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Mun-Ease News

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Our Address:
Prescient Software JRD, Inc.
23732 Hillhurst Ave. Ste. 37
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
www.mun-ease.com
949-248-5788

Release 2012 Ships - (v. 15)

This newsletter describes the features of our 2012 Release (v. 15.00).   Our 2012 release includes a new 64-bit framework, a new database, a new graphics utility, and newly formatted report packages for our Sizing, Refunding, and Arbitrage modules.

Our newsletter is accompanied by a CD containing the new release. The CD is mailed to the contact designated by the customer. Customers who have chosen not to receive the CD can download it from our web site.

Our Migration Strategy to a 64-Bit Version Reprised

As we mentioned in our March 2012 newsletter, we have a three-phase migration strategy to a 64-bit architecture. We decided on a three-phased approach because of the significant amount of effort relating to the 64-bit conversion. The three phases are:

Phase 1 (This release) - As of today, we are releasing a 32-bit version of Mun-Ease with a "64-bit framework." In other words, all of the toolboxes that do not run in a native 64-bit environment have been replaced with tools that are 64-bit compatible.

Phase 2 - Release of a 64-bit version of Mun-Ease. Initially, the user interface

will be virtually the same as our 2010 release. However Mun-Ease will have the capability run as either a native 32 or 64-bit application.

Phase 3 - We will gradually incorporate new features that are part of the Windows 8 system from Microsoft into Mun-Ease.

New Database and Graphics Tools

Our 2012 release features a new database and a new graphics utility. These new utilities were incorporated into Mun-Ease because the older tools were not compatible with a 64-bit architecture.

The ElevateDB Database

Our standard release can use either the SQL Server database from Microsoft or the ElevateDB from Elevate Software. The ElevateDb database replaces the Borland Database Engine (BDE) that was used in previous versions. Like SQL Server, the ElevateDB database is a multi-user database that supports database views, stored procedures, and multi-table updates that are processed as a single transaction. It is distributed to our users on a royalty-free basis. We provide a conversion utility that can move data back and forth between the ElevateDB database, the BDE and SQL Server.

New Graphics Utility

We provide new graphics software with Mun-Ease. Our new graphics package allows users to incorporate gradient fills into each of the 14 standard graphs included with Mun-Ease. The gradient fills can be displayed in individual

series, background panels, and/or graph walls. We also provide templates so that users can create professional looking graphs instantly with very little effort. The Sizing and Refunding modules now include options to generate graphs at the conclusion of a calculation.

A Few Kind Words for the BDE

We have used the Borland Database Engine for many years. Saying goodbye to this product is like bidding farewell to a longtime friend. On one hand, we consider ourselves lucky to have worked with this tool. Even to this day, the BDE compares very well to other databases. It is extremely fast (in some situations even faster than an enterprise database) and was an ideal database for single users and small workgroups.

But the BDE is an orphaned product that has been all but abandoned by its vendor. With each new release of Windows, it has become harder to maintain - mostly because the vendor has not kept it up-to-date with the changing folder conventions that accompany each new release of Windows from Microsoft.

The BDE is definitely not the only database product to suffer this fate. To the dismay of thousands of users, Microsoft has discontinued support of Foxpro; thus leaving their users in a similar predicament.

The Elevate database product is a great replacement for the BDE. It includes many features to make it easy for users to switch to the new database. It also has capabilities that are commonly associated only with high-end enterprise databases.

New Versions of Our Sizing, Refunding, and Arbitrage Reports

Currently our Sizing, Refunding, and Arbitrage modules allow you to create a package of reports that includes a table of contents. The 2012 release has a new feature that allows you to add a cover page for the report package. The cover page can contain bitmaps of your logo and the client's logo. We include logos for all 50 states with the 2012 release.

All of the reports in these modules have been revamped. There are now in color and designed for maximum impact in presentations. Shown below are links to samples of our reports:

Arbitrage reports –
www.mun-ease.com/cmastarb.pdf

Sizing reports –
 www.mun-ease.com/cmastsz.pdf

Refunding reports –
 www.mun-ease.com/cmastrf.pdf

Bifurcated bond issues –
  www.mun-ease.com/cmastszbif.pdf

New Features in Our Internet Add-On Module

Our Internet Add-On Module allows you to place one or more Mun-Ease databases on a web server so that people outside of your immediate organization can obtain information about your debt. Our 2012 release provides the ability to run this program as either a CGI (Common Gateway Interface) application or one that uses Microsoft's ASP (Active Server Pages) technology.

New GASB 65 Reporting Features

With the exception of "prepaid insurance", GASB 65 requires the issuer to expense upfront issuance costs instead of amortizing those costs over the life of the bond issue. Prior-year financial statements must be restated so that they are consistent with this new rule. We have revised our reports to include information that will facilitate the required restatements under GASB 65.

Other New Reporting Features

 We have added a new Escrow Agent Monitor report to help issuers ensure that the escrow agent has made payments on-time and in the correct amount to bondholders for the issuer's escrowed debt service.

Unchanged Prices for Maintenance & Support

With one small exception, the fees that we charge for maintenance and support (M&S) will remain unchanged for the remainder of 2012 and 2013. The exception relates to yearly maintenance and support for the base module which increases from $200 to $250.

New User Manuals

We are in the process of revising user manuals for the 2012 release. We plan to ship a CD that includes the new manuals and a hard copy of our Tutorials guide before the close of 2012. (The shipment will be to those customers who have not requested the "download only" option.)