CPA
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May. 25, 2006

From the June/July 2006 Review of
Small Business Accounting Systems

Every business has unique workflow processes that determine the amount of time it takes to complete a sale or perform a service. Every business has unique inventory or pricing needs. Every business has unique payroll situations or customer and vendor relationships. Yes, every business is unique. But the general attributes of a business are usually pretty consistent with other businesses in their industry and in their particular trade.

So despite their unique niches, it isn't that difficult to find a software system that can help them manage the various aspects of their business, from managing sales and invoices, maintaining inventory, to handling payables and payroll, as well as keeping a reliable and secure chart of accounts. But different programs are certainly more adept at different processes, and each has varying usability characteristics.

The programs reviewed here offer the basics, plus many provide additional productivity-enhancing features including payroll, advanced contact management, HR functions, analysis and forecasting tools, time-based billing or point-of-sale hardware. Remember that the small business management software employed by a company becomes the backbone of that business. So in addition to handling the books and core financials, the system must also address the business' workflow processes in an intuitive and easy-to-use manner. The method of exporting
business financial data should also be a focus for the professional accountant serving this business, since the data may need to be transferred into the accountant's write-up, trial balance and tax preparation systems.

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