



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

TJPS Software's Write-Up aims at investment portfolio market

The cumbersome process of preparing year-end files for investment portfolios just got easier.

TJPS Software's new Write-Up application integrates an investment-tracking module with a general ledger, and eliminates the awkward transfer of spreadsheet information to an accounting program.

The end result, according to TJPS, cuts the time accountants spend reporting and recording this information by 60 per cent.

First released in September 2002, Write-Up has over 600 installs across Canada. The 2004 edition of Write-Up, currently being beta tested by accounting firms, is slated for an early spring release.

"It's been a long road trying to get the word out about Write-Up, but it's finally starting to catch on," said Jack Shuster, TJPS Software CEO.

TJPS's application targets practitioners who prepare year-end files for investment portfolios held by holding companies, estates and trusts, and high net-worth clients.

The user creates the chart of accounts and links it to the different investment activities in the broker module. All broker transactions are automatically posted to the general ledger. The general ledger also supports banking and adjusting entries, displayed by account, reference and entry numbers.

General ledger entries are tagged with a prefix to identify the source transaction. The user can

view, edit or delete the transaction by clicking on the general ledger entry. General ledger entries can be exported in detail or summary format to Caseware.

The product supports a full range of broker transactions, including buys and sells of all types of securities (long or short positions) with automatic gain or loss calculations, trust unit distributions, spin-offs, share mergers and exchanges, cash and share transfers, re-invested dividends, and stock splits.

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It can allocate profits or losses on transactions as either income or capital gains, and it tracks foreign and local dividends, interest, capital gains and other income. All 40-plus broker transaction data-entry screens are user friendly and follow the format used on most broker statements, with a running balance always visible.

This gives you at-a-glance data verification. The user can edit or delete any transaction and Write-Up will automatically update the general ledger and all reports.

The software generates the required financial, investment and income tax reports in detail or summary format, which can be exported to Microsoft Excel with formulas in place. Investment and

income tax reports show both local and foreign currencies.

Financial reports include balance sheet and income statement in both standard and comparative formats. The general ledger report shows opening and closing balances as well as detail transactions.

The investment reports include marketable securities reports, accrued interest receivable, broker transactions, cash flow, income summary, share and cash transfers.

The marketable securities reports are displayed in two formats: marketable securities held showing current number of units, current adjusted cost base, current market value and unrealized capital gains or losses; and, marketable securities held showing complete detailed transaction history, proceeds on disposition and realized capital gains or losses.

Both reports can be generated either on a broker by broker basis or by the weighted average for each security.

By entering the maturity date, interest rate and frequency of interest payment for bankers' acceptances, bonds, discount and promissory notes, term deposits, T-Bills and GICs, Write-Up calculates accrued interest receivable based on the ending date selected by the user.

The income tax reports include capital gains, dividend income and non resident tax, interest income and expense, foreign income, other income, trust unit distributions and foreign exchange.

The software also allows the user to close a year in both the general ledger and investment tracking modules and carry forward the open securities positions and general ledger balances into the new year. Prior years are kept in the client file for viewing and printing.

When entering a new security into Write-Up, users can now tag it as either local or foreign to automatically designate the type of income.

The 2004 version enhances the recording and tracking of short positions, and users can sell a security to create an open position and then buy the security to automatically close with a gain or loss calculation. If there is an excess of units on the purchase, Write-Up will automatically open a long position.

Share transfers in will automatically create a new position, long or short, if the security is not held or close an existing long or short position depending on the units transferred and the units held. The closing will trigger a gain or loss calculation automatically.

Spin-offs, share mergers and exchanges have been updated to work in a similar manner.

When selling foreign short-term investments such as T-Bills, Write-Up allows the user to include capital gains or losses on foreign exchange. The 2004 version includes the following new broker transactions: adjust the ACB of a security, exercise puts and calls. The miscellaneous transaction has been enhanced with a reference field and more line items.

The existing views have been enhanced with additional information and new views have been added to both the broker and general ledger module. The general ledger module has been enhanced to include a new trial balance view, recurring entries and more line items for adjusting entries.

"Even if we wanted to stop developing the product, we couldn't — it's taken on a life of its own," said Shuster.

