DONALD R. Frey & COMPANY INC.

NEWSLETTER

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Microsoft SQL Databases Now Available

By Don Frey

An increasing number of current and prospective clients have been asking for our products to use Microsoft's SQL database as the information storage technology. This request stems from the desire for all information to be stored in a common format. SQL also improves the scalability of the software to meet future growth needs. The IT (Information Technology) staffs usually press for this capability because it is easier to manage a *standardized* database system.

In 2004, Frey & Company began the process of creating versions of our software that would run using Microsoft's SQL for the database. The first application to be implemented was CUBIC because it was the most sought after application using the SQL database.

Our goal was to offer a SQL database as an option in addition to the *Vision* file system which we have used for years. We also wanted to maintain one set of programs that could run with either database. Migration programs would be needed that would permit existing users to convert their information from a Vision to a SQL format.

At the beginning of the process, we spent a considerable amount of time researching Microsoft SQL documents, and other *readings.* We acquired an additional server that would be the host for SQL applications. We were very intent on creating a *real world* environment to test the new system.

We conducted *alpha* testing in-house using a database of about 25,000 accounts. This was a *live* database supplied by one of our clients. We are now *beta* testing the software at the client site, allowing them to evaluate its capabilities.

We also had the system reviewed by Microsoft SQL technical support engineers to assure that we had a well structured implementation.

Below are some of the things we discovered during this development process.

Program Changes: The SQL version of the software presents a user interface that is identical to the Vision version. This is important because it allows us to maintain one set of the source software for both Vision and SQL databases. The SQL version of the software uses an additional runtime that connects our programs to the SQL database engine.

Crystal Reports: If you have created Crystal Report programs, changes will be required. Data names have been changed because of SQL naming requirements. Other changes are necessary because Crystal will now be using SQL rather than ODBC for connectivity.

Size: Your current database will expand by approximately 250% based on our tests. This is because of the way SQL stores and accesses information. If you are not currently using CUBIC, you can estimate that each account will require about 200,000 bytes.

Speed: In most cases the difference is barely, if at all, discernable. Some batch processes run somewhat slower than Vision, but they are infrequently accessed.

SQL Requirements: We recommend the Enterprise edition of SQL Server if your database will exceed two gigabytes. Smaller databases could use the *Standard* edition. However, that edition will only support two gigabytes of memory. About two gigabytes will be required for the SQL Server and Windows 2003 Server. The *Enterprise* version also offers some additional tools and features.

Microsoft 2003 Server: If you will need more than four gigabytes of memory, you will need to purchase the 2003

version of the server. We recommend a dedicated server for SQL applications. We suggest fast *mirrored SCSI* disk drives. Storage is not an issue. Newer drives offer huge capacities. Faster processors are recommended.

Clients: We suggest fast clients with 512 megabytes of RAM.

Additional Applications: We have completed the optional SQL version of BUCS and will be offering that product with the next release. Our plans call for us to offer an optional SQL version of the CHIPS payroll in the fall. These will become available at the normal release times. *Beta* test versions will be available several months sooner. If you would like to participate in the testing, please let us know via e-mail.

Cost: This will vary by application. Please contact us for an estimate based on your requirements.

If you would like more information about the SQL versions of our applications, please contact our sales or support staffs for details.

New BUCS 9.3 Release in Testing

The next release of BUCS is in *alpha* testing and will shortly be released for *beta* testing. Below are few of the new optional modules and features that will be available. All improvements are provided as a part of your annual support agreement. New modules are available and can be purchased within sixty days of the release without incurring an upgrade fee.

Vendors: There is a new Vendor Class field that has been added that will let you specify what type of class the vendor is. Class can be used to identify the type of products or service that a vendor supplies.

Follow-Up Alerts: There is a new Note Follow-Up Alert program that will check for any notes that have a current follow-up date. If there are notes for Vendors or A/R Customers that need to be followed-up, a screen will display listing these notes where they can be viewed or edited.

Posting Analysis: The Posting Analysis report can now be exported to Microsoft Excel®. This requires the database module.

Encumbrance Maintenance: The system has changed so that only users who are members of the "Master" or "Super" groups will be able to delete encumbrances.

Requisition Control. There is a new option on the encumbrance approval screen that will give the user the ability to approve multiple encumbrances at a time without having to physically edit each encumbrance.

ACH Module NEW!: Now available for Accounts Payable that will allow vendor invoices to be paid via ACH (Automated Clearing House) processing.

Invoice Processing: While entering an invoice that contains an Encumbrance, if the invoice is not for the entire encumbrance amount, there is an option to prorate the entered amount across all line items on the invoice.

Check Reconciliation: This has received a major overhaul. The screen has been redesigned so that all transactions are now located in one grid instead of two. Now one can post bank charges and interest and have the system automatically make all of the necessary posting entries. A new Reconcile feature will allow you to reconcile your bank statement on the screen instead of only providing a report. There is also the ability to post adjustments to resolve problems and issues with the reconciliation process.

Bank Report NEW!: The check and deposit report have been combined into a new Bank Report which includes all of the new transaction types added to check reconciliation.

Check Register History: There is a new option for the grand totals that will summarize the cash account totals by check and ACH number.

A/R Receipts: There is an option in system controls that will automatically print a receipts transaction log after posting receipts.

A/R Customer Statement: The statement now rolls up payments by check number instead of listing the amount paid on each invoice.

