Over $1,000)

One Size Does Not Fit All: Client Accounting Systems Offer Varied Functions

Mary Girsch-Bock • Jun. 01, 2009

From the June 2009 Issue

Editor's Note: *The review of Tier I systems (those costing less than $1,000 for a five-user license) was in the April 2009 issue.*

Last month, in a four-mile radius surrounding my house, five small businesses opened in spite of the financial problems our country continues to struggle through. Even in a struggling economy, businesses will continue to open, grow and expand, and it's important that they utilize the tools that are available, both as a one-person owned business and as a growing and expanding entity.

In the last issue of this magazine, we reviewed Small Business Accounting products with a price tag of less than $1,000 for a complete core accounting product that included GL, AP, AR and Payroll functionality (see www.CPATechAdvisor.com/go/2306).
This month, we continue the Small Business Accounting review by looking at products
that range in price up to $5,500.

This opens up the category considerably and lets us look at products that are really designed for small businesses in transition; such as businesses experiencing growth, or those with multiple users and/or locations.These products are generally a step above the products reviewed in the Tier 1 group last issue, offering a more powerful system with quicker response times, more features and extended functionality.

As always, we will look at the vital areas of these products, hopefully simplifying

Core Accounting/Security Functions. This area looks at what the product will do. All of these products will contain basic accounting functions such as GL, AP, AR and Payroll, but we also recognize the additional options and features that are available, either with the core product or as an add-on. For instance, if you have a service business an Inventory module may not be important, but if you have a gift shop it will be a necessity. Security options are also important, particularly for those with multiple system users where security is stressed.

Reporting & Management Functions. This is an important area, and it's difficult if not impossible to determine the true financial status of a business without solid reports. We look at the various reporting options, the ability to email or save reports in different formats, and whether reports can be customized as needed. Management functions have also grown in importance. Just a few years ago, business snapshot reports and dashboards were only found in Enterprise-level products, but they are now common in many small business accounting products, as well. These management tools can help both business owners and accountants keep a good handle on business.

Import/Export/Integration. For those businesses with a need for more flexibility, this area can be a great determinant. Can data be imported from a prior accounting product? Can business contacts be imported? Can data be exported into a spreadsheet or word processing document? Does the software integrate with a good variety of third-party products?

Help & Support Options. Many people don't really expect to have to use telephone or email support, but they want to know that it's there if needed. Many times, a decent Help file can answer many of the questions new users have.

Relative Value. If you're a small business owner just

A-Systems Corporation —
A-Systems Visual Bookkeeper Preferred Edition

With Visual Bookkeeper-Preferred Edition, A-Systems targets small business owners who are looking for a product a step above the typical entry-level products.

Read Full
Review

Acumatica

SIDEBAR: With Acumatica's first release still in the Beta stages, we were unable to include a full review of the product here, but be sure to look for it in the very near future. This is a browser-based product that can be utilized in a SaaS (Software as a Service) model or hosted in-house, allowing it to be conveniently accessed from anywhere with an Internet connection

Read Full
Review

Cougar Mountain Software —
CMS Professional 2009 Accounting

CMS Professional 2009 Accounting from Cougar Mountain Software is ideally suited to small to mid-sized businesses looking for a step above off-the-shelf accounting programs.

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Review

CYMA Systems — CYMA Accounting
Software

. CYMA is a completely modular system that is a

offered accounting and job costing software to companies of all sizes. Its scalable product line ranges in scope from single-user systems to those powered by powerful Microsoft SQL.

Read Full
Review

Intacct Corporation — Intacct
Small Business

Intacct Small Business provides users with the perfect step up from entry-level products. Offered as a Software as a Service (SaaS) product, Intacct is ideally suited for small businesses looking to expand flexibility with their software options.

Read Full
Review

Intuit, Inc. — QuickBooks
Enterprise Solutions 9.0

As QuickBooks continues to maintain market share with its small business accounting products, it also continues to push the envelope with products designed not only to fit smaller operations, but those that fit well in growing operations as well.

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Review

NetSuite — NetSuite

NetSuite offers a completely integrated system that includes a complete set of financials along with industry-specific applications such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Order

entry-level product that can be easily upgraded to the more robust TurningPoint if and when necessary.

[Read Full Review](#)

Red Wing Software — TurningPoint Accounting Software

TurningPoint Accounting Software is an excellent accounting product for smaller to mid-sized businesses looking to upgrade from an entry-level product. TurningPoint modules can be purchased separately or as a core suite of financial products.

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Sage Software — Peachtree by Sage Quantum Accountants Edition 2010

Sage Quantum Accountants Edition varies somewhat in that it is designed for professional accountants who wish to manage their clients' books electronically.

[Read Full Review](#)

Softrak Systems, Inc. — Adagio Accounting

Adagio Accounting is geared toward small to mid-sized companies looking for better reporting and customization capability. Currently priced at $1,500 per module, that price also includes all product upgrades and maintenance for 15 months.

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Technology

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