For more information on the Write-Up software visit TJPS' Web site: www.tjpssoftware.com.

ACL offers turnkey solution

VANCOUVER, B.C. — ACL Services Ltd., provider of audit and data analysis technology to financial executives and audit professionals has announced the availability of its Continuous Controls Monitoring (CCM) solutions.

These "turnkey solutions" are designed to build on ACL technology to extend audit best practices in controls compliance and transactional analysis expertise into core business processes. The CCM solutions provide an independent control mechanism to help organizations improve bottom-line results, reduce costs and mitigate the risk of fraud, while meeting increased regulatory requirements.

"Governance breakdowns and subsequent legislation, such as *Sarbanes-Oxley*, have given greater prominence than ever before to the importance of internal controls and the integrity of financial transactions and reporting," said Harald Will, ACL president and CEO.

The new solutions, released in late November, independently check and validate all transactional data against control parameters, business rules, and historical data trends to identify anomalies. Business unit managers and financial executives can be notified immediately of significant control breaches, while suspicious activity is captured and displayed through a browser-based interface for further investigation and follow-up.

Applicable to a broad range of business processes and compli-

ance concerns, the initial product launch includes applications specifically designed to provide controls assurance for several core financial processes, including the purchase-to-payment cycle, travel and entertainment expenses, and procurement card programs — as well as an industry-specific application for anti-money laundering and compliance requirements within the banking and finance sector.

"Although regulatory compliance is forcing organizations to a closer look at the effectiveness of their internal controls, best practices in corporate governance are good business. By examining transactional data on a continuous basis, our clients immediately see improved bottom-line results," said Will.

"By combining powerful, ongoing analysis of data with immediate reporting of suspect transactions, financial management gains insight into their control exposures — the areas of greatest business risk," said John Verver, ACL vice-president of professional services and member of the advisory board for the Center for Continuous Auditing (CCA).

"This is the most effective way I know to allow management to react quickly to problems as well as monitor the overall quality of their internal controls. Our Continuous Controls Monitoring solutions are an important step in delivering this assurance, effectively and affordably to a broad range of organizations."

Leap year poses potential payroll anomaly

Every 11 years the calendar days fall in such a way that there can be 27 bi-weekly pay periods in a year, and every seven years when there can be 53 weekly pay periods — this varies depending on the pay cycle of an organization.

Does this mean that this year some employees may be getting an extra paycheque or a reduction in the amount of bi-weekly pay from their employers to account for the extra pay period?

"The Canadian Payroll Association's Payroll InfoLine telephone and e-mail hotline has received over 100 inquiries in the last month from members about this issue," said Patricia Kelly, chair of The Canadian Payroll Association.

"Although the extra pay period will create a little extra work for an organization's payroll department, it is likely not significant because payroll practitioners review their upcoming year's payroll cycle in advance and make any necessary adjustments to allow the technology of their software to take

much of the calculation headache out of this issue.

"Many organizations have decided to deal with the extra pay period anomaly by using a year-end accounting accrual rather than adjusting employee pay amounts."

The bigger issue is not the technical implications of accounting for this calendar anomaly, but rather the HR impact on employees. An employee relies on receiving a specific amount in regular intervals, whether weekly or bi-weekly.

Any change to the amount received or the interval can have an adverse effect on an employee's life.

Organizations should deal with this issue proactively by communicating this calendar anomaly early to their employees. Organizations should also consult with their payroll, accounting, and HR departments to find the best way to handle this situation.

For organizations who choose not to deal with this issue by using the year-end accounting adjustment, but rather by reducing their

employees' paycheques by allocating one year's salary into 27 pay periods, this could be construed as a change in conditions of employment from an Employment/Labour Standards perspective.

Currently, this calendar anomaly is not specifically covered under any of the provincial Employment/Labour Standards legislation. Depending on how organizations respond, the results could bring about a clarification in Employment/Labour Standards law on this issue.

Information supplied by the Canadian Payroll Association, the national association representing the payroll community in Canada for over 25 years. With more than 10,000 members, the CPA's education programs, advocacy programs, products and services help members enhance and adapt payroll operations, meet new legislative requirements, address changing workplace needs and take advantage of emerging technologies. www.payroll.ca.