

Product Information

**International Trade, Customs, Despatch and
Transport Logistics with ASSIST⁴**



What We Would Like To Tell You First

About this brochure

Of course, we know that we are not the only ones offering software solutions for the areas of international trade, Customs, despatch and transport logistics – Despatch, Export and Freight.

But we also know that as a specialist in this niche market, we have developed sophisticated and comprehensive solutions. Therefore, this brochure will give a description of how our software and solutions distinguish themselves.

Should you miss anything when reading through the list of functions, this does not mean that it is not available. We believe that the Internet is the more appropriate medium to provide up-to-date and complete information. Software is developed much faster than new brochures can be printed. But please read on to get an initial overview of what we can do for you.

About us

Actually we do not want to talk too much about us. We would like to convince our customers by our products and by the experience we have gained during hundreds of worldwide installations over the past 20 years.

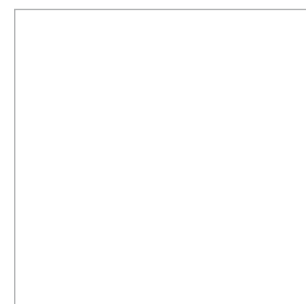
Customer satisfaction has always been our main focus – ever since we started our business. The following anecdote gives a vivid example of this attitude.

No distance too far

A customer to whom we were providing consultancy still had to type hundreds of Customs and shipping documents on a typewriter. The reason? There were no suitable printers.

When we heard that a flatbed printer had been developed on which pre-printed stationery could be printed, we quickly made a telephone call. Afterwards we drove to pick up the printer so that it may be configured overnight. The following day, it was possible to fill in the Customs declarations via computer. By the way – this was all carried out by our boss.

Nowadays, it is no longer necessary that our bosses pick up printers from the manufacturer overnight – but if it is to the service of our customers, none of our more than 150 employees will consider any distance as being too far or too inconvenient.



Actually we do not want to talk too much about us, we would like to convince our customers by our products and services.

Three Target Groups – One Brochure

■ Are you a shipping or export manager?

eCommerce, eLogistics, Global Supply Chain Management – three terms that currently have a strong impact on logistics. All three have the concept of “globalisation” in common.

Worldwide distribution and procurement of goods is nowadays no longer feasible without intensive IT support. Worldwide multi-modal movements of goods can only be controlled efficiently by a cross-system flow of information. This is not possible without intelligent software monitoring processes, facilitating the workflow and replacing manual work and entries.

ASSIST4 is a modular software solution. In a close interchange with central ERP systems on the one hand and application systems of business partners on the other, consistent and cross-system business processes can be organised and implemented.

ASSIST4 is software that can be used worldwide for Global Supply Chain Management and eLogistics.

■ Or are you in charge of Customs procedures?

Global movement of goods includes Customs processing. If state-of-the-art logistics applications only make sense through electronic communication, this is also true for state-of-the-art Customs applications. eCustoms is the synonym for electronic communication in the area of Customs. ASSIST4 supports new electronic procedures in the area of Customs and Excise.

ASSIST4 is software for eCustoms.

■ Or are you an IT manager?

It is in the interest of every IT manager to have – if possible – only one supplier for software. But even the market leaders for ERP systems have or leave gaps in their systems. Therefore, it is clear that a third-party supplier needs to be found who will cover a wide range of niche applications as an integrated solution.

It is vital that a third-party supplier fits into the IT environment – i.e. that their systems can be interfaced with other solutions used in your company. Therefore, such a supplier must look beyond their own systems and know the developments of other software producers. ASSIST4 is designed as such an add-on software.

No matter whether you come from the shipping, Customs or IT area – ASSIST4 is software that can be tailored to your requirements and needs. You provide the specifications – ASSIST4 will meet them.

ASSIST4 – A Construction Kit of Software Products and Modules

ASSIST4 Despatch, ASSIST4 Export, ASSIST4 Freight

What is behind the products from a business point of view?

Despatch

From the moment when goods come from the warehouse or production to the shipping department, up to the loading of goods at the ramp, from the packing department up to the creation of the shipping documents – at all stages the despatch module supports the work of the respective department.

The web-based Tracking & Tracing module allows the tracking of consignments from the receipt of order up to the delivery of goods to the consignee.

