A-Systems Corporation — A-Systems Visual Bookkeeper

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From the July 2012 Review of On-Premise SMB Accounting Systems

Best Fit: Visual Bookkeeper is a small business accounting and management system based on A-System's powerful construction-focused flagship product JobView. The primary differences between the two is the inclusion of extensive job-costing functions and workflow utilities in JobView, while both offer strong accounting, GL, AP, AR, sales order management, contact management and built-in payroll capabilities. Visual Bookkeeper, which has been in on the market and in continual development with feedback from users for 34 years, also offers scalability as a business grows.

Strengths

- Intuitive overview screens
- Comprehensive GL, AP, AR, built-in Payroll
- Import of journal entries
- Depth of reporting and one-click export to spreadsheet

Potential Limitations

- No multi-currency capabilities
- Moderate inventory
- Limited integrated e-banking options

Basic System Functions: 4.5 Stars

The system's friendly navigation starts with the opening screen of Visual Bookkeeper,

In addition to the core GL, AP and AR elements, the program's built-in payroll capabilities are a distinguishing factor of Visual Bookkeeper. The complete payroll module is included in the system at no additional cost, and includes user-definable updates to payroll tax tables [users can update tax tables from our website for free] and changes in Federal tax forms for the current licensed year and following years with renewal licensing. All updates are sent on a CD. If using third-party payroll processing, users can import transactions and payroll into the GL, as well as export timesheet information, but the in-house payroll processing functions offer more comprehensive functionality. The full-time, built-in audit trail in Visual Bookkeeper tracks all transactions and records what was done, the date and the user who performed the action. This feature cannot be disabled. Multi-Currency is not supported in Visual Bookkeeper. The program does not offer direct support for multi-location installations or remote access data entry, however businesses can use Citrix or Terminal Services for similar functionality.

Day-To-Day Operations: 4.5 Stars

The program offers support for multiple checking accounts and automatic check and invoice voiding, as well as recurring invoices for AP and AR. Sales order management is included in Visual Bookkeeper, along with shipping integration with FedEx and UPS. Warehousing management (with multi-location and bar code scanning features) and point-of-sale options are available as add-on modules. As noted previously, A-Systems also offers the JobView program, which is designed for contractors and construction businesses, offering full job-costing and construction payroll features.

Once these modules are installed, Visual Bookkeeper will support using a bar code scanner to enter product codes, inventory valuation methods that include average cost, LIFO, FIFO, standard, last cost, average cost, and serial numbers.

A built-in credit card processing option is offered through a partnership with

additional areas of Profit, Payroll, Equipment and Purchase Orders.

Business reporting features are easy to use with the ability to customize standard reports using the built-in report generator to tailor any of the large library of stock reports or creating the from scratch. One notable feature in Visual bookkeeper that is not found in the other products reviewed was a comparison of Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable between the general ledger and subsidiary ledgers to identify imbalances. A "Trouble Scan" button then helps users identify possible reasons for out of balance situations.

Other reporting capabilities are further enhanced with the ability to use ODBC to read the database. Additional reports can be created with "FormMaker "an imbedded report writer or DataView , a query program with selected fields & filters at additional cost.

Security is based on individual users and rights are assigned based on menu options and features.

Integration, Import and Export: 4 Stars

Users can import list data such as Vendor, Customer, and Employee lists and transactions can be imported from Invoices, Timesheets, and General Ledger entries. All reports can also be exported to Microsoft Excel or Word. Data Transfer is supported with a General Ledger Journal Import/Export add-on at a cost of $100 for the base version and $250 for the top of the line version.

Direct integration to outside accounting programs is not available, but a free copy of Visual Bookkeeper is offered to accounting firms with clients who are on the system.

Help and Support: 4.75 Stars

The company's support website includes technical bulletins, FAQs, program updates

Visual Bookkeeper is a good choice for a business that needs strong core accounting features, built-in payroll and inventory functions, with options for additional warehousing and point-of-sale capabilities. The support and user conferences will help the user get the most out of the product and create a valuable network of professionals. Pricing for the base version of Visual Bookkeeper starts at $79.95, with the ability to add any number of additional users. The top of the line version starts at $995 and is equally expandable.

Visual Bookkeeper supports an unlimited number of users, each additional user license is $100 for the base version and $250 for the top of the line version and no annual fees per seat.

2012 Overall Rating: 4.75 Stars

Small Business