



NEWSLETTER

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Changes Coming in Information Technology

By Don Frey

A number of changes are coming that are noteworthy. Microsoft is releasing a new operating system called Windows XP. The Internet is continuing to grow in almost every aspect. And, wireless computing is emerging as a hot new development.

In October, Microsoft will release the Windows XP OS (operating system). Microsoft is merging Windows and NT into one product. Microsoft says XP stands for eXPerience. XP is based on NT which is supposed to be much more stable and reliable than other *Windows* systems.

The merging makes sense. If a single system can be provided that will satisfy both markets, a tremendous savings can be realized. It also allows you to use the same style of computer at work and at home. One has to be careful though. You cannot let the requirements for one group interfere with the needs of the other group. Example: A high security requirement for business, low for home use.

Frey software is currently running on Windows and NT. We do not anticipate any problems with XP. However, you may need to be concerned about older software. A program in XP will look for applications that may cause potential problems. If one is found, it will give you a warning.

XP will tax your resources unless you have a fairly powerful system. If you have a less powerful system, you may want to consider purchasing a new machine. Two models of XP will be available, Consumer and Business.

The Consumer version will have heavy emphasis on entertainment such as music, digital photography, gaming, and communications.

The Business version will emphasize security and high performance. Collaboration tools will be available for instant messaging, voice, video, and application sharing.

Mobile computing will be enhanced by providing remote access to the data and applications at your office computer.

Both products will share greater ease-of-use via a new GUI (graphical user interface). Help and support will be enhanced for improved *dial up* diagnostics and on-line support services.

I do not perceive XP as being as dramatic of a change as the transition of Windows 3.1 to Windows 95. XP will represent a more reliable and uniform product. The new *tools* offered with the OS will also be an attraction.

The Internet continues to expand at a rapid pace. I recently read that fifty-eight percent of the US population now has access to the Internet. Faster line speeds and lower costs are also making the Internet more attractive as an infrastructure for business computing.

Browsers are being released that allow one to connect to applications using the Internet infrastructure. These *browsers* are *thin* clients. Thin clients cause the processing to be done on the server. Only the answers and screen graphics are transmitted to the client. This makes for faster and more efficient processing. Soon, you will be seeing Frey software appear on the Internet allowing customers to inquire about their utility bills and consumption history. Bill presentation and payments will also be coming. However, there are security issues and fee processing considerations that still need to be addressed.

Wireless computing is hot! I am excited about this development because it is here, practical and everyone can see its benefits. Wouldn't it be nice if we could eliminate wires to keyboards, printers, mice, scanners, telephones, LANs? Products are out or emerging that will do all of the above mentioned and much more. Today, you can purchase wireless keyboards and mice. WLANs (Wireless Local Area Networks) are now becoming available at a cost-effective

price. WLANs need to get a little faster, but that will happen very soon. With wireless local area networks, you can carry a notebook or palm computer around the office, while connected to the main computer. With wireless cell phones built into your notebook computer you will connect to the Internet or office and chat at the same time. This is where things are going. Actually, we are there! ☐

BUCS 8.4 Fund Accounting , Full Of New Features



The 8.4 release of BUCS launches over three dozen new features and improvements to extend your capabilities and make your computing environment friendlier.

New capabilities this year include expanded reporting for FASB 117 for nonprofits and GASB 34 for governmental agencies. This new software aggregates funds for reporting. It also provides columnar formats and additional *font* options to meet the new presentation standards.

A new *Fee Receipting* module is now offered. It allows one to prepare receipts and certificates. It can be used for items such as building permits, pet licenses, and park shelter rentals. When a fee is received, purchaser information is recorded, certificates and receipts are prepared, and the general ledger is automatically updated. Fee processing has been integrated with Crystal Reports to allow the user to design their own formats. Reports can also be prepared detailing activity by type of fee received.

Archiving of the Posting file is another new capability. We found that many clients may no longer need to access the Posting file on a daily basis, but would like electronic access for research. You can now archive the Posting file by a date range. The archived file can be viewed on the screen via the Posting Journal Analysis program. It can also be printed using the Posting Journal Analysis Print program. Access can also be gained via ODBC compliant software.

