

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Lowes's TradeStone Software (TSS) for an Import Vendor

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## General Questions for a New User

### TradeStone, what is it?

- A web-based platform that provides an integrated solution for import item and import purchase order management. It offers a robust database of information to support vendor and purchase order management processes related to import transactions.

### Who uses TradeStone?

- **External** to Lowe's
  - With the implementation of 'Purchase Order Management'
    - Vendor and Factory roles will enter **logistics** information
  - Currently, Vendor-users have a read-only view of
    - Party Id information (Home Office, Ship From, Factory Partys)
    - Item details
- **Internal** to Lowe's
  - International Merchandising, International Sourcing, Import Administration, International Transportation, and International Logistics and Replenishment.

### Why is TradeStone being used by Lowe's?

- It is an extended database of import related information for item and vendor records
- One-stop shopping for internal users for import orders

### Purchase Order Management (POM), What is it?

- Purchase Order Management is a web portal that collaborates import process components:
  - Every step of the PO process (from issuance to close)
  - Vessel assignments
  - Visibility to Financial Instrument payment instructions
  - Documentation submissions

### When did TradeStone start for 'Purchase Order Management (POM)?'

- December 5, 2011. Detail and updates are emailed to users with TradeStone access via LowesLink® secure.

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## What will I need to do in TradeStone Purchase Order Management?

- External users
  - Vendors and Factory / Logistics users will enter and load key import information:
    - FI (Financial Instrument), PO ship date, Review of Pre Shipment Inspection Dates, AMS, Packing List, ASN, Commercial Invoice, bank documentation, etc.
    - See Factory / Vendor Roles, detailed below
- Internal users
  - Replenishment: Manage purchase orders, including the execution of PO changes.
  - Import Administration: Manage financial information
  - International Merchandising: Manage Home Office and Ship From setup and maintenance
  - International Sourcing: Manage Factory setup information and maintenance
  - Classification: Manage import classification details
  - Asia International Logistics Specialist: Manage Lowe's logistics

## How does a new user get started?

- **External** users to Lowe's
  - Home Office (HO) Primary Contact authorization is needed.
    - Primary Contact emails an [LGS Vendor Workbook](#) (Lowe'sLink > LG Sourcing > Forms) to the International Sourcing (IS) or International Merchandising Coordinator (IMC) with the TSS tab completed
    - **Training** resources (Training Modules / software simulation and printable **User Guides**) are available in Lowe'sLink secure sign-in > **TradeStone Information**
- **Internal** TradeStone user setup
  - Manager completes setup form:  
[http://lowesnet.0998.lowes.com/departments/product\\_development\\_sourcing/internal\\_user\\_setup\\_request\\_for\\_tradestone.pdf](http://lowesnet.0998.lowes.com/departments/product_development_sourcing/internal_user_setup_request_for_tradestone.pdf)

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## Roles – Vendor vs Factory, what is the difference?

- **VENDOR** Role for Purchase Order Management:
  - i. Confirm Purchase Orders received from Lowe's
  - ii. Review vessel schedules
  - iii. View Inspection Data such as the requested inspection, scheduled inspection, etc.
  - iv. Create AMS (Advanced Manifest Submission)
  - v. Create Packing List
  - vi. Review LC/OA
  - vii. Create ASN (Advance Shipment Notice)
  - viii. Create Commercial Invoice
  - ix. Upload Documents into TradeStone
  
- **FACTORY** Role for Purchase Order Management:
  - a. Factory user **CAN**
    - i. Review new purchase orders without pricing information and limited to their own items.
    - ii. Review vessel schedule
    - iii. View Inspection Data such as the requested inspection, scheduled inspection, etc. – (Limited to their own items)
    - iv. Create AMS – only when all items on Planned AMS are produced by the factory of the user.
    - v. Create Packing List - only when all items on the AMS are produced by the factory of the user
  - b. Factory user **CANNOT**
    - i. See pricing information
    - ii. Review LC/OA, Create ASN, Create Commercial Invoice. Upload documents into TradeStone.

