



The CPA Software News awards ACCPAC Advantage Series in the high-end and mid-range category accounting system

ACCPAC Advantage Series, formerly known as ACCPAC for Windows, was awarded a five-star rating and a four-star rating for its Enterprise Edition in the high-end category and Small Business Edition in the mid-range category, respectively, in CPA Software's most recent software review.

It was not the first time that ACCPAC products receive this kind of prestigious acknowledgement from the accounting software industry. ACCPAC Advantage Series has been known for its fully integrated suites of end-to-end business solutions that includes Accounting and Operations, Customer Relationship Management, eCommerce, Warehouse Management, and Human Resource Management.

Life Tips

While it's important to win, it's imperative to compete.

-Dave Weinbaum

Its scalability and its flexibility on the reporting end contribute to its success penetrating the mid-size enterprises market. Advantage Series supports a number of databases, including Pervasive.SQL, Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle, IBM DB2, and CA Ingres II, making it a software of choice for companies of any size.

To obtain more information on how ACCPAC can help your business, please contact us at **(323)265-3000**.

How to choose an information system in today's Internet era

The other day I was talking to my colleague, who works at a manufacturing company. He mentioned to me that the need for a smooth data exchange between his clients is increasing.

My colleague accurately observed that now more than ever before, it is important to collaborate data across companies fast and effortlessly. We can say that a company's information system has become an infrastructure in business relationships.

Moreover, a company's information system is the core of your business operation; it is not only necessary for daily operations but also influences critical decisions for your company. Business environment requires quick decision-making due to its constant and rapid change; accordingly, information system where decision-making derives from also needs constant adjustment.

Then, what are the key points when choosing an information system? There are many factors that you have to consider when choosing an information

system for your company, but let us focus on the following three: quick implementation, scalability, and quality of support.

Quick implementation has become a major factor when you create an information system. It is now even dangerous to invest in information system in the long term because it may already become "obsolete" for real business management when all implementations have finished.

Furthermore, an information system requires scalability. It is desirable for an information system to grow by adjusting company's business activity because the requirement is changing as time goes by. You should now invest in an information system as your needs arise. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the return on investment in shorter terms and to add modules on as they are needed.

Finally, you need a good support to make use of an information system. Even though I said that you should consider the system investment as "short

term," you should not change applications of the information system frequently. Therefore, what I mean by "Good support" includes good application and good installation vendor. You can check whether the application vendor has a large installation base and it provides frequent and timely upgrades; Likewise, you can check whether the installation vendor can provide several references and training.

Those are some of the key aspects when you choose an information system for your business. Lastly, consider a different but just as important component--Motivation. You have to motivate your users to use the system and make the most of it. No system is going to work without the proper consensus from the users, especially when the system is first put into effect. Bear in mind that any system, after all, is a tool for the users; therefore, their active participation is an integral part of a successful system implementation as well.

- OpenAxis, Inc.

At OpenAxis, we focus on the implementation of IT solutions for small- and medium-sized businesses.

We provide management and computer consulting services by identifying issues, implementing solutions, and managing all your IT needs.

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How to Overcome IT Challenges for Small Companies That Have Outgrown Their Current System (Part I)

Many small companies are scrambling to find a solution to replace its outdated system or its current system that is no longer able to handle the number of transactions they have to process everyday and their specific needs to compete in today's harshly competitive market. They scour available enterprise-wide application in the market and find that the challenges they face might be too much to undertake for their company sizes. It is the data conversion, the lack of resources, the fear of change and several other challenges that can turn their implementation project in disarray. Their fear is not unfounded. Numerous projects at small companies are currently hanging in the balance of being scrapped if not already or being downscaled somewhat to adjust to their resources capabilities.

As tough as these challenges can be, there is a way to overcome them by understanding these challenges and working on careful planning process to implement them. Based on the "Nine Challenges to ERP Implementation" discussed by Jay Taylor in the February 1999 issue of *Management Accounting*, one of the challenges is to find scalable software. Small companies often invest in software that has too much capabilities and complexities than they need. These extra capabilities could result in additional maintenance costs and/or hardware requirements that will harm them in the long run. To illustrate, small companies that need a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to automate its sales force do not necessarily have to invest in a full blown CRM software packages. Full-scale implementation of CRM includes functions like contact management, time management, marketing campaign management, marketing evaluation tools, sales cycle management, and account and activity management. Do you think small companies need all these capabilities in a CRM system? The answer is a definite no. They need to start with a smaller system that can be scaled to handle their future growth. One example of this kind of system in the market is ACCPAC eCRM Sales Force Automation. It is a perfect starting point to a cost-effective and complete CRM system.

The other challenges to ERP implementation are finding the best way, having realistic expectations, allocation of resources, overcoming fear of change, mapping out key business processes, converting data, the urge to take shortcuts, and training and technical support. I will discuss each of these challenges further in our future publications. If you are a small business owner and would like to find out how we can help you successfully implement scalable enterprise-wide system that will not leave you in the dust, you can contact us at (323)265-3000 to have a free consultation.

Add Descriptions for Your Database Objects

In Microsoft Access, you can give each of your database objects a description. An object's description appears next to the object's name in the Database window when you click **Details** on the **View** menu. Although descriptions can be up to 255 characters, you may want to keep them short so that you can view the entire description in the Database window. To add a description for a database object, right-click the object in the Database window, click **Properties** on the shortcut menu, and then type your description in the **Description** box.

Have a question on Microsoft Windows or Office products?
Ask our specialists and they can answer you on this newsletter.
Please feel free to email your question to techsupport@openaxis.com.