Other improvements and extensions have been made for the new release that are too numerous to mention. Those details will be covered in-depth in the release letter shipped with the product. As customary, an updated user guide will be provided as a part of the annual upgrade package. ☐



CHIPS 8.3 Payroll Coming Soon

We are in the midst of preparing the next CHIPS update. The IRS made extensive changes to the reporting forms and magnetic media this year. Much time has been spent updating the software to meet these new requirements. Over two dozen other improvements are on the list this year. These suggestions have come from the survey, customer comments, and the user conference.

A number of *usability* features have been added, such a mechanisms that make navigating around in the program more convenient. Below are some highlights.

- Fields have been added to track holiday and personal time. This was the result of a user request.

- A new declining balance deduction code has been added. Once the deduction has reached zero, it will cease to function.
- Deduction and earnings description fields have been enlarged to provide improved information.
- CHIPS will now prepare the 941 reporting form.
- A *global* change for pay increases has been added.
- Option to print year-to-date totals on pay check.

Full details of the changes will be addressed in the release letter. If you are interested in participating in this year's *beta* tests, please let our support staff know. ☐



CUBIC Release 8.5 Has Exciting New Capabilities

The next release of the CUBIC utility billing system will be in *beta* testing by the time this newsletter is released.

Work Orders have been extensively redesigned. The processing of work orders has been made much more flexible. These changes have come about as a direct result of the valuable suggestions submitted by users.

Delinquent notices can now be optionally prepared using Crystal Reports. This provides the user with additional flexibility in the document's design.

A new CASS certification module is now offered. CASS certification is an address validation and delivery point coding process. It allows users to receive a more favorable mail rate from the Post Office. If you are mailing more than 2,500 pieces per month, you should consider this new capability.

Deposit processing has been greatly expanded. New deposit handling capabilities have been developed. The system will now calculate interest on deposits using several different methods. The Deposit report has several new options and Refunds have been expanded and streamlined.

A new RUBS (Ratio Utility Billing) module is now available. RUBS is a method of allocating costs and billing for utilities in multi-unit facilities such as apartments and warehouses. The ratios are based on a combination of occupants and/or square footage. This concept has become very popular for apartment complexes and *shared facilities*. Other services are also being billed such as cable, Internet, and telephones.

Over two dozen additional improvements have been made to CUBIC. Details of these improvements will be in the release letter that will be shipped with the product. ☐



User Conference, 2001 Technology Odyssey

The 2001 User's Conference was held August 12 – 14, at the new Marriott at River Center, in Covington, Kentucky.



Don Frey reviewed where technology has brought us in the preceding decades. Forthcoming technology changes were discussed including Microsoft's Windows XP, Internet developments, and the new *Wireless* revolution.

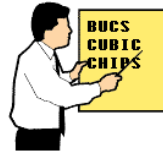
The agenda included briefings on product improvements that will soon be released. Open discussion periods were held to exchange views with fellow users and the development and support staffs.

A special session was held to address the requirements for GASB Statement 34 and FASB 117. These requirements will require consideration on how accounts will need to be aggregated for report presentation. Other issues were reviewed such as the need to adopt *full accrual basis* accounting and the requirement to report on infrastructure assets.

So many of our clients use Crystal that we decided to have a session on tips and tricks. Examples of reports that would be useful to everyone were presented. Those who have Crystal, found the session very helpful. Those who do not have Crystal, got a good idea of how useful it can be.