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## TradeStone Primary Contact, who is this?

- Only one (1) vendor contact can be entered by your IM or IS as the 'TradeStone Primary Contact' on the Party Information screens.
- This individual will receive all TradeStone correspondence and coordinates other Vendor or Factory users in their organization.
- Same contact (in TradeStone Software):
  - Home Office Vendor Party Id
    - Ship From Vendor Party Ids (related by the Home Office VBU - as the parent)
    - Factory Party Ids
      - Defined by the Party Relations managed by the IS Team
      - A Factory Party Id can be related to only one (1) Home Office Party Id

## Home Office Primary Contact needs to be changed in TSS, how do I get this updated in TSS?

- Email an updated LGS Vendor Workbook  
<http://www.loweslink.com/llmain/pubdocuments/lgsVendorWorkbook.xlt>
  - To your International Merchandising Coordinator (IMC)

## Training for TradeStone Software for Purchase Order Management

- When/how does training become available?
  - Through LowesLink® secure sign-in > **TradeStone Information (eCommerce menu):**
    - **Training Modules** – software simulation
    - **User Guides** – printable details
  - Periodic emails will be sent to users with TradeStone access for 'Instructor Led Training' opportunities

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# Technical / Business Questions

## PO (Purchase Order)

### 1) Confirm

- a) **PO issued before TradeStone go-live:** all PO will be loaded in **Confirmed** status, you don't need to confirm them via TradeStone
- b) **PO issued after TradeStone go-live:** vendors are required to confirm PO in TradeStone within 3 days. Contact ILS for PO updates.
- c) New PO - vendor can download PO from LowesLink Webforms but they will need to confirm the PO in TradeStone.
- d) Can a Factory user see their order once vendor confirmed order? Yes.

### 2) Cancel

- a) PO will not be cancel even vendors do not confirm it. PO will be cancelled in 14 days if the PO is "Rejected" by TradeStone. There are 3 scenarios PO will be rejected by TradeStone, no confirmed item details (which means the item setup is not done), shipping terms is not correct and/or Replenishment used a wrong VBU (i.e. used a FCL VBU issued CONS PO or vice versa).

### 3) Reject

- a) Does a vendor have to reject PO first once they have issues with PO?
  - i) Not necessary, but suggest them to do it as it will show up on ILS query, ILS can follow-up with them immediately. If not, ILS can see them after 3 days.
- b) PO reject-> re-confirm, if will shown on "PO release " or "late vendor conformation"
  - i) If PO reject, it will shown on "late vendor confirm", after re-confirm, then will shown on "PO release"
- c) When PO is "reject" status, will JDA assign vessel when close shipping window?
  - i) Yes, JDA still assign vessel whatever vendor confirm or reject PO.

### 4) Hard Stop

- a) All system hard stops are removed from TradeStone. Even there is a "Failed" inspection; system will not stop a PO to go to next step. However, vendors will need to make sure all issues are fixed before they ship out the PO.

### 5) Updates to PO / PO revisions

- a) PO Maintenance - Email ILS completed form:
  - i) From LowesLink > LG Sourcing > Forms > [PO Change Request](#)
- b) Factory Change - email ILS completed form:
  - i) From LowesLink > LG Sourcing > Forms > [Factory Change Template](#)
- c) Reporting - Dashboard > Reports > **PO Change Details Rpt**, vendor should check daily.
  - i) How many days will be reflected on PO Change Details Rpt?
    - (1) 72 hours after received PO change requirement

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## Import Transportation

- 1) Shipping instructions available in Excel?
  - a) Yes, on Vendor role's Dashboard > **Vessel assignment**, then search as your needs, and export to excel.
- 2) If found vessel information in TradeStone is not accurate, how is it corrected?
  - a) Same as before TradeStone, contact ILS to ask JDA team amend.
- 3) When vessel information received?
  - a) JDA is assign vessel 20-28 days prior to last ship date, if 14 days prior to last ship date still without shipping details in TradeStone, please contact your ILS at once
- 4) Change use higher container size due to carrier lack of equipment, what is done in TradeStone?
  - a) Contact your ILS to make Notes in TradeStone

