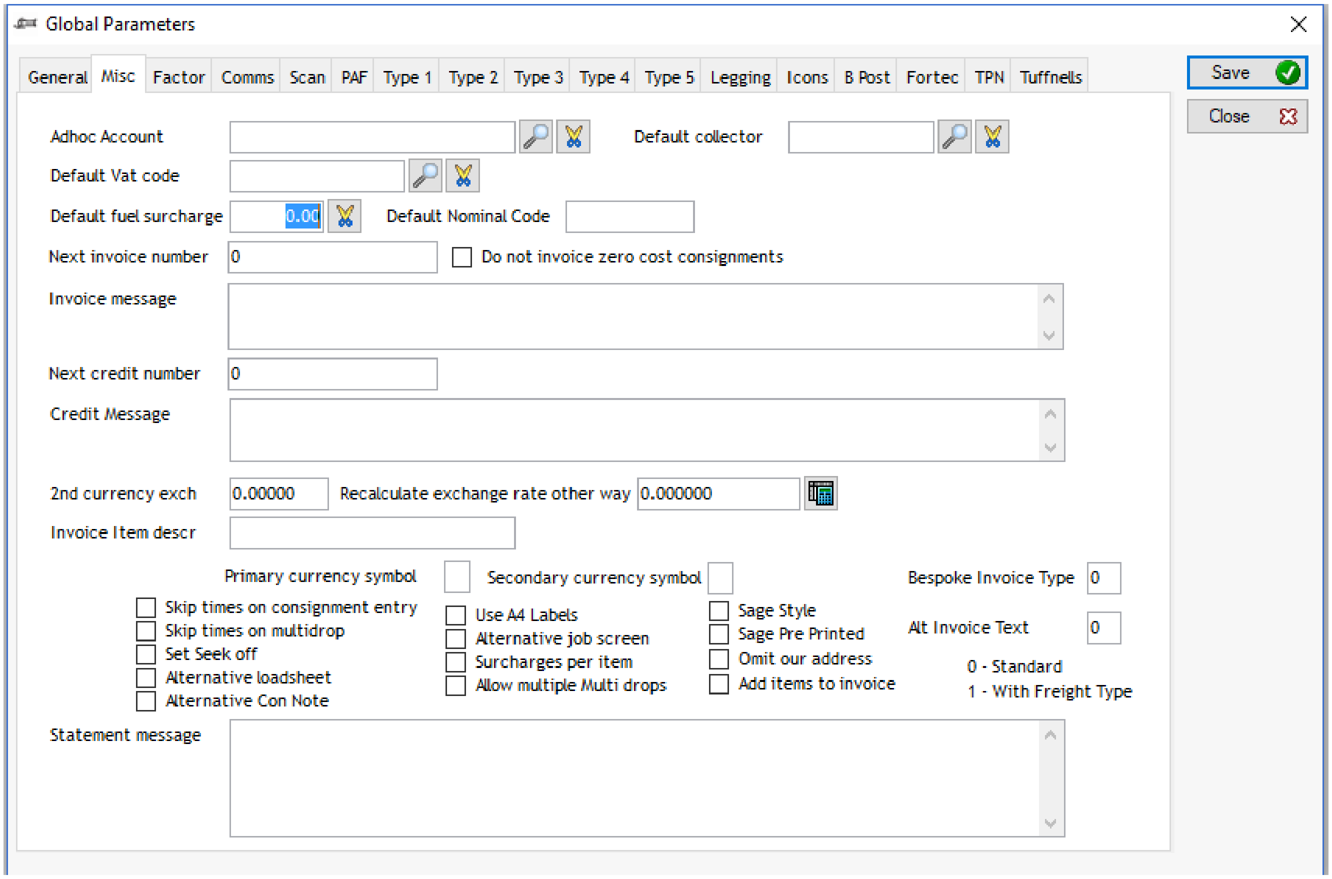
SETTING UP - GLOBAL PARAMETERS

Global Parameters appears on the Setup menu. It contains many defaults for all users.

The General tab needs your VAT code -

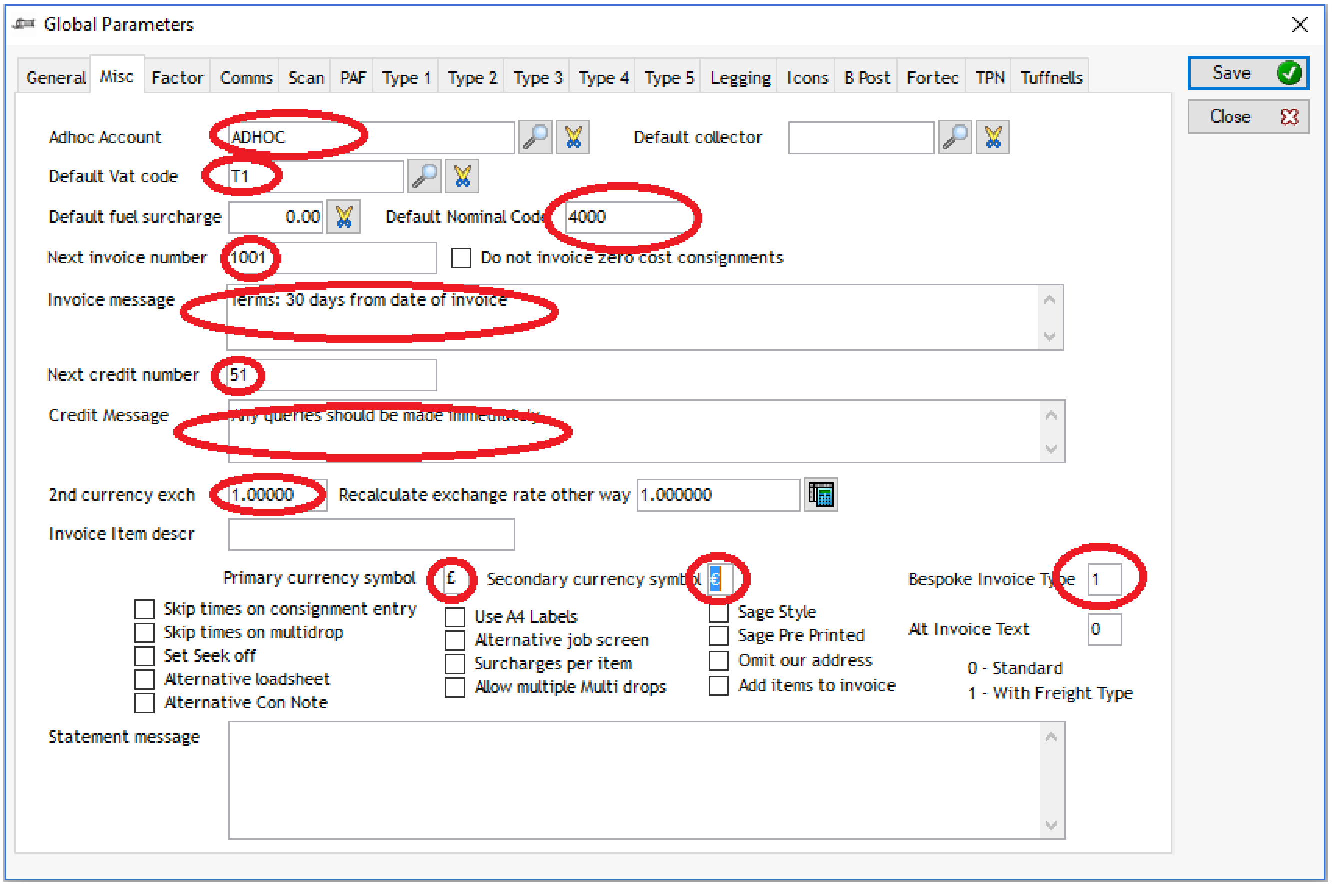


The Misc tab needs more -



a. ADHOC account. Create an account for AHDOC purchases in Accounts. Use this for all ‘one-offs’.
b. Default VAT code. Select this from the list by clicking on the magnifying glass symbol.
c. Default Nominal Code. Usually 4000 in Sage.
d. Next invoice number.
e. Invoice message.
f. Credit Number.
g. Credit message.
h. 2nd currency exchange. Set to 1 if you do not use this.
i. Set Primary currency symbol. Usually £
j. Set Secondary currency. If Euro hold down left ALT key and type 0128 on the numeric keypad.
k. Bespoke invoice type. This is a numeric value, defaulting to 1 if not set. Simply test with any invoice to get the design you like.

This is a general guide -



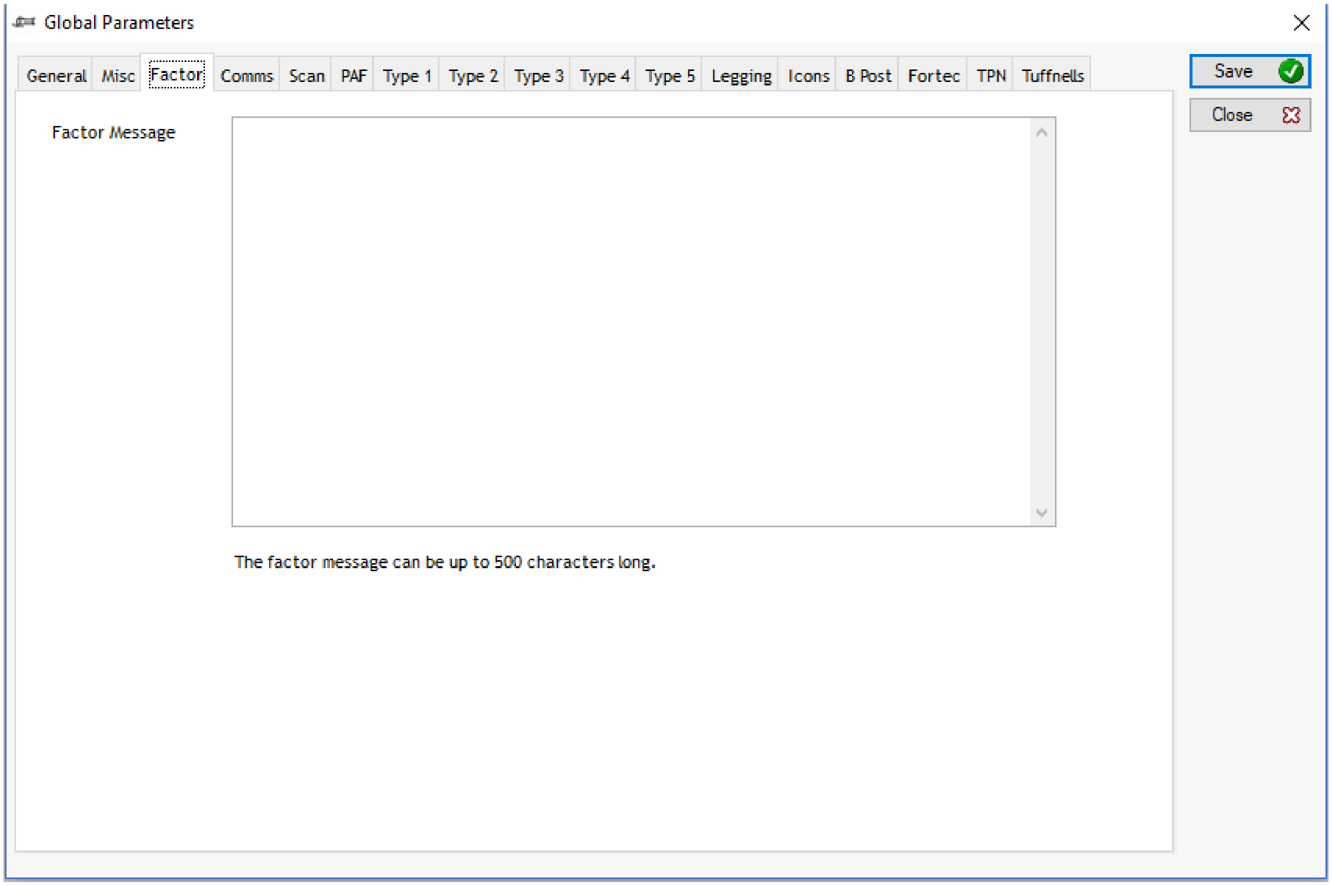
There are further tick box options at the bottom for use with pre-printed forms.

