

Volume 4
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Headline News

Best Software announced general availability of the Abra Payroll MAS 90 and MAS 200 Interface, an add-on module for Abra Payroll that allows MAS 90 and MAS 200 users to import general ledger (GL) information resulting from payrolls processed with Abra Payroll. The Abra Payroll MAS 90 and MAS 200 Interface eliminates duplicate data entry and streamlines workflow, allowing users of both products to take advantage of a truly integrated accounting and payroll solution.

The Abra Payroll MAS 90 and MAS 200 Interface is compatible with MAS 90 and MAS 200 versions 4.0 or higher, and Abra Payroll version 7.3 or higher. Please contact us for more information about Abra Payroll and the Abra Payroll MAS 90 and MAS 200 Interface. ★



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Noteworthy Enhancements

Version 4.0 Feature Overview

Most of the changes in Version 4.0 surround the General Ledger module, which received a significant redesign. Expect to see many of this module's changes incorporated into the subsidiary modules in future releases. Here we've grouped our overview of changes into the following sections: *Global Changes*, *General Ledger Enhancements*, and *Reporting Changes*.

Global Changes

Role-Based Security

MAS 90 has always provided for a robust and flexible security system, and Version 4.0 expands on that system, giving you precise control over who has access to your data. The new role-based security is easy to set up; simply define roles and assign the rights belonging to each role. Each user is then assigned one or more roles, granting them just the rights needed to do their job.

The Version 4.0 General Ledger and Library Master modules carry this role-based security one step further, allowing you to assign access with specific rights such as: *Full Control*, *Create*, *Modify*, *Delete*, and *View Only*. For example, you can allow the data entry clerk role the *Create* authority in



New role-based security is flexible and easier to set up and maintain.

General Journal Entry. This feature provides exceptional control over who can create, change, or delete entries. These same features will be available to the subsidiary modules in future releases.

Advanced Lookup Engine (ALE)

Export your selected data directly to Excel from all lookups—with just the touch of a button.

New Version Of Business Alerts

If you already are enjoying the efficiency-enhancing features of Business Alerts, you will be pleased with the changes incorporated in this new release. The user interface has been updated to be more intuitive, and streamlined setup procedures simplify this module's configuration. Importantly, this version allows you to send HTML-formatted email.

If you are not currently using Business Alerts, and have a current maintenance plan, you will receive a **Business Alerts Select Edition** at no added charge. This limited version of Business Alerts includes five alerts to introduce you to the power of this tool.

General Ledger Enhancements

Grid-Entry Screens

As each module is released in Version 4.0, the data entry screens will follow a dual grid-entry pattern.

The screens are handsome, uncluttered, efficient, and user-friendly. Perhaps you're saying,

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Noteworthy Enhancements Continued

“What can a grid-entry screen do for me?” The benefits are real and substantial.

Many diehard number crunchers skeptically adopted Windows-based data entry screens. They felt data entry was faster in a DOS character-based application. No reaching for the mouse, no tabbing from here to there. A tap of the enter key moved you anywhere you wanted to be. With the introduction of the grid-entry system in Version 4.0, those skeptics may at last be satisfied.

The use of the grid-entry system results in near limitless data entry flexibility. Where appropriate, screens will utilize a dual-entry grid, allowing you to place more frequently used fields in the primary grid, and lesser-used fields in the secondary grid. Now you can view the essential information about each data record without having to scroll the screen from side to side. You can resize grids by grabbing a corner. Any non-required field may be hidden from view, or entire columns can be hidden from view. You can quickly add, delete, and reorder lines. You have the ability to move columns in any order desired and even move a column from one grid to another. This system truly enables you to design data entry windows that work best for your company, streamlining entry tasks, and making grid-entry screens faster and easier than even the old character-based screens.

Expanded GL Number

The General Ledger Account Number now supports up to 32 characters with 10 segments. The main account (also known as the natural account) is now maintained separately from the other individual segments. Support for the expanded account number is built into each subsidiary module, allowing you to immediately take advantage of this notable change.

Big Money

Version 4.0 introduces expanded numeric capacity within General Ledger. Individual transactions up to \$999 million are supported, as are account balances up to \$9 billion, and financial reporting totals up to \$99 billion.

Allocations

Source accounts can be financial or non-financial accounts. Automatic allocations may be run

at any time for any period. A new **Basis Allocation** feature enables you to distribute the allocation amount from the source account based on values associated with the destination accounts. For example, you receive July's utility bill in August. You could elect to allocate utility expenses based on the prior period's (July) head count of each department.

Infinite Budgets

With the ability to save an unlimited number of budgets, you can retain all of your historical budgets for reporting purposes, while setting up future fiscal period budgets in a new and efficient grid-entry screen. You can simultaneously edit budgets for multiple accounts and restrict your display to only the budgets you want to work with.

Batches Keep You Organized

General Ledger data entry functions will benefit from the addition of batch entry in **Transaction Journal Entry** and **General Journal Entry**. You can create multiple data entry batches that can be reviewed and updated individually. Use batches to separate the work of different operators, different posting dates, or different departments. Batches are a great way to organize your data entry tasks.

One Step Bank Transfers

This top customer-requested feature allows you to post to your cash accounts and your bank codes in **Bank Reconciliation** from a single entry in **Transaction Journal Entry**. Fewer steps mean less room for error.

Powerful New UDFs

In Version 4.0, you can add user-defined fields (UDFs) to any data file within General Ledger. The UDFs you create will reside in the actual data table, not in a separate UDF table—facilitating reporting. Define the source of the value of a UDF, specifying a default value if you wish, or naming the source from which a UDF value is inherited. For example, if you create a UDF in GL Account Maintenance and create a second UDF for Transaction Journal Entry Lines, you can then specify that the value of the Transaction Journal Entry UDF is populated with the value from the GL Account Maintenance UDF. Harness even more power by creating valida-

tion tables for your UDFs and selected existing fields. Include information from these tables on Crystal Reports and forms. This new UDF functionality will be rolled out to the other modules in future releases.

Reporting Changes



Friendly Financial Statements

Standard Financials get a significant overhaul in Version 4.0. Renamed simply **Financials**, it benefits from a wizard-based front end and several usability improvements. Quarter-To-Date Income Statements and the ability to define segment or roll-up codes for Income Statements are added. In addition, you can specify whether to print account numbers, dollar signs, zero balances, and/or set a percentage mask.

Retain Report Settings In GL

You have your favorite style of report. You know just the sort, filter, and printer selections you like to use. Now you can save those selections with a unique name. Simply select your style at run time to get your report, your way, with no additional work.

Business Insights Reporter

This powerful new tool for creating custom reports promises tremendous ease of use. Essentially a front-end for Crystal, **Business Insights Reporter** keeps the power of Crystal, but removes much of its complexity. You and your staff will be able to create reports without the need to understand the underlying data structure. We will talk more about Business Insights Reporter in an upcoming issue of *info for MAS 90.

Note: MAS 200 for SQL Server will be following an independent release schedule. The next release of MAS 200 for SQL Server is version 3.72, currently scheduled for the last quarter of 2004.

We've just touched on Version 4.0's new features here. In addition to the features, there are real considerations to keep in mind during the upgrade. We address some of these considerations in our article beginning on page 3.

As always, if you have any questions, we are here to help. ★