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info Newsletter

For Sage Software Nonprofit Solutions

What's Inside

Headline News

Sage Summit, the annual conference for Sage Software customers, will be held this year in Chicago, during the first week of November. You'll learn about software, connect with other Sage Nonprofit Solutions users, and generate lots of new ideas for growing your organization.

Go to www.sagesummit.com for the latest conference information, including great rates at preferred hotels.

Keep Your Data Secure

See page 4 for more info!

Electronic Efficiencies With Sage MIP Fund Accounting

As a successful nonprofit organization, you already realize the important role technology plays in helping you operate more efficiently and with less overhead. Are you maximizing your technology investment? Are there tools you could be taking advantage of to further save your staff's time and effort? In this article, we'll look at three available modules for Sage MIP Fund Accounting: **Electronic Requisitions, Electronic Funds Transfer for Accounts Payable, and Direct Deposit for Payroll.** These modules can save steps, increase efficiency, and allow you to spend more time on your mission and less on your accounting.

The Electronic Requisitions module allows you to streamline the process of creating, approving, and tracking requisitions.

Electronic Requisitions

Routing paper requisitions around the office is both inefficient and problematic. Papers get lost, misfiled, or shuffled to the bottom of an in-basket. What's worse, while that piece of paper is on someone else's desk, other individuals within your organization don't know the status, or have access to notes and other information surrounding the requisition. The Sage MIP Fund Accounting Electronic Requisitions module allows you to electronically route your organization's requisition requests by e-mail through the appropriate chain of approval, streamlining the entire process of creating, routing, approving, and tracking those requisitions.

Creating New Requisitions

Creating new requisitions within the Electronic Requisitions module is a straightforward task. You can easily record all the pertinent information as you create a requisition. Separate Shipping and Billing Address fields allow you to direct your purchases to the site where they are needed. A Required Date, an Approval Needed By Date, and an Urgent check-box all help keep your requisition on track.

Paperless Approval Process

When you move to Electronic Requisitions, you can say goodbye to paper copies of your requisitions. Once you've completed the data entry, a single mouse-click starts the approval process by routing the requisition through your pre-established approval steps.

As each reviewer completes the approval process for a requisition, a handy routing box allows the user to indicate the name of the next reviewer in the approval process, and whether they approve or reject the requisition. To keep the approval process moving, Electronic Requisitions automatically sends e-mail notifications

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to the appropriate recipient when a request is approved or if a request is awaiting approval. Once the requisition receives final approval, the request automatically transfers to the Purchase Orders module.

If you have the Budget module, you can check for available budget prior to making a request or reviewers can check before granting approval. The one-click Budget Checking tool allows you to review the budget impact of the current request. Available budget is calculated including actual encumbered and pre-encumbered funds.

Create A Purchase Order

The end result of the requisition process is to create a purchase order to send to the vendor. The interface between the Electronic Requisitions module and the Purchase Orders module makes this task a snap.

From within the Purchase Orders module, select the items from the requisition or requisitions for which you want to create purchase orders. You can pick and choose the items from each requisition to include. Only requisitions with a Final Approved status are available to choose from. For added efficiency, you can combine more than one requisition onto a single purchase order.

Notes And Attachments

You can enter and maintain extensive notes for each requisition. Those notes will follow the requisition through its approval process and are available to all who view and approve the requisition. Similarly, documents can be attached to a requisition record. Attach a vendor's quote, a spreadsheet with supporting numbers, or whatever else may be important during the requisition and purchasing process. It all adds up to an efficient electronic communication system.

Electronic Funds Transfer

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) is a system allowing payments and collections to be made electronically, in lieu of passing paper checks. Many of us already take advantage of online bill paying services offered by our personal banks, which utilize EFT. By incorporating EFT into your organization's accounting operations, you can save a potentially significant amount of money. By most estimates, it costs around $.89 to issue and mail a paper check, but only $.09 to process an electronic payment.

The Sage MIP Fund Accounting Electronic Funds Transfer module for Accounts Payable brings the efficiency of EFT to your organization, allowing you to issue vendor payments electronically.

When you issue a paper check and mail it, you have little control over when that payment is taken from your accounts. With Electronic Funds Transfer, you designate when payments are taken, helping make your organization's cash flow predictable.