Please note: When invoices are created, the exchange rate for currency 2 is recorded. It therefore does not matter if the value in Global Parameters is later changed. If reprinted they will correctly print with the value at the time.

You should update the exchange rate as it fluctuates. There is a default monthly value that you can obtain from the HMRC website.

Next Invoice Number and Next Credit Number must be greater than zero.

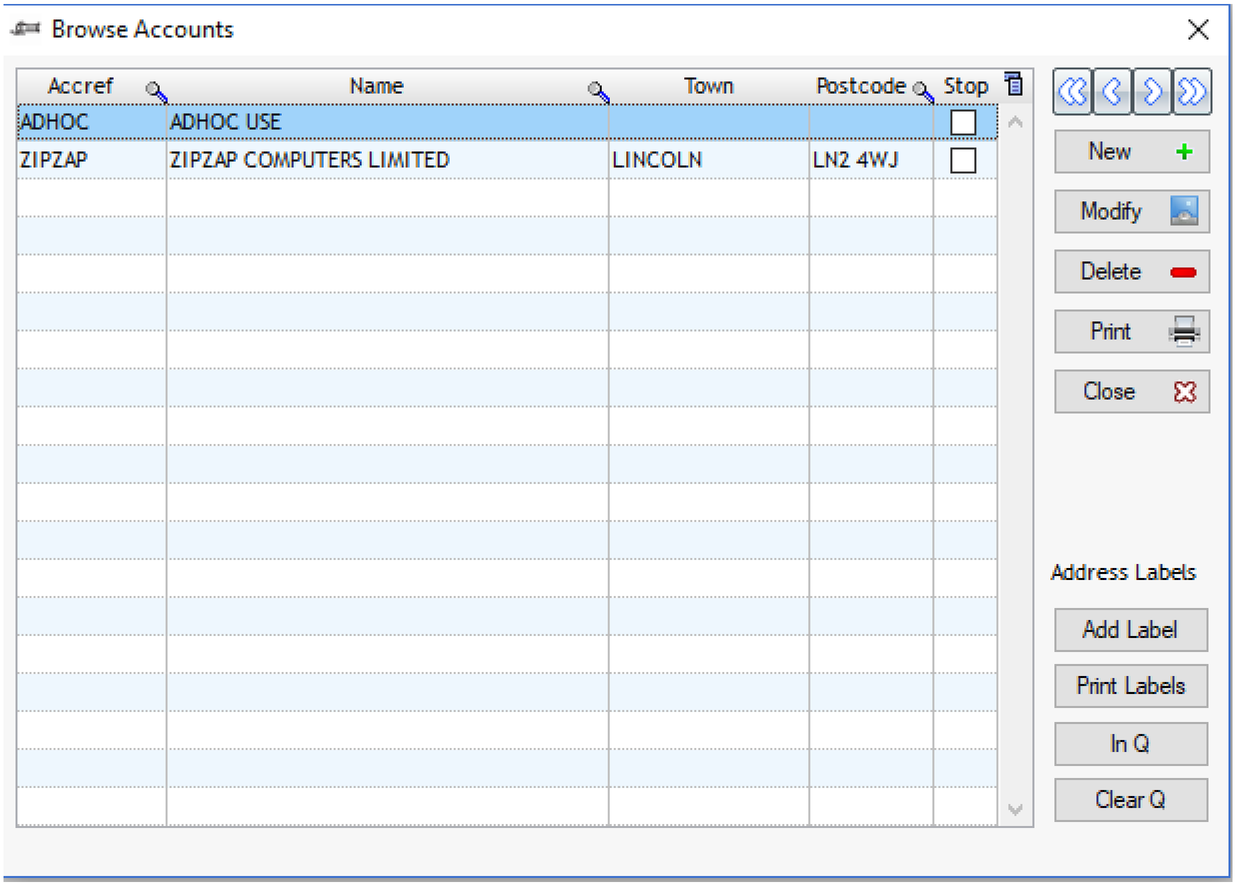
You can factor invoices. In this case you should complete the factor tab with whatever message your factor company has advised you to complete -



Please note: You can factor (or indeed not factor) every account individually. It is a setting on the individual account.

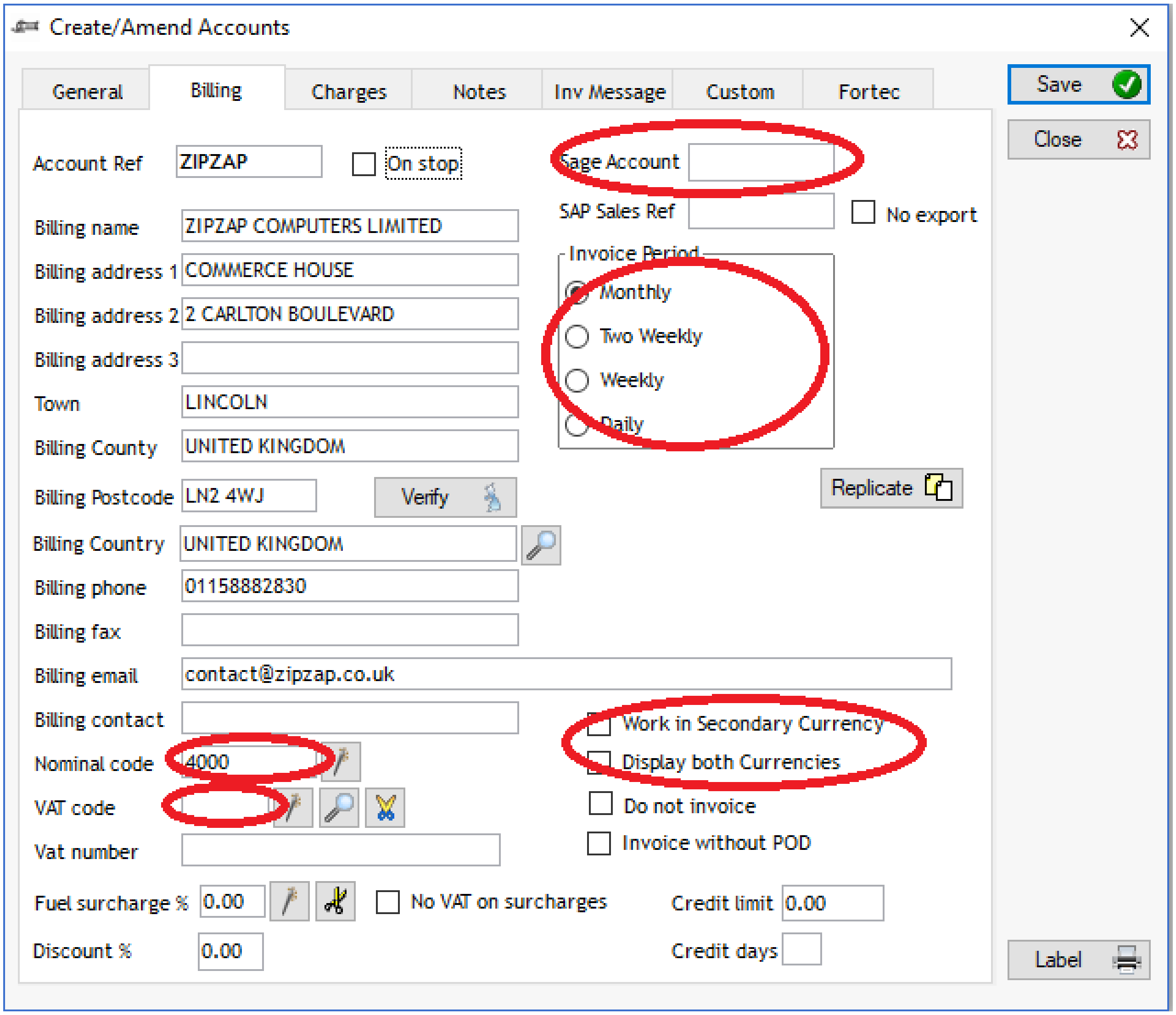
SETTING UP - ACCOUNTS

Setup/Accounts -



Note: The ADHOC account is used for 'one-off' invoices.

Select the account and look on the Billing tab.

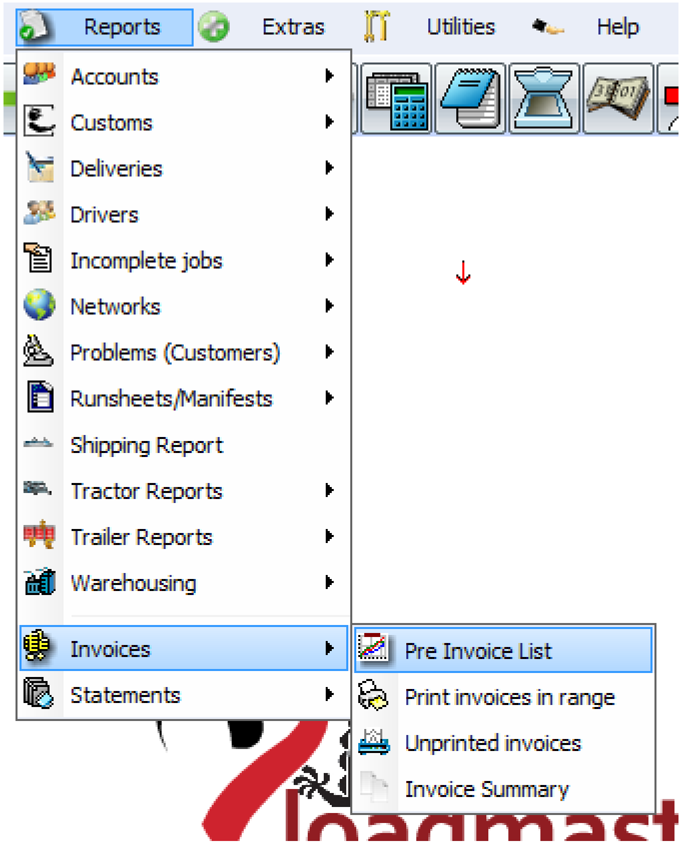


a. If you use Sage with a different account then enter it in the Sage Account field, otherwise leave it empty.
b. The Invoice Period is selectable. You choose this when invoicing. Note that if you invoice on a monthly run it will invoice ALL customers.
c. If blank the Nominal Code defaults to the one in Global Parameters.
d. If blank the VAT code defaults to the one in Global Parameters.
e. If you work in Secondary currency then it assumes you are invoicing in that.

