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## Headline News

The unemployment rate continued to hold steady at 9.7 percent in the month of March, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Nonfarm payroll employment increased by 162,000 as temporary help services and health care continued to add jobs. Federal government employment also rose, reflecting the hiring of temporary workers for Census 2010. For the latest information, [click here](#).

# Sage Abra Suite Version 9

## Version 9 Gets A New Look And New Search Capabilities For Intuitive Ease Of Use

**S**age Abra Suite Version 9 is scheduled for release this summer. This version boasts a new intuitive interface, dynamic information sharing in Employee Self Service, simplified installation, and more.

### New Intuitive Interface

Based on a usability study among Sage Abra users, the new user interface design is intuitive and easy to use. HR and payroll professionals can accomplish tasks and find the information they need quickly and easily with the new task organization, terminology, and process workflow.

When you first log in to Sage Abra Suite Version 9, a new welcome page displays. It provides quick links to: a *What's New in Sage Abra Suite* page, Online Help, Guides, Contact Support, and Provide Feedback.

### Navigation Pane

The Navigation Pane is a list of groups that displays on the left-hand side of the page. Clicking on a group in the Navigation Pane expands it to display its subgroups. For example, if you click to expand the Employees group, it displays the Tasks and Processes subgroups. The Tasks subgroup lists all employee-related tasks such as Add New Hire, Change Job, and Terminate Employee. The Navigation Pane replaces the Activity Center as the alternative to using the Main Menu for navigation. Groups, tasks, and processes that



a user does not have security access to will not display on the Navigation Pane.

You can customize the Navigation Pane to select which groups, subgroups, and tasks display. By default, Sage Abra Suite lists tasks on the Navigation Pane in alphabetical order; however, you can choose the order that tasks display for groups and subgroups.

### Toolbars And Icons

Sage Abra Suite now displays the Quick Launch Toolbar in the lower left-hand corner of the workspace. The 12 custom icons and toolbar icons throughout the application have been modified for easier identification. If you use your own images for detail pages on toolbars, Sage Abra Suite now will display your icons on the toolbars.

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## Sage Abra Suite Version 9

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### Employee Find

To find employee records more easily, you now can search by first name, as well as view the number of records found based on your search criteria. Additional columns are available in the search results by clicking the More Options button, including Organization Levels, Status, State, Type, and Salaried/Hourly.

### Helpful Toolbars

The Employee Toolbar has been designed to give you quick access to all the details related to individual employees. It displays just below the Main Menu when you select Employees > View/Edit Employees. It consists of several tabs that take you directly to employee details such as Demographics, Emergency Contacts, HR Status, and Leave of Absence.

The Training Toolbar displays below the Main Menu when you select Training > View/Edit Trainee. Several tabs such as Required Courses, Certifications, and Courses Taken provide you with quick access to training detail pages.

### Information Bars

Each detail page in Sage Abra now includes an Information Bar that displays general information about an employee, training, applicant, or requisition record. Buttons help you easily navigate back and forth between records.

### Payroll Process Map

A new visual tool, the Payroll Process Map, has been added to assist with payroll workflow. It is accessed from the Navigation Pane by selecting Payroll > Process Payroll.

### New Employer Filter

To allow you to easily filter by Employer, the Employer Filter functionality now is

accessed via a drop-down list that is always available in the Main toolbar. To set the filter, you simply select the employer or enterprise from the list.

### Product Feedback Option

A new Product Feedback option is available from the Help Menu. Here you can submit ideas about how Sage can improve the product, compare your ideas with those of others, rate the importance of ideas, and track the ideas you submit.

### Dynamic Information Sharing

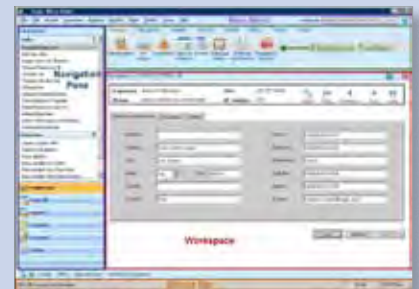
If you are using the Employee Self Service (ESS) module, the new View Builder allows you to dynamically and securely share workforce information via a Web link. This capability empowers HR to share Sage Abra data with executives. Workforce data is displayed in graphical views that managers can use for decision support. Information is automatically filtered according to the user's Sage Abra role.

### New Installation Process

The product install for Sage Abra Suite Version 9.0 has been rewritten to simplify the install process and to provide seamless support for all versions of Microsoft Windows. The new install process uses the latest Windows Installer technologies as well as Microsoft's ClickOnce deployment technology.

The registration process also is simplified so that when you purchase a new module, you enter the new install code from inside the application, instead of re-running the install. Note: Only one version of Sage Abra Suite can be supported per client machine. If you are upgrading from a previous version and are currently running a side-by-side installation, please contact us for assistance before you begin the installation.

ZOOM IN 




The New Toolbars and Navigation Pane in the Sage Abra Suite Version 9 Desktop give you fast access to tasks and information.

### Crystal Reports 2008

All custom reports delivered with Sage Abra Suite have been updated to run in Crystal Reports 2008. In this new version, built-in report experts are improved and simplified to guide you step by step through building reports from your Sage Abra data. Analyze your workforce data and discover trends or insight into the daily workings of your company.

New page layout capabilities make special reports like employee badges easier to use.

Give us a call with your questions, or for assistance working with the new features of Sage Abra Suite Version 9. 

# Government Compliance Considerations

Compliance is one of the top challenges facing any human resources department. It is up to HR to ensure that hiring, discipline, and termination practices are compliant with the law. Mistakes can be costly. Over one-third of private companies surveyed by Chubb Insurance had experienced an employment-law event (EEOC charge filed or employee lawsuit), at an average cost of \$74,400. Here we provide a brief overview of the compliance areas you should be aware of.

