



Have questions about what you read this month in our newsletter?

Want more information about our products or services?

Visit our website:

www.cogitateinc.com

Contact Us:

Phone: 1-866-634-9991

Fax: 1-989-649-5900

Email:

President@CogitateInc.com

Are you signed up for 9G Backup?

One of Cogitate's customers called recently and thought they were backing up their files. They had not switched to the new 9G Backup service yet, and thought the changeover was automatic.

The changeover from the Data Refuge product to the 9GBackup product is NOT automatic. So if you have not switched to the 9G Backup product please call George at (866) 634 9991 as soon as possible to get signed up. If you are not sure if you have changed over then call George at (866) 634 9991.

Computers and Power Brownouts

Power to the people! In the days when we made coffee in electric percolator coffee pots, and

washers and dryers only had two settings, and refrigerators did not give you ice and cold water in the door, electrical power could vary in strength without causing damage to the things plugged in.

These days the entire work place and home is riddled with "Smart" devices that if the electrical power fluctuates too much in either direction the smart devices will burn out. Most of us have heard of surge protectors by now and that is an important safety device to have protecting your devices. In most new homes there is even a whole house surge protector placed in the electrical box so all devices are protected from power surges.

The other side of the electrical power problem known by us old folks is a "brownout." That is

when the electrical power is not lost but is coming in too weak to properly power the devices. For a computer a brownout can cause just as much damage as a surge. To protect against brownouts and the damage they can cause computers, you need to have an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) that can condition the power to the computer.

Not all UPSs will protect you from a brownout, so make sure to ask or call the manufacturer of your UPS. You may be thinking you are safe because you turn off your computers before leaving work and do not need the protection. Unless you

remove the electrical power completely to the computer it is still at risk since electrical power is still getting to the computer.

One of our customers recently lost power and the building generator turned on. The computers that were turned off and not protected by a UPS all got fried. So please make sure you have a UPS that conditions the power for every computer. You should also back up information on every computer. The 9G Backup system lets you add up to 250 computers to a single account so all your computers can be protected.

Pro Fund Accounting Tip of the Month

Election Workers

The status of election workers has been defined by the Federal Government as being employees. Therefore, you must set up this type of employee with your regular employees.

The rules governing the taxation of election workers' wages as of January 1, 2008, are as follows:

1. Federal and State taxes must be withheld when a worker's wage reaches \$600 or more anytime during the calendar year.

And...

2. FICA and Medicare must be withheld when a worker's wage reaches \$1,400 or more anytime during the calendar year.

These minimums may change according to the IRS's rules from year to year.

Setting up an Election Worker

On the Employment Info screen, fill in the Active Status, Pay Code, and Rate boxes, and click the box next to "Election Worker" in the Specialty Flags area. This flag will tag wages paid for election work and subject these wages to the \$600/\$1400 taxation thresholds.

Note: Once you have checked this flag, you cannot remove it.

If you hire a regular employee as an election worker, you must set up a new employee record (new employee number) and be sure that the date of birth and social security number matches the employee "Personal Info" screen.

On the Deduction screen, give the election worker all four taxes (Federal, State, FICA, and Medicare) plus the ZD deduction code*. Be sure to make the statuses "Active."

If the election worker is hired as a regular employee of the municipality, set up a duplicate

employee record (new employee number) to record regular wages. The date of birth and the social security number must match the original record; otherwise, when W2s are printed, there will be separate W2s for regular wages and election wages.

NOTE: If an election worker did not make at least \$600 in the calendar year, a W2 form will not be printed for them.

*The ZD (Zero Deductions) code must be setup in Deduction Types Maintenance with a Calc Type 29.

UtilAbility Tip of the Month
Setting the Active Status for Customer Accounts and Services

Did you know you can set the status for individual customer services as well as their entire account?

Setting the status for an account allows you to control their scope in various features throughout UtilAbility. You can control whether or not their meter(s) show up while manually posting meter readings, whether or not they are calculated when calculating bills, and even whether or not they show up in various reports throughout UtilAbility.

To set the status for an account, you set their Acct Active check

box located in the Account Maintenance form. This would be checked for Active and unchecked for Inactive.

You can also set the status for individual services by setting their Service Active check box in Service Information Maintenance. This again would be checked for Active and unchecked for Inactive. This allows you to control down to the individual service level for any account. This may be useful if you want to suspend billing of a particular service for any account(s) within your database.

Please note: If you set all metered services Inactive for an account, their meter(s) will not show up while manually posting meter readings.

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The Linotype Machine

by Jim Harlan

I recently got to visit a small, local and closed down print shop. Housed in what looked like a big garage in a regular neighborhood I found a complete printing shop, vintage 1960, that had closed down in the 1990s. This is where a newsletter, menu, poster, flyer, catalog, or a small pamphlet would be printed. Bare bulbs provided just enough illumination to see dirt and cobwebs and rusted equipment.

Those bulbs also illuminated a treasure trove of the way things once were. There were

cubbyholes of wooden type fonts, a character on each wooden block. There was a guillotine paper cutter, there was a paper jogger, and there were printing presses. The presses ran from old mimeograph machines to big presses with huge plates and driving wheels to print poster sized prints. There was a complete darkroom and also a long flat bed camera to make 20x30 negatives. There was a mercury vapor lamp to burn an image into a sheet of metal. There was equipment that I did not recognize and whose function I could not fathom.

But the centerpiece was a huge Linotype machine. It was

6 feet high and wide and 4 feet deep. It had banks of 6 inch to 18 inch gears of impressive heft. It had 2 keyboards and a chair for the operator. And the operator of this machine was the master of his universe and the envy of his peers.

This machine would melt zinc ingots and cast lines of typeface based upon whatever the operator typed into the clunky keyboards. Think of what this machine did. The operator would type a character. From a pot of melted zinc that letter was cast into a die that would form the shape of that character that was chosen from hundreds. Several of these castings were put

together to form a line of type, hence it's name. As cumbersome and slow as this process was it was an amazing leap forward from assembling blocks of type characters to form a sentence.

And the Linotype's demise was not that long ago. I have a friend who was a Linotype operator. He was famous around Cogitate for his very heavy hand on a keyboard no doubt from years of operating the non-touch type keyboard of a Linotype machine.

Looking at the assemblage of equipment and technologies, I couldn't help but to be amazed at what it took in equipment and training and operation to do what today can be done much better

by a 10-year old with a \$500.00 computer in a bedroom.

A room full of mechanical complexity all replaced by an inexpensive computer. And now we go even further - we've even eliminated the paper and the ink. This newsletter, like many others, is never printed but simply published electronically.

The friend, whose print shop I visited, reveled in showing me all the machinery and how it once worked together and all the steps and skill it took to make it sing.

Its song is gone now. But we should remember.



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