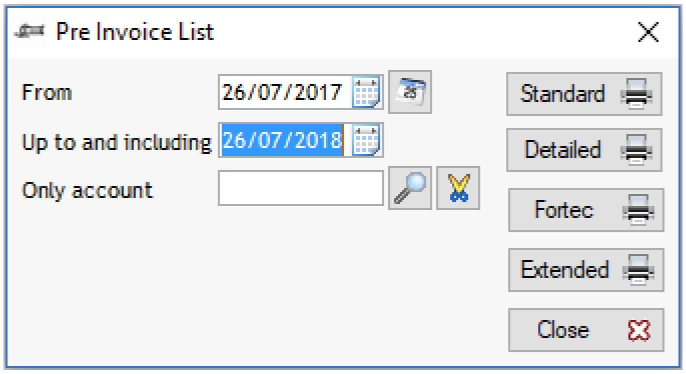
PRE-INVOICE CHECKS

Although invoices can be reversed if things go wrong, it is wise to check the jobs before pressing the button. You can do this in a variety of places.

Pre-invoice reports via Reports/Invoices/Pre-Invoice List.



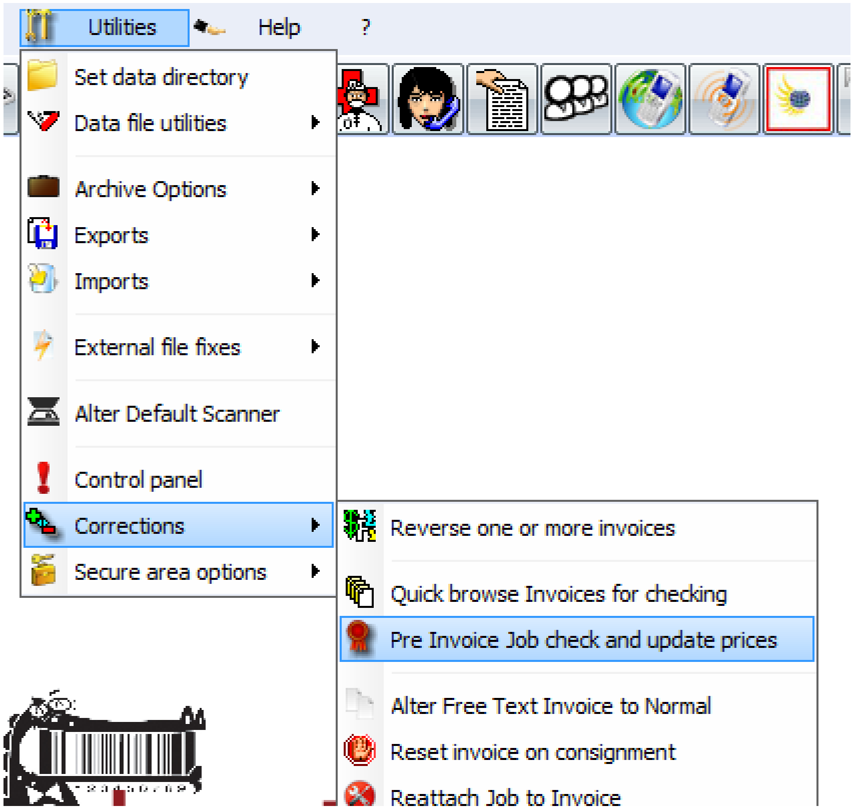
This gives -



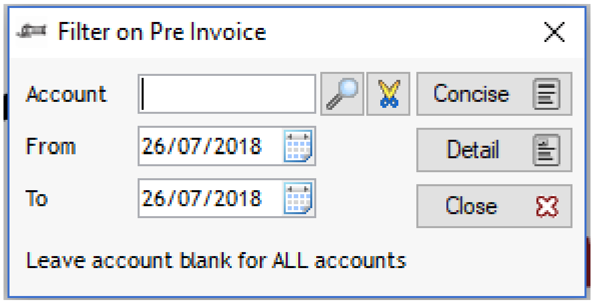
You can select an option. It will preview on the screen first so that you do not actually need to print it if you don't want.

Additionally, there is a further check on Utilities/Corrections/Pre Invoice Job Check and update prices.

Note: You must have authorized access to get this option.

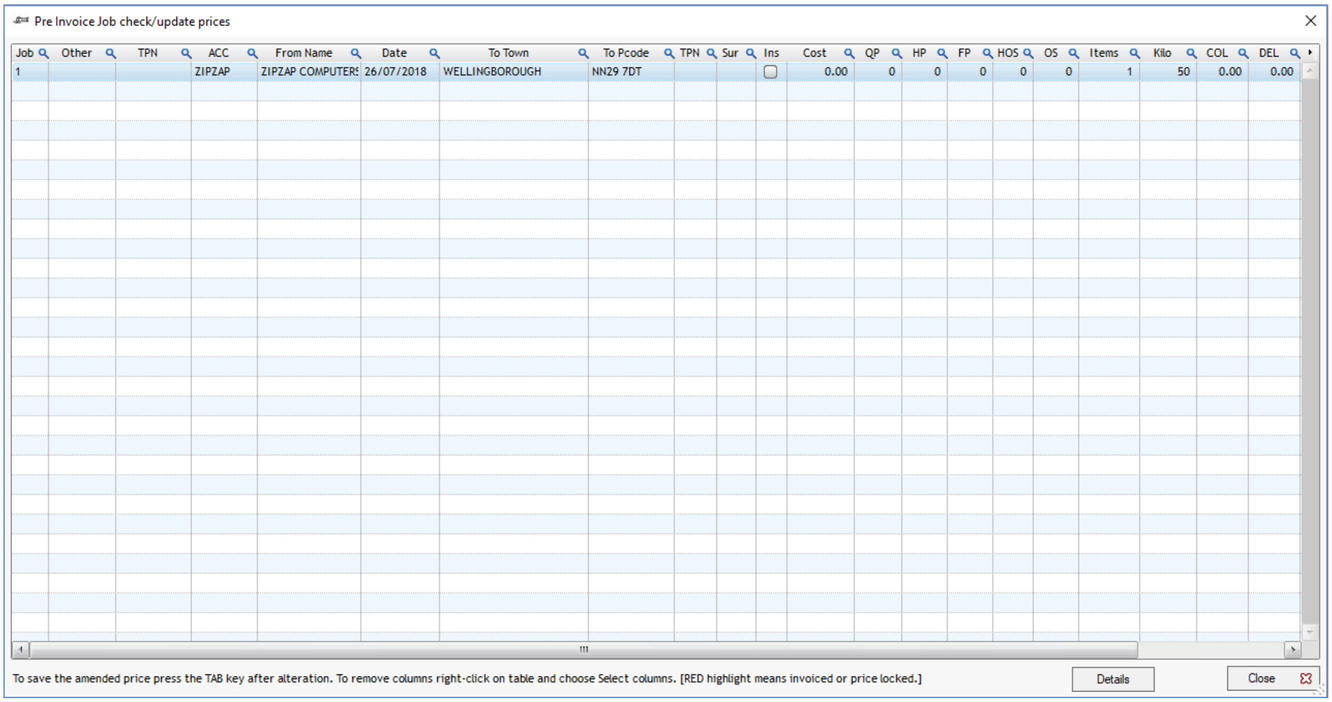


This in turn brings up -

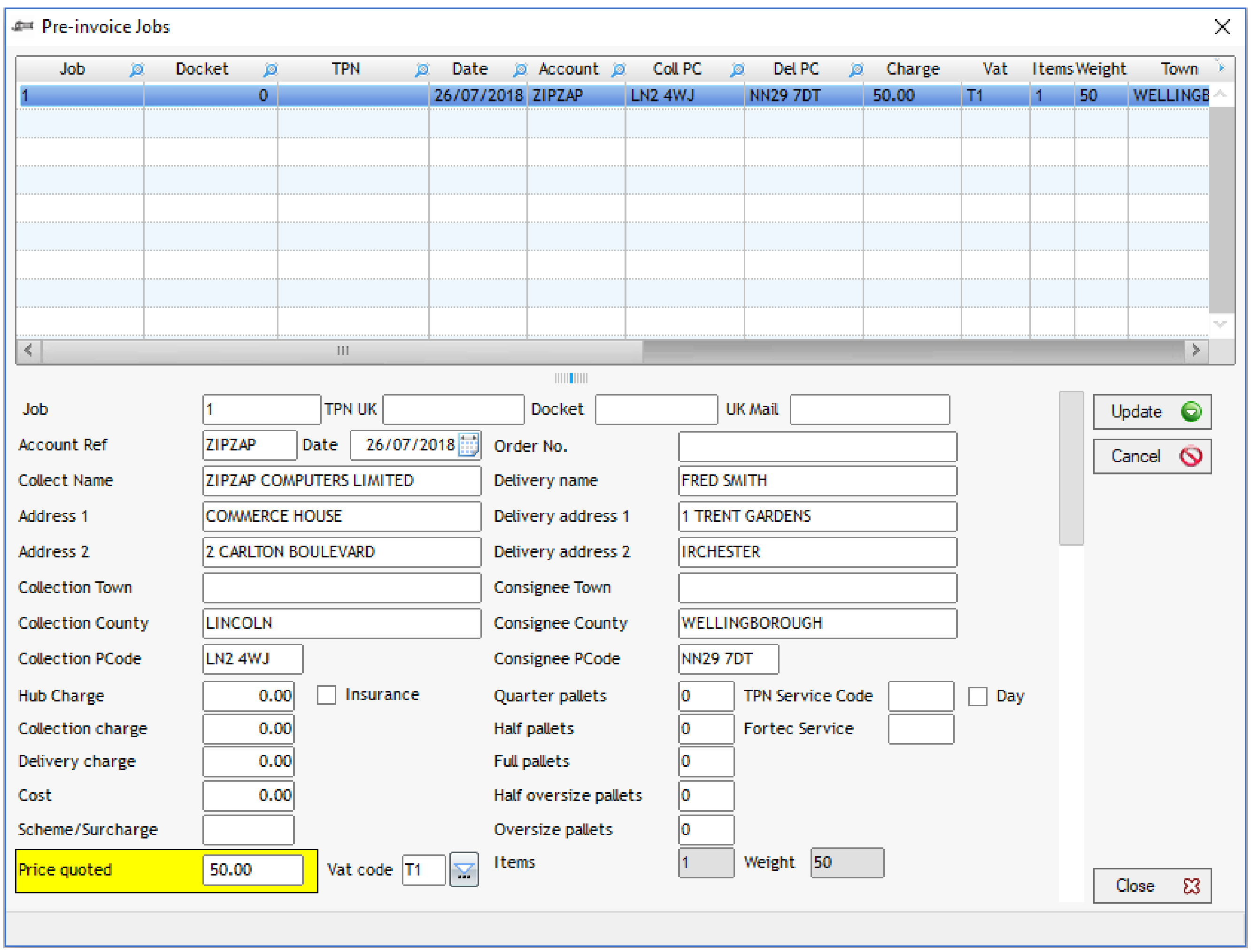


You can choose Concise or Detailed views.