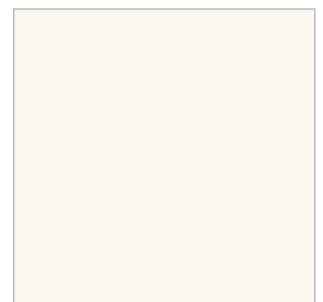
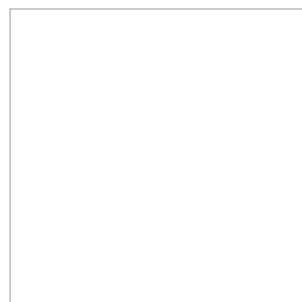
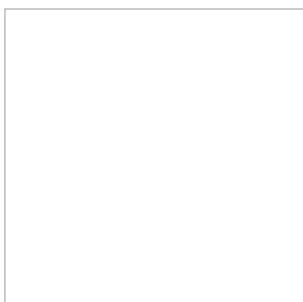
Export

Export processing is in principle a special kind of despatch function making different documents and statistics necessary.

Consequently, the export system is an integral part of the despatch system which is needed as a pre-requisite.

Freight

Freight costs have a considerable impact on the yield of many orders. Optimised selection of the freight forwarder, precise calculation of costs and check of invoices – with the freight system you have a tool to control these costs efficiently.



Software Basics

– The Columns on which ASSIST4 is Built

Think differently

Programmers often think differently – in bits and bytes – and not always in the same way as a user. However, ASSIST4 should become a genuine assistant for your daily business. For this reason, we have closely worked together with experts from the logistics industry. The results of this approach are a wide range of functionality and excellent ergonomics.

Ergonomics – not just a word

All ASSIST4 products are structured clearly and intuitively, have a pleasant look & feel and can be extended by the functions required on the respective workstations. The user interface can be largely customised to suit individual requirements.

The clear-cut structure of the system is also increased because screens and fields are only shown if they are required for the business process. Otherwise they are suppressed from display. Having a constant dialogue with our customers and regarding them as our partners, we will continue to optimise the ergonomics of our software.

Luigi, Hugo or whoever

During a busy working day, a little mistake is easily made; a piece of information is missing or something has been forgotten. In such situations a reliable assistant would be helpful. Exactly such a feature has been integrated into our software – an assistant who analyses the business case and provides support whenever necessary.

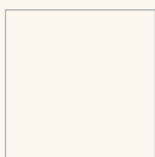
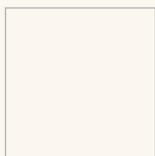
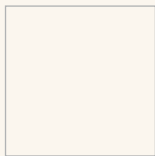
This assistant is more than a context-sensitive help. He jumps from field to field, remembers certain initial values – thus being quite intelligent indeed. Being appreciated by our customers is clear by the fact that he has been given all kinds of different names. At AEB we call him Luigi.

Standard software, but not off the shelf

All ASSIST4 products are standard software. Nevertheless they can be customised, extended and optimised to a company's specific requirements without losing upgradability. This balancing act is achieved through a strictly object-oriented approach.

Whether you need customisation right from the beginning or whether you store your specifications for automation in the flexible rulebase, whether you customise your documents on field level or whether we program your individual extension of the system – everything is preserved and remains operational after a release change.

The modular structure of all ASSIST4 products bridges the gap between standard software and a custom solution.



Luigi, Hugo or whoever.
The assistant as an integral part of the software is quite intelligent indeed. Being well appreciated by our customers is clear by the fact that he has been given all kinds of different names.

Great emphasis on service and support

Is there any bug-free software? This is a futile question. What is more important is how fast customers get proficient support. If there are technical adjustments to be made, if business requirements change, if consultancy or support is needed – we are open to listen to all the questions you may have.

Our service and support team uses a system specifically developed for this purpose. Via remote maintenance, our service and support staff are able to provide fast support and are trained in such a way that they can also offer help if problems do not originate from AEB systems. Providing excellent service and support is of great importance to us.

State-of-the-art technology

In the meantime, we can look back on more than 20 successful years of development of standard software. Being “state-of-the-art” has always been an essential part of our philosophy.

Today it is the communication with SAP on COM basis, the ASSIST4 application server technology (based on XML/SOAP) which enables secure web applications to be put on the Internet/Intranet, our applications used as NT services or browser-based wireless scanners – today this is all still worth mentioning, but tomorrow?

