

Finding a New Software System

As I enter my final year of service on my software system, a part of my business plan is to provide consulting services as needed to those clients who need help evaluating alternatives. There may be a consulting fee required depending on the extent of the work involved, but please feel free to discuss with me any questions you have going forward or how I may be of service.

There is no direct replacement for the system that I am retiring so it is time for a good replacement plan. I am giving a year's notice so you will have plenty of time as I continue to support your current system into next year. No matter what choice you make, users will be learning a new system with new procedures and features. I categorically do NOT recommend any products from Open Systems, Inc. (Call me if you need to know particulars.) In any case, the system you have is really a Crosse-Over Designs product. OSAS was just the base system I used to modify and create my product.

All of the data in your current system can be exported in Excel format. So the pain of conversion may be lessened by not having to enter all the data. With data in Excel, many vendors with any number of systems, can import that data into their new system. Frankly, at times like this, sometimes it is actually better to realign your coding system and fix things that you have been living with for a while. So don't miss the opportunity now to get it the way you want. You can also keep your existing system running indefinitely for legacy reporting purposes. So consider your options closely, but don't let misleading marketing lead you in a less than desirable direction.

Payroll Alternatives

After March, 2020, I will no longer be supporting payroll processing, but I do not intend to disappear. As long as the good Lord allows me good health, I will continue to be available via email indefinitely beyond that time for less urgent issues. So what are some alternatives?

Timecard Module

There are not many good alternatives for handling subminimum wage and piece-rated payroll. Some companies may consider moving away from these requirements and switch payroll to an hourly-paid, minimum or higher, basis. If you did this, then you could use a standard payroll system off the shelf. But this is not practical for many companies.

You can consider using the Crosse-Over Time Card module for an indefinite period of time well beyond 2020. While eventually you will want to replace the Time Card module you use now, it may be too disruptive or too expensive to do it next year. (Some individuals may be nearing the end of their work life on the system and wish to continue the status quo for another year or two.) In the coming weeks I will be placing on my website some helpful documentation on how to support the Time Card module yourself. This software could continue to function for you for several years without my involvement. The Time Card system would calculate your pay as it

does now, then total pay could be transferred to a payroll system of your choice. I currently have export programs for a number of payroll systems, or the wage could be manually entered into any system. Faced with bad timing, less than ideal or costly alternatives, this may be a very good alternative for a number of years. Talk with me about how this might work for you.

Outsource Payroll

This is the world of ADP, Paychex, and others. These service companies have limited support for piece-rate or subminimum wage, but can work well for hourly and staff payrolls. They also have the advantage of being able to make your tax deposits and quarterly reports for you. So companies that have a limited in-house staff to do this work may find these services helpful. Of course, you will pay for all the services. The Time Card module could be used as a ‘front-end’ process to pass wages into a service bureau.

In-House Payroll

Similar to the service that I have provided, you could find another software package that provides full payroll processing. (See Accounting Systems below) Again, you could use the Time Card module as a ‘front-end’ for consumer payroll processing. My recent research shows that many software systems use the cloud for payroll processing. As the trend is moving strongly in the direction of the cloud, you have to look closely at what the future holds for your needs over the coming couple years. Planning for a slow transition to the cloud may be best at this time. I would have a bias in favor of cloud based software, but at this moment, the pricing for software services in the cloud can be on the high side. There may be per-employee, per pay check fees along with additional fees for direct deposit, etc. So evaluating total solution cost is important.

MITC Software

I have visited with the owner and a number of staff periodically over the last few years and I am impressed with their operation.

I have a couple of clients who use their time keeping system for payroll. Frankly, at this time I would consider time keeping to be their strongest area of expertise. They do provide a full payroll solution for workshops and can handle subminimum and piece rates. Their website is:

<https://mitcsoftware.com/>

You can mention that you use my system now.

Accounting Systems

There are a lot of accounting systems to choose from, and this is where individual company needs will trump a generic choice or recommendation. Again, my bias would be toward a cloud based software system, but that may not be the best choice for another couple of years. The most important factor is the support that you will receive from the company providing the system.

Check with your Accounting/Auditing Firm

One place to start is with your auditing or accounting consulting firm. Some accounting firms offer support and services that are worth considering.

Package Software Systems

Here is a short list of systems I see used:

- Quickbooks – \$ the inexpensive but widely used accounting system
- Oracle Netsuite – \$\$\$\$ the high end to fit specific needs and customizable
- Cougar Mountain Denali – \$\$ middle market
- Sage 50 Accounting – \$ another inexpensive option
- Microsoft Dynamics – \$\$ middle market

The main reason I am giving a one-year notice of my retirement is so that you will have plenty of time to evaluate options. I look forward to continuing my support of your current system into the first quarter of 2020, so you can take your time to survey alternatives. I also encourage you to use me as a sounding board. I am here to help, so don't hesitate to give me a call and discuss your particular situation and concerns.