Concise -



Detailed -

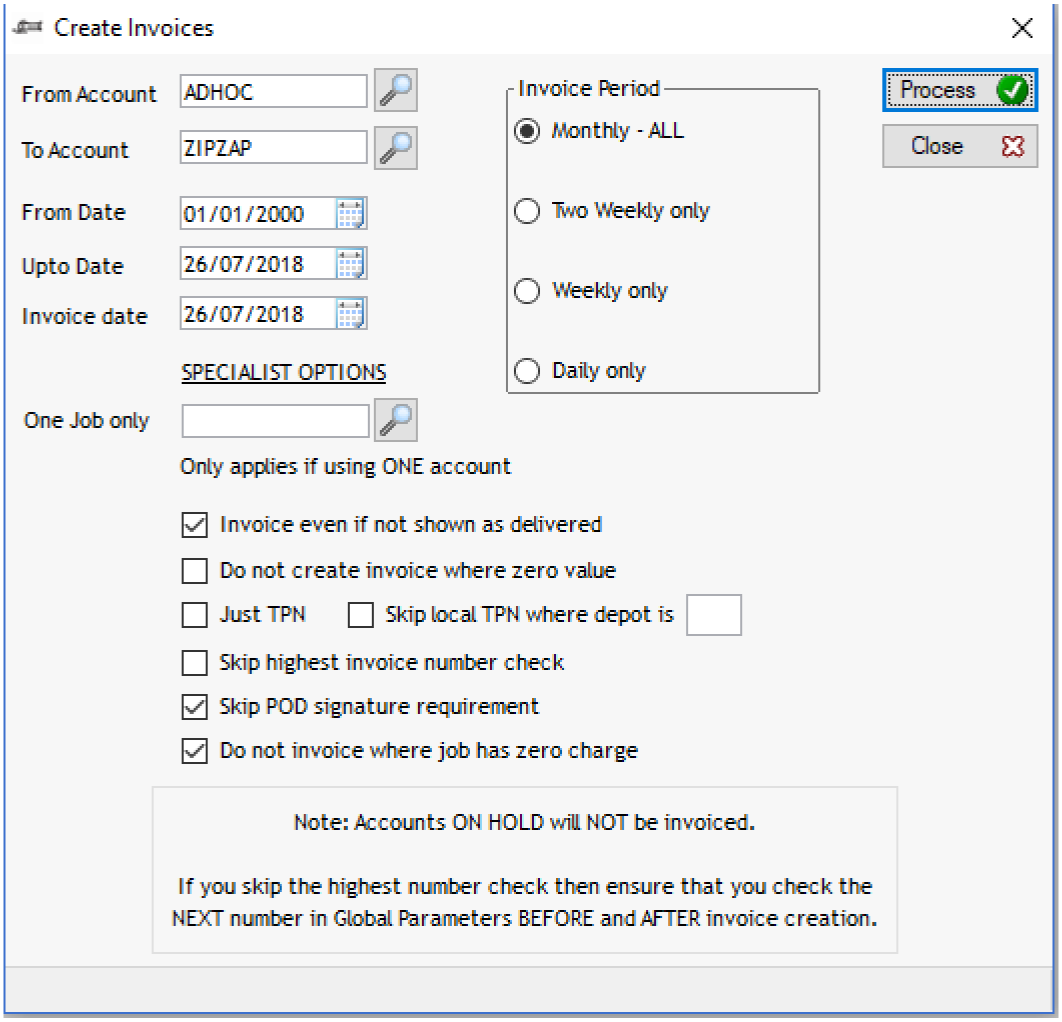


There are further checking options.

a. Actions/Invoicing/Checks on Invoices/Report consignments with zero charge -This finds any jobs that have a zero charge on them.
b. Utilities/Secure Area Options/Check for Problem Jobs/Orphan - This finds jobs where the associated account has been deleted. To correct, just put the account back in the system.
c. Utilities/Data File Utilities/Healthcheck – This checks all files for corruption and advises of any problems.

INVOICE RUN

Actions/Invoicing/Create Invoices



By default, the program will set all the options to invoice all outstanding jobs to the current date. You should only alter this if you are sure.

If you omit some data then the next time the invoice run is performed then it will catch it up.

The invoice periods are set to Daily, Weekly, Two weekly and Monthly. This is not fixed and is presented this way to make the concept easier. They are simply periods 1, 2, 3 and 4.

a. If you invoice Daily customers then it only invoices them.
b. If you invoice Weekly customers then it invoices Weekly and Daily.
c. If you invoice Two weekly then it invoices Two weekly, Weekly and Daily.
d. If you invoice Monthly then it does them all.

If you alter the FROM DATE to a later date then anything before that date will be skipped.

The UPTO date is the last date to consider. It will skip anything after this date.

The INVOICE DATE is the date you want on the invoices as the creation date.

You get options to not invoice if the total invoice is zero and to skip individual items on the invoice that are set to zero.

The Just TPN option is included where a TPN depot wants to do distinct invoice runs for TPN and non-TPN jobs.

The Skip highest invoice number check is a specialist option that should only be used under supervision.

One job only does what it says. Invoice the one job.

WHAT DOES CREATE INVOICES ACTUALLY DO?

It matches the criteria that you selected and gets all jobs for a particular customer one at a time.

It gets the next invoice number from Global Parameters and creates an invoice record with this number. It fills in the name, address, totals, exchange rate etc.

It places the invoice number onto the invoice number field of every consignment that was matched. Previously this was set to zero.

It increments the invoice number in Global Parameters.

It gets the data for the next customer.

It continues this process until complete.

You can then print or email the invoices.

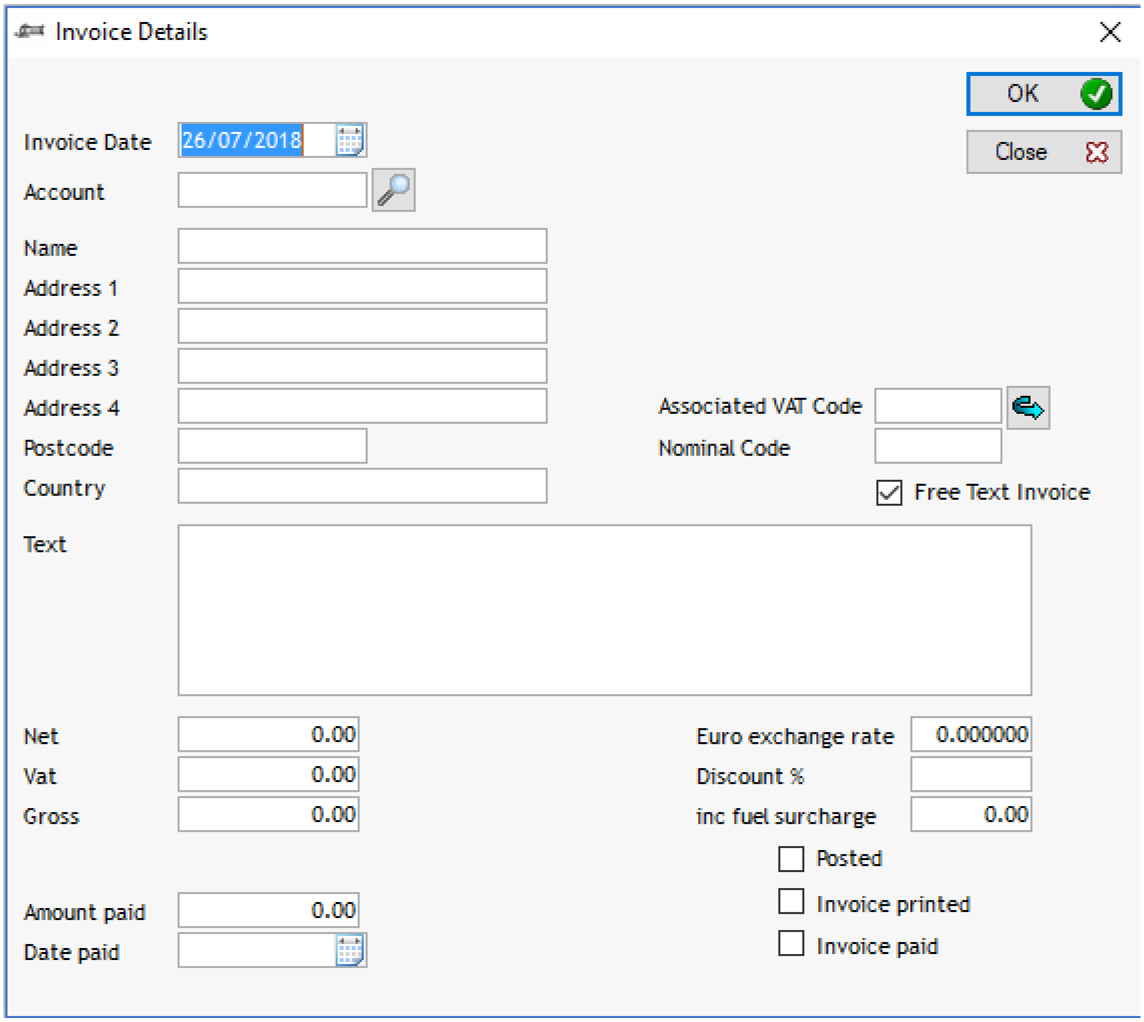
Note: Reversing invoices is therefore a simple process as all it has to know is the number of the invoice that you want to reverse back to. It removes all invoice records above this number and runs down the consignments and sets the associated invoice number back to zero where previously it was above this.

Reversing invoices may take a little while as it deliberately runs through every invoice and every job and considers them. This is a safeguard.

FREE TEXT INVOICING

Actions/Invoicing/Free Text Invoicing

This is used where you want to invoice for something that is not related to a consignment, storage for example.

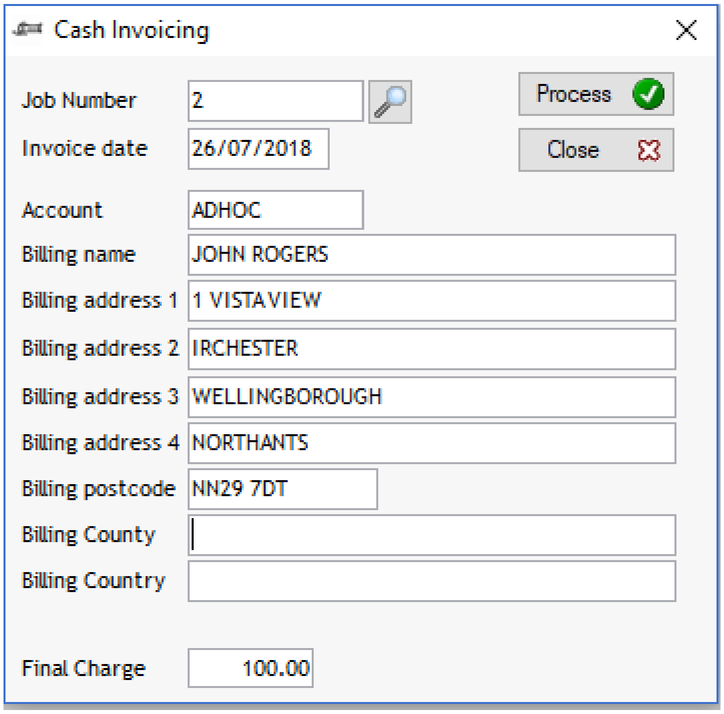


You simply fill in the details and click OK.

