

*This text excerpt was written in 2000. Please note that Olympic Arms is now in the process of implementing an advanced electronic system to replace most internal paperwork, order, sales, shipping and inventory systems.*

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When this company began its operations in 1975 there was no such thing as a personal or home computer. "PC's" as we are all now well aware, are common place in most every home in America today, and the ability to create, record, organize and change a database of information is as easy as a click of the mouse. However, 25 years ago, that technology was unavailable.

What was done then, was a simple matter of hand recording in legal sized ledgers the manufacture date, sale date, and other sales information of each and every serial number produced. This went on for years, until the fairly recent advent of the personal computer allowed for additional options. Once an electronic A&D book system requirement was approved by the BATF (the government agency responsible for the enforcement of firearms regulations in the United States), Olympic Arms already had almost 20 years of data already recorded in the BATF required bound books.

Once the Electronic database requirements were approved, we as a manufacture, looked into this option very seriously for obvious reasons. But, because of the rules and regulations concerning the BATF issued variance for the keeping of an electronic A&D book, as well as other considerations, the decision was made by Olympic Arms management to NOT go to the electronic system. Here is a better explanation as to why.

To be legal with regards to BATF regulations, any FFL (Federal Firearms License) holder that desires to maintain his A&D records in an electronic format must receive a variance from the BATF to do so. This variance states that as long as certain criteria is met, that the FFL holder may maintain his records in electronic format.

That criteria is easily met with most standard and common ledger/spreadsheet programs such as MS Excel® and others. However, more popular and more powerful versions are available designed specifically for the firearms industry. These programs found in use throughout the industry, allow for automatic inventory reduction, printable invoices, error shields (program quirks that will not allow an operator to make a mistake, such as sell a serial numbered part to a non-FFL dealer, etc.), as well as the (automated) required A&D records information. The decision was made that if all of the Olympic Arms data was going to be transferred from hard copies of bound books to this electronic system, that it would only make good sense to do so using one of these types of programs designed for the firearms industry.

These programs however, are very costly. Initial estimates were in the \$10,000 to \$35,000

range! Quite a chunk of change. And if the change was going to be made, it was going to be with a piece of software that was currently in use and proven to be efficient, effective and reliable. We were not going to risk that amount of money on a new and unproven program.

Then would come the transfer of data from hand written A&D books, to the electronic files. The transferring of the data that already existed in paper-bound legal ledgers would be such a daunting task. One that would require quite frankly, thousands of man hours to re-record as electronic data. With the small size of Olympic Arms (any where from 40-60 employees max.), and the sometimes already over-taxed staff, the transfer of data was best left up to professionals. Estimates were put out to bid, and when data processing companies assessed the amount of work required to transfer almost 20 years of information, the estimated costs were almost \$100,000.00 (that's right, One hundred Thousand Dollars)!! This was simply not a sound decision for our business.

Additionally, the variance would also necessitate BATF access to the file and or computer maintaining the file at any time for investigations, and or inspections. That means if a BATF agent were to walk into your place of operation, upon demand, that agent must be given access to that computer and or files. This was something that Olympic Arms was not willing to allow. The risk involved and the opportunity for unscrupulous and or illegal activities by certain governmental officials is not a risk Olympic was willing to take. This decision was made not only to protect Olympic Arms, but also all of Olympic Arms' customers.

With this information compiled, the decision was easy. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" became the motto of the day. The decision was made to continue on in the same format. One that may be time consuming and seem somewhat antiquated, but just as effective, and legal.

The bottom line however is this; If the BATF required something different that what we had been doing for 25 years, we would do so. But, alas, they do not. Therefore, we will not make extra work for ourselves until the law requires us to do so.