One thing is for sure: We do not program fast and sloppy, our standard is not mediocrity – we develop modern, state-of-the-art technology. Excellent quality has always been our aim and will continue to be in the future – for your benefit.

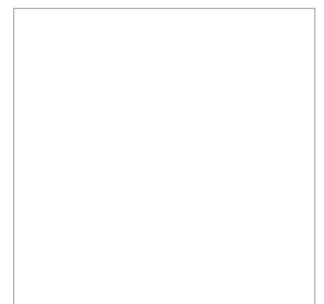
Integration – a pre-requisite for cross-system solutions

It goes without saying that all products and modules of the ASSIST4 family are able to communicate smoothly with each other.

However, an ingenious system is not useful if it cannot be integrated into the existing IT environment. It is exactly this requirement of communication that has already been implemented into the system architecture. The ability of integration is the constructive principle of our software.

Due to this concept, it is possible to integrate business processes, i.e. organise workflow beyond different systems and applications. ASSIST4 incorporates different technologies and standard interfaces from and to ERP systems, e.g. SAP, J.D. Edwards, BPCS, Baan, Navision, infor business solutions...

In the same way, we offer ready-made solutions for communication with freight forwarders, banks, Customs offices, customers and suppliers.



State-of-the-art technology:
We look back on 20 successful years of development of standard software.

ASSIST4 Despatch **– Adapting like a Chameleon**

Celebrate the difference

If you ship garden gnomes to Timbuktu, a power plant to Wuxi or lenses to the Silicon Valley – there will be different requirements.

Picking the goods, packing and weighing, marking the shipping units, producing the documents, planning the transport, loading, monitoring the delivery and billing the freight costs – all of these processes need to be organised, planned and invoiced.

Always the same and always different

ASSIST4 is a standard software product that provides enough flexibility to cover these different requirements. Customising is the key.

Software can be adapted to individual, organisational requirements – and it can be automated to a large extent. Therefore, every installation looks a bit different – adapted to the respective conditions: a software chameleon.

Assistance in multiple ways

Software supports the user when consolidating delivery notes and consignments, when it comes to choosing a suitable freight forwarder and when printing all the required labels and documents. ASSIST4 offers more than 100 different documents (SITPRO-certified) and many standard interfaces to a high number of well-known freight forwarders and courier services.

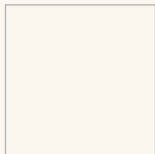
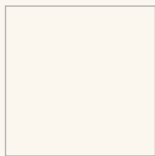
Whether used as a stand-alone installation or with an interface to an ERP system (e.g. SAP R/3) – ASSIST4 provides comprehensive functionality to improve, accelerate and streamline shipping processes.

What is a mouse doing at the packing station?

Wherever possible, the necessary data should be captured during the packing process. However, without using keyboard and mouse.

Here, the respective conditions need to be considered – hence, customisation in order to enable either simple mass processing or complex individual transactions, delivery notes or bills of material, big or small parts, man-to-goods or goods-to-man transactions, batches, hazardous goods etc.

With ASSIST4, it is possible to set up different types of packing stations, e.g. barcode-based, with a touchscreen, 1-level or n-level packing or data capture via WEB-based wireless scanners.



Mr Hua in Hong Kong has a computer, too

For organising and controlling the worldwide movement of goods and information, communication between business partners is indispensable. This means that suppliers, customers, packers, freight forwarders and Customs authorities need to be part of a data network.

Via EDI or Internet, you can transfer your order to Mr Hua and he can send you a delivery advice. ASSIST4 offers the necessary B2B/B2A communication technologies and modules for such purposes.

What, where, when and how

How often do your customers call and ask you when they will receive their shipment? It would be nice to have an Internet-based system where customers can see for themselves which processing status their orders have achieved. Are the goods still to be picked or are they already at the forwarder or almost reaching their final destination? ASSIST4 offers this functionality with Tracking & Tracing.



