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Headline News

Net@Work offers free Webinars designed to help you better manage your business.

For the current Sage Abra HRMS Webinar schedule or to register, please call us on 1-800-719-3307 Ext 4330 or email seminars@netatwork.com

Sage Abra SQL HRMS Version 8.5

Sage Abra SQL HRMS is the SQL-server-based option for Sage Abra users. Version 8.5 was recently released and includes a number of new features and updates that expand usability and increase performance. In this article we'll highlight the new release and let you know what you can expect from Version 8.5.

Note: The changes we detail in this article apply only to the Sage Abra SQL HRMS solution.

Streamlined Module Install

Sage Abra SQL HRMS version 8.5 allows you to add a module or option when you upgrade your software from a previous version (for example, from 8.3, 8.4, or 8.41). During the upgrade process, you can enter the new installation code (which includes the additional module or option) and then continue the installation process.

Performance Improvements

You expect rapid processing and report generation with a sophisticated solution like Sage Abra SQL HRMS and Sage continually works to improve the performance of its solutions.

The Version 8.5 release includes changes designed to improve the performance of the following functionality:

- » Employee Profile Report
- » Mass Update Pay Rate Process
- » Mass Update Attendance Process
- » Cross Employer Transfer Action



- » Assign Leave of Absence Action
- » Add A New Insurance Benefit
- » Update Benefits Process
- » Update Email Addresses Process
- » Rebuild System Files
- » Create Security Groups

Abra Workforce Connections

Abra Workforce Connections, comprised of Abra ESS (Employee Self Service) and Benefits Enrollment, is a Web-based application that uses Microsoft .NET technology to connect employees, managers, and administrators.

Version 8.5 enhances Abra Workforce Connections, enabling employees to view and access payroll data in addition to the benefit and HR data already available. To accomplish this, a new Synchronize Payroll History

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Sage Abra SQL HRMS Version 8.5

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process is available in Sage Abra SQL HRMS to synchronize payroll history data to Abra Workforce Connections.

Once synchronized, employees can view the following information in Abra Workforce Connections: Pay Day, Hours, Gross Pay, Deductions, Taxes, and Net Pay. In addition, a Preview option displays the Payroll History detail page, which details taxes and deductions both for the selected pay period and year-to-date.

ZOOM IN

| Pay History | | | |
|-------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Pay Day | Hours | Gross Pay | Deduction |
| 03/21/2008 | 240.00 | 8698.46 | 72 |
| 03/21/2008 | 240.00 | 8698.46 | 72 |
| 03/07/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 03/07/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 02/22/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 02/22/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 02/08/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 02/08/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 01/25/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 01/25/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 01/11/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |
| 01/11/2008 | 80.00 | 5198.46 | 2 |

Employees can now view and access Payroll data through the Employee Self Service component of Abra Workforce Connections.

By making even more data available to your employees, you can expect fewer phone calls and requests coming in to your HR department staff members.

Abra eRecruiter

The eRecruiter module has quickly gained a reputation as a valuable tool for simplifying the workflow of the recruiting cycle.

To allow flexibility when asking compliance-related applicant questions, Abra eRecruiter now allows the administrator to select which questions to display on the application and the applicant profile pages, for

example: age, gender, citizenship, and work permit status.

PrintBoss For Abra SQL Payroll

PrintBoss is now available as an optional add-on for Abra SQL Payroll. PrintBoss by Wellspring Software, a Sage Endorsed Partner, offers many enhanced capabilities for Abra SQL Payroll, including: MICR encoding, laser signatures, the ability to send employee paystubs via e-mail, positive pay files, and support for additional check and Direct Deposit Advice formats. Give us a call for more information or pricing on PrintBoss.

SIN For Canadian Employers

In the Abra HR module, when the Employer Country is set to Canada, all Social Insurance Numbers (SIN) for dependents and beneficiaries now have the correct format of XXX-XXX-XXX to conform to Canadian SIN standards.

