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when they need it, where they need it?  
Ask us how we can help!



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# that's correct

The latest in Smart IT Solutions by The Smart IT Company

may 06

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## Correct Solutions

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Is your system  
supporting your  
business growth?  
Call 02-8831-8200

**With this month's issue we bring you...** A focus on your business systems, with an article outlining 7 insights to avoid growing pains, followed by 7 questions that will help you assess your business's readiness for growth. We also bring you our second instalment in our series on Patching. We value your feedback! If you have any comments about this Newsletter please give us a call on 02-8831-8200.

## are you serious about business growth?

### Seven Insights for Avoiding Growing Pains

It is fair to say that the majority of small businesses owners aspire to becoming the owners of medium or even large businesses some day. There are challenges aplenty for entrepreneurs on this path - but some of the most significant hurdles can be avoided by making informed decisions early on.

This is particularly true of accounting software. When it comes to accounting software, many small business owners seek advice from their accountants, then purchase a "brand name" entry level package from a department store. While the business is still small, the \$1000 odd dollars spent on the software represents outstanding value by providing a wide range of general purpose functions, reliability and ease of use. But problems begin to emerge as the business grows. There may come a time when more than five staff need to access accounting information concurrently - which the software may not permit. There may be a need to create reports with more detail than those available "off the shelf".

One of the key obstacles facing these businesses is the need to understand that their \$1000 software was designed to perform a number of general tasks well in a small business, but was never intended to meet the specialised needs of larger organisations. As is often the case, retaining this software for too long can lead to excessive costs, as well as forcing operational compromises that can be dysfunctional and hold the business back.

Naturally, the owners driving the growth of their businesses have much better ways to spend their time than reviewing accounting software to support the next stage of their expansion - it is a classic "important, but not urgent" task. But for those seeking to avoid being painted into a corner, a little knowledge can go a long way - so you may wish to consider the following:

#### 1. Multi-User Support

As your business expands, many more people across the organisation will need access to your accounting data to get their jobs done. Most entry level software packages permit a maximum of 5 or 10 concurrent users, which can create unacceptable bottlenecks in the future. The right software for a growing business anticipates this, supporting many more users.

#### 2. Specialist Functionality

Will your business need to track product serial numbers? Manufacture from bill of materials? Trade overseas? Operate multiple warehouses? The diversity of specialist functions available to medium sized businesses is breathtaking if your only experience is with a \$1000 package. Demand software that can support your operations, whether you're in manufacturing, services or need to work with foreign currency.

#### 3. Modular Design

As important as it is to have access to specialised features, it is undesirable to pay for them before you need them, and you certainly don't want to pay for those that aren't relevant to you. The right choice of software will let you select the modules and add-ons that you need, when you need them.

#### 4. Integration

The hallmark of a truly capable accounting software package is that it largely eliminates the need to have "bits and pieces" of information scattered all over your business. When the business consists of two people, having everything on hundreds of Excel spreadsheets and Word documents is accepted. But with 30 staff, it's a very different story. Entry level packages are generally unable to meet the more sophisticated information storage needs of a growing business.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## May Special Offer!

### Fly Free with HP!

HP are giving away a free flight within Australia with any HP Compaq dx series Business Desktop or nx series Business Notebook purchased between 1 May and 31 July 2006!\*

See [www.hp.com.au/flyfree](http://www.hp.com.au/flyfree) for details or call us for a quote today on 02-8831-8200!

\*Terms and conditions apply. Please see the HP website above for details on the terms and conditions of this special offer.

Is your system supporting your business growth?

Call us today on 02-8831-8200!



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## 5. Reporting

In 2004, a survey of owners of growing businesses revealed that one of the prime sources of pain was their frustration at being unable to access the information they needed. Small businesses can usually manage with the generic reports included with off-the-shelf packages. Organisations that are growing have vastly different requirements, so the software you select should make it a breeze for trained people to create and modify reports based on your business's individual needs.

## 6. Work with Others

You will almost certainly need to exchange data with your accountant. Insist on software that can export to all leading brands used in practice. This ensures that you will retain this facility, even if your accountant switches to another product in the future.

## 7. Returning control to you

One of the paradoxes of growing businesses is that the owners have an urgent need to delegate many day-to-day activities - but without sacrificing control or visibility of key performance indicators. Selecting the right software makes a critical difference to the ability of the owners to maintain a birds' eye view of everything that's taking place, as well as making it easier and less costly for staff to perform the tasks that keep the business growing.

At Correct our philosophy is simple. We take a holistic approach to understanding the needs and objectives of your business - not just a software focus. From here we can offer a solution which better suites your needs - a solution which is congruent with your business philosophies and complements your established business objectives. Call us to discuss your current business needs on 02-8831-8200

Is your current business software holding your business back?

Take a few moments and ask yourself these questions about your current business software:

1. Do you want information that your current system cannot provide?
2. Is your current accounting solution making your office inefficient?
3. Do you want more staff to be able to access your data at the same time?
4. Would a fully integrated payroll system save you time and money?
5. Do you need a foreign currency module?
6. Do you want your software to work around your business instead of your business having to work around your software?
7. Will you need to replace your current software as your business grows?

If you answered YES to two or more of these questions, then you may be outgrowing your software!

Did you know... that Correct Solutions can handle all your accounting and Customer Relationship Management needs?

We supply and support software from major vendors such as Sybiz, Sage, Legrand, Finance Plus and Microsoft!

Call us today for more information! 02-8831-8200

## why we patch machines

In last months Newsletter we featured an article that outlined the difference between Security Patches, Hotfixes and Service Packs as the start of our four part series. This article helps explain why we patch machines:

"We all feel that patches must be applied with a higher sense of urgency. This is true. But we do not feel the same towards service packs. I have observed that many companies do not apply service packs at all. They just keep applying patches. This is not the right practice.

If a service pack and a patch was released on the same day, I would go for the service pack, not the patch.

To understand why service packs are important, consider the following:

- Service packs are planned releases. Patches are ad-hoc and created in a hurry.
- Service packs are tested like the original product itself. Patches do not have that much time to be tested because these are created to plug some security vulnerability.
- Service packs are cumulative. Applying service pack 4 directly is same as having applied service packs 1, 2, 3 and then 4. Patches are independent isolated entities.

So they can not be cumulative.

- Service packs contain the patches released till the cut off date. Therefore, applying one service pack will eliminate the need to apply many patches or hotfixes.
- Service packs are produced to manage security vulnerabilities as well as other bugs. In addition, service packs also add some new features to the product.

Service packs must be applied when they are available. The only thing you would want to do is to try these on a test setup and then roll it out on the production one. However, patches are not mandatory. Each patch has a bulletin associated with it. You have to check the way in which the vulnerability affects IT systems. If your system is not made vulnerable by this issue, you do not have to apply the patch.\*\*

In next months article we will look at what happens if you don't patch your systems and how Correct Solutions can help you prevent adverse effects on your systems through our patching services. In the meantime, if you would like to know more, please call Ryan Spillane or Belinda on 02-8831-8200.

\* Security Tips and Guidelines – III, Tech Forum, Express Computer, Issue dated - 22nd March 2004, Dr Nitin Paranjape  
<http://www.expresscomputeronline.com/20040322/techspace01.shtml>