Despatch Features

- Download of data from host systems, e.g. order, delivery note, invoice, bills of material
- Automatic consignment creation
- Entry of packing data in the shipping department – single and multi-level packing
- Packing stations:
 - Packing with the help of a touchscreen monitor
 - Automatic weighing including barcode/label printing
 - Qualified packing (packing list)
 - WEB tracker packing station (man to goods)
- Entry of batches and serial numbers
- Load building, consolidated consignments
- Printing of all shipping documents
- Hazardous goods processing (documents and load building)
- Load device management (including accounts for customers, carrier load devices): Stock/account management for returnable empties, check of outstanding load devices of the consignee
- Electronic interfaces to forwarders (e.g. UPS, DPD, DHL, GP, TNT, FedEx, Danzas, NET, NVS etc.)
- Load control – scanning during loading – data capture via tracker
- Optical archive: Filing and retrieval of shipping documents
- Statistical reports – data pool and reports via Excel and Crystal Reports
- WEB-based entry of shipping orders – entry of orders from each workstation
- Tracking & Tracing – status checks including download of data from linked systems, e.g. SAP R/3, packers, banks, Customs, forwarders and courier services
- Barcode labelling on the basis of SAP R/3
- Forwarder performance statistics
- WEB-based tracking of returned goods

ASSIST4 Export

– A Compass in the Document Jungle

Welcome to the future

In some companies, the department responsible for export processing is often not a priority as far as the introduction of modern technology is concerned. It does not have to be like this.

ASSIST4 knows all export documents, stores legal export regulations for many countries in a rulebase and can thus propose the documents that are, for example, required for exporting to Turkey. Documents such as the export declaration, the Certificate of Origin and EUR.1 are generated on a laser printer or if pre-printed stationery is required, on a dot-matrix printer.

Linked to a central system, ASSIST4 Export automatically downloads delivery note or invoice data. The user only needs to add missing data or make some revisions.

Convenient accumulation

After the download from the central system, the relevant data will be available in ASSIST4 and – ASSIST4 is in a position to calculate. Thus, goods value, statistical value, consignment weight and all the data required for the export declaration or Intrastat report are calculated from the items on the invoices/delivery notes and are accumulated for the consignment.

A virtual treasure trove

A typewriter in the cabinet? It might still be needed if your computer system or network is down or if there is a power failure. For such reasons it should be kept. But for any other reasons ASSIST4 also offers a so-called typewriter mode. All documents can be amended as if using a typewriter.

If amendments are made, they will only be saved for the current document and will not be stored in the database. Therefore, ASSIST4 saves an optical version of each document in a revision-secure archive. ASSIST4 Archive is an integral technical component of the system. Here, all documents should be stored – for example, also a Certificate of Origin which is scanned with the stamp and signature by the Chamber of Commerce or an e-mail referring to a specific business transaction.

If research becomes necessary, e.g. on the occasion of an external audit, the complete set of documents relating to a certain business transaction can be opened and displayed.

Export departments are where foreign languages are spoken, where a typewriter can still be found and where books with countless numbers of legal regulations fill cabinets.

Software as a goldmine

ASSIST4 cannot extract gold, but in many installations our customers have achieved a return on investment in less than a year.

Almost like Christmas

ASSIST4 offers a multitude of additional functions. L/C transactions, for example, sometimes require the art of spelling mistakes correctly. This can be a laborious task and prone to errors. Now it is possible to transfer L/C data from your bank directly into ASSIST4. This does not only save time, but also increases reliability.

How many times have you chased your freight forwarders for proofs of export or the export declarations – those with the yellow margin? With ASSIST4, this annoying task can be avoided because the software includes a “Proof of Export Monitoring” module.

But there's even more. Just have a look at the feature list.



Export Features

- Download of data from ERP systems or using the data downloaded into ASSIST4 Despatch
- ASSIST4 Export is an extension of ASSIST4 Despatch (pre-requisite)
- Documents can be created in different languages (master file data for up to eight languages)
- ASSIST4 offers over 100 standard documents also including document variations
- Export documents are also available, e.g. for Germany, Austria, Switzerland according to the respective regulations
- Company-specific documents can be created if the available sample documents are not sufficient (e.g. quality certificate, despatch advice, proforma invoice)
- Typewriter mode for fast amendments
- Letter of credit processing with electronic transfer of bank data – also from the SWIFT network of banks
- Carnet printing and monitoring
- Application for export permits and monitoring
- Proof of export monitoring
- Processing of CAP and excise goods
- Automatic indexing and optical archiving of all documents
- Scanning and indexing of documents, e.g. Certificate of Origin
- Viewing documents, e.g. despatch advice via the Internet
- Periodic entries, e.g. Intrastat
- NES – New Export System
- Statistic data pool – including export statistics

ASSIST4 Freight

– The Streets are Paved with Gold

Trust is good, control is better

Are you also aware from your daily work that freight costs are rarely checked? Such verifications are quite difficult without a suitable system.