## Pre-Shipment Inspection

- 1) Inspection Certificate
  - a) QA process does NOT change as a result of TradeStone implementation.
- 2) If inspection result different with actual on TradeStone, what action is needed?
  - a) Contact **QA Manager** to correct TradeStone (see Parties section on the Purchase Order screen)

## CONS (Consolidated PO)

- 1) For CONS PO, vendors do not need to create ASN but they still need to create AMS, Packing List and Commercial Invoice.
- 2) Also they will need to upload documents into TradeStone.

## AMS / AMS Builder

- 1) How many days prior to vessel departure date to submit AMS/PACKING LIST/ASN?
  - a) Requirements are all in the training materials for details. PL is the most critical as it serves the 10+2. Vendors are required to submit Packing List **48 hours before the vessel sail**.
- 2) PO does not appear on the Builder why?
  - a) PO will not appear on the AMS builder if an AMS already been associated with the PO; instead, see the Dashboard left navigation Search > Advance Manifest Submission.
- 3) **Shipper(s)**, adding?
  - a) See the "Tracking and Shipping" user guide (located at <https://secure.loweslink.com/llmain/tradestone/privdocuments/tsQuickRefShippingTrackingEng.pdf> (available only with your LowesLink user profile - click OK if prompted)) to enter the shipper information into TradeStone. You only need to enter this once and you can use it when you create an AMS.
  - b) One AMS should have only one Shipper.
- 4) **Stuffer**
  - a) **Stuffer** is the actual container loading location.
  - b) **Stuffer Office** is the office who controls the loading process. Lowe's is expecting the last location that the container is loaded and sealed in multiple loading locations scenario.
    - i) If it is a consolidated load then this field should be populated with a consolidator office location.
    - ii) If the shipment is a full container load shipment (non-consolidated) this field should reflect the vendor office location.

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5) **Pre-Release?**

- a) When vendor sets to Y, message returned: AMSSndToCrrCust: Please verify that updates or review of shipped quantities has occurred prior to final release of this AMS/Packing List. Once released, the status of this document will not allow for edits without contact to the Consignee representatives for intervention. Submission of this document will impact all other documents including the commercial invoice impacting the speed and accuracy of payments.

6) **Logistics Information**

- a) **Vessel Departure date** - If there is a feeder vessel, this will be feeder vessel ETD, if not; this will be mother vessel ETD. Also this field will be overwritten by carrier EDI later of the process.
- b) **ETA Destination Date** - add 6 days for RDC and 3 days for TDC (same logic as before TradeStone) from the ETA Port date
- c) Weight and cube feet – originates from Item Offer Sheet information sent to IMC. When PO issued, all dimension and weight data will be migrated to all other Lowe's systems.

7) **AMS Status**

- a) Draft = AMS is created, but not submitted
- b) AMS = AMS is submitted, but PL is not submitted
- c) PL = Packing List is created, but not submitted
- d) ASN = PL is submitted, but ASN is not created
- e) CI = Commercial Invoice (ASN is submitted)

8) **Defaulted weight and volume in CUFT/LBS, however, SWB is showing CBM/KGS by carrier. We concern the difference unit between carrier and TSS system when vendor submitted SI.**

- a) In TradeStone, all the reports (AMS, Packing List) related to dimension and weight will be converted to metric as noted in the 'Shipping and Tracking' User Guide.
- b) Use the converters in the User Guide to avoid discrepancies.

9) **What to do if a mistake is made during AMS creation process?**

- a) Before a user submits, changes can be made. If you need the whole AMS to be deleted, contact ILS.
- b) After submit, only Import Admin is able to update the data. Vendors will need to notify ILS on the mistakes. ILS will notify Import Admin to make the change.

