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*From the Sept. 2010 Review of **Professional Payroll Systems**.*

Paychex

offers a full suite of payroll, human resource administration, benefits management, and tax filing and employee pay services. For the purposes of this review, Paychex fits our “Outsourced/Referral” payroll model, with the client and vendor having a direct relationship. The client manages all of the day-to-day data-entry functions and the vendor performs compliance tasks, but the professional accountant maintains an advisory and management role through the Accountant Access to online reports and the General Ledger. Paychex is also a preferred provider of payroll and retirement planning services for the AICPA’s Business Solutions Program as well as the National Association of Enrolled Agents (NAEA).

BASIC SYSTEM FUNCTIONS:

Paychex Online Payroll targets clients with 1 to 49 employees, but can accommodate larger clients, including those in excess of 100 employees. The workflow and user interface of the system is fairly intuitive.

Adding clients was simple, and the system will import information/data from Excel or CSV files. Adding and editing payroll deductions is easy to do as well. Processing payroll can be done from anytime and anywhere and is accomplished with three steps: logging in, verifying entries and totals, and submitting

Since the product is focused on multi-employer configurations, processing multiple payrolls at a time is fairly intuitive. Once the payroll has been submitted, it will be run and generate pay to employees via printed checks or through direct deposit to multiple accounts. When creating payroll checks, Paychex allows clients to calculate gross-to-net pay or net-to-gross pay. All federal and state tax

returns are updated quarterly and payroll taxes can be remitted electronically

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pay rates, whether it's hourly, salaried or contracted employees. And users can view employee records individually or all at once.

REPORTING & MONITORING:

Paychex Online Payroll offers numerous customizable reports with real-time data available shortly after payroll submissions. Basic reporting options include earnings statements, gross-to-net, summary overviews on a variety of periods, cash requirements, time sheet, new hires, and employee earnings records. Reports can be exported to PDFs. Email alerts are available for administrators and/or clients who wish to be alerted when payroll and quarterly reports are ready to be reviewed. The administrator of the system can also monitor upcoming and recent transactions.

Paychex's Online Reporting Service is free to accounting professionals and provides anywhere/anytime access. New enhancements to this service include the ability to toggle between reports, payroll and GL reporting; the ability to build a list of most frequently used reports; and the ability to organize reports by pay period, quarterly, annually and by invoice.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT & EXPORT:

The program can import data from Excel, and now offers the ability to import from time clock systems and other third parties. The General Ledger reporting service also allows payroll personnel to post payroll info directly to popular accounting systems like QuickBooks, Peachtree, Accpac and Simply Accounting. Obviously, the system directly integrates with the other components available from Paychex, such as HR, benefits management and retirement planning services.

HELP/SUPPORT:

The system provides traditional built-in Help functions and an index, along with form instructions and guidance. Live, phone-based technical support is

included in pricing, and each client is assigned a payroll specialist. The Paychex

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W-2s, and employee information (demographics, tax withholding, etc.).

SUMMARY & PRICING

Paychex is a best fit for practices who want to outsource the payroll functions of their clients but maintain a management and advisory role with the ability to monitor reporting, etc. The system is available for small and mid-sized companies. Practitioners can enter the payroll services space with minimal set up and overhead. Paychex prices its services based on the number of payrolls processed and the number of employees paid. The average cost for a weekly payroll with 10 employees is \$41.18.

2010 OVERALL RATING:

Advisory • Payroll

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