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When Choosing Bookkeeping Programs

By Kyle Greatbatch

My organization recently decided to update its bookkeeping programs. Though it will probably improve efficiency in the long term, but presently, it puts me, as the office manager in an uncomfortable position.

Over the years, the firm have tried several bookkeeping programs, but finally settled on Quickbooks, which frankly speaking, I am very indifferent to, but have gotten so used to it in the last few years. We probably won't know the fellow that took the decision to adopt a new bookkeeping program; nevertheless it was a wrong decision.

There was nothing wrong in the existing bookkeeping program, and setting up a new one was created new problems, that has was never envisaged. First, everything had to be recorded to the new bookkeeping programs, and for this task, the boss hired a computer expert, who also happened to be his son.

The task involved writing a macro that will convert all of the files from the old bookkeeping programs into the new one, and unfortunately, the project failed– just like everything the boss and his family do, on top of this is the problem of lack of compatibility between the QuickBooks and the new bookkeeping programs, which was a kind of general public access thing that was obviously produced by Linux nerds in their spare time. Though it is very stable and well coded, it is just not a user friendly interface.

Of course I bore the brunt of the whole thing, so I had to learn how to operate this graphics free, all text interface, before entering the old bookkeeping program data. Of course the new program is more stable, and perhaps faster, but the point is it is boring and takes a longer period to learn.

Even now that I have a full grasp of it, I still prefer one of the bookkeeping programs where I can click on a few icons and not bother about keyboard shortcuts.

I resent this new program because I will have to use it all day, so I think I deserve something pleasant to work and interact with.

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But it seems no one is interested in that, as long as it is free, fast, and occupies less hard disk space, then it will do just fine.

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Keeping Up With The Family Finances

By Dee Marie

Staying on top of the family finances does not have to be difficult. With a little planning, your finances can be kept up to date with ease. Believe me, having a handle on your family finances goes a long way in creating family harmony.

The first step is to set up a bookkeeping system. We've used Quicken software for years. It has helped to keep track of our expenses, and we have been very happy with the program. It takes a little bit of time to set up initially. The second part of your bookkeeping system involves setting up a place to save your receipts. We use a small cardboard divider file with a special slot devoted to "receipts that need to be posted". The key idea here is to have a place where you store all receipts from expenses (including ATM withdrawals) so that they are readily available when you go to enter them into your bookkeeping software.

Once you have the system set up, then you simply enter your receipts, whether income or expenses. As you enter each item, you select a category for it to go into. Reconciling your account is done online. One of the greatest advantages in using an automated system like this is the ability to see your expenses by category. With the click of a button, you can find out what you spent on groceries, entertainment or any other category for any time period, like last week, last month, or the last quarter. Many other reports are available such as a cash flow report and an itemized categories report. Using this system has streamlined our ability to keep our account updated. Bills are easily paid on time.

Once you've established your bookkeeping system, then you must set aside time on a regular basis to update it. For our family, we've found that a weekly update works well. My husband and I alternate weekly turns on posting receipts and then reconciling our account. It never takes us more than 30 minutes at a time and our account is always balanced.

If you are behind in your finances, start by doing just 15 minutes at a time. You'll catch up eventually. Then, be sure to make time on a regular basis to keep up with your account. Having your finances in order is a real stress reliever and can be attained by anyone!

For money saving tips and money management ideas, be sure to visit

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