Note: Currently there is not a Canadian Payroll module available for Sage Abra SQL HRMS. However, there is a Canadian Payroll module for Sage Abra Suite.

System Requirements

Sage Abra SQL HRMS v8.5 Supports: Windows 2000 Server Standard or Advanced Edition (SP4 or above); Windows 2003 Server Standard or Enterprise Edition (SP1 or above); SQL Server 2000 Standard Edition (SP4 or above); and SQL Server 2005 Standard Edition.

Is Sage Abra SQL HRMS Right For Me?

While Sage Abra SQL HRMS is ideal for larger organizations with 300 or more employees, there are many advantages to be realized for smaller organizations as well.

We would be happy to speak with you

about the different Sage Abra product offerings to help determine the best fit for your organization; please give us a call.

((What's In A Name?))

The Sage Abra HRMS product family includes Sage Abra Suite and Sage Abra SQL HRMS (formerly Sage Abra 500 HRMS). The two products offer nearly identical feature sets, with the Sage Abra SQL HRMS product providing an ideal solution for companies that prefer or require an application that supports the Microsoft SQL Server database management system.

The product names for Sage Abra 500 HRMS and Sage Abra U.S. Payroll have changed slightly. The Sage Abra 500 HRMS version 8.x product line is now the Sage Abra SQL HRMS product line. The Sage Abra U.S. Payroll module is now the Sage Abra U.S. Payroll (SQL) module. While the changes are subtle, they reflect an emphasis on the product's support for the powerful SQL database management system.

Another change to be aware of is that Sage Software has changed its name to Sage, to better reflect its relationship with its global parent company, The Sage Group plc.

You will see both of these changes reflected in upcoming branding and marketing materials.

Achieve A Perfect Fit With The Sage Abra Toolkit

Every business is unique, and that means workflow processes are unique as well. Sage Abra HRMS is a powerful collection of tools for acquiring and managing human resources. Did you know that you can tailor it to meet the demands of your organization? Rather than adjust your internal workflow to match the software, you can adjust the software to match your workflow. To meet your organization's specific requirements, you can use the Sage Abra Toolkit module to customize menus, processes, actions, reports, toolbars, panels, and fields. Let's take a closer look.

Quick Access To Needed Functions

The Sage Abra Quick Launch Toolbar can be customized with the Abra Toolkit to provide quick access to the programs you use most. You can add buttons to launch frequently-used tasks and even Web sites, such as Monster.com. Choose a bitmap for the button from the collection built into Sage Abra or use your own. You can delete buttons you don't use, and even change bitmaps to make them more intuitive for your organization. If you have new programs that have been created using the Abra Developer's Toolkit, you can add these to the application sidebar. Using the Abra Toolkit, you can design a workspace that precisely matches your organization's needs.

Add New Fields

Is there special employee information that you need to track? With Abra Toolkit, you can add new fields. For example, you could add a field or fields to track equipment issued to an employee such as a BlackBerry or Pocket PC handheld device. The new fields can even include calculations.

Modify Menus And Panels

Sage Abra has many screens and functions, and for some users the number of choices may be daunting. Using Abra Toolkit, you can design menus and panels that present only the information the user needs, and in the order you desire. If you always begin your processing in the third panel of a task, you can move it to be the first panel you see when you start the task. This saves time and makes it easier to train new staff. You can even add panels to track special information unique to your business.

The panels you add also can be at the employer level. Perhaps you have a company credit card or list of emergency contacts that should only be accessible to certain staff. You can add these fields to a panel and secure them appropriately.

Change Actions And Processes

Using the Abra Toolkit, you can create new actions for employees, applicants, and requisitions. You can add, remove, and change the order of steps within actions. To continue with the example above, you can add a step to record the serial number of equipment issued to the employee in the Record New Hire action. Once this step is added, users will be prompted to complete the data fields as a routine part of recording a new hire.

Customized Reporting

With the Crystal Reports® module included in Sage Abra, you can create custom reports to meet your requirements. Perhaps your industry has special government reporting needs or a union contract that requires a specific report. Your custom reports can easily be added to the reports menu using the Abra Toolkit. To make it quicker and easier to find reports, you also can remove reports you don't use and reorder existing reports.

