Sep. 01, 2008

From the Sept.
2008 Review of Professional Payroll Systems

Mangrove Software recently debuted Version 5 of its Mangrove Online system. Subtitled Workforce Empowerment, the web-based system is a workhorse, providing extensive payroll and human resources management functions, geared primarily toward use by larger enterprises. Built on a Microsoft SQL database, the system can support an unlimited number of companies, employees, departments, cost centers
and other subsidiary units. The company also offers a server-based version of the program. Pricing varies considerably, but the investment generally starts in the tens of thousands of dollars. Workforce Empowerment goes well beyond the basics, providing tools for experienced HR, payroll and benefits staff to assist with processing payrolls for hundreds or thousands of employees, along with benefits offerings and ensuring compliance with EEO, HIPAA, OSHA and COBRA.
The system also provides employee self-service functions for reviewing previous pay stubs and W-2s, as well as requesting time off and other HR functions.

DATA ENTRY & KEY FEATURES – 5 Stars
The online Mangrove system provides multiple user roles with a customized interface
specific to the tasking involved with different departments, while also offering security features that prevent unauthorized users from accessing sensitive areas. Initial setup of company, employees, rates and other settings is directed by wizards that ensure pertinent data is entered and correct. The interface is also very customizable, and opens into a personalized announcement page that alerts the user to specific tasks that await action. It can also notify managerial

users of the status of tasks for which others are responsible. Management can

data can be imported or entered manually in several ways, including a grid time entry sheet and a weekly timesheet. The Workforce Empowerment system can handle
any time of employee or contract worker, with unlimited pay rates per worker, unlimited deductions and multiple states. A Mass Salary Change tool simplifies the task of applying pay rules across large groups or departments.

Direct deposit functions can support multiple accounts per employee as well as partial check/deposit payments, while all types of benefits programs can be managed, and paid time off can be set to accrue via any method. Electronic payment of tax liabilities and third-party funds is also available.

Data-entry sheets are customizable, and the program's human resources functions allow tracking of unlimited amounts of employee information that can be easily searched. It includes features for maintaining and processing job applicants, requisitions and interviews, performing salary reviews, tracking skills, and training and monitoring employee attendance and performance. Through the online employee access portal, workers can access their own historical pay information and make changes to personal information and W-4 data (pending review
and approval by payroll staff). It also provides a time off request system that channels the request through management approval steps. The portal can also be used as a corporate intranet, providing company handbooks, news and other information.

REPORTING CAPABILITIES – 5 Stars
In all aspects, Mangrove is a powerful payroll beast, including its reporting options, which provide about 600 customizable reports that span the spectrum from payroll summaries, deductions, wages and periods, to human resources-focused

output. Part of the customization features include a self-populating list of

INTEGRATION/IMPORT & EXPORT – 4.5 Stars

Mangrove can import employee time data from most time tracking systems, as well as from spreadsheet and plain text formats, and a bridge allows export of GL data to most general accounting packages.

RELATIVE VALUE – 5 Stars

Businesses likely to reap real benefit from the substantial investment in a comprehensive HR/Payroll system like Mangrove Online are those with very large employee bases and considerable reporting requirements, especially those with multiple geographic locations that increase the complexity of reporting and payment of liabilities. For these entities, with multiple staff members managing payroll and human resources functions, the system helps ensure full compliance and provides great workflow tools, outstanding employee self-service that integrates back into the system for approval routing, and strong analysis and reporting functions. Technical support is included in pricing.

2008 Overall Rating: 5 Stars