But for many companies freight charges are a considerable cost factor. If this cost factor is controlled and checked systematically, there is remarkable potential for optimisation. Ten per cent less freight costs can frequently be achieved.

With ASSIST4 Freight, it is possible to manage the forwarders' quotes and based on these, freight charges can be calculated for each consignment making it possible to choose the most favourable offer.

The same is not always the same

It's true: Comparing quotes is tiring work, and when each forwarder has a different way to distinguish their services, the comparison becomes even more difficult.

ASSIST4 offers procedures enabling you to compare costs and durations for different modes of transport, despatch types and routes.

Do it yourself

“How much is it to ship the machine to Madrid?” A shipping manager is often asked such questions. But answering such a simple question can often impede daily work.

If there was an Intranet application from which the information could be obtained, it would be more efficient for both sides. Such a WEB application is available: in ASSIST4.

Don't do it yourself – have it done

Instead of having your forwarder check the freight bill, you can create a credit note or, at the end of the month, a consolidated credit note depending on the agreement. The verification has then to be made by the forwarder.

What if...

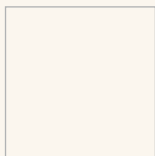
Whether a new quote is really more favourable is sometimes difficult to judge. Unless you have a suitable tool available.

With ASSIST4 Freight, you can, for example, compare the transports of the past six months with a new quote. You can quickly gauge whether the new quote is really competitive considering the given transports.

But ASSIST4 Freight can do even more – it is not only the simulation of quotes, but it is also possible to vary the parameters, e.g. location, weight, volume, loading metres etc.

For many companies freight charges are a considerable cost factor.

In the case of systematic controlling, there is remarkable potential for optimisation. More than ten per cent less freight costs can frequently be achieved.



Everyone has to pay their share

Cost controlling also involves the allocation of costs to cost centres and budgeting. For this purpose, you do not need a calculator or an abacus – ASSIST4 can do it.

Freight costs – divided into cost components such as stamp fees/documents, product-dependent costs, weight-dependent costs etc. – can be assigned to delivery notes or line items according to chargeable value or weight and be invoiced to the commissioning departments/cost centres and/or cost objects.

This makes ASSIST4 Freight an efficient cost planning and controlling instrument.



Freight Features

- Download of data from ERP systems or using the data downloaded into ASSIST4 Despatch
- ASSIST4 Freight is an extension of ASSIST4 Despatch (pre-requisite)
- Freight cost calculation (outgoing/incoming freight) on the basis of quotes with cost components, distance determination and tariffs for all modes of transport that can be combined flexibly – also as batch calculation
- Freight planning through cost comparison, route calculation
- Freight optimisation through consolidated transports
- Automatic allocation of freight costs to cost centres, cost objects, cost elements
- Invoice check/credit note procedure, provision of all the necessary data for controlling and financial accounting
- Calculator function – also available as WEB calculator
- Statistical reports
- Debit advice
- Freight simulation – i.e. calculation on the basis of existing transports with varied parameters
- Parallel invoicing of freight costs towards the forwarder and the customer including transfer of customer freight costs for invoicing
- Freight archive

ASSIST4

– In Brief for IT Experts

ASSIST4 components

Like a construction kit, the modules of ASSIST4 can be configured in many different ways.

Besides the application modules – Despatch, Export, Freight – the construction kit also includes technical modules for data exchange and optical archiving.

Data exchange

The component for data exchange is a high performance converter for XML, EDIFACT, VDA, ODETTE, FORTRAS, SWIFT, IDoc, ANSI-X12... This module is responsible for the interfaces from and to your ERP system. It logs and checks all communication processes automatically.

The standard interfaces include a high number of ready-made mappings, particularly in the field of SAP.

Archiving

Optical archiving, scanning and OCR are integrated construction elements. For every data stream relevant for archiving an image is created and every document is automatically indexed and archived in a revision-secure way.

Usage in other applications

Both components can also be used independently of ASSIST4 as a company archive or EDI converter.