Electronic Funds Transfer is easy to set up and use. You'll designate which vendors are to receive electronic payments, and then process payments using the same select and pay processing method you already use for Accounts Payable checks. Through an easy-to-use interface within Sage MIP Fund Accounting, you'll dial and send your electronic payments directly to your bank. If you wish, the Electronic Funds Transfer module can notify your vendors of your payment through an automatically generated e-mail message.

Bank reconciliation is simple; you can quickly identify and clear electronic vendor payments in the Bank Reconciliation module.

Payroll Direct Deposit

Payroll direct deposit operates on the same principle as EFT; think of it as EFT for payroll. The Sage MIP Direct Deposit module brings this convenience and control to your organization's payroll processing.

Through a straightforward setup procedure, you can split an employee's deposit into multiple accounts, allowing them to designate both a checking and a savings account, for example. It doesn't have to be an all or nothing proposition—Direct Deposit allows you to process checks and direct deposits in a single payroll processing step. For special circumstances, like bonus checks, you can easily override an employee's direct deposit preferences and print a paper check if you like.

Like EFT, your payment instructions are transmitted directly to your bank through an easy-to-use interface. The Direct Deposit module creates and transmits a properly formatted NACHA data file automatically.

As you would expect, the Direct Deposit module interfaces seamlessly with the General Ledger module, preserving your organization's financial audit trail.

By embracing the technology tools available to you, you can save your organization both time and money—resources we're certain you can put to good use.

Call us with your questions.

Tips & Tricks

How To Reverse An AP Invoice

1. Start a new session of the same type as the original transaction. For example, to reverse a posted AP invoice select Transactions > Enter A/P Invoices and click on the <Start> button.
2. On the transaction entry screen click the Auxiliary Command Button from the toolbar, <Reverse Posted Document> button.
3. On the Reverse Posted Document form select the original Session ID and Document (Invoice) that you wish to Reverse From Posted Document.
4. Leave the Reversed Document number the same as the original document number. In most cases, you will also want to leave the checkboxes for Use Original Document Date and Use Original Effective Date checked so that you get an exact reversal of the original document.
5. Update the new Document Description to indicate this is a reversal. (If you change the document description, you may also click on Use Document Description for Line Items to make the new description the line item description.)
6. Click <OK> to finish the reversal process. (The application will warn "The entry will post an adjustment to Vendor ID <name>, invoice <number>." Click on <OK>.)
7. Review the reversal transaction in the entry screen and click <Save> or <Post> to finish the transaction.

Reporting In Sage Fundraising 50

Reporting consistently ranks as one of the most valuable elements in an organization's software solution. You enter valuable information into your fundraising system each day. But that data is only helpful if you find, extract, and present it effectively. Sage Fundraising 50 supplies the reporting and analysis tools you need to communicate your results and demonstrate good stewardship.

Hundreds Of Standard Reports

Sage Fundraising 50 includes more than 90 standard reports providing the most frequently asked for information, such as: campaign progress reports, year-to-year comparisons, cost-per-dollar raised performance reports, and outstanding pledge reports.

What's more, by using the powerful built-in report writer, you can modify many of these existing reports, or create entirely new reports to meet the needs of your organization.

Share Your Reports

The Sage Fundraising 50 solution makes it easy to share your reports with built-in Outlook integration that allows you to e-mail reports directly from the software. Convert your reports to the popular Adobe PDF format, attach them to your e-mail messages, and share with your donors, executives, board members, or other stakeholders.

Finding The Report You Need

With so many reports, it might seem a bit intimidating to find the report you need, when you need it.

Every standard report has a brief description of what type information is returned on the report. While many reports lend themselves to extensive customization, others do not. To determine the customization options available with each report, access the Setup function after selection of a report to review that particular report's flexibility. If a tab within report Setup does not display a particular feature or option, then you will have to search for another report to fulfill your needs. The most accommodating reports are those with the word Export in their titles.

Along with the supplied short definitions listed with each report, a quick click on the Help selection from the upper Tool Bar allows you to search by name for a specific report. The Help section includes a template of each report so you can easily review the formatting of the report along with the type information it will extract and display.