Security And Integration

With Abra Toolkit, you can define which groups have permission to access your custom fields and panels from the Group Security page.

The power of Abra Toolkit extends to Abra HR, Abra Payroll, and Abra Train, providing broad flexibility in tailoring the system to meet your needs. The Abra Toolkit is compatible with Sage Abra HRMS version 8.1 and above, and both the U.S. and Canadian editions of Sage Abra Suite. If you're looking for new ways to put Sage Abra HRMS to work for your organization, please give us a call.

((Tips & Tricks))

How To Use Sage Abra Toolkit To Create A Calculated Field Within Custom Details.

1. Go to Activity Center, System, Processes, "Design Custom Details."
2. Select Detail to modify an existing detail or ADD to create a new detail.
3. If new detail; Select name and options.
4. Click in main body of Detail design to add a field.
5. Select "Employee Custom Fields" click ADD.
6. Name the Field label and Database field.
7. Set Data type to 'Calculated' from drop-down list.
8. Click Expression Builder and create expression. Click OK.
9. Example: Pe.p_annual * 2
10. Click OK.
11. Detail now will display a field that will calculate two times the employee's Annual Salary.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Recall, Review, And Share: Sage Abra Reporting Tools

Data output is often ranked as the single most important element of a business software system. You must be able to find the data you need in an efficient and expedient manner. Sage Abra HRMS includes several built-in reporting tools that allow you to do just that. From the hundreds of Standard Reports, to various analyses, Abra Secure Query and Crystal Reports®, Sage Abra places reporting firmly in your control. Let's learn more about the reporting options Sage Abra has to offer.

Standard Reports

Are you aware that there are more than 200 standard reports included with Sage Abra HRMS? In addition to printing to your printer, each report can be previewed on your screen, exported to a file for use by other applications, or sent by e-mail to the recipient of your choice. Many companies successfully rely on standard reports for virtually all of their HR, Payroll, Attendance, Training, and System reporting needs.

Sage Abra Analyses

When you need to examine your data for trends and indicators, Sage Abra Analyses are the tool of choice. This collection of queries provides an analytical look at critical areas such as HR, Payroll, and Attendance.

Use the Analyses within the Abra HR module to compare performance versus longevity or to monitor OSHA incidents. Use the Analyses within Abra Payroll to take an in-depth look at your tax liability or perform

a 941 audit. Within the Abra Attendance module, Analyses will show you absences by day or by hour to help you identify attendance patterns and potential problems. Sage Abra Analyses are a fast and effective way to uncover the analytical data you need.

Crystal Reports

Crystal Reports is an amazingly powerful, graphical, industry-standard report writer included with Sage Abra. In addition to using Crystal Reports to design entirely new custom report templates, more than 100 prepared Crystal reports are included with your Sage Abra software. You may use these reports as they are designed or modify them to suit your individual business needs.

Abra Secure Query

Abra Secure Query is an excellent tool for creating a one-time ad hoc report or a standing report that you will use again and again. You can create a query to provide you with the current, pertinent data you need. Abra Secure Query doesn't require that you have an understanding of the underlying data structure, or have an in-depth knowledge of custom report writing tools.

There are many uses for Abra Secure Query. In Abra HR, you can use it to generate an Excel spreadsheet of 401(k) contributions to your retirement plan administrator—even send the query directly to the administrator by e-mail, with a copy to yourself. If you are using Abra Train, you can ensure your training stays on track with a query list of employees

who have completed a required course. In Abra Payroll, you could use Abra Secure Query to create a Word document listing all employees who received a car allowance last year. Then use the mail-merge process to send a letter updating terms of the plan to these employees. You could run a report of vacation hours paid YTD, sorted by department, to give to managers, or quickly report on FMLA absence hours within a certain time frame.

Please give us a call us with your reporting questions, or for assistance building custom reports.

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