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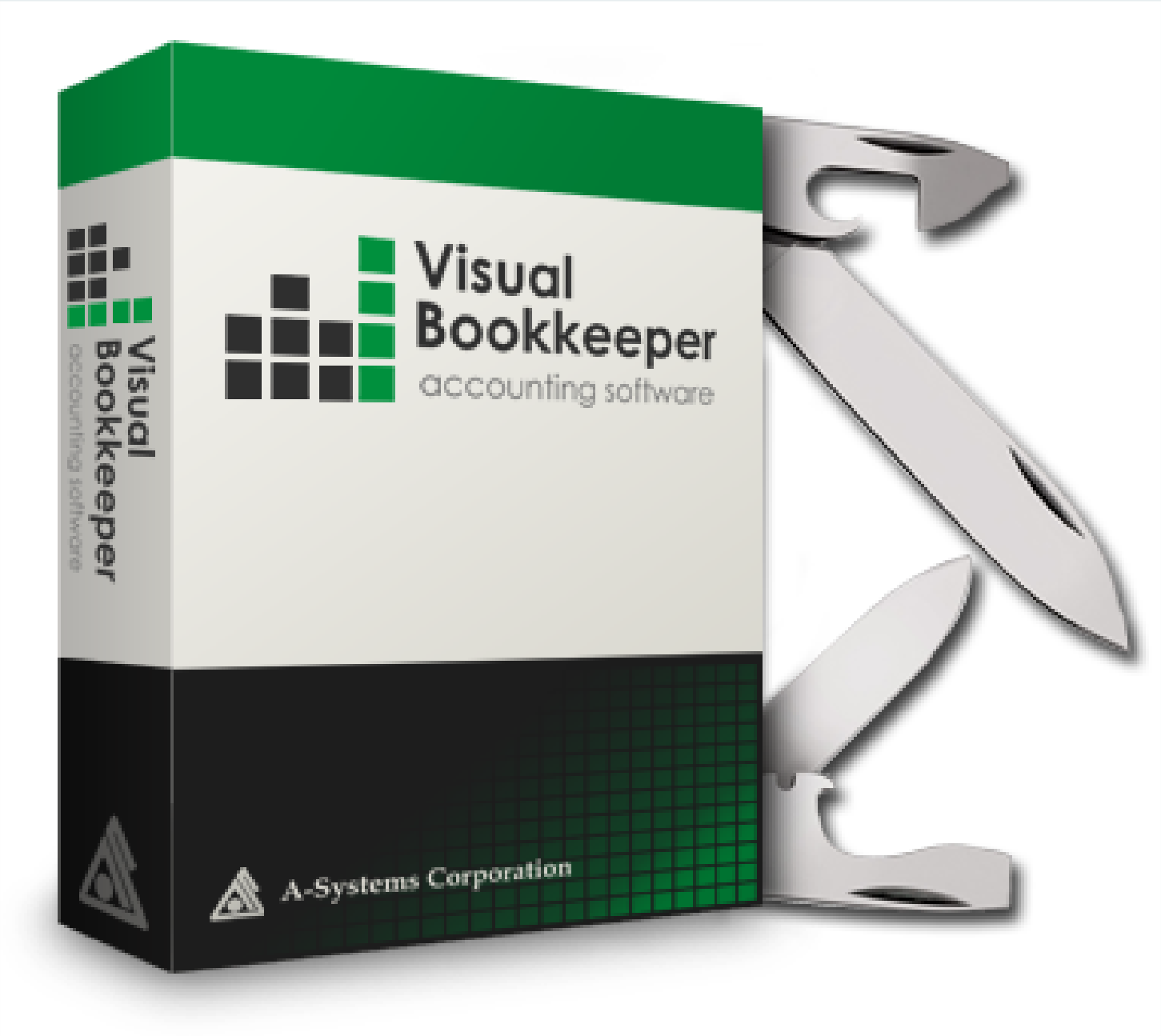
offers accounting, payroll, management tools, and contact management capability for small businesses. Insight Accounting, a more robust version is also available for larger ...

Mary Girsch-Bock • Jun. 14, 2016



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- Affordable for just about any business
- Solid help and getting started features and functions
- Good selection of add-on modules

Potential Limitations:

- No remote/online access for accountants

Visual Bookkeeper from A-Systems is a Windows-based accounting product that offers accounting, payroll, management tools, and contact management capability for small businesses. Insight Accounting, a more robust version is also available for larger businesses and offers additional features and functionality.

