



The seven essentials of your
next accounting solution



A Director's Guide
to selecting accounts software

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1 Microsoft SQL Server Database

Overview

Microsoft SQL Server is the fastest selling and most widely used database in the world. It drives the activity of many of The Times Top 1,000 Companies, and for very good reasons; it combines excellent speed and security with an almost limitless capacity for data. There can be little doubt that MS SQL Server is the most cost-effective database engine available today.

Features

Access Accounts offers you all the benefits of this 'Industry Standard' database. Security is particularly strong: permission can be granted or denied to match your existing controls, and, in the unlikely event of a power or hardware failure, the entire system can be rolled-back to protect your core data.

But the major advantage of our SQL accounting software is its potential for integration. With their open architecture and highly effective integration tools, Access solutions will integrate seamlessly with 'Best of Breed' applications (such as Microsoft Office) and all your industry-specific software.

Benefits

- **Data processing 20 to 40 times faster** than solutions built around proprietary databases.
- **No practical limit** to the volume of data that can be stored (subject only to hardware constraints).
- **Advanced segregation of duties**, down to individual fields, options and tables.
- **Roll-back facility** protects your data integrity in the event of a power or hardware failure.
- **Create a fully integrated** business network, centred on your accounts.
- **Eliminate duplication** and data re-keying, reducing administration and eliminating errors.
- **Automatically import transactions** generated in third party systems
- **Integrate seamlessly** with SQL, COM, ODBC, e-mail, XML and Internet applications

2 Real-time System Updates

Overview

Many accounting systems rely heavily on scheduled update routines to keep them in step with the real world. Even then, they are only accurate for a very limited time - shortly after each update is complete. If your business depends upon such a system, for the vast majority of your working day you will be basing your decisions on inaccurate information.

Features

There is no viable alternative to a system that operates in real-time. Only then will you enjoy the advantages of immediate access to an accurate picture of your sales and purchasing activity, your outstanding projects and your overall financial position.

With Access real-time accounting, transactions update both the ledger they are entered into and all other relevant parts of the system simultaneously. There is no waiting around for updates to occur at the end of the day, week or month, and you can still control your transactions using batch processing and validation.

Benefits

- **All 34 Access modules** integrate seamlessly with one another in real-time (including Cash Book and Petty Cash).
- **Instant Nominal Ledger updates**, the moment invoices and payments are approved and posted.
- **Share information company-wide** - current data on every business activity is always available to authorised members of staff. This can lead to substantial improvements in customer service.
- **Stronger decision-making** - eliminate the errors that can arise when decisions are based upon inaccurate or incomplete information.
- **Far greater responsiveness** throughout your organisation. Make sure up to the minute management information is available to all your senior decision makers.
- **Remote workers never lose touch**. Access Accounts can be operated securely and in real-time from anywhere in the world, using optional .NET facilities.

3 Live Reporting & Business Intelligence

Overview

You can only react as quickly as your business systems allow. Even the smallest delay can result in a missed opportunity. Of course, individual members of staff have very different needs and levels of accounting knowledge. So it is essential to choose a system that can deliver real-time information precisely when and where it is needed, using a wide variety of formats.

Features

Access provides a superior range of reporting options, from instant 3-year activity 'snapshots' to a fully integrated business intelligence system. This on-screen information is complemented by 225 highly configurable Crystal templates, for traditional printed reporting.

Integrated business intelligence is the perfect way to maximise the benefits of real-time accounting. Choose from over 250 on-screen summaries, containing pre-formatted trends, graphs and statistics on every part of the business process. These reports will strengthen the decision-making of every member of staff.

Benefits

- **3-year on-screen snapshot** of trading activity built in to every record, for routine enquiries.
- **225 Crystal templates** for precisely tailored (printed) management reporting.
- **250 Business Intelligence summaries** covering every financial aspect of the business process. Ideal for accounts and non-accounts users alike.
- **Summaries are up-dated automatically**, with current data, and delivered straight to your Windows desktop.
- **Unique 360-degree view** available with every record and transaction, for instant 'all-round' visibility.
- **Share vital business information** with every authorised member of staff, automatically.
- **Bring greater depth** and clarity to enquiries and reports.
- **Improve the responsiveness** of your entire organisation.
- **Drive productivity** using integrated KPI functionality.

4 Period-based Accounting

Overview

Correctly handling transactions that fall outside the current trading period can be a major challenge. Some systems will allow transactions to be posted forwards and backwards without restriction. These purely 'date-based' applications may cause confusion and can prove difficult to audit. To gain proper control over your transactions, you need flexible period-based accounting.

Features

Access allows you to divide the year into 12 or 13 periods, and to keep up to 26 periods open at any one time. This enables you to safely post transactions forwards and backwards from the current trading period. The system automatically suggests the most appropriate period for each transaction, but can be overridden as necessary.

This flexibility is particularly important as your financial year draws to a close. You simply leave your final period open and commence posting transactions into the new financial year in the normal way. Year End then becomes a minor event in the business calendar, rather than a major administrative headache.