CASH INVOICING

‘One off’ jobs can be entered under the ADHOC account. This is where you are doing work for someone and you are not going to create an account for them.

To invoice them you use Actions/Invoicing/Cash Invoicing



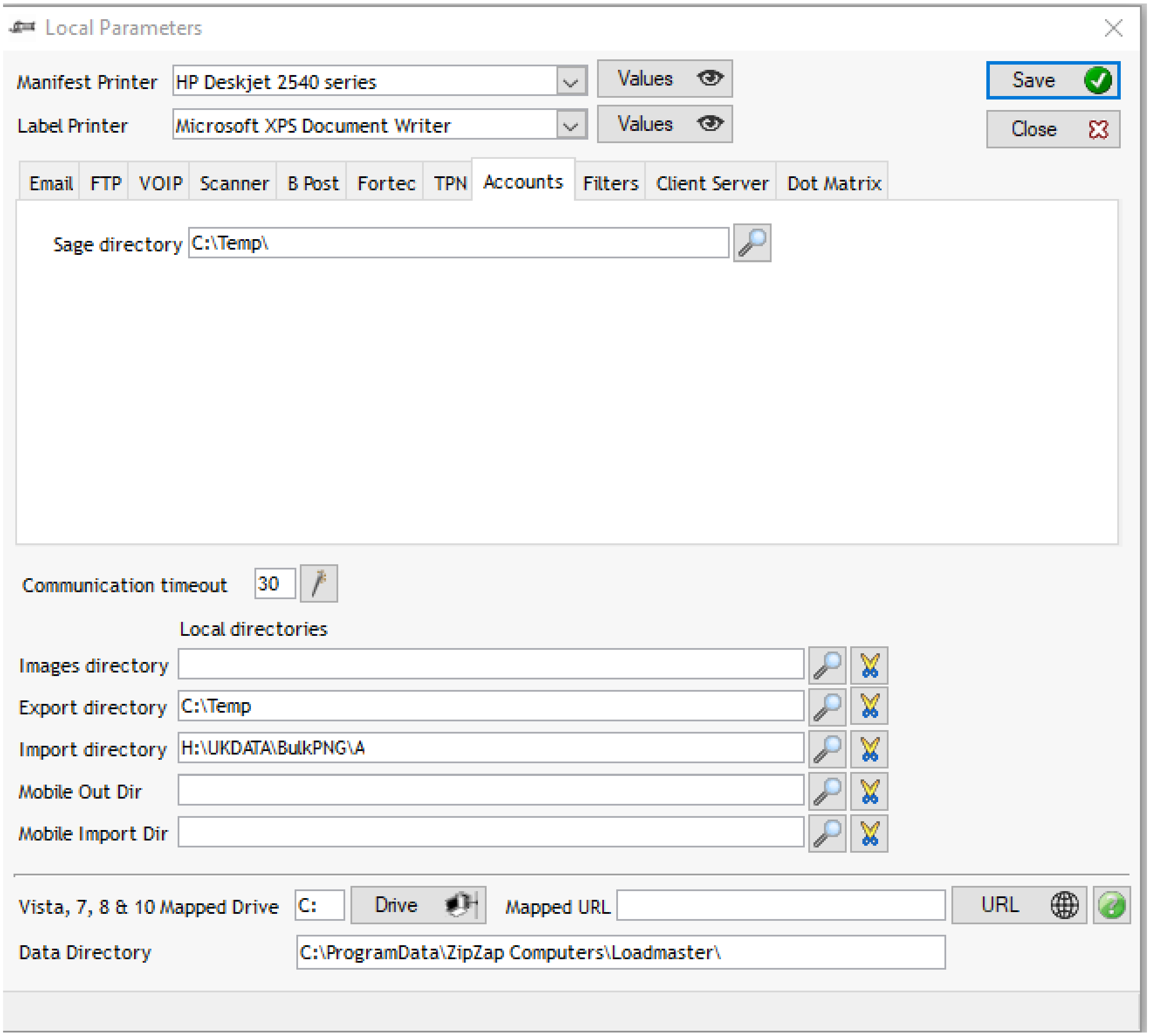
Select the job, enter the basic details and hit Process.

An invoice is immediately created.

CREATING A POSTING FILE

The location where the accounts posting file is created is set in Setup then LOCAL PARAMETERS. This can be anywhere that the program has access to write a file.

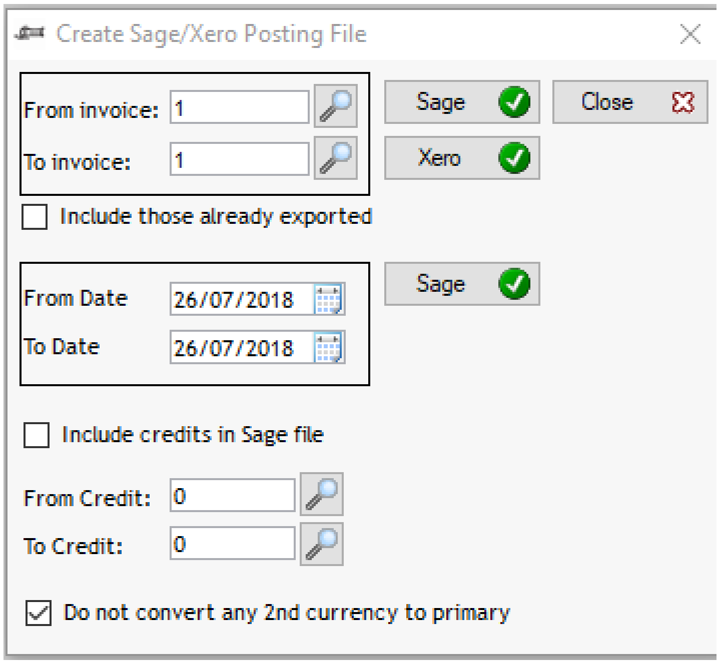
Look for the Accounts tab and set the Sage Directory to where you want the file saving. Use the same field for Xero.



You create the file using Actions/Invoicing/Create Sage/Xero posting file.

The program will know which invoices you have already posted and will suggest values to be used.

You will see something similar to this -



In general, you should choose the Sage button on the top option if using Sage and the Xero button if using Xero.

If you want to create a posting file for a range that is not suggested then select the range and tick 'Include those already exported'.

There is an option to perform and export based on dates and a further to include Credit Notes.

The 'Do not convert any 2nd currency to primary' does not export the 2nd currency value but uses the 1st currency instead. Check how your accounts package wants the data.

The transaction file will be called TRANS.CSV

IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT BEFORE YOU IMPORT A TRANSACTION FILE FROM LOADMASTER INTO YOUR ACCOUNTS PACKAGE THAT YOU DO A BACKUP OF THE CURRENT ACCOUNTS DATA.

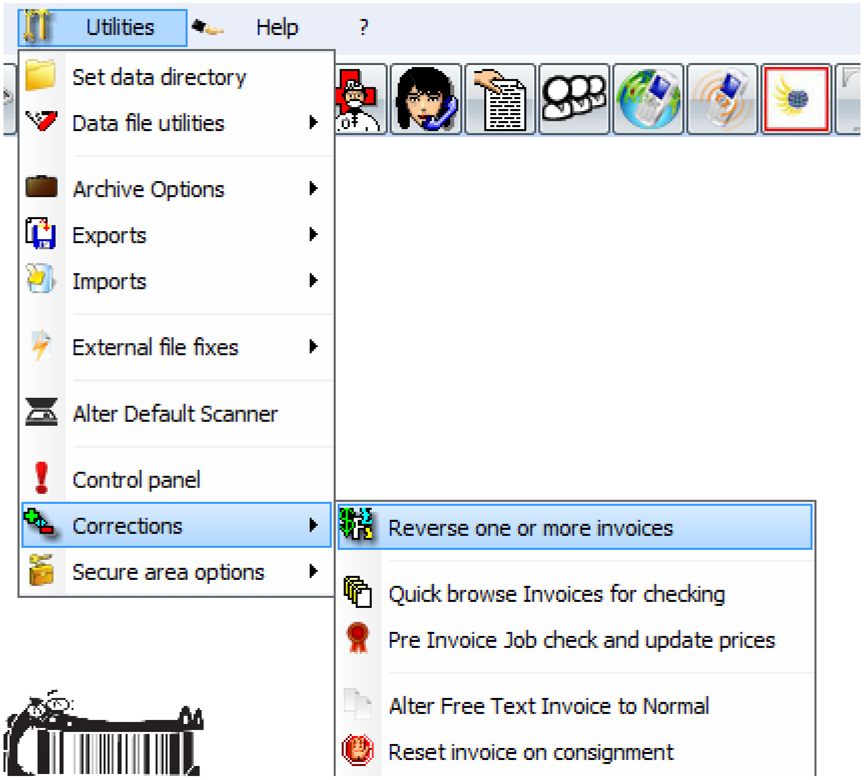
It is easier to restore a backup than reverse many postings.

REVERSING AN INVOICE RUN OR A GROUP OF INVOICES

You should reverse invoices with caution as the reverse cannot be undone.

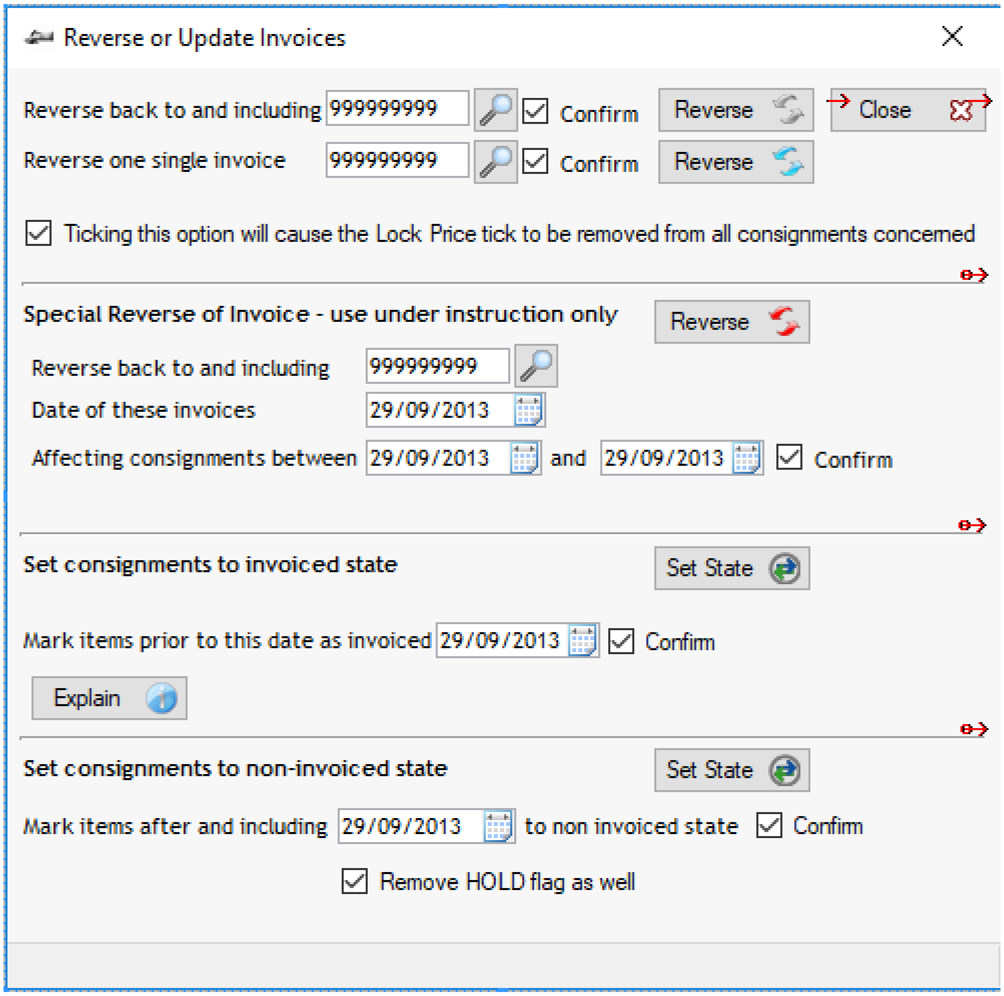
Unless there is a special reason you should always reverse back to the last ‘good’ invoice. You should seek our advice if you want to do anything else.

