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From the October 2005 Review of Not-for-Profit Accounting Software

Donald R. Frey & Company has been in the software market since 1974. Specializing in nonprofit software, the company has continued to add new and innovative features
to its software product over the last 30 years, which brings us to its current product, BUCS (Budgetary Control System) Fund Accounting Software, Version 9.3.

Ruth Slone operates Hazard, Kentucky-based Mitchell Associates Accounting Inc., servicing 500 tax clients and approximately 50 corporations with monthly work. Hazard Perry County Community Ministries Inc. is her primary not-for-profit client, although she prepares financial statements for several other charitable organizations as a community service (no charge).

"We selected BUCS because we needed to be live within two months, not one year," Slone said. "We had reviewed other software and, after talking with other vendors, chose Frey & Co. because they were the only one who had been able to get comparable companies up and going in this time frame." Slone says the most beneficial aspect of BUCS is the ease of financial statement preparation, and she notes that very few journal entries are required once you go live. She also recommends that potential users also purchase CHIPS Payroll because it "makes financial statement preparation so much easier, especially if time allocation is a big factor with your company."

EASE OF USE/FLEXIBILITY — 4.5 Stars
BUCS uses a standard Microsoft interface throughout its modules, making this an easy system to navigate, particularly for those familiar with Windows products. The main screen features a drop-down menu, where you can click on a menu item

GASB/FASB Reporting. Single-user systems are ODBC-compliant, and the multi-user system offers the Microsoft SQL database as an option. It is also compliant with Microsoft Terminal Server and Citrix, as well. The Data Dictionary module provides access to BUCS from any ODBC-compliant application, which gives you access to BUCS files through Excel, Access, Word and Crystal Reports. Easily navigated import and export functions make moving files between applications painless.

FEATURES/FUNCTIONALITY — 5 Stars
BUCS sports a true Microsoft GUI, which makes navigation consistent throughout the program. The program's flexible account numbering scheme will let you assign account numbers up to 29 characters long, either numbers or alpha characters. Slone says that Hazard Perry County Community Ministries Inc. has 39 funds and eight departments. She stresses that you need to "discuss in advance of training your account set up needs. This client's account number is 12 digits long, and these numbers must be ready before training."

Drill-down capabilities are found throughout BUCS, so historical data is always accessible. Slone especially likes the vendor history when working with invoices and statements in AP, saying "You have the capability to see exactly what invoice has been previously paid." The Budgeting feature is flexible, enabling you to set up your budget to reflect either annual or period totals, based on actual totals, or zero based if no historical information is available. BUCS also has an excellent fixed assets feature that will calculate depreciation and prepare the appropriate journal entry. You can also calculate replacement costs of items. BUCS can handle amounts up to one billion dollars, will post recurring entries to the GL, and can process an unlimited number of funds. Encumbrance
processing is available, as is grant tracking.

System security provides several levels of access, including view, update

the year-end adjustments report, and a completely redesigned check reconciliation module.

REPORTING — 4.5 Stars

The Combining Reports module lets you create an alternate chart of accounts, allowing you to link and reformat numbers for reporting purposes. You can produce GASB Statement 34, FASB 117 and other reports using this module. A wide variety of reports is available in each of the modules. For your convenience, financial reports from previous periods can also be reprinted. The report scheduler lets you choose the reports you want to print as well as the frequency. All financial reports can be easily exported to Excel or published using Adobe *.PDF files. Many of the financial reports can now be printed using presentation-quality fonts, and, for your convenience, client logos can now be printed on reports. Slone notes that if there are special reports that you need, "take them to Frey and see if they can help set them up." She actually downloads the financial reports to Excel and prepares additional statements needed by the finance committee for financial planning. "BUCS will not produce all of the reports you need, but the information is there so that you can prepare them easily," she added.

SUPPORT/HELP — 5 Stars

An extensive manual is included with BUCS, and I love the "e-mail technical support" icon found on the task bar. You'll also find a link to the company's home page and an area where you can download product updates. Telephone support is available, as is on-site training by request. Internet training is also available, if desired. All clients on support receive a major software upgrade annually. Slone noted that the client for which she uses BUCS chose not to continue with the annual service program, although she disagrees with their decision because she finds value in the updates. "I do not consider the cost to be outrageous; the benefits received are greater than the

money spent." She advises potential users to keep the service contract

2005 Overall Rating — 4.5 Stars