Fixed Assets NEW!: There is a new ability to assign user definable fields for descriptions, dates, amounts and numbers. There is also the ability to search for an asset by serial number.

Reports NEW!. You now have the ability to print a logo on the top left corner of the reports. Most reports can now be printed using proportional spaced fonts.

Microsoft SQL NEW!: A **new module** that will allow the data to be stored in a Microsoft® SQL Server database.

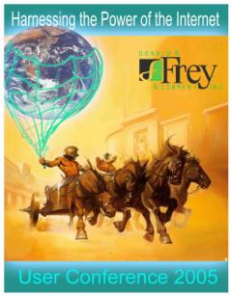
Frey & Company is dedicated to provide state-of-the-art software and timely competent support at affordable prices.

Frey & Co. Now On Federal GSA List

In the fall of 2004, we received the approval to be placed on the GSA list. The GSA List provides federal and many state/local agencies the ability to make purchases without going through a complex acquisition process. Approval required a vigorous check of our products, support, and company history of satisfactory service. Our intent is to make it as easy as possible to do business with Frey & Company.

Frey & Company Growing Again!

Last year, Matt Frey joined Donald R. Frey & Co. as the Director of Marketing. This year we are adding an additional individual to our support staff. We are doing this to meet the needs of our growing number of clients. We want to be sure that we can continue to provide the high quality service that our clients have enjoyed for the past thirty years.



2005 User Conference

Harnessing The Power of the Internet

This year's conference will focus on *Harnessing The Power Of The Internet.* The dates are set for July 31st through August 2nd at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Covington, Kentucky.

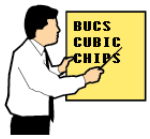
We will study how the Internet has impacted us in the last ten years and look into the future to see how it will affect our business models.

The sessions will include instruction on the use of the many new features in this year's releases along with open discussions about product use and potential future improvements.

Our evening event this year will be held at Vito's Café "A Music & Dining Experience". This unique Italian restaurant offers excellent cuisine and musical entertainment in the form of Broadway show tunes, arias, and *favorites.* These are presented by graduate students from local performing arts institutions, who also serve the tables. For more information visit www.vitoscafe.com.

Frey & Company Web Site Revamped

We recently updated our web site to give it a *fresher* look, improved organization, and expanded coverage. It offers extensive information about our products including, product literature, PowerPoint presentations, demonstration programs, and *white papers* on related subjects. The site also serves as the host for downloading our interim software updates. As a part of this revamping, we have also purchased a dedicated server, maintained by a third-party, which acts as the host for our web site www.drfrey.com and our CUBIC Internet Customer inquiry site www.drfrey.biz .



Tips From Your Support Staff

By Dean Eldridge

CUBIC: To reduce the number of bills sent out that are too high, print the High/Low bills on the Billing Edit List. Prior to updating bills, go to OPTIONS-BILLING-EDIT LIST. Choose the Print Option of Detail. For Bill, choose BILLED only. For High/Low Range, select the High/Low option. This will print any customer where the consumption falls above/below the high/low range. Check these customers to verify the billing is correct. The High/Low Range is setup in the System Controls under the Service Information.

BUCS: In BUCS 9.2, report parameters has an option to specify a report type with reports. If this is done, when we go to reports to print, it will only list those types of reports. To set this up, go in to GENERAL LEDGER-REPORT PARAMETERS. When a report is loaded, at the bottom left is a Report Type option. By default, these will all be Standard Reports. Change this to the specific type of report it is (Trial Balance, Revenue, Expense, etc). Then when reports are printed, only those report types will appear on the search screen.

By Mike Emmerich

BUCS, CUBIC & CHIPS: Pressing the **Shift + F7** keys will allow you to print the current active window.
BUCS, CUBIC & CHIPS: Pressing the **Shift + F8** keys will allow you to print the entire screen.

CHIPS: Since many people are very concerned about Identity Theft, it's a good idea to suppress the printing of the Social Security number on the check stub. To do this, go to Options – System Control – Edit, then click on the Control Tab. Find the option that says "**Print Employee's Social Security Number on Check**" and un-check this option. While you're there, it would be worthwhile to check "**Use Bold/Underlined Fonts on Check**". This will bold and underline the headings of each category on the check, giving the stub a more professional and easier to read format. Another popular option is the printing of the YTD Deduction Totals on the check stub. Find the option of "**Print Deduction YTD Totals on Check**" and check that option too.

BUCS: BUCS 9.2 increased the invoice description size from 30 characters to 44. To print all 44 characters on the check stub, you need to go to General Ledger – System Control – Edit, then click on the A/P tab. Find the **Default Check Format** option at the bottom of the screen and click on **Long Description**, then click on ok. When you order new check stock from Hillsborough Printery, the description size on the check stub will increase from 30 to 44 characters.

CUBIC: To help prevent keying mistakes when keying in payments, it's a good idea to put in a **Receipt Reasonability Percentage** in the System Control File. For example, if the outstanding bill is $50 and you key in payment of $80 or possibly $500, it will bring up a warning message such as "The amount that you entered seems excessively high, do you wish to re-key in a new amount?". To activate this test, go to Options – System Controls – Edit, then click on the Cash Receipts tab. Find the option that says **Receipt Reasonability Percent,** and then change it from 0 to 25 or 50. I'm finding most people are putting in 50.

GOVERNMENT ♦ NONPROFIT ♦ UTILITIES

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NEWSLETTER

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