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From the September 2005 [Review of Mid-Range Accounting Software](#)

Cougar Mountain Accounting is a business management suite that includes GL, AP, AR, Order Entry, Inventory and Reporting modules integrated into a single package. The system includes support for multiple companies and complex inventory systems, with special features for manufacturing concerns. Add-on modules are available to fully integrate with the accounting application to help tailor the system for specific types of businesses, including Job Cost, e-Commerce, Bank Reconciliation, Credit Card Authorizer, Multi-Location Inventory, Advanced Bill of Materials, Purchase Order, Point of Sale and programs that interface to customers' FedEx and UPS shipping software. Cougar Mountain also produces software for point-of-sale, fund accounting and payroll, along with specialty applications for businesses and not-for-profits. Cougar Mountain Accounting starts at \$1,499 for a single-user license, \$2,699 for a four-user license, and \$3,699 for an unlimited license, with a maintenance contract that includes upgrades costing \$285, \$513, and \$703 respectively.

Brittany Supply is an Asheville, N.C.-based distributor of janitorial supplies and equipment. Bill Brown is the Operations Manager at the company and has been a Cougar Mountain DOS user until late 2004 when he moved to Windows. He was impressed with the ease of conversion from the DOS application to Windows. "The conversion was seamless and required less than a day." He also noted that technical support provided excellent guidance and documentation.

EASE OF USE/TRANSACTION ENTRY — 4.5 Stars

The program's main menu provides access to Cougar Mountain's modules, with additional options for setting up companies, accessing system utilities and setting

security and user preferences. The program offers moderate customization options,

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selection lists and searchable/sortable/filterable lookup fields for selection of accounts, customers, items and other data. Customer and vendor phone numbers have been added to these lookup screens, allowing users to search and sort by phone number and view that information whenever vendor and customer data is accessed.

Brown says it was an easy decision to stay with Cougar Mountain because they had been a Cougar Mountain DOS user for more than 10 years. He says, "Application stability was excellent under the DOS version and has been equally impressive with the Windows version." He finds the user interface to be intuitive and easily mastered, pointing out that "design standards were followed well between the various modules." Brown has 20 years of accounting system experience, holds a degree in Computer Information Systems, and has implemented several systems over the years. He highly values the extensive audit trails that are available in Cougar Mountain's GL.

NOTABLE FEATURES — 4 Stars

Cougar Mountain's security features are anchored by its comprehensive protected audit trail and also include user-level password security that enables restrictions down to specific tasks. The company recently added additional salesperson security that enables management to prohibit clerks from editing saved invoices or receipts, while maintaining their ability to retrieve and view those transactions. Also new, is drill-down capabilities that provide a history report with detailed information on a selected transaction. The feature was added to the GL, AP, AR, Order Entry and Payroll modules.

The system's AP module streamlines many processes, including payments and adjustments to suppliers (which can be made on a single screen), enables users to set recurring payments to post automatically, and allows monitoring of payment activity as well as the evaluation of future cash requirements. Through the AR

module, users can drill down to detailed customer transaction histories, print

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transaction history. The GL provides GAAP- and FASB-compliant reporting.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT — 5 Stars

All of the program's modules can be integrated to share data, which is updated upon batch processing of transactions. Cougar Mountain can import transaction data into the system through the system's Universal Bridge or through a mapping technique that can acquire data in common formats. Export to Excel and ASCII-formatted files is also available. Brown says the application is well integrated, "with tremendous flexibility to set up various types of companies."

REPORTING — 4.5 Stars

Each of the system's modules contains reporting functions specific to their tasks, such as income statements, cashflow statements, comparative profit and loss statements, comparative balance sheet reports and an audit trail report from the GL; and aging reports, payment histories and customer statements from the AR. The system offers more than 50 such stock reports plus invoicing statements, and enables creation and customization of reports with the R&R Report Writer module. New enhancements to the program's reporting functions allow searching and filtering of report information.

SUPPORT/TRAINING/HELP SYSTEM — 4 Stars

Cougar Mountain's built-in help utility provides adequate assistance with context-specific topics and a *.PDF version of the manual accessible from within the program. Customer service is available through time-based subscription plans, and updates to the program can be obtained through Software Assurance Plans. Training is available on-site or at the company's offices.

SUMMARY

The Cougar Mountain Accounting suite offers a comprehensive business application that, through the addition of industry-specific modules like POS, credit card

acceptance and bar coding, can be customized to meet the needs of most small and

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