

THE CPA SOFTWARE NEWS

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR ACCOUNTANTS' SOFTWARE
www.cpasoftwarenews.com October 2000

Payroll Processing



Star Rating

Abra Payroll Targets Small & Mid-Sized Businesses

By Phillip D. Dunford, Jr.

Abra Payroll v6.12 from Best Software is one component of the company's Abra Suite, a human resource solution with multiple modules for human resources,

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attendance, organizational charting, payroll, tax filing services, application screening, resume scanning, worker training and more. All programs use a common



Abra Payroll targets small and mid-sized businesses with 50 to 1,000 employees. Abra Payroll represents a complete payroll/HR solution. Growing businesses with

in-house human resources departments that are looking for the next step after basic payroll would be remiss if this product weren't on their short list.

Installation & Setup

Abra Suite requires a state-of-the-industry computer. At a minimum, Best Software recommends a Windows 95, 98, or NT 4.0+ Pentium 133MHz machine with 32MB of RAM and up to 500MB of hard disk space (for the entire suite). Available in single-user and network versions, Abra Payroll supports all modern network operating systems, including NetWare 3.11+, NT Server 4.0+ and Microsoft Windows Terminal Server. I ran the single-user version of Abra Payroll on a Windows 2000 Professional workstation without any problems.

As a component of Abra Suite, Abra Payroll features multiple, flexible security levels that require each system user to have a login ID and password. While logging in to the system, the main login page displays links for opening live data, a sample file or the guided

tour. When it comes time to create a new company file, Abra Payroll simplifies the often daunting task via Abra's Quick Setup Interview, a utility program that walks new users in order through the steps required to populate Abra Payroll with initial data. During the creation of my company file, certain



items caught my attention, like Abra's support for up to five levels of organizational structure and automatic accrual of sick, vacation and personal time. At any time during initial setup, users can elect to leave the Quick Setup Interview without initializing a new payroll file.

Abra Payroll is a modern
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Abra Payroll Ships With Over 50 Standard Reports

Continued from front

Windows program sporting a well-designed and well-organized interface. Just one look at the interface will assure users that although this system is designed to handle complex payrolls, it's not necessarily a complicated system to learn and use. The main screen opens an Activity Center, which is a starting point for daily interaction with the program. The Activity Center is organized by activity. Abra uses six straightforward terms to identify possible program actions: Actions, Processes, Analysis, Reports, Rules and Panels. Users first select the appropriate activity, and then the program displays a list of activities for which the user has clearance. The six available program

activities are also available as unique pull-down menus, offering users two ways to work with the program.

Price & Add-Ons

The Abra Payroll module has a starting price of \$1,595. Pricing is based on the number of employees as well as the number of seats licensed. Multiple add-ons are available since this is a suite of products. Payroll-specific add-ons include Abra ToolKit. Starting at \$1,295, Abra Toolkit lets companies design custom processes and display screens as well as the organization of the pull-down menu system. Starting at \$995, Abra Link adds import and export functionality to the suite. Abra also offers the Abra Multi-Site

Consolidation module for corporate-wide compliance and reporting.

Direct Deposit/EFTPS

Direct deposit and EFTPS file creation are standard options with Abra Suite. The direct deposit file can then be sent to the ACH (Automated Clearing House) network. Like direct deposit files, EFTPS files are generated by the system to be sent to the government agency.

For larger organizations with significant compliance requirements, Best offers an integrated payroll tax filing service for federal, state and local jurisdictions and a year-end printing service.

Form Support

Abra Payroll generates the

following forms: W-2, 1099-MISC, 1099-R, W-3, 941, 943 and 1096.

Reporting

Abra Payroll ships with over 50 standard reports grouped in seven categories. In addition, the program ships with a report writer for modifying existing reports or creating new ones.

Bottom Line

Abra Payroll is specifically positioned for organizations with in-house human resources departments. As your company grows, so can your investment with the Abra Suite. This program combines technical savvy with the ability to handle complex payrolls with ease. ■ ★★★★★

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