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SurePayroll — SureChoice for Accountants

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From the Sept. 2007 review of Payroll Systems

SurePayroll offers payroll processing solutions to both business owners and accountants providing service to multiple clients. Through SureChoice for Accountants, professional firms can utilize the online system, including rebranding of client interfaces and support for an unlimited numbers of clients. SurePayroll is primarily an outsourced system, with users responsible for employee data entry and the system automating payroll processing, after which SurePayroll performs all compliance filing, deposits and liability payments. Direct deposit, an employee self-service portal, accruals tracking and benefits management are included in pricing, which is based upon the pay frequency and the number of checks/direct deposits processed. Costs for a business with 20 employees paid twice monthly would be about \$57 per payroll if the service is provided through their accounting firm, which receives a 10 percent discount.

EASE-OF-USE/DATA ENTRY — 5 Stars

The web-based SurePayroll system opens within the user's web browser, with the Account Center acting as the primary start screen. This screen offers navigation menus for key task groups such as Payroll, Reports, Employees, Company, and Tools & Resources. Firms can have the system linked from their website and have firm branding elements. The Account Center acts as the daily hub for interaction with the

system, providing payroll status notes prominently and offering quick access to payroll processing. Links to online Help and support remain on-screen throughout all processes.

Initial setup tasks such as creating companies and employees are performed on traditional web-based data-entry forms with tab or mouse navigation functions. SurePayroll's employee selection list provides a good centralized spreadsheet list that masks all but the last four digits of SSNs and provides basic filtering functions. For professional firms, the initial interface provides a client list and sorting by name, run date, frequency and other options.

Within employee records or when creating new ones, the system guides information entry by information groups, including basic demographic data, banking information, pay rates, taxes, deductions, department codes and human resources notes. Free support is also offered for setup functions. During payroll processing, the online system displays an easy-to-use spreadsheet view of all employees included in the pay period, divided by employee type (hourly or salaried), with the ability to quickly enter time, pay type, bonus, one-time deductions and other information. A Common Questions box offers assistance for related functions, while tips at the bottom of the screen provide additional assistance. Data entry is not processed in real time, but only after submitting the data and using the preview function, which displays an itemized summary of the current payroll run.

FEATURES — 4.5 Stars

The web-based SurePayroll system allows users to access, edit and submit payroll and time data from virtually any location. Another benefit of the system's online nature is that accounting firms can provide businesses with access to it for entering employee information, instead of providing the data on a spreadsheet and having the firm enter it into the system. SurePayroll supports all states and can manage any number of employees with up to three default pay rates but only one taxing state per worker. Rates include hourly, overtime and other. Unlimited voluntary and involuntary deductions can be managed, including child support, garnishments, charitable giving, loans and union dues, and benefits management functions such as 401(k), insurance and cafeteria spending plans. Up to 10 one-time deductions can also be set per employee per pay period. Direct deposit is included but is limited to three accounts, which can be set up as percentage-based or flat amount deposits. Pay cannot be distributed to an employee split between check and deposit. SurePayroll includes accruals tracking, which can be set to build per pay period, month or hours worked.

Included in system pricing, SurePayroll handles all federal, state and local compliance reporting and payment of tax liabilities and guarantees these processes will be performed without penalties, so long as accounts are appropriately funded by the company. For other tasks, users can set up the SureReminders system to notify them of important due dates, and the program can automatically send secure e-mails to employees notifying them of payday activities. The employees log into SurePayroll's employee self-service portal to view and print pay stubs or make changes to personal information. The program's new SureAdvisor HR Service provides outsourced employee management compliance, including the ability to print state and federal employment regulation posters. Expanded online Help has also been added since the last review. As an online system, rate updates are maintained by the vendor.

REPORTING CAPABILITIES — 4 Stars

Traditional payroll reporting options are available through the Reports menu, with access to payroll summaries, department details, deductions, wages, benefits, workers' compensation with classification codes, cash requirements, check registers, accruals and new hires. New hire reporting is also performed by SurePayroll. Even though compliance reporting is handled by the vendor, the system allows printing of forms W-2, W-3, 940, and state reports. All forms and reports can be output to Excel and PDF formats.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT & EXPORT — 4 Stars

SurePayroll can export GL data into QuickBooks and MYOB, as well as into Excel format, but no other direct integration options are available. The system's PDF output enables use with a paperless document management system.

RELATIVE VALUE — 4.5 Stars

SurePayroll offers businesses and payroll service providers relief from compliance headaches by offering filing and payment services for all government entities as an included feature of the program. Pricing is a little higher on a per-employee basis, but because of its total compliance offering, SurePayroll is a good option for businesses and firms who wish to outsource most payroll processing tasks, while still having instant access to reporting and management features. The employee self-service functions and the ability to rebrand client interfaces also add to its value.

2007 Overall Rating: 4.5 Stars

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