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From the September 2005 Review of Mid-Range
Accounting Software

Sage BusinessWorks Accounting (formerly BusinessWorks Gold) is a mid-sized business accounting option that bundles general financial management modules for GL, AP and AR along with cash management, inventory, order entry, payroll, job costing and utility functions. The system uses the Pervasive SQL database engine and supports up to 20 concurrent users. The CPA Technology Advisor reviewed
the new version 6 of the product. In addition to the re-branded name, several new features and enhancements have been added to this latest version. New features and enhancements include additional options for record lookup; enhanced drill down capabilities; the ability to create POs from sales orders; and incorporation of the Sage Software Information Center into the interface, which provides news about the software as well as tips and tricks, product alerts and training and support information.

Each of the system modules is available individually, with the exception of the System Manager and GL, which are required for use of any of the other modules. Sage Software also offers bundled packages that include one of the vendor's annual software maintenance plans. The Core Bundle, which includes the GL, AP and AR modules plus the basic maintenance plan costs $1,195 for a single user; $3,495 for five users. Other modules cost $595 each, regardless of user licenses, with the exception of the Cash Management system, which is currently free to BusinessWorks users, and the Custom Office solution, which is $395. After the first year, annual maintenance plans start at $575.

EASE OF USE/TRANSACTION ENTRY — 4.5 Stars

shortcuts, help and reference materials and other items. For clarification, the interface actually is a browser (not just browser-like), but it is a little awkward in its appearance, and the browser attributes do not necessarily lend (or subtract) value to the system. On the other hand, the quick access to the various items in the vertical menu adds definite value.

The system takes a more traditional approach to data entry, with subwindow screens that provide data lookup for fields such as customer and vendor, invoice numbers, account numbers and other items, along with calendar-based date selection.
Screens remain generally consistent through various types of data entry and provide additional assistance through buttons specific to the task at hand, such as customizing invoice headers, entering notes or looking up customer historical
data. Data is recorded in real-time across pertinent areas of the system as soon as the user posts a transaction. Additional customization options further ease use of Sage BusinessWorks, and sortable/searchable/filterable lists for customers, vendors and inventory items simplify finding specific information.

NOTABLE FEATURES — 4 Stars
Sage BusinessWorks includes system security functions that can restrict user access at multiple levels, from broad restrictions at the company
or module level to specific tasks. A complete audit trail is also maintained, tracking all transactions and adjustments. The program can support multiple companies and can consolidate data for multiple entities. Account descriptions can hold up to 50 characters, with support for up to 999 departments. The GL maintains nine years' worth of financial history per company, and the
AP and AR modules maintain up to five years'
history for vendors and customers, respectively. The flexible receivables module

also allows users to set up automatic posting of recurring invoices and can

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT – 5 Stars

Sage BusinessWorks' internal integration is smooth, and the system also offers integration capabilities with ACT! It can import data from text and ASCII files through a mapping protocol, and can export documents into Word and Excel. Additionally, the system's Custom Office module includes a mail-merge function and access to Excel-based reporting and analysis tools. The Attachment Manager aids in paper quantity management (paperless endeavors) by allowing users to attach images, audio files, and Word and Excel documents directly to account records, customers, items, jobs or employees.

REPORTING — 4.5 Stars

Sage BusinessWorks includes more than 200 customizable reports that can include graphical elements such as graphs and charts using the system's built-in report writer or through integration with Crystal Reports or F9. Reports are easily accessed within the system because of links within the modules that go directly to reports related to that module's functions. For example, the GL's report menu contains detailed financials, the audit trail and other fiscal reports; and AR has aging, sales analyses and client histories, among others. All reports can be output to Excel, Word, HTML, *.CSV or plain text, or directly e-mailed from within the system.

SUPPORT/TRAINING/HELP SYSTEM — 4 Stars

BusinessWorks includes numerous assistance features throughout the program, most notably help and "How do I" buttons on all transaction screens. An online support site offers further assistance, and user guides are available as well. Sage Software offers three support/maintenance plans that include payroll tables and program updates.

SUMMARY

Sage BusinessWorks is a very capable program, particularly for manufacturing,

construction and inventory-centric businesses. The system's modules provide

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