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## Packing List (PL)

### 1) Shipping Mark

- a) If Shipping Mark is too long, vendor will use attachment for B/L. Because each item need to show "Description of product" & "Quantity" on shipping mark. Can TSS accept the attachment? How many bytes are TSS allow for Vendor to entry shipping mark?
  - i) The shipping mark field contains 4000 characters. This should be large enough for vendors to enter a shipping mark for most shipments. However, if there is a need to enter more, vendors can state "As per Attachment" on this field. When they upload the documents into TSS, the attachments are needed to upload as well. .

### 2) What does "**Container fumigation**" mean? Is container or goods?

- a) Container.
  - i) If goods is finished fumigation then load into container, the flag should be "N".
  - ii) If it is container fumigation after it has been loaded, then US need transfer the container at a special location for action, so the flag should be "Y"

### 3) What to do if a mistake is made during packing list process?

- a) Before a user submits, only BOL# field can be edited
- b) After submit, only Import Admin is able to update the data. Vendors will need to notify ILS on the mistakes. ILS will notify Import Admin to make the change.

## Advance Ship Notice (ASN)

### 1) Some PO the vendor has submitted the AMS to carrier but need to do the ASN in TradeStone. If the gross weight and measurement on Seaway bill is different from TSS, should vendor submit PL/CI with TSS template to the bank and UPS or use their own version? Will it affect the US import customs clearance?

- a) No, vendor should follow the TradeStone process. Vendor cannot create two CI for the same shipment. That will have potential impact on US customs clearance.
- b) Vendor should notify the ILS if there are weight and dimension discrepancies.

### 2) Bill of Lading (BOL)

- a) MRC/MCC port?
  - i) Port of loading which DHL actual load.

### 3) What to do if a mistake is made during ASN creation process?

- a) Before a user submits, changes can be made.
- b) After submit, only Import Admin is able to update the data. Vendors will need to notify ILS on the mistakes. ILS will notify Import Admin to make the change.

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## Commercial Invoice (CI)

- 1) If One PO has multiple factories, will CI show all the factories as manufactories? Yes
- 2) If the Bank Beneficiary Name is different from the Vendor Name, How can vendor provide the correct CI to the bank to get the correct party be paid?
  - a) Normally the Beneficiary Name is the same as the shipper, both shipper and beneficiary will be appears on the CI report.
- 3) What to do if a mistake is made during CI creation process?
  - a) Before a user submits, changes can be made. After submit, only Import Admin is able to update the data. Vendors will need to notify ILS on the mistakes. ILS will notify Import Admin to make the change.

## Documentation Process

- 1) For **FCL** Shipments
  - a) If your OA payment instruction is issued **before TradeStone go-live** and **your ASN is already created in GXS**, please e-mail to [importtrack@lowes.com](mailto:importtrack@lowes.com) for a copy of shipment record and create all other documents in the same way as before TradeStone
  - b) If your OA payment instruction is issued before TradeStone go-live and your ASN is **NOT** done yet in GXS, you will need to follow the TradeStone process to **create AMS, Packing List, ASN and Commercial Invoice in TradeStone** (you can present a TradeStone Commercial Invoice Report instead of GXS shipment report to the bank for payment without discrepancy) and please upload one set of documents into TradeStone as well
  - c) If your OA payment instruction is issued after TradeStone go-live, you will need to follow the new documentation process via TradeStone
- 2) For **CONS** Shipment
  - a) If your PO is shipped before TradeStone go-live, please create all documents as today
    - (1) If you PO is going to be shipped on/after TradeStone go live, please create AMS, Packing List, and Commercial Invoice from TradeStone and also please upload all documents into TradeStone as well
- 3) **Intermodal certificate/overweight container/pre-loading stuffing container inspection** - several templates are available for the vendor to upload.
  - a) Does vendor can download template from TradeStone, or still keep use current template?
    - i) If TradeStone does not have the template, vendor should use the current ones; if needed.
- 4) UPS / Do documents still needed to be sent to FTP for UPS?
  - a) Vendors still need to send a set of documents to UPS.
  - b) Reminder to vendor – **vendor should submit TSS version PL/CI to the bank (not only sending to UPS).**
- 5) If PO's FI already released (before TradeStone), will TradeStone send a official notice to vendor for the requirement even if on hand FI hasn't use new template? See above.
- 6) **Sea Way Bill (SWB)** upload into TradeStone. OA requires vendor to upload SWB. Upload the draft of SWB to TradeStone? Answer: Draft is not the official document and this is not acceptable.