The evening event this year was hosted at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens. Gail Meister of IBEW Local 212, *tried on* this lovely Boa. The Zoo is one of the finest in the country and provided a very enjoyable evening. ☺



Tips From Your Support Staff

By Mike Emmerich

Save Auditor Fees - As a part of the audit process, many of our customers have to calculate the total liability of the accrued vacation hours at the end of the year. One customer said it took several days to go through & calculate this manually. As a suggestion, Crystal Reports can easily extract this information from the employee file listing each employee, number of vacation hours available, current rate of pay and give the total value of the vacation time. Obviously, it can give you the Grand Total, which is the number the auditor is looking for. Many of the payroll customers at the 2001 User Conference said they could use this report. If you do not have Crystal Reports with the Data Dictionary for CHIPS, please call us regarding this valuable reporting tool. I was told this feature alone paid for the cost of Crystal Report Writer.

By Dean Eldridge

Report Fonts: Since the release of BUCS 8.3, proportional space fonts have been added to the system. This option will allow reports (Trial Balance, Revenue Report, Expense Report, Balance Sheet, etc), to be printed using a multitude of fonts that will make them much more appealing. Upper and lower case letters can also be used. Using report parameters (Titles, Descriptions, etc), both lower and upper case can be utilized for more attractive reports. To better utilize proportional space printing, the case for the chart of accounts and vendor file can be changed with a maintenance program. This will change from all CAPS to just the first letter of the word being capitalized.

Crystal Reports: It may be worthwhile to upgrade to Crystal 8.5. This version is considerably faster at processing reports than previous versions.

BUCS Prior Year: It is a good idea to create a *prior year* in BUCS even if you don't think you will use it. Prior to closing the Fiscal Year, go to FILE-UTILITIES-PRIOR YEAR-CREATE. This will create a copy of the current year information prior to closing to the new year. This can be used for any adjustments that are found that need to be made after closing the year. If this is used, after adjustments are made, the YEAR END ADJUSTMENTS program can be used to incorporate these into the current year. If the Prior Year isn't used, we can merely delete it.

By Brian Scott

Change of Email Address: When there is a change in your email address,, please notify us immediately. Call us at 1 800 659 3739, or email us at spttfrey@aol.com. This way we can keep our list current, and when we sent out the notification that there is a new update on our internet site (WWW.drffrey.com), we don't have to try and track down the email address's that come back as unknown address. By keeping your email address with us current, you help us keep your software current. ☺

GOVERNMENT ♦ NONPROFIT ♦ UTILITIES

Fund Accounting, Payroll, Utility Billing

ESTABLISHED, in 1974 with installations throughout the US. *We understand your business and special needs!*

EASY TO USE, Microsoft Windows interface with on-line Help, ODBC and extensive *search* tools. *Programs that make your work easier and more enjoyable!*

RELIABLE, withstood the rigors of audits in dozens of states for years. *Problem free accurate programs!*

ECONOMICAL, unique pricing model that lets you purchase just what you need. *More value for your money!*

PORTABLE, designed for multi-user systems and personal computers. Frey applications run on hundreds of computers and can easily be moved from one to another. *Freedom of choice for you!*

ADAPTABLE, programs that can grow with your needs! Our updates keep your programs tuned to the latest in technology. *Software that is always state-of-the-art!*

SUPPORT, help when you need it! A **Free** 800 number for your convenience. Internet update services. *Support you can swear by, not at!*

INTEGRATED, applications that talk to each other. ODBC and Crystal Reports allow you to easily transfer data from Frey packages to spreadsheet, word processor and other application systems. *A team approach to your needs!*

SPECIAL SERVICES, custom designed modifications; full range of computer related consulting services. *Professionalism and competence on which you can rely!*

Call Toll Free	1-800-659-3739
Internet	http://www.drfrey.com
e-mail sales	drfrey@drfrey.com
e-mail support	spptfrey@aol.com



40 North Grand Ave., Suite 303
Fort Thomas, KY 41071-1765
(800) 659-3739 Toll Free
(859) 441-6566 Telephone
(859) 441-7152 Fax
www.drfrey.com Internet
drfrey@drfrey.com E-mail

Systems and Software Engineering

NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE:

Changes Coming in Information Technology
BUCS Fund Accounting, New Features
CHIPS Payroll Has New IRS Reporting
CUBIC Utility Billing Has New RUBS & CASS
User Conference 2001 Technology Odyssey
Tips For Users