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ACCOUNTING

2017 Review of GMS Grants Management Systems

Grants Management Systems (GMS) is a nonprofit accounting and financial management software that is designed for organizations that need to track grant, contract, and program activity. GMS is a good fit for organizations that receive the bulk of their ...

Mary Girsch-Bock • Jul. 20, 2017



From the [July 2017 Reviews of Nonprofit and Fund Accounting Systems](#).

Grants Management Systems (GMS) is a nonprofit accounting and financial management software that is designed for organizations that need to track grant, contract, and program activity. GMS is a good fit for organizations that receive the bulk of their funding from grants or contracts. Designed to be deployment on-premise, users can also choose to install the product on a cloud-based virtual server for more convenient system access.

GMS uses a 5-digit code for all regular accounts, such as general asset and liability accounts. A 6-digit code is used for tracking other data such as cost centers and program activities, with the 6-digit code linked to a specific project. Users can make each program element inactive if it's currently not being used. Though users can easily add additional accounts, there is currently no option to create multiple account segments.

GMS handles multiple transaction types, including general journal entries, cash receipts, AP processing including processing AP checks, vendor management, scheduling of payment dates, document management, a cut down version of the GL function for organizations that don't require additional functionality such as Payroll, AP, and Cost Allocations. Add-on modules for AR, Purchase Orders, Direct Deposit and Fixed Assets are also available.

GMS allows users to create five different budget types; Program Budgets, Indirect Cost Budgets, Fringe Benefit Budgets, YTD Budgets, and YTD Timesheet Budgets, along with a general organizational budget. The document management feature in GMS allows users to attach any related documents directly to the budget.

GMS is not designed for nonprofits that need to manage and track donations or cultivate potential donors. Its focus is on grant management, so the product is able to track all grant activity, as well as contracts, projects or programs. Users can also create and manage budgets for each grant entered in the system. A variety of cost allocations are able to be tracked and managed in GMS, including general and administrative costs, common costs, along with both direct and indirect costs. A variety of cost allocation add-on options called supplements are available to

purchase separately including Salary, Leave and Fringe Detail, Special Allocations, Cost Allocation Locks, Consolidated Cost Allocation Detail, and Shift Indirect Costs.

GMS offers multi-level security capability, with administrators able to assign security levels by individual user or by creating user groups and assigning users to a specific group. Read only rights can also be assigned, as needed.

All reports in GMS are created as a PDF for easy sharing and saving. All reports are categorized, with categories including Monthly Processing, GL Listing Reports, Cost Allocation Reports, Financial Reports, and other financial reports. Additional reports are available as supplements, including Board of Director's Reports, Executive Director's Reports, Cost Summary, Comparison Financial Reports, and various balance sheets. For nonprofits that need to create custom reports, a Report Writer and R & E Report Designer option are both available.

The standard GMS package offers a completely integrating financial management product, which includes GL, Cash Receipts, General Journal, Budget Preparation, Cost Allocation, AP, Payroll, Timesheet Accounting, Financial Reporting, and Security features. Add on applications are also available, including AR, Purchase Orders, Direct Deposit, Fixed Assets, and Report Writer. Supplements are also available, that are designed to enhance reporting capability throughout the application.

Users can export GMS data using a variety of formats, including CSV, Microsoft Word and Excel, and Rich Text. Users can also export data to Crystal Reports or save reports as a PDF.

The GMS website offers users the ability to request support, initiate a chat with a support rep, or download any product revisions, forms, or other materials. GMS requires all new users to purchase the full, unlimited service program for the first year, along with between three to six hours estimated for installation and additional time for training. Training is billed as incurred. Users can choose to convert to a pay-as-you-go service plan after the first year if they desire. A client portal is also available for users to access support, update contact information, order supplements and forms, and access system downloads.

For organizations that are required to track multiple grants, programs, or contracts, GMS can prove to be a worthy investment. Pricing for GMS is based on the number of licensed system users, with a 1-2 user system running \$3,500, with add-on modules starting at \$100. 3-4 user and 5+ user systems are also available. GMS offers a free

downloadable demo of the product, but it may be too confusing to be useful without training.

2017 Rating: 4.25 Stars

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