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From the April/May 2007 *Review of Construction Accounting Software*

Peachtree's reputation in the software industry remains strong. Peachtree by Sage Premium Accounting for Construction 2007, released in June of 2006, contains all of the core strengths that have made Peachtree one of the most reliable and recognized accounting software products on the market, along with industry-specific features such as the ability to track progress billing, calculate labor burden, and manage retainage payables and receivables.

The program also allows users to track subcontractor insurance for expiration dates and track costs as they happen, along with a record of revenue received in order to monitor the profitability of each job. Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction is a good fit for small to midsize construction companies, but the lack of a strong customer management function and service dispatch function makes it less suitable for HVAC, Plumbing and Electrical contractors. However, a number of third-party applications are available that can perform these functions.

LEARNING CURVE – 5 Stars
Installation went smoothly. The main screen of Peachtree contains a drop-down menu at the top of the screen with access to all program functions. System functions can also be accessed using the vertical navigation bar to the left of the screen. I found the screens to be somewhat cluttered, but the good news is that new toolbar customization capability allows users to customize the information that appears on their navigational screens. Most data-entry screens contain a toolbar that can also be customized if desired. Clicking on a system function will update the screen to reflect the options available within that area. Shortcuts can also be added for quick access.

Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction also contains a sample company in

add-ons designed to integrate with the program, including addressing and shipping options, inventory management and barcoding, service management, and analysis reporting. These are not Sage Software products, but they are designed to work with Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction.

PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS – 5 Stars
The program contains a surprising number of productivity tools, including a number of analysis tools like the Cash Manager, which will forecast cash flow on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis. The Payment Manager displays a graph of payments due as of a specified date. The Financial Manager provides either a business summary of profitability, resources and working capital or key balances, which includes cash on hand, AR and AP balances, and inventory totals. The feature I really like is the Internal Accounting Review, which will flag 'problem' transactions, such as deposits posted to the wrong account, possible duplicate transactions, unreconciled cash accounts and 12 other areas. Users can choose the period of time they wish to examine, whether it's daily, weekly or monthly. This is an excellent tool, particularly for those whose expertise does not lie in the accounting arena.

IMPORT/EXPORT & INTEGRATION – 4.5 Stars
Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction is a completely integrated system. Data can be imported into Peachtree from a variety of applications using the *.CSV file format, and data can be imported directly from Timeslips for better time management. The Dynamic Data Exchange feature allows all Windows programs to share data. Data can be easily exported to Excel, Word or into a product catalog. The program will also sync with Outlook to manage customers, vendors and field employees without duplicate data entry needed.

REPORTING – 4.5 Stars
Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction contains excellent reporting

capability. The 'Select a Report' user interface displays report areas and the

offers Freedom Support for both single- and multi-users, which includes unlimited support access and the PeachCare Support Plan, which is 60 minutes of support per year. New users will receive 30 days of free product support upon product registration, with the option to extend the support monthly. Per-Incident support is also offered. Users also have access to Peachtree's knowledgebase, which is a very active forum for Peachtree users. Self-Study Guides are offered or an Accounting Tutorial is available on CD. An excellent Help function will answer most questions, and the vendor's website can be accessed for links to local support technicians.

RELATIVE VALUE – 4.5 Stars
Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction costs $599.99 for a single-user system; the five-user version costs $1,199.99. The program provides an excellent entry-level product for smaller construction companies and contractors. An extensive list of reasonably priced add-ons makes Peachtree even more attractive. With the power of Sage Software behind it, Peachtree Premium Accounting for Construction has evolved into a more sophisticated program with more power than ever before.

2007 Overall Rating – 4.5 Stars

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