Reverse one or more invoices appears on the Utilities menu.



Choosing this option opens another window.

Use this with care -



In general, you should only ever use the top option and then to reverse the last invoice run.

Put the number of the invoice in the field (this is normally the first invoice of the last run). Tick confirm and click on reverse.

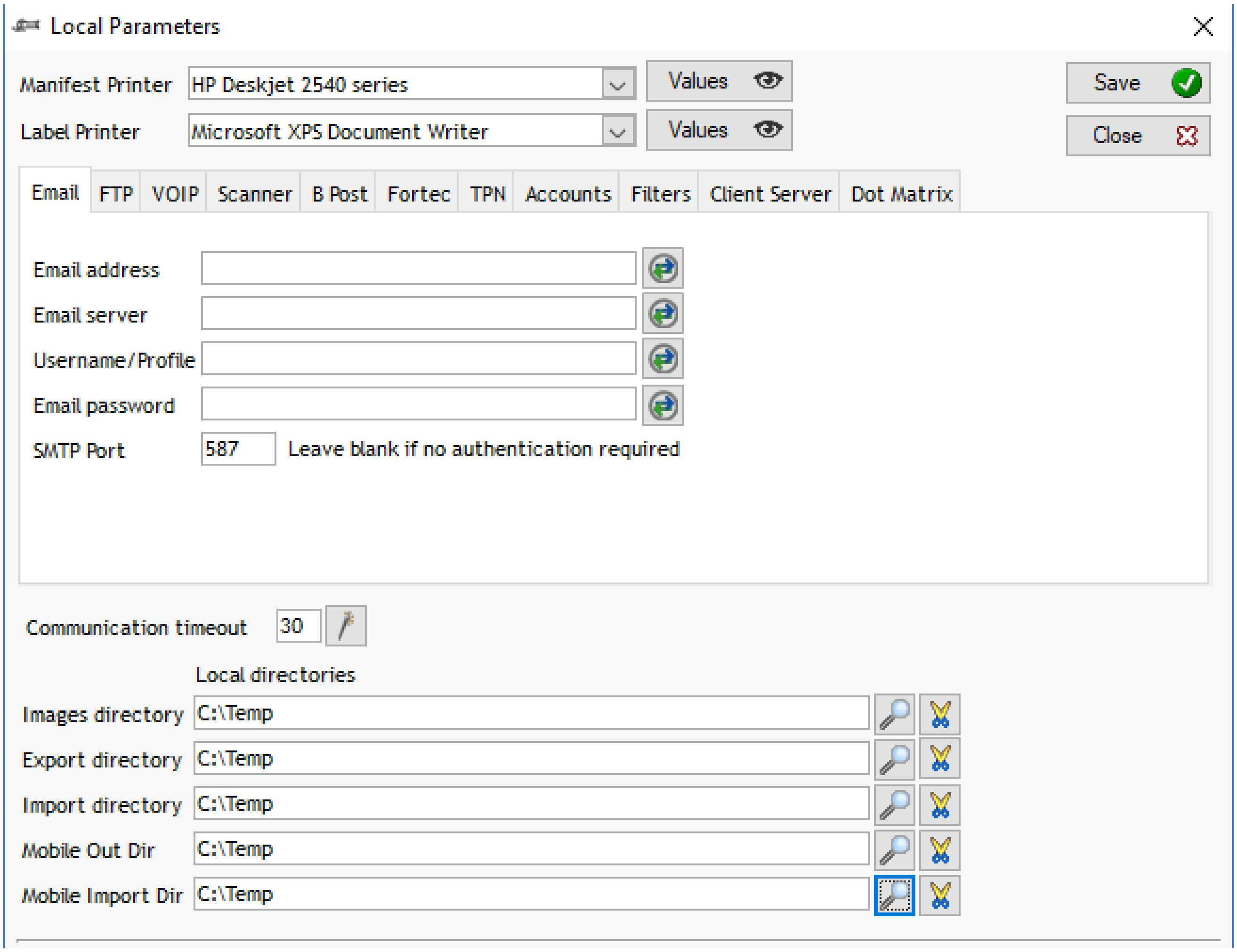
Check the next invoice number in Global Parameters afterwards.

EMAILING INVOICES

It is important that you know what email system you are going to use to send invoices. Normally you will have already set this up and are using it. There are three different methods -

a. SMTP (standard method. Used by Thunderbird, eM Client etc)
b. Outlook
c. MAPI

The email settings for the program are located on each individual computer in Setup/Local Parameters on the Email tab.



These settings will already have been used to set up the email on the computer.

Email address is the address of the account you use and is the one that other people reply to.

Email server is used for SMTP email and is normally something like smtp.freeola.net (yours will be different). Leave alone if using Outlook.

Username/Profile is the username that your system uses with the associated account. It may be the same as your Email address. If using Outlook then you use your Outlook profile name, this is visible in your account settings in Outlook.

Email password is the password associated with the account.

The SMTP port varies according to your provider. If using Outlook then leave it alone. Otherwise this may be 25, 435 or 587. See your Email client.

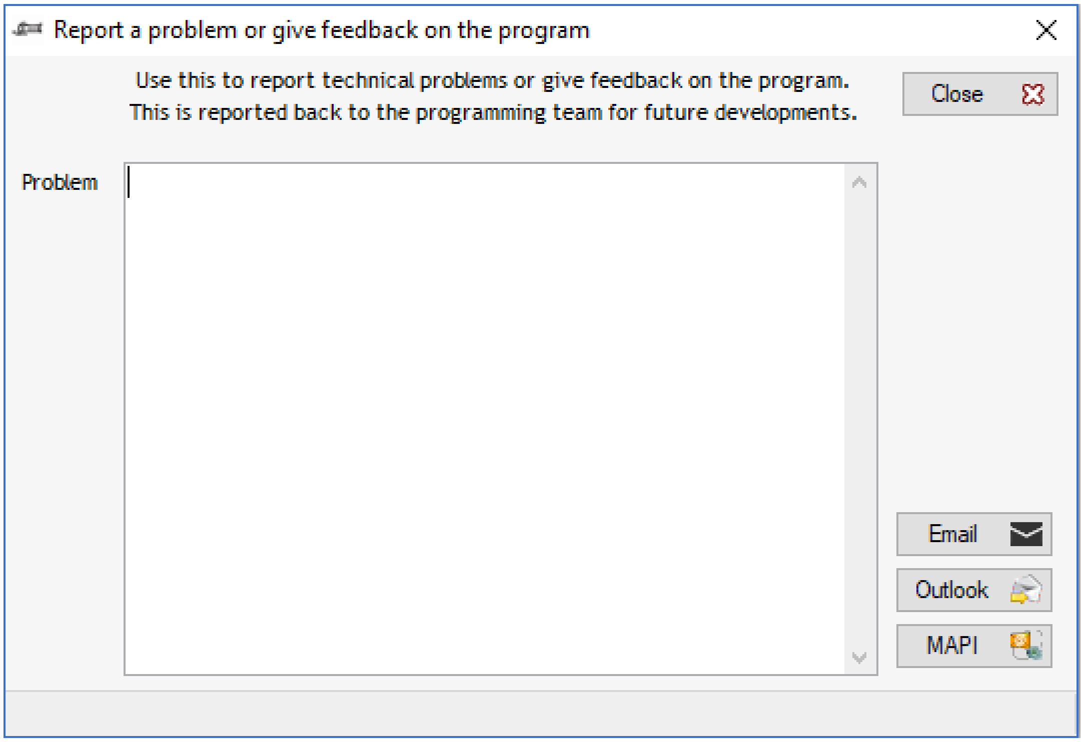
At the bottom of the page there are a number of Local Directories. The Export directory is used to store copies of created PDF invoices. Unless you need to store these in a particular place then it is recommended that you create a directory on the local disk C: and point all these to it. Here I have created a directory called Temp on local disk C: and set all to it.

You should test the email connection by going into Help then the option of ‘Report a problem or give feedback’.

Type a message on the Problem area and click on the button in the lower left. Choose Email if using SMTP, Outlook if using Outlook and MAPI is using anything else.

Please type a meaningful message such as ‘Testing email at …….’

