COGITATE
Newsletter

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Year-End Reminders

The hustle and bustle of year-end planning is underway. The following is a list of some of the things you should check so that your year-end will go smoothly.

- Make sure you have 2011 W2s and that you have a sufficient number of forms.
- Before calculating your first payroll for 2012, be sure you have run the Check for Updates program to update your tax tables.
- If you use state equipment rental rates, run Check for Updates to download the 2012 rental rates file. Note that this file is already available. You can download it now so that it will be in place before you post your first time card for 2012.. Run the Equipment Rental Update program to apply the new rates for 2012.
- Print a copy of the Year-End Procedures document. It's available under the Help menu on the main HMS/MMS screen. Select HMS or MMS Users Guide and scroll to the last page of its Table of Contents. Select "Year End Procedures" and print the pages you need.

Pro Fund Accounting Tip of the Month

To setup a new account number go to General Ledger on the Main screen. Click on Account Maintenance. Up in the right hand corner you will see 5 icons. The one on the far right looks like arrows going in opposite directions. Clicking on this will change your entry mode from straight line to segmented. I find it easier to setup numbers one segment at a time.

Click on NEW and enter the segments of your new number. Tab to the NAME field and enter a name. Tab to the TYPE field and enter A for Asset, L for Liability, R for Revenue, X for Expense, or E for Equity. Click on SAVE. You may get a message about setting up missing levels. Always say YES. You now have a new account number that you can post to.

Check for Updates!

Because we're quickly approaching the end of 2011, tons of tiny little changes and program modifications are constantly being made by the programming elves. And when they get bored, they start making little changes to the reports. It's hard to keep on top of them to know when they've made changes and pass that information on to you.

Therefore, from now through the end of December, we want you to use the Check for Updates function religiously. Run it at least once a week to make sure you're updating your software to the latest and greatest version available!

UtilAbility Tip of the Month

Using Comments and Warnings: Have you ever found yourself keeping your own separate additional notes about your utility billing accounts on the side? Did you know that you can save miscellaneous information or comments for your customers and accounts directly to your database, from various maintenance screens within UtilAbility? In fact the Customer Information Maintenance, Account Information Maintenance and Meter Information Maintenance screens all have comments fields where you can enter any information you wish. This can be anything related to the individual Customer, Account and Meter you are on. These are great reference fields to help you keep track of special information, such as when a customer will be out of town for a period of time, additional notes about an account's status, if they are having issues with their meters or any other information you wish to save. These comments are easy to locate using our flexible search methods, so you can view them quickly whenever necessary.

You can enter individual account related comments that you wish to see automatically every time you are posting payments for your accounts. For example, if you do not wish to accept checks for a particular account, you can note that on the Post Comment field for each account. This field is located on the Additional Info page in the Account Information Maintenance screen. Every time you select that account while posting payments, you will see your reminder to not accept checks, or any other comment you enter here.

UtilAbility Tip of the Month

(continued)

You can even setup an automatic Post Warning if you wish. This is a generic warning that will appear for all accounts within your entity while posting cash, based on parameters you setup in the Post Cash Warning Parameters section. These parameters are located on the Additional Info Page in the Entity Information Maintenance screen. They include a selected Service, number of Max Days and number of Max Bills.

If you save this information, you will see a warning appear while posting payments for any account that has been billed for the selected Service at least the Max Bills number of times within the last number of Max Days from the effective date in which you are posting.

This can be helpful in situations where you might want to exercise certain policies if the warning occurs. For example, if you have an account that has been charged three overdraft fees within a twelve month period, you may not wish to accept checks from them.

These comments and warnings are convenient and easy to use, so go ahead and save some time and paper by utilizing them any time you wish.

Numbers!

— by Jim Harlan

I love numbers. Odds, evens, integers, primes, irrationals, infinities and in the computer business, binary, floating point, and a bunch of others. I live in an ocean of numbers and to me those waters are inviting, warm and comfortable. My favorite is zero. It's the last number discovered by man somewhere in India or the Middle East around 400 but I love them all.

But sometimes the numbers do not love me.

I spend many hours each year trying to figure out where some number did (or didn't) come from. The problem usually comes from simple addition or subtraction and maybe a very few multiplications or divisions thrown in, usually from lots of different numbers selected from a database. It's amazing how complicated tracking backward from some incorrect result can be.

It always takes a strong commitment to dive into the confusion to find the source of an error. During the analysis, I'll accumulate several pages of numbers that contribute to the puzzle. And a daunting puzzle they can be. I find I have to really push myself to wade through all the details to make sense of what's happening. Happily, almost every time I will find the key that brings understanding to the Chaos.

But not every time, sometimes Chaos wins the day. When that happens I'll try to find a workaround or, as I frequently call it, a Band-Aid. That's kind of an admission of failure and I don't like failure. Still, I have applied a fair number of Band-Aids in my day.

So I love numbers and I hate failure and I walk the line between them every day. And if I fall into Chaos at least I always enjoy the swim in my oceans of numbers!

Coming Next Month

In next month's Newsletter:

- Making Sure You're Backed Up
- Voiding A/P Checks and Removing Invoices
- Adjusting Inventory
- Import Programs: A Recap

Holiday Hours

Cogitate's December holiday hours are:

Christmas: From Friday, Dec. 23rd through Tuesday, Dec. 27th.
News Year's: From Friday, Dec. 30th through Sunday, Jan. 2nd.

Cogitate wishes you all a

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

Want more information about our products or services?

Visit our website:
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