Benefits

- **More secure and auditable** than date-based accounting.
- **Bring consistency** to the posting of old and post-dated transactions.
- **Cater for audit adjustments** with minimum disruption.
- **Up to 2 years' accounts** can be kept open at all times, for forward and backward posting.
- **3 years' turnover** can be viewed at any time (month by month) for all types of record, including customer, supplier, nominal and stock.
- **Retain line by line detail** of every transaction for the lifetime of your system, or purge items at your discretion.
- **Management reports** (such as Profit & Loss) can be prepared 'as at' future and previous periods, for instant year-on-year comparisons.
- **Completed transactions** become part of an indelible audit trail, keeping accountancy and audit fees to a minimum.

5 Multi-Windows

Overview

It's easy to overlook one of the most valuable qualities of the Windows operating system... the ability to have two or more windows open side by side. This feature helps to reduce the time taken to carry out administrative tasks, by limiting unnecessary movement between different parts of an application. When it comes to accounting software, multi-windows functionality can greatly enhance productivity.

Features

Using multi-windows, Access Accounts allows you to open an enquiry screen at any time, without freezing or cancelling the work in progress. From a single starting point you can pursue your enquiry in any direction, opening new windows as you go. And you can return to your original task at any time, with just one click.

If you are entering a transaction, such as a Sales or Purchase Order, you can instantly open enquiry windows on anything from nominal records to costing time sheets. As you drill around the system, each successive window is overlaid and remains instantly available, enabling you carry out investigations with minimum disruption. This feature also enables you to move quickly from inputting one transaction type to another.

Benefits

- **Simple system-wide navigation**, using a separate enquiry menu and unlimited drill-down options.
- **Enquiry menu** lists every subordinate window open, allowing you to move between them - or close them all - in an instant.
- **Answer queries** quickly and easily, with minimum disruption to transaction entry.
- **Switch mid-way** through entering one transaction, to start or complete another.
- **Greater staff satisfaction** - eliminate the frustration of continually closing one screen in order to open up another.
- **See every record from every angle**, giving you a clear 360-degree view of all your business activity.

6 Integration with MS Office & Outlook

Overview

Microsoft Office and Outlook are amongst the world's most popular business applications. Word, Excel and Project underpin the administrative processes of the economy, and Outlook has revolutionised communication between customers, suppliers and staff. Linking your accounts software with these applications is a simple but highly effective way to improve efficiency and productivity.

Features

It is important to make sure that your new accounts system offers alternative methods to traditional ODBC integration. Access Accounts makes full use of modern technology to provide you with the most efficient link of all - an option that places 'Access Accounts' on your main Microsoft menu.

Updating your chosen Microsoft document with current accounts information takes just seconds, and changes to non-auditable data can be sent back to your accounts instantly. Access integration with MS Outlook enables staff to e-mail transactions directly into your accounts, with full validation and real-time updates.

Benefits

- **Ideal for companies** that prefer to use spreadsheets for preparing their management reports.
- **Suitable for any member of staff** involved in the maintenance of accounts records, regardless of their IT knowledge or accounting expertise.
- **Perfect for mail merges** - transfer up to the minute accounts data straight into your Word documents.
- **Eliminate mundane tasks** such as recalculating margins on stock records or changing the sales person on your customer records. Simply use Excel's 'drag & fill' feature and then select 'update Access Accounts' on the Excel menu.
- **Staff working remotely can e-mail transactions**, such as Purchase Orders, Sales Order and Timesheets, using simple Outlook forms.
- **Statutory data is fully protected**, bringing added security for users outside the accounts department.

Turn over for the final essential

7 Accreditation

It may be the last of our seven essential features, but proper accreditation is one of the most important aspects of any new accounting solution. Access Accounting is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and its solutions are accredited by all the industry's major authorities, including the Inland Revenue and ICAEW. This gives you complete confidence in the quality of our software and confirms our long-term commitment to your business success.

Our tried and tested technology is backed up by the most professional service and support in the industry. Access Accounts solutions are sold exclusively through a national (and international) network of Accredited Specialist Centres. Staff at these centres undergo a stringent training programme and are re-accredited on an annual basis. This ensures that they are equipped to supply, implement and support the entire Access range, with the greatest possible emphasis upon quality and service.

Microsoft

Three levels of Microsoft accreditation are available, beginning with Registered Members. Certified Partners are recognised for a high degree of competency and expertise, but the highest level of accreditation - Gold Certified Partner - is reserved for companies who demonstrate the strongest commitment to robust, Microsoft-based business technology.

ICAEW

With 125,000 members, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales is Europe's largest professional accountancy body. Over the last two years its product accreditation scheme has gone from strength to strength. In 2002, Baker Tilly were appointed as the scheme's independent assessors.

BASDA

The Business and Accounting Software Developers Association focuses on the accreditation of specific software features, such as multi-currency functionality. Access Accounting was one of the first developers to attain full BASDA EMU accreditation, and Access multi-currency functionality (including the Euro) continues to lead the field.

Inland Revenue

In 2000, the Inland Revenue introduced its Payroll Standard scheme. For any company seeking the benefits of an integrated payroll system, Inland Revenue approval is essential. It guarantees that the accredited solution will process PAYE returns in line with Revenue expectations and fulfil all the criteria laid down for electronic submission of Year End returns.

IMIS

Access Payroll is also accredited by the Institute for the Management of Information Systems. This organisation was set up with government funding to provide an independent testing facility for business software authors.



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