The screen will initially look like this -



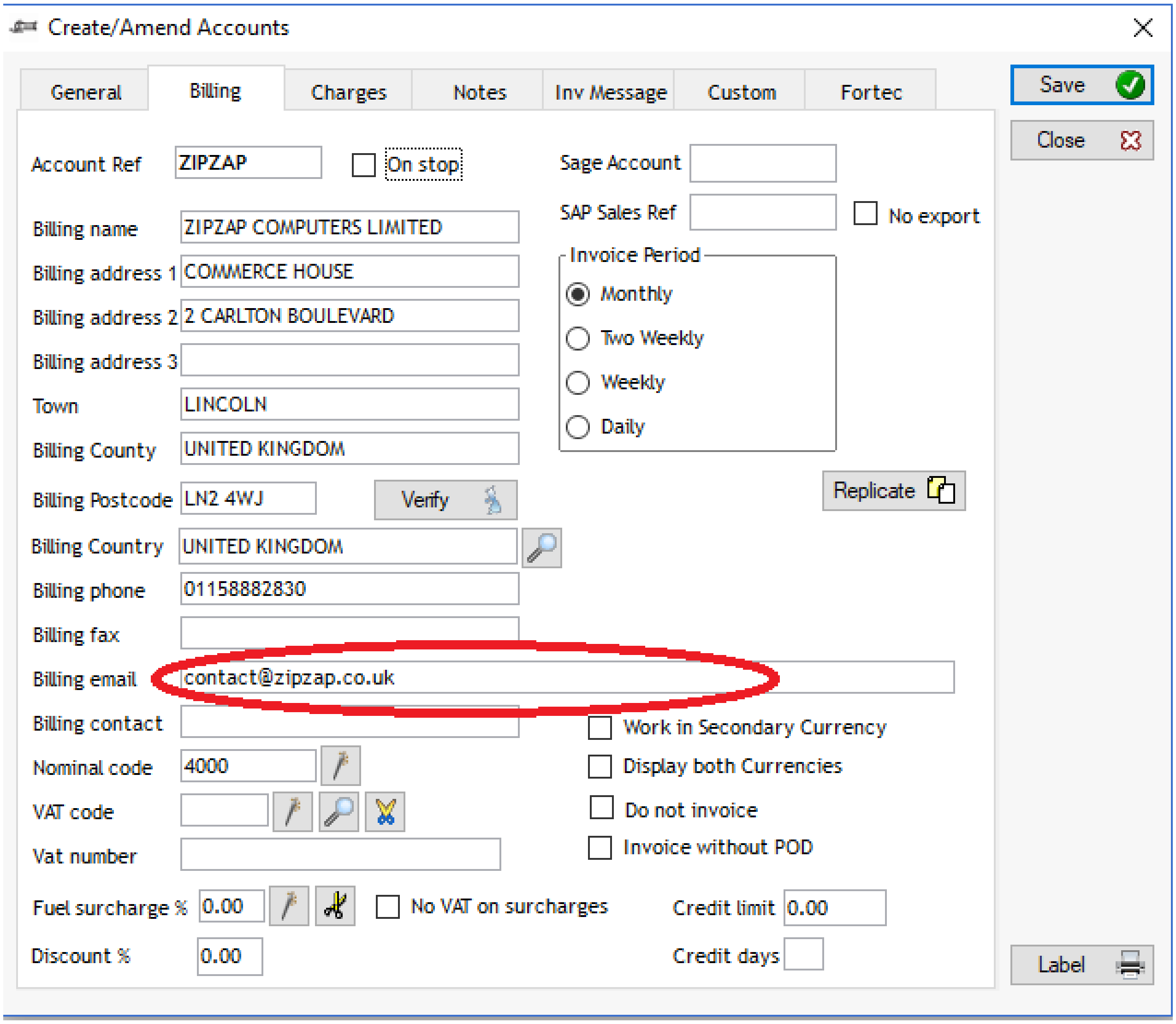
If successful you will get a success message and the screen will close.

If unsuccessful it will give an advisory message of what is wrong.

If you cannot send a message from this then you not be able to email invoices.

EMAILING INVOICES

The program needs to be able to access the email address of your customers. You set these on the billing tab of their account.



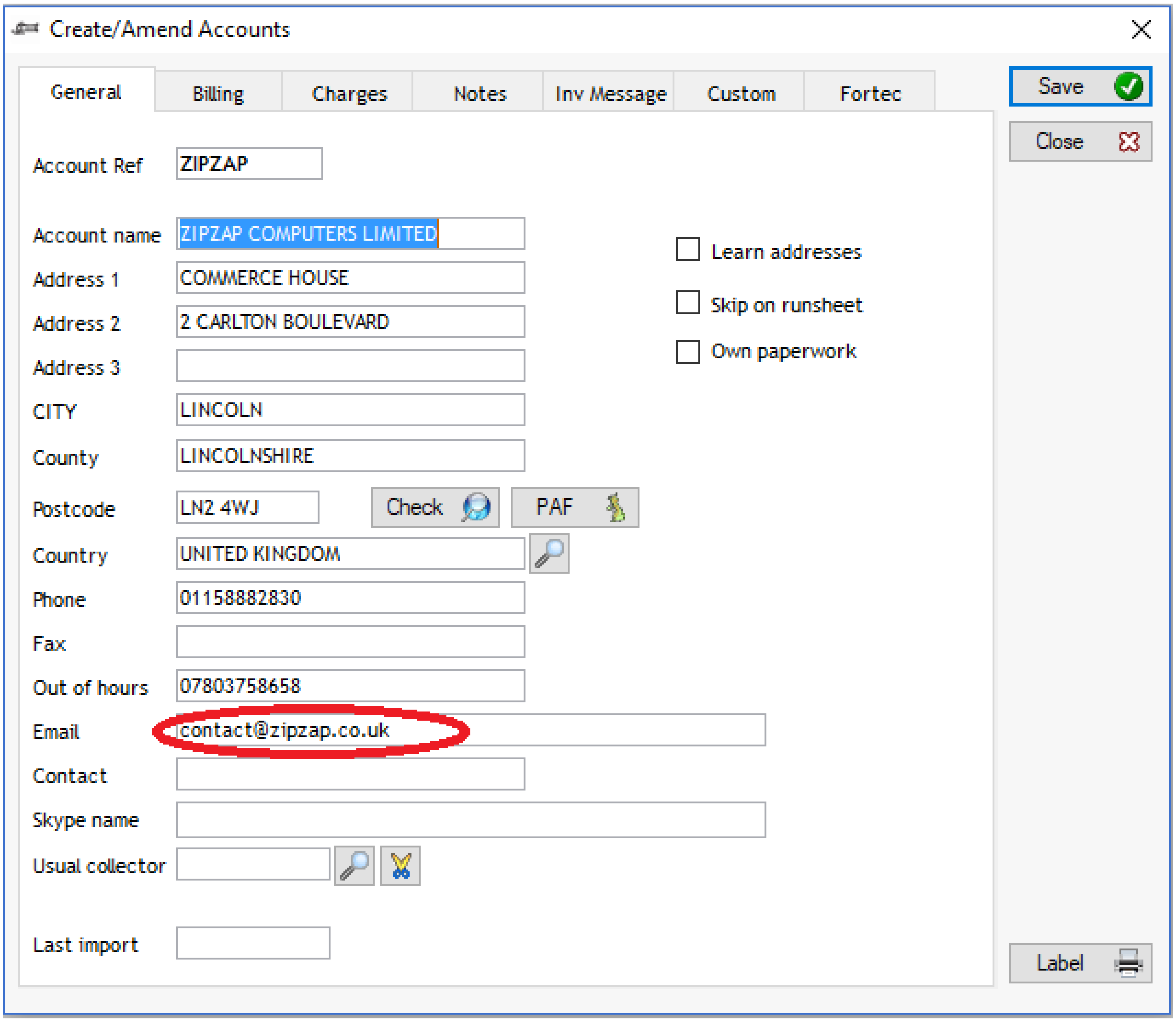
To send to two emails at the same time simply put a semi-colon between the addresses e.g.

contact@zipzap.co.uk;fred@zipzap.co.uk

If the address is blank then the program will look at the normal email address and send to that instead.

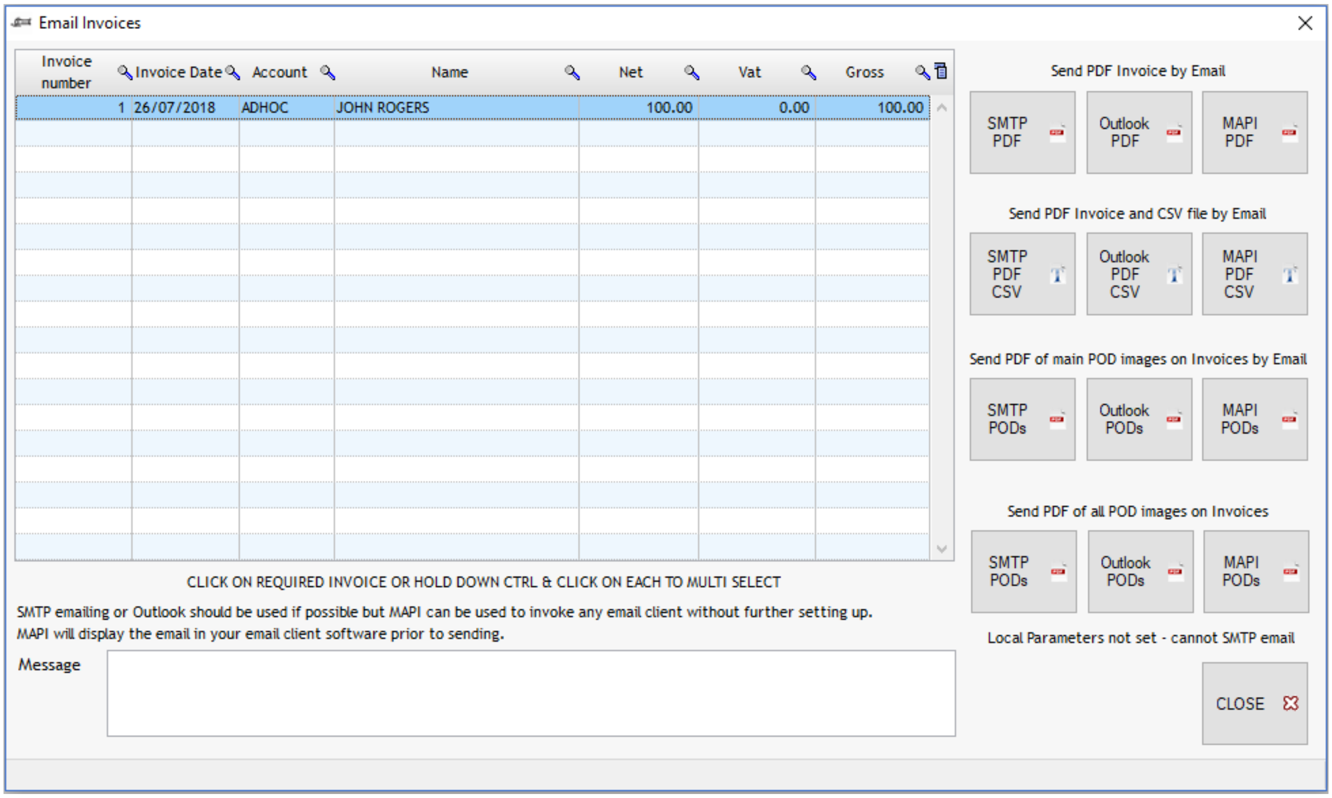
If both are empty then it will be unable to send and will advise you.

General email -



You can send a single invoice or a block of invoices at any time.

Choose Actions/Invoicing/Email Invoices -



Note that the invoices are displayed in REVERSE order, so the newest are at the top.

Click on the invoice you want to send OR hold down the CTRL key and click on each to multi-select.

Choose the appropriate button on the right-hand side.

Invoices are created in PDF format before being attached to the email. These are saved in your Export directory prior to sending.

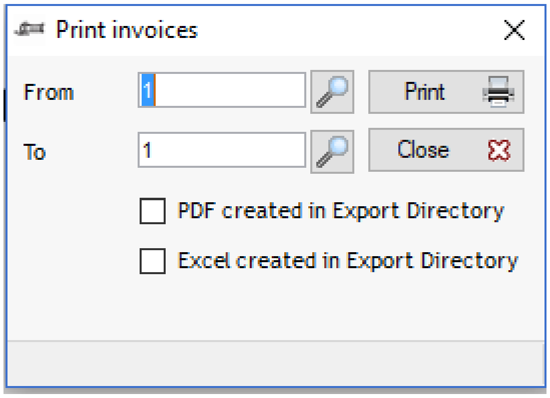
If you want to send a message with the emails then type it in the Message box before you send.

At the end if some failed then you will be notified. Sent emails are logged in Actions/Invoicing/Email log.

ADDITIONAL - INVOICE PRODUCTION

You can generate invoices as PDF or CSV files at any time.

