

HandyWork Newsletter



Winter 2004/5

20th Year Anniversary!

Long Haul

It seems hard to believe but HandyWorks celebrates it's 20th year of supplying quality software to the professional community of Chiropractors, Podiatrists, Physical Therapists and Acupuncturists. This milestone makes us one of the oldest surviving software companies serving this marketplace.

Actually, we are even older than 20 because we wrote our first office management software program in 1981, prior to the formation of Microsoft and well before IBM even launched the PC business.

Our first program ran under CP/M, a precursor to DOS. It ran on machines like the Kaypro 10 and the Victor, neither of which survived the computer revolution. In 1984, when Dr. Steve moved from Atlanta to the Big Apple, the program was completely rewritten to meet the needs of his personal practice. But other DC's in town saw what it could do and before long, HandyWorks began as a formal business venture.

Interestingly enough, we still have a couple dozen users who insist on working in our DOS version! They tell us that it continues to work well for them and they will only switch to the Windows version if it becomes absolutely necessary.

So, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we are able to look forward to upcoming changes while remaining firmly rooted to our past. We thank all of our loyal users for their continued support.

X-Charge It

Over the last 6 months, our office has been using (testing) the X-charge credit card processing system on a daily basis. We have found it convenient, fast, reliable and less expensive than our previous credit card clearing center. It fully integrates into the HandyWorks program and makes charge processing simpler and easier. We encourage all HWW users to explore this very cost-effective system.

To make it work, you will need three pieces of relatively inexpensive hardware. First is a \$69 credit card swiper from POSmicro.com (item 21080203). We mounted this swiper on the top right edge of our keyboard so it is easy to access. The second item is a receipt printer. We are using a Citizen CST-300 which costs \$250. It hooks up to our computer's serial port and sits on the back of front desk area, behind and to the right of our keyboard. (It has a very small footprint, about the size of my hand, so it doesn't take up much real estate.) Lastly, we added a second internal modem for \$14.95. The first modem remains in our system for faxes and this second modem is dedicated for the X-charge communications.

Configuring this new equipment is extremely easy. The swiper connects its wire between the keyboard connection to the computer. The printer, once connected to the computer's serial port is handled through the add printer option in your control panel.

The modem is configured just as easily.

You tell HandyWorks, you are using the X-charge system by putting the X-charge path into the Preferences screen. Once that is done, whenever you enter a "CR" code in the transaction screen, a pop-up form opens up asking you to swipe the card and enter the charge amount. After pressing the "enter" key, HandyWorks analyzes the swiped data and creates a charge record in the X-Charge directory. This initiates the transaction. X-Charge takes over from here, dialing the modem and sending out the charge. When done, the credit card company approves or denies the sale. If approved, HandyWorks prints the receipt (2 copies) and returns the approved amount to the transaction screen as if you had typed it in yourself. If not approved, it prints a denied receipt and types a zero for the amount.

If you are interested in exploring this option further, please call Todd Granat at 800-637-8268. He will send you the X-charge disks and help you get started on his end. We, of course, will be ready to help you with the remaining links as needed.

ClearingHouses

Most users want to send all their electronic claims to one facility that will sort them out and forward them to the correct destination. This requires using a clearinghouse, which acts as a "middle man" that accepts all of your claims and sends

them to the proper carrier.

While we have no special preferences, we have worked with several clearinghouses and have established relationships with them. If you already work with a clearinghouse and are happy with them, please call us so we can add them to our list of reliable vendors. *Feel free to call any of the following vendors. Please be sure to tell them you're from HandyWorks!*

1. Proxy-Med 800-792-5256
2. MD-Online 888-499-5465
3. The Consult 800-676-7645

Old Newsletters

Did you know that our newsletters go back to 1992? Hard to believe, but it is true. Sometimes users have asked us for past issues, and generally, because we always print more than enough, we can easily comply with their request. However, this can sometimes be a time consuming process and we have come up with a perfect solution.

In a nutshell, we will post old and current newsletters on the handyworks.com website as an Adobe PDF document. While this might seem like a straight forward process for us, few things are as easy as it seems. It might have been easier if our newsletters were produced in Word but in fact they're not. The older newsletters were written in AmiPro (anyone remember that wonderful dog of a program?) and our newer versions are done Quark Express. Neither of these programs have utilities that allow us to output to the PDF format so we must first scan each newsletter into a picture file. This image file is then converted into the PDF, which then gets uploaded to our website.

We expect this process to be completed in January, 2005. This doesn't mean you will not continue to receive these by mail. Rest assured you will! But if you happen to misplace one of these wonders of communications, an exact copy will always be close at hand.

Your Network

Earlier this week, one of users called us up in a bit of a panic. It seems that one of their workstations had lost its network connection. But worse was that the user of that workstation reconnected onto a data set on its local computer. So, for the past week, entries made on that station have appeared only on that station and not on the database shared by all of the other users.

Unfortunately, in a non-replicated database, it is not possible to merge the two sets of data, so all that work needed to be re-input, once the network connection was restored.

Problems like this can be easily avoided if ONE cardinal rule is followed. That rule is to have only ONE copy of HWDATA.MDB on your network and it should live in the \HWW folder.

There are times that one can have other copies of HWDATA. You could have a "backup" folder where you have subfolders for the days of the week and these folders could conceivably have copies of your data. But clarity of what and where your data is truly located is of prime importance. Please call us with any questions!

How to Backup

There are two types of computer users out there. Those that have lost data and those that will. Backing up is your ONLY insurance against a computer failure. If you don't have a backup and you lose your data, it will be no one's fault but your own.

We recommend backing up on either a R/W CD or Iomega Zip disk. Backup several times a week, on different disks for different days. This way, if you have bad data that you only just discovered, you can go back to a previous date.

And please make sure you are backing up the Handyworks data files. These are c:\hw*.dat for our DOS users and c:\hww\hwdata.mdb for HWW users.

Important: Do not believe that your beloved and trusted consultant has set your backup correctly! You must verify that it is correct by testing the restore yourself. To be absolutely safe, restore your data to your home computer and verify that everything is cool