Constituent Reports

The Constituent Reports category includes summary type reports drawing upon a constituents' entire record. These reports can provide detailed information from within a particular constituent's record. They are usually used for creating mailing labels, call lists, or reports that require fields to be printed.

Get the information you need about your fundraising activities from the many reports available with Sage Fundraising 50.

Financial Reports

The reports in the Financial Reports category provide detailed gift information from individual cards in a constituent's record. Choose this category when you're looking for a report containing detailed information about your constituent's giving history.

Analytical Reports

Reports in the Analytical Reports category return overview information about your organization's fundraising as a whole. Choose this category when you want statistical information about a specific campaign or fundraising effort, such as total number of donors or a comparison report for two select giving periods.

Volunteer Reports

The Volunteer Reports category includes reports that serve to analyze the information entered on your Volunteer cards. The reports here include both detailed and summary information about your volunteers.

Event Reports

Detailed and summary information analyzing the information from your Event cards is included in the Event Reports category.

Membership Reports

The reports in the Membership Reports category draw from your Membership Level table within the Table Maintenance section. They also utilize the information you entered in the Membership tab on your System Options. Most reports within this section are analytical type reports, based on the entire membership database.

Grant/Prospect Reports

When you need details or analytical information on the Proposal and Contact cards established for your constituent records, pick a report from the Grants/Prospects Reports category.

The information you need is waiting for you within Sage Fundraising 50. If you would like assistance selecting or customizing the right report for your needs, please give us a call. ☆

In The Spotlight
Keep Your Data Secure

Data security is a growing concern for nonprofits of all sizes. Threats seem to be everywhere: viruses, malware, natural disasters, power surges, disgruntled or simply careless employees—and the list goes on. What are some practical steps you can take to ensure better security of your organization's valuable data? In this article we offer a few suggestions for securing your Sage MIP Fund Accounting database, and the rest of your organization's electronic data.

Access On A Need-To-Know Basis

While you must give your employees access to your organization's databases to allow them to do their jobs, it's prudent to tightly control that access. It's far safer to grant the access as it becomes evident the employee needs it than to risk providing that access before they do.

With Sage MIP Fund Accounting you can limit access by organization and by function within the organization. You can assign privileges to View, Edit, Delete, Add, and Process to each User or Group.

Should your organization require more control in assigning security, consider the **Advanced Security** module. With this module you can control entry and viewing access by individual program, department, general ledger code, and more.

Strong Passwords

Did you know that a blank password (no password) is more secure than a weak password, such as 1234? On computers using Windows XP, an account without a password cannot be accessed remotely by means such as a network or the Internet. An effective way to fortify your passwords is to use an alphanumeric combination, incorporating numbers and lowercase and capital letters. Insist that employees change their passwords often, and that they not use easy-to-guess passwords such as pet's or child's name.

Back It Up

Without a doubt your organization has established backup procedures for its servers. Be certain to periodically test your ability to restore from a backup and invest in secure off-site storage. Should you ever find yourself in need of that backup, any costs and inconveniences you experience maintaining a usable back up will be well worth it.

Beware Of Malware

It is likely that you have strong anti-virus software installed and running on your organization's network, but there are other sinister threats to your system lurking.

You're familiar with Malware, short for malicious software—software designed specifically to damage or disrupt a system. Spyware is the most common class of Malware, but there are others such as zombies, keyloggers, and dialers. While not technically Malware, Phishing scams are on the increase. You may have received an e-mail that appeared to come from your financial institution asking you to follow a hyperlink to their site to update your password or account data. Internet Explorer 7 has a built-in Phishing filter, plus there are several other low and even no-cost malware and phish-catching software options available.

Building Best Practices For Data Access

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) have adopted an information security standard document. While not specific to the nonprofit sector, it provides a common-sense approach to managing electronic data.

Greatly simplified, the standard is based on three principles:

- Confidentiality: ensuring that information is accessible only to those who are authorized.
- Integrity: safeguarding the accuracy and completeness of information and processing methods.
- Availability: ensuring that authorized users have access to information when required.

The best practices are worth considering. Visit the ISO's Web site at www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/popstds/informationsecurity.html.

Let us know if we can help you address your security concerns. ☆

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