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1996 to 2004 saw a 53.5 percent increase in public charities and a 75 percent increase in private foundations.

Oct. 01, 2006

From the October 2006 Issue

Nonprofit organizations continue to grow at an enormous pace. The time frame of 1996 to 2004 saw a 53.5 percent increase in public charities and a 75 percent increase in private foundations. According to the IRS, at the end of 2004, there were close to 1.4 million nonprofit organizations in the United States.

While the technology needs for these organizations may vary, each one needs to establish a way of maintaining grants, keeping tracking of donors and pledges, paying employees, and producing required reports. If you're a nonprofit organization looking for a software product to help you better accomplish these tasks, or if you're an accountant looking to recommend such a solution, how do you go about choosing a product? To answer that question, you'll first need to evaluate your budget. Many organizations have limited budgets, especially at the onset. Look at what you can afford today as well as what that program may offer you in the future. Do you want an entry-level product that will suffice while your organization has few needs or do you want a product that can grow along with your organization?

The products reviewed here vary widely. Entry-level products are designed for small organizations and offer quick installations, easy navigation and decent reporting options. They are also affordably priced, even for those on a limited budget. While these products provide out-of-the-box capability, they leave little room for customization or future growth.

Other nonprofits may be looking to upgrade to a more scalable product that

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but usually contain more management level capabilities and often include a fundraising module that can track detailed information about donors, including historical data.

Does this mean that you should skip over the entry-level products? No.

Do those products automatically receive lower ratings? No.

Entry-level products can be an excellent choice for those whose needs and budget are minimal. They can't really be compared to enterprise-level products, and they don't claim to compare. What they do claim is to help the small nonprofit with their needs, and they do it well. If they do what they claim to do, then they deserve a good rating. We can all agree that a software product designed for up to five users will not have the same capabilities as the software product designed for unlimited users. It doesn't mean they do not do their job well.

I hope you find the reviews helpful. And don't forget to visit the software vendor's websites for additional information. □

[AccuFund, Inc. — AccuFUND](#)

The AccuFund Accounting Suite offers a series of modules designed specifically for nonprofit and government agencies. Additional modules can be added to customize the software for a specific type of agency.

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Cougar Mountain FUND Suite

Cougar Mountain recently released Version 10.3 of its FUND Suite. Aimed specifically at small to midsize nonprofits, Version 10 comes equipped with new features such as the ability to create a mirror image...

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[Review](#)

CYMA Systems, Inc. — CYMA

Not-For-Profit Edition

CYMA Systems, Inc. has offered the nonprofit edition of its popular accounting software to midsize nonprofit organizations since 1980. With the addition of a Grant Tracking module, CYMA continues to provide value to both new and existing customers.

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[Review](#)

Donald R. Frey and Company, Inc.

— BUCS Fund Accounting

Donald R. Frey and Company, Inc. has released version 10 of its fund accounting software designed for midsize nonprofit organizations. BUCS – Version 10 contains numerous new features and enhancements.

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FUND E-Z Development Corp. —

FUND E-Z Fund Accounting Software

FUND E-Z Development Corporation has been providing affordable nonprofit software for over 15 years. Version 9 of FUND E-Z

Fund Accounting Software is the latest version of this affordably priced,

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smaller nonprofit organization, QuickBooks: Premier Nonprofit is a good choice for startup nonprofits.

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[Review](#)

[Kintera, Inc. — Kintera](#)

[FundWare](#)

Since 1976, FundWare has provided nonprofit organizations with a quality financial product. Now part of Kintera Inc., Kintera FundWare software continues to be a major player in the nonprofit software sector. Chip Conway is the finance manager at Ace Construction Authority, a governmental construction agency in the Los Angeles area.

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[Sage](#)

[Software — Sage MIP Fund Accounting](#)

Since 1982, Sage Software has been providing fund accounting software for small to midsize nonprofit organizations, including state and local government agencies, through Sage MIP Fund Accounting. Formerly known as MIP Fund Accounting, version 8 of this comprehensive software product will soon be introduced to the public.

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Navigator

Serenic Navigator is a high-end integrated financial and fund management product from Serenic Corporation. Designed for larger nonprofit organizations and government organizations, Serenic Navigator offers a complete financial and fundraising management solution.

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[Review](#)

2006 Review of Non-Profit Accounting

Systems — Executive

Summary

It is our hope that the nonprofit software reviews you've read have assisted you with your short list to finding a software product that suits both your needs and your budget. The reviews covered six distinct areas.

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Technology

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