Choose Reports/Invoices/Print Invoices in Range -



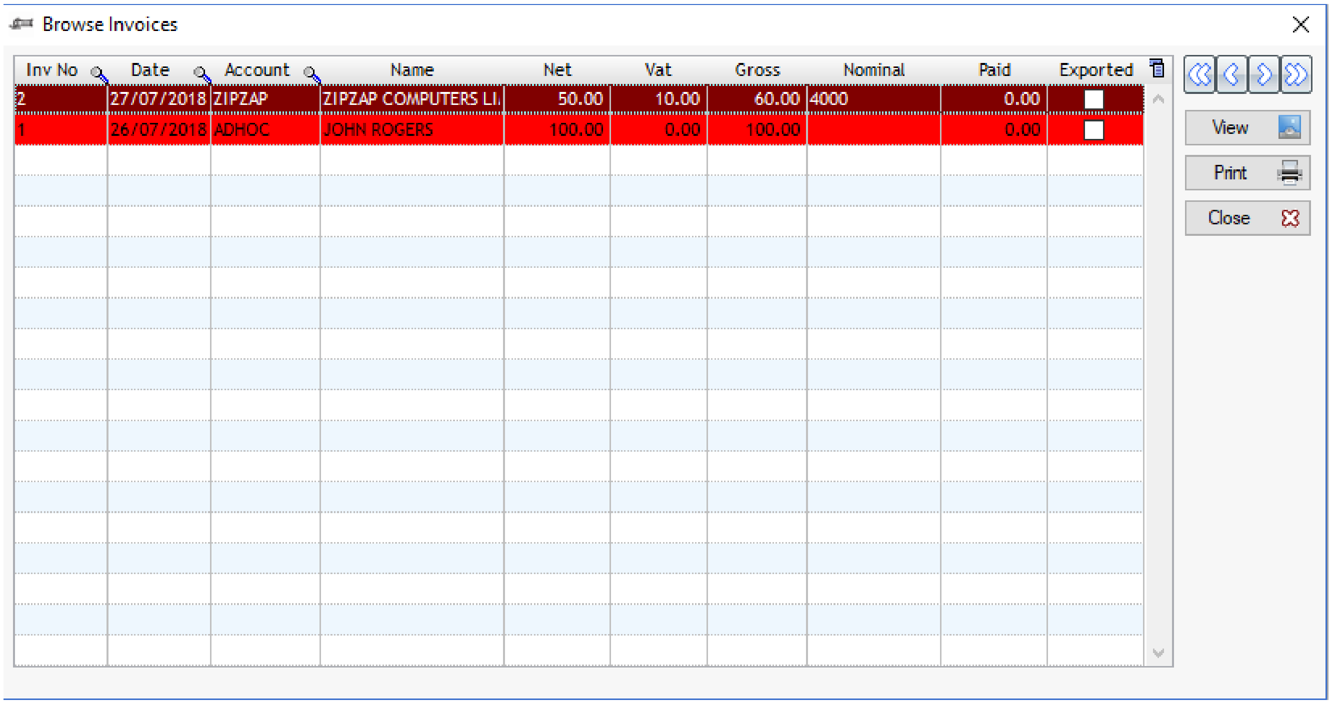
Tick PDF created in Export Directory to create all in this directory, they will be named (invoice number).PDF

Tick Excel created in Export Directory to create all in this directory, they will be named (invoice number).CSV

You can create as many as you like.

ADDITIONAL - BROWSING INVOICES

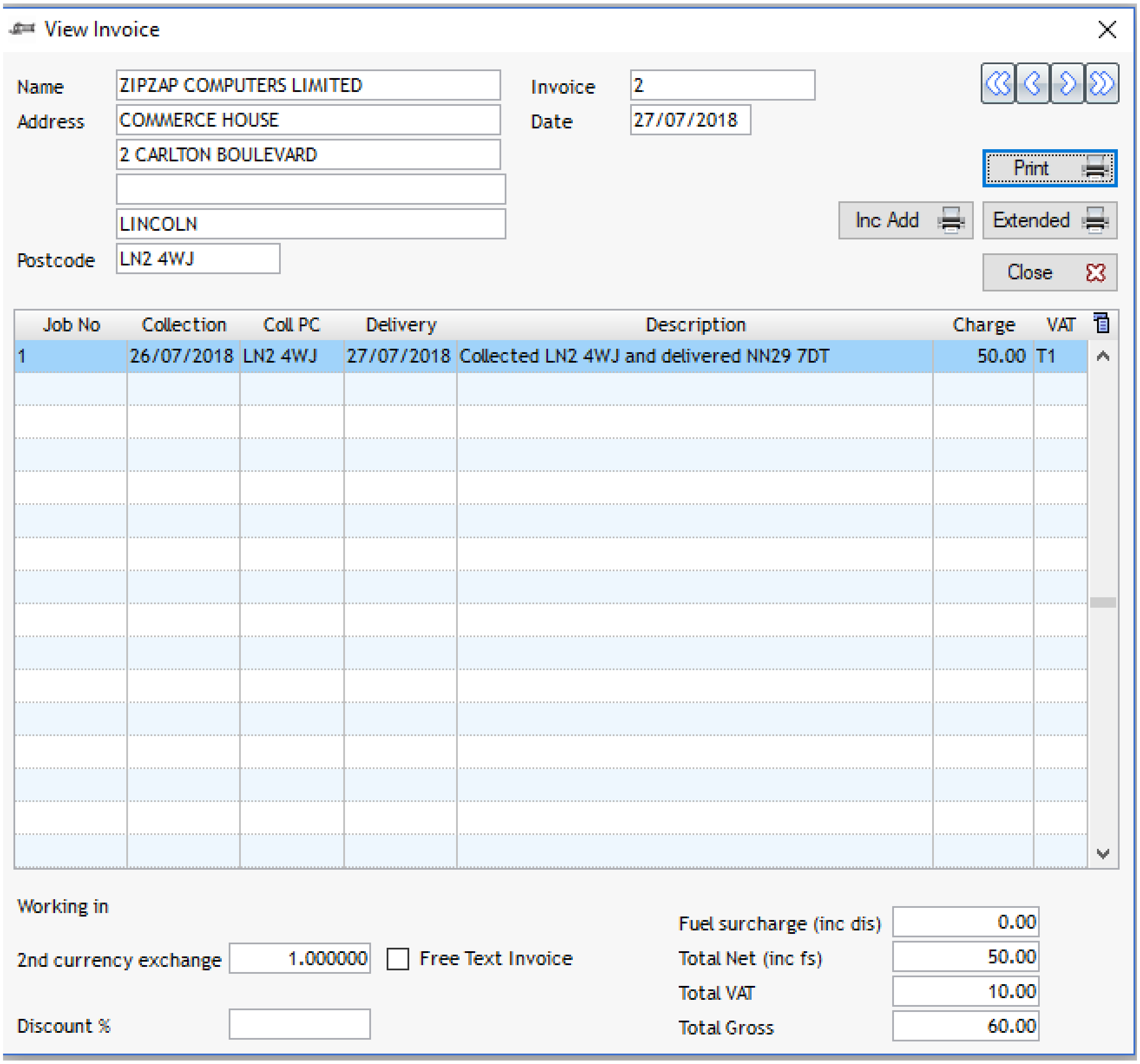
You can browse all invoices. Go to Actions/Invoicing/Browse Invoices



The rows appear in reverse number order.

If unpaid the row will be highlighted in RED.

Clicking on a row will display the record.

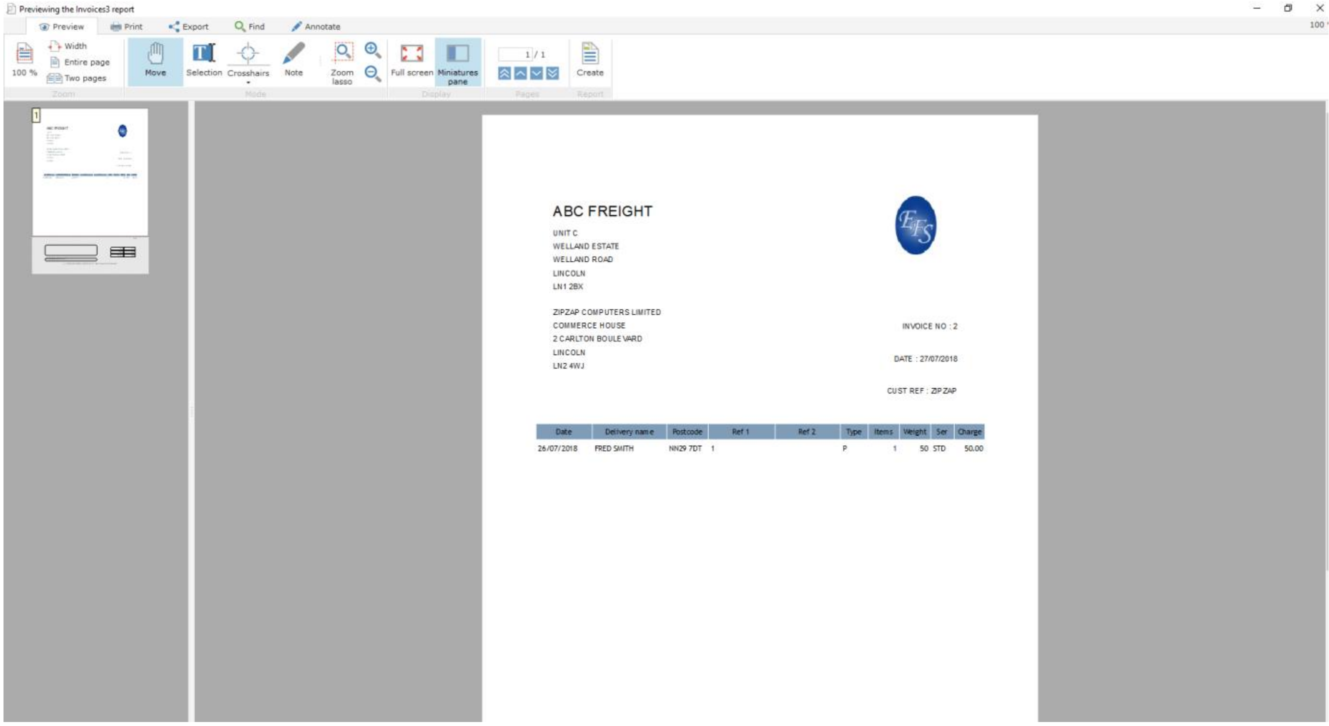


This is a representation of what was on the invoice. Clicking on PRINT will display the actual invoice on the screen as it was printed. You can then print or create a PDF from it.

Inc Add does the same but adds your address if you were using pre-printed stationery and it was being suppressed.

Extended does the same but adds further details to the invoice.

The invoice will be displayed in preview –



You can also abort by closing the window.

RANDOM TESTING

It is vitally important that you check the accuracy of the invoicing on a regular basis.

Before emailing all the invoices out it is recommended that you print a random invoice and go through it thoroughly to ensure it is accurate.

If discrepancies are found then determine why. If necessary reverse the invoice run, perform the corrections and run the invoices again. Recheck the accuracy.

Never just assume that the invoices are correct.

Always report discrepancies.