with a free Software Developer Kit (SDK), Intuit has opened up its 3 million-user base to software developers.

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One of the most important strategic moves made by Intuit recently was opening up the QuickBooks database to software developers. By creating an Application Programming Interface (API), and providing developers with a free Software Developer Kit (SDK), Intuit has opened up its 3 million-user base to software developers. Even a casual programmer using Microsoft Office and Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) can develop an application to read from and write to a QuickBooks data file.

Intuit is even using the SDK to write add-on applications for QuickBooks. For example, the Financial Statement Designer (included with QuickBooks Premier: Accountant Edition 2005) uses the SDK to allow you to create GAAP-formatted financial statements. Developers have flocked to the opportunity. Over 60,000 people have downloaded the free SDK from Intuit's servers (available at http://developer.intuit.com),

and there are currently over 350

I call these 'Awesome Add-ons.' What is an Awesome Add-on?
An Awesome Add-on is a QuickBooks
add-on that enables a consultant
to do his or her job more professionally,
efficiently and profitably, and
it generally applies horizontally
across industry markets. It solves
problems not addressed by the QuickBooks
program or, in some cases, solves
a problem 'better' than
QuickBooks does. Awesome Add-ons
make consultants look better to
their clients, often by allowing
us to perform miracles on hopelessly
broken data files. Awesome Add-ons
make consultants richer (or less
poor). These add-ons often automate
processes that have been done manually
in the past, thus saving time and
money.

Awesome Add-ons allow consultants
to say, 'Okay,' when
we used to say, 'No way.'
There are several tasks that we've
always wanted to do, but there was
just no way to do them. For example,
a client once asked me if I could

combine two data files together

with a brief description of each product.

QDA+

QDA Systems, Inc.

www.qdasystems.net

QDA+ automates the data file analysis engagement. QDA+ automatically interrogates and tests the QuickBooks data file, produces an editable report that details problems and their likely causes, and offers recommendations for correcting the problems. In the interest of full disclosure, I have a financial interest in this company. I think they have a great product that significantly improves the lives of accountants, whether or not they use QuickBooks, so I joined the company.

RAS
Remote Accounting Solutions

www.remoteaccounting.com

This add-on provides fast, secure data transfer service between client

and consultant. This software/service

Q2Q ' Karl Irvin

www.q2q.us

The Data Transfer Utility allows QuickBooks users to transfer (merge) list and transaction data from one QuickBooks file to another QuickBooks file. Using simple parameters, the Data Transfer Utility automatically makes the transfer while allowing you to control the process. QuickBooks files are opened and closed by the Data Transfer Utility, and the regular QuickBooks program does not have to be running. This allows you to merge two company files, or you can specify which transactions to copy. It supports all transaction types except payroll and inventory adjustments.

QReportGrabber
QODBC

www.qodbc.com

This program creates live links to QuickBooks data using a QuickBooks-like interface from within Microsoft

Excel. It is implemented as an Excel

www.qodbc.com

QDataViewer is a graphical report manager that allows you to view, export and secure reports created with Crystal Reports. You can access QuickBooks data and reports via QODBC to create text and graphical reports that are not available with QuickBooks alone.

eXcelBooks
Synergration

www.synergration.com

If you're familiar with Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) development, you'll love eXcel Books. eXcel Books exposes our easy-to-use coreObjX business objects to VBA in Excel. With this technology, you can easily create applications that have complete access to the QuickBooks application programming interface. This is an ideal way to create commission calculators, order entry screens or custom invoice templates. eXcelBooks' report interface makes it possible to pull report data directly into an existing

workbook, preserving your formulas

as your credit card issuer provides
Quicken download files, you can
import credit card purchase transactions
directly into QuickBooks. ccImport
lets you select which transactions
to post to QuickBooks from the downloaded
data file. It also lets you associate
QuickBooks vendors with expenses
for downloaded transactions. Best
of all, it remembers these settings
so that, on subsequent imports,
vendors and accounts do not need
to be selected again.

AutoReporter
BQE Software

www.bqe.com

AutoReporter allows you to automate
and schedule QuickBooks reporting.
You can set your clients up so that
when they turn on their computer,
the scheduled reports will be created
automatically with the desired filters
and formatting. The reports can
be sent to the printer and/or delivered
to you via e-mail for review, analysis
and client monitoring. QuickBooks

doesn't even have to be running

your QuickBooks data. It supports 18 states, and it provides special payroll reports for analyzing payroll. There is no need to upload payroll data, there is no per-EIN software cost, and it works with all versions of QuickBooks. Accountants can provide payroll tax services for multiple clients without even subscribing to any payroll service. It supports ALL versions of QuickBooks, even those prior to 2002 (the first SDK version).

Certified Payroll Solution
Sunburst Software Solutions

www.sunburstsoftwaresolutions.com

The Certified Payroll Solution creates and prints certified payroll reports, prevailing wage reports and statements of compliance reports. It is designed for contractors or subcontractors who perform work on federal or state-funded construction projects that fall under the Federal Davis-Bacon or state-specific prevailing wage laws, and for those who use QuickBooks

for their normal accounting and

with Schedules A and T and California Sales Tax Form 401-EZ, all directly from QuickBooks data. With proper QuickBooks data file setup and data entry, this is a true timesaver for consultants with clients in California. More states coming soon.

Conclusions

These Awesome Add-ons provide better data viewing and reporting, better data manipulation, better form creation, and better automation of our consulting engagements. They provide exactly what many of us have needed for a long time, and they really help us solve the tougher QuickBooks client issues.

Note that some of these tools are designed for QuickBooks experts, so if you don't fit that description, contact the developer. Most of the time, they'll have a list of qualified advisors who can help you with the client issue.

Mr. Sleeter is the founder of The Sleeter Group, a national provider

of expert-level QuickBooks seminars

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