## Dashboard

- 1) If multiple persons review task at same time, if the task number will be decrease or change to 0?
  - a) No, except the task be finished. Suggestion: vendor does not assign multiple users dealing same work.

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## Contacts / Roles

### AMS / ASN change requests

- Import Tracking – [Imptracking@Lowe.com](mailto:Imptracking@Lowe.com)

### Classification

- Import Classification – [ImportClass@Lowe.com](mailto:ImportClass@Lowe.com)

### CTPAT, 10 + 2

- CTPAT, 10+2 – [CTPAT@Lowe.com](mailto:CTPAT@Lowe.com)

### EDI – Electronic Data Interchange

- [EDI-Production@Lowe.com](mailto:EDI-Production@Lowe.com)

### Factory Party Id Information and Relation to Home Office (HO)

- **International Sourcing (IS)** in LGS Shanghai or LGS Hong Kong
- See name on the on the Purchase Order screen, **LGS Senior Merchandiser** Parties section

### Financials – Import Administration

- Financial Instrument (FI) - International Logistics Specialist/ILS (overseas)
- Commercial Invoice (CI) - Import Administration, TradeStone– [ImportAdminTradestone@Lowe.com](mailto:ImportAdminTradestone@Lowe.com)

### International Logistics Specialist (ILS), Business Questions

- See name on the on the Purchase Order screen. Please provide the ILS details:
  - Always provide the necessary information such as PO Number, AMS Number, User Name, VBU#, etc.
- Vessel assignment / JDA changes
- [PO Changes Request](#) – see form in LowesLink > LG Sourcing > Forms
- [Factory PO Change](#) – see template in LowesLink > LG Sourcing > Forms
- Contact [TradeStone-HongKong@Lowe.com](mailto:TradeStone-HongKong@Lowe.com) or [TradeStone-Shanghai@Lowe.com](mailto:TradeStone-Shanghai@Lowe.com) for ILS email address

### International Merchandising Coordinator (IMC / PDC)

- Home Office, Ship From, and Item Offer Sheet (IOS) Business Questions
- Party Information screen > Associations > Documents / Conditions > Party Team > PDC row

### LowesLink

- [LowesLink@Lowe.com](mailto:LowesLink@Lowe.com)
  - Getting Started with TradeStone - <http://www.loweslink.com/gettingstarted.htm>
    - Follow the instructions on LowesLink® regarding system requirements and trusted sites: <http://www.loweslink.com/llmain/loweslinkrequirements.htm>

### Purchase Order Questions – ILS / Buyer

- International Logistics Specialist-ILS and/or the Buyer can be found on the Purchase Order screen
- Contact TradeStone Support email address for ILS or Buyer email address

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## TradeStone Software Technical Support & Administration

- TradeStone support staff in your area:
  - North China, Korea, Shanghai: [TradeStone-Shanghai@Lowe.com](mailto:TradeStone-Shanghai@Lowe.com) / + 86-21-51162215
  - South China, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong / Shenzhen / Taiwan / India: [TradeStone-HongKong@Lowe.com](mailto:TradeStone-HongKong@Lowe.com) / + 852-3423-6386
  - US / Mexico / Europe / South America: [TradeStone@Lowe.com](mailto:TradeStone@Lowe.com) / +1 704-757-8777

## Transportation

- International Transportation – [Imptracking@Lowe.com](mailto:Imptracking@Lowe.com)
  - Includes GXS shutoff or booking management

## Webforms

- [Webforms@Lowe.com](mailto:Webforms@Lowe.com)
  - Also see [http://www.loweslink.com/edi\\_webforms.htm](http://www.loweslink.com/edi_webforms.htm)

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