## Payroll Record Keeping

Accurate payroll is essential for any company. Errors in government filings and tax payments can result in costly fines. You must keep detailed records about employee wages and hours to satisfy compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and FICA and FUTA tax filing and reporting requirements. FICA and FUTA records must be kept for at least four years from the date of filing, and FLSA information, including employment and earnings; additions or deductions from wages; certificates of ages; wage rate tables; and work time schedules must be kept for two years.

## Benefits Compliance

There are a myriad of compliance laws surrounding employee benefits such as retirement, health benefits, and other insurance plans. Many laws contain record-keeping and government reporting provisions. Here are two aspects of current law to keep an eye on in the coming year.

First, HIPAA allows you to submit enrollment files to insurance carriers electronically. Many insurance carriers charge fees if employers do not submit information electronically. But your electronic enrollment files must comply with HIPAA standards for encrypting and protecting sensitive information.



Second, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year for certain family and medical reasons. Disputes over FMLA lead to about 3,000 complaints filed with the Department of Labor annually, as well as employee lawsuits. The Act requires that documentation be kept to track an employee's FMLA request, dates, disposition, etc. to support that no detrimental action was taken as a result of the FMLA request.

## Hiring Records

Newer requirements include keeping records that help determine employee citizenship and locate parents who are delinquent in child support obligations.

## Safety Regulations

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulates workplace safety. To ensure compliance with OSHA regulations, all employers must display the OSHA poster in a prominent location; report the work-related death or hospitalization of

three or more employees; and in many cases, comply with additional OSHA record keeping requirements.

## Avoiding Discrimination

Federal employment laws prohibit discriminatory practices based upon gender, race, religion, disability, and other attributes. Discrimination claims are among the most frequently filed lawsuits, and the most expensive jury verdicts. To protect your company from employee discrimination complaints and lawsuits, it is essential to conduct regular training with managers and employees about workplace discrimination and harassment, and to establish formal processes for dealing with complaints and keeping records. Sage Compliance Trainer, a Web-based training solution, provides a proactive defense against employee lawsuits by demonstrating that you have educated your employees to prevent workplace harassment and discrimination. Give us a call if you need more information regarding current government compliance requirements and how to set them up in Abra HRMS. ✨

## (( Tips & Tricks ))

### Setting Up An Audit Trail For OSHA

There is complete Audit Trail tracking in Abra which can be very useful to see the changes to ANY fields, especially key items related to government compliance. One idea is to use this feature to see a detailed audit trail for OSHA. From the Activity Center, select System, Rules and Enterprise Setup. Select the "Audit Trail Setup" tab.

1. Be sure "Enable Auditing" is set to 'Yes'.
2. From the "Select File to Audit" drop-down list box select 'Employee OSHA'.
3. Check the box next to "Enable File Audit".
4. From the "Audit All Fields in File" drop-down list box select 'Yes' to set the audit trail for all fields or select the individual fields to audit by placing a check in the "Audit" column next to the field description.



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

## Be More Proactive With Business Activity Monitoring

We have all had days filled with troubleshooting problems and remedying mistakes or oversights. Often these problems could have been avoided if only we had been alerted to a situation. Of course Sage Abra HRMS captures important information about your organization and provides the reports essential to successfully manage your employees. But you may not always have time to read through reports to identify issues requiring your attention.

That is where business activity monitoring comes in. Business activity monitoring tools review your data and alert you or the appropriate persons by e-mail when items needing attention are identified. And these tools can even update your data automatically based on criteria you set.

Sage KnowledgeSync (SKS), a Sage Abra Endorsed Solution for Alerts and Workflow, now is available for Sage Abra HRMS. This powerful business activity monitoring tool can proactively inform you of important events, such as an employee on leave of absence due to return today. Let's learn more.

### Stay On Top Of Important Events

Sage KnowledgeSync for Sage Abra monitors and responds to important business conditions and alerts appropriate personnel via e-mail. But SKS also is a business activity monitoring system that can perform actions on data in the database. When specified conditions occur, Sage KnowledgeSync can do any or all of the following:

- » Send alerts via e-mail, fax, pager, cell phone, dashboard, or screen pop-up.
- » Generate and deliver forms, documents, and reports.
- » Update the Sage Abra database with the details of what occurred.

### Pre-Configured Business Conditions

SKS comes with an extensive collection of pre-configured alert events and condition triggers, making it easy for you to get started. You simply enter the parameters for each event, such as how far in advance you want to be reminded about a new hire starting work. There are 13 Applicant triggers, for example, "Application status has changed." There are three benefit triggers, such as "Benefit expires today." There are 14 general employee triggers, including performance review coming due, birthday greeting, and new hire starts today. There also are payroll, certification and training, and leave of absence triggers so that no HR activity ever slips through the cracks.

### Two Editions To Choose From

Sage KnowledgeSync is available in a Professional and an Enterprise Edition; both are compatible with current versions of Sage Abra Suite and Sage Abra SQL HRMS.

The Professional Edition is limited to 24 events and supports alerts in text and HTML format. It is a good place to start if you have never used a business activity monitoring system and just want to be able to receive notifications and reminders by e-mail. The

Enterprise Edition adds the Workflow Action Module which allows you to automate the addition to and update of records within Sage Abra. The Enterprise Edition also includes the ability to deliver forms and documents as attachments to alerts and automate report distribution.

A free trial of either edition is available for download, and includes the Sage Abra triggers. Give us a call for assistance. ✨

## Contact Information

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