Basic System Functions: 4.75 Stars

Visual Bookkeeping is designed for Windows environments, and utilizes a batch system to process transactions. A-Systems, makers of both Visual Bookkeeper and Insight Accounting offer a free, downloadable demo for potential users to explore prior to purchasing. The main user interface of Visual Bookkeeper features a drop down menu at the top of the screen, with quick access to various system options directly below. To the left of the screen, users can access all modules via the vertical menu.

Overview screen options are available for quick access, and a workflow screen is updated when a module is chosen. The workflow centers are fully customizable, so users can display only the features and functionality they typically use. A Reminders option allows users to choose what, if any reminders they wish to receive. Data entry screens are nicely formatted and easily navigated, with help functionality found within each data entry screen. The addition of tabs at the bottom of most data entry

screens allows users to quickly access the information they need from one main area,

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All transactions entered in Visual Bookkeeper are automatically assigned a batch number. Designed to handle standard bookkeeper functions, Visual Bookkeeper offers GL, AP, Sales, AR, and Payroll functionality. Numerous add-on modules are also available including Inventory, Purchase Orders, Equipment Costing, Data Import/Export, DataView, and Electronic File Cabinet. Additional concurrent user licenses can be purchased as well. Users can tag batches for posting, or untag a batch if changes are needed.

Users can keep detailed files on all vendors, including standard payment policy, and can enter both standard and trade invoices for processing. Invoices can be partially paid, and any interest and discounts can be easily applied to an account as needed. The accounts receivable module offers similar file capability, with users able to manage customer data including name, address, and payment policy. Adjustments and discounts can be easily applied to any invoice. Visual Bookkeeper can handle five different invoice types including Trade Invoices, Progress Billings, and Finance Charge Billings, as well as Open Invoice Billings and Balance Forward Billings. Payments can be distributed to all open invoices, or posted to specific invoices.

Visual Bookkeeper also offers solid fixed asset management, with the ability to enter each asset currently in service, track purchase date, value, and number of months in use. There is also an option to manage a corresponding service schedule for each asset in use, and users can attach a photo of the asset, as well as any corresponding documentation such as warranty or contract information to the file if desired.

Visual Bookkeeper offers excellent payroll functionality, with uses able to track employee data, assign multiple pay rates for each employee, as well as manage both standard and user-defined payroll deductions. The payroll module contains multi-state capability, and can track overhead allocations as well, and time data can also be imported directly into Visual Bookkeeper from time recording devices. Visual Bookkeeper contains audit trail functionality that cannot be turned off. Remote

system access is not available, and multicurrency functionality is not currently

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and Vendor data is easily managed in Visual Bookkeeper, with users able to track large amounts of data, with plenty of user-defined fields available for custom tracking of information as well. Users can create purchase orders if desired, and the inventory module is solid, with users able to track inventory movement using a variety of valuation methods including LIFO, FIFO, Standard Cost, Last Cost, Average Cost, or Serialized Tracking. A/P invoices can be paid electronically, with EFT information entered in the Vendor file during customer setup. And all reports can be emailed directly to recipients from the report screen.

Management Features: 4.75 Stars

The Financial Overview option offers users access to various business trends. Here users have access to Balance Sheet, Ratios, and Income Statement data. Color coded pie charts are displayed to illustrate balance sheet and income statement totals, and the ratios screen provides users with both liquidity and debt-equity ratios. Work flow overviews are available for Accounting, A/R, A/P, and Financial, with users able to customize each overview to display the information they desire. Visual Bookkeeper offers a solid selection of reports that can be customized and saved in the system for future use. The optional DataView custom report writer allows users to create fully customized reports, if desired. Third party report applications can also be used, if desired. The FormMaker tool allows users to easily customize invoices, statements, reports, and checks.

System security is role-based, with users granted access into all, none, or selected functions that are found in each defined role. Security settings can also be copied from one user to another, if the roles are similar.

Integration/Import/Export: 4.25 Stars

Users can easily import data into Visual Bookkeeper from QuickBooks, and the Data

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Help & Support: 4.75 Stars

Product support is available during regular business hours, with a technical support package available which includes all system updates as well. Users can also choose to pay on a case-by-case basis, and pay separately for system updates.

Visual Bookkeeper offers excellent help functionality within the product, including a getting started wizard, along with some training videos. A tutorial is also available at an additional cost. System training is available as well, with the company offering on-site classes, web training, and telephone training.

Summary & Pricing:

Visual Bookkeeper offers small business owners solid bookkeeping capability, with a good selection of system add-ons that can increase product functionality. Visual Bookkeeper is available for $249.00 for a single user system, with users able to purchase add-on modules and user licenses at an additional cost.

2016 Star Rating – 4.5 Stars

Small Business • Software

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