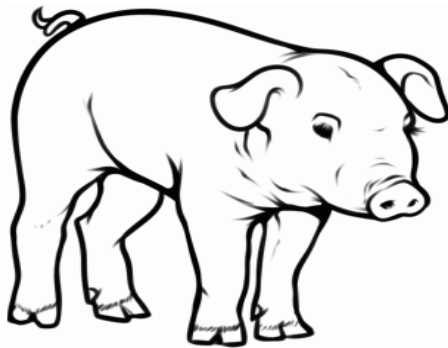




ARKO Laboratories

A Non-Coder's Experience using AI to Create Enhancement Software *From Clueless to “Coder”*

Hans Koehnke, DVM – Director of Research & Owner, ARKO Laboratories





The Vision & The Stakes

Project Goal: Automatically read Purchase Orders (POs) and insert them into QuickBooks.

Business Drivers:

- Decrease data entry time for administrative staff.
- Prepare for growth and increase order accuracy.
- Cross-training: Ensuring the system works even if key staff are away.



Day 1: Feeling "Completely Clueless"

The Starting Line (12/29/25): "I feel completely clueless."

The Strategy: Followed a CIRAS roadmap and utilized a paid Gemini account.

The Toolkit (The "Car" Analogy):

Python: The "Engine" translating code.

VS Code: The "Dashboard" for organizing and running code.

Tesseract OCR: The "Reader" turning scanned images into text.



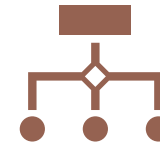
The 10.5-Hour Sprint (New Year's Eve Day)



The Deep Dive (12/30/25):
Worked 10.5 hours non-stop—
no lunch, total focus.



Key Learning: Uninterrupted
time is essential for navigating
complex logic.



The Win: Produced a CSV file
perfectly matching QuickBooks'
required input columns.

Hitting the "Security Wall"

The Snag (New Year's Eve Day):

Tried to automate the QuickBooks insertion and hit a hard roadblock.

The Error: "Certificate Revoked" for the Python version used.

The Pivot: "It's New Year's Eve!!! Project stopped... I'm going to go have fun!".



This 37-second excerpt from "Star Wars: A New Hope" is used for transformative educational purposes to illustrate software integration and security clearance hurdles. © 1977 Lucasfilm Ltd.



Lessons in "Fluid" Software



Software is Fluid: Updates constantly change security rules and version requirements.



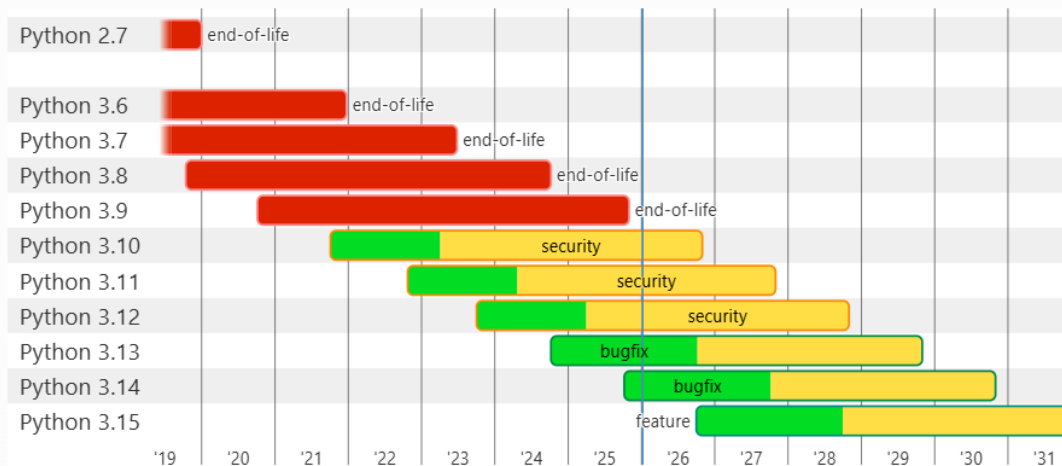
Technical Debt: Python 3.12 was flagged as a security risk, causing QuickBooks to block it.



Strategy: Upgraded to Python 3.13—stable enough for libraries, new enough to be secure.

Active Python releases

For more information visit the [Python Developer's Guide](#).





The Reality Check: (The Pivot)

Moving from "On the Verge" to Strategic Action

- **Protect the Core:** Is a DIY project worth risking our entire QuickBooks database?
- **The "Dirty Data" Wall:** Automation proved we cannot automate a mess; we need standardized product IDs first.
- **Know Your Limits:** High-risk integrations require a professional Designer, not just a tinkerer.
- **Strategic Shift:** Redirecting lessons to a safe, high-impact project: **The Task Management Loop.**

The Google Sheets Management Ecosystem

- **The Pivot: Used Lessons Learned and** Switched gears to another ongoing project
- **The Problem:** High-stakes, multi-year SOPs for validation of equipment, renewals, etc that are easy for staff to forget.
- **The "Frankenstein" Phase:** Initially a fragile patchwork of cell formulas and Google Apps Script.
- **The Solution: A Management Feedback Loop:**
 - **Google Forms:** Simplified data entry for employee task completion.
 - **Gmail:** Automated "Nudge" triggers for upcoming or overdue tasks.
 - **Google Sheets - Visual Dashboard:** One field showing Overdue, Pending, and Completed tasks.



The Breakthrough: Cursor & Clasp

Transitioning to Pro Tools:
Switched to **Cursor**, an AI-native editor that "remembers" the project.

The Clean Sweep: Cursor wiped out messy cell formulas and rewrote the system cleanly in 100% Apps Script.

The "Magic" of CLASP PUSH:: Eliminated laborious copy-pasting by pushing code directly into the google sheet.

**Now Using as a Very Effective Scheduling
Tool for our Business!!!**

[illegible]

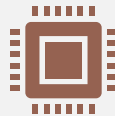
Standardizing for the Future



Valuable Lesson from PO Reader Project:



The Hidden Truth: Automation revealed that customers call the same products by different names.



Automation Reality: Realized you cannot automate a mess; you must standardize data first.



Actionable Goal: Assigning unique product IDs by the end of 2026.

Golden Rules for AI in Business



The Screenshot is Your Best Friend:

(Windows + Shift + S) Let the AI see what you see to spot missing details.



Accept Your Role: "I am not a coder and never will be one." Focus on business efficiency.



Think in Ecosystems: Use AI to link existing tools (Sheets, Forms, Gmail) into a single visual dashboard.



Don't Climb Walls Alone: If you hit a "rabbit hole," find a resource or expert immediately.



Protect the Core: For critical system links (like QuickBooks), bring in a professional to ensure security and prevent data corruption.



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Thank You

Hans Koehnk
