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eTEK International, Inc. — MTX Accounting for Microsoft Office

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

MTX Accounting for Microsoft Office offers an integrated suite of accounting modules geared toward mid-sized companies in the construction and distribution industries and other project-based service businesses. Built upon Access, MTX's base system includes general ledger, reporting, cash management, and databases for suppliers, customers and employees. Optional modules include job costing, AP, AR, bank reconciliation, payroll, billing and a supply chain management system for managing work orders, sales orders, purchasing and inventory. A PDA interface is also available. The complete MTX Accounting System (includes base system plus all subsystems) with an annual software maintenance and support license costs \$9,595 (two to five users); \$11,995 for six to nine users. The complete *eTEK* Xpress (single-user) version with one year of support (includes base system and all subsystems) costs \$4,875. Twenty hours of web-based training is included free with all complete system purchases. Otherwise, it's \$90 per hour (16-hour minimum).

One organization that uses MTX Accounting is the Couple to Couple League International, Inc. (www.ccli.org), an interfaith not-for-profit

that provides natural family planning instruction, counseling and information on five continents. It employs 24 staff members at its Cincinnati, Ohio, headquarters, but most services are provided in local communities by over 2,000 professionally trained and certified volunteers. Jack Langlitz is the director of Operations at CCLI, and has been very pleased with the product as well as a constituent database product *eTEK* recently built for them. He noted that both are now SQL versions with a functional Access front-end. Langlitz said that when they began looking for a PC-based replacement for CCLI's legacy product a decade ago, "*eTEK*'s was the only package that met our requirement for one that was written entirely in Microsoft Access."

EASE OF USE/TRANSACTION ENTRY — 4.5 Stars

MTX opens to a small main menu window that provides traditional Windows-based pull-down menus across the top, as well as toolbar icons identical to Microsoft Office applications. Additional task icons specific to the program are also located on the upper toolbar. Within the Main Menu screen, a subwindow provides a scrollable list of available modules, with functions related to the selected module accessible via tabs for Data Entry, Inquiry, Reports and Actions. All of the modules follow this interface, providing consistency that can aid in navigation.

By storing customers, suppliers and employees in a relational database, MTX simplifies searching of these entities with its Inquiry tool. And when changes are made to a customer, supplier, employee or inventory item, the change is reflected when accessing that item from any of the system's modules. Data-entry tasks, accessed from the Data Entry tab of a module screen, are performed on tabbed windows that utilize traditional entry fields along with scroll-down selection lists for selecting accounts, customers and other people or items from the database.

The system includes numerous setup checklists for creating new companies and other tasks, including getting started, a GL setup checklist, a guide to defining account structure, and information on setting up job costing, AP, AR, payroll and creating invoices, running checks, or handling recurring journal entries.

Langlitz advises potential users that if you run the program out of the box, "Read the directions!" He says the instructions are great, "and the help menus are truly helpful." Secondly, he suggests that if you are customizing, you should work with a near-completed beta face-to-face. "To

our experience, this adds efficiency and avoids the human communication pitfalls,” he said. “And we ended up improving on our specifications on the fly.”

NOTABLE FEATURES — 4.5 Stars

In addition to system activity logs and a comprehensive audit trail, MTX Accounting includes user- and task-level security options, enabling administrators to determine user rights and access to various levels of the program. The base system offers considerable customization options, from total control of the GL and chart of accounts and divisional accounting, to the system menu and interface. Additionally, the program’s open code Access base allows complete control over the entire program.

The system’s optional modules also offer the same level of customization, including the four-level job costing module that tracks at the project, job, phase and task level, and includes extensive job costing-focused reporting. The Payroll module supports all states as either a live or after-the-fact payroll utility that offers direct deposit and integrates with the GL and, along with the AP module, can print checks to blank stock or pre-printed supplies, with support for MICR printing.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT — 4 Stars

MTX’s modules integrate with each other, and have the ability to export reports directly into Word or Excel with only one click, directly from the report screen. The system can also export data to HTML, XML, *.RTF and plain text. It can also import from such data files.

REPORTING — 5 Stars

MTX includes an array of more than 200 stock reports and financials with filtering and sorting options. Reporting capabilities are enhanced by its report design wizard and the built-in report design tool, which allows significant customization of reports and data from within the program. Of course, the ability to export directly to Excel and Word makes it even more friendly, with the ability to easily preview the document or e-mail it as needed.

SUPPORT/TRAINING/HELP SYSTEM — 5 Stars

MTX includes an extensive built-in help system that includes How-To information for virtually any task for which the system could be used. These task checklists guide and explain quite well and should be very useful for infrequently performed activities. The company also offers maintenance agreements that include support

and program updates. Web-based training is available, and new customers receive 20 hours of web-based training free.

Langlitz says that CCLI's trial balance would be well over 800 pages each month if they printed it — high accounting volume. Yet he notes that their calls to technical support are infrequent. "When we do call, they are always responsive, and I sense that they get a feel for the technical ability of the caller and communicate at his or her level."

SUMMARY

With its four-level job costing module, MTX is exceptionally well suited to construction companies, distribution companies and other and service-based businesses with a need for tracking costs by activity. The system provides generous reporting options, and its integration with Microsoft Office enhances its usability.

2005 Overall Rating — 4.5 Stars

Article

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