If you already have such components in use, we transfer ready-made data streams to your converter or store the documents in your archive system on your jukebox.

WEB applications

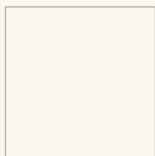
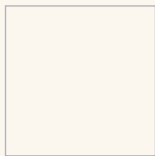
In connection with ASSIST4, we offer a number of WEB-based applications which run by default on Microsoft Information Server (IIS).

Operating system and database

ASSIST4 is programmed in Smalltalk and Java and designed for Microsoft systems (all current versions of the operating systems).

Oracle and Sybase are supported as standard databases. Oracle databases can also run on a Unix server.

The software is fully scaleable, i.e. everything can be installed on one machine or distributed to several machines – it is also possible to use one machine per function (DB, file server, archive server, EDI server, application server, gateway...).



How To Get Your ASSIST4 System



We can be your partner

In order to learn what you expect, we first need to listen. Then we can offer you three procedures depending on the scope of your requirements.

- Training (1 day) plus workshop
- Training (1 day) plus audit and report
- Feasibility study plus training plus audit and report

From fine tuning to introductory support

If you would like to have the standard system, it can be installed almost immediately. Based on the report, the system is customised. In the case of larger projects, a fine-tuning meeting should be scheduled after a certain period of time – to ascertain and mutually agree whether the customisation meets your requirements.

After installing the system at your site, we support you via remote maintenance and provide, if desired, accompanying introductory support. For optimum preparation, we offer a comprehensive training programme for your staff.

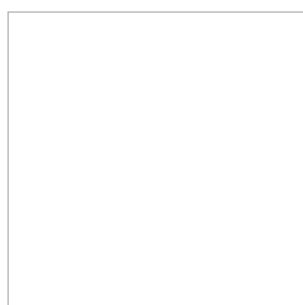
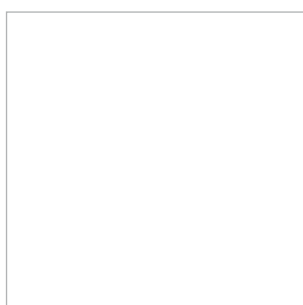
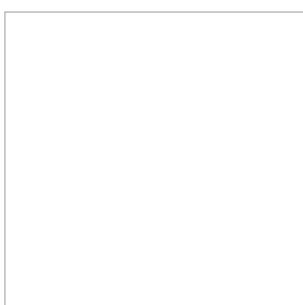
Finally – only when you are satisfied, will we be satisfied too

After finishing the project and final acceptance of the system, our support and service team will be available for you Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

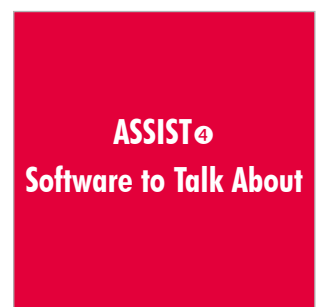
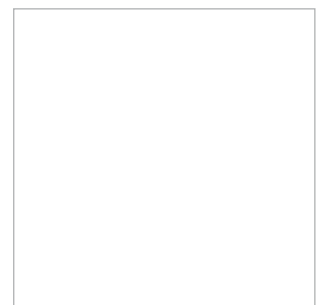
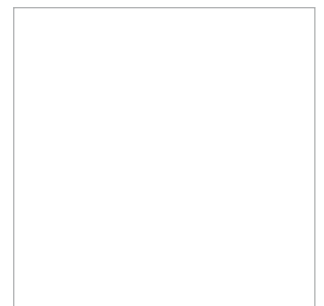
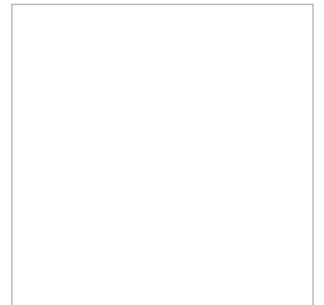
What about amendments?

In our licensing agreements, we commit ourselves to always keep the software up to date as far as technical changes and legal regulations are concerned. You are entitled to new releases of the software without additional charges.

As we have already said: We would like to gain you as a long-term, satisfied customer.



If you would like to receive more detailed information about our products, please have a look at our web site www.assist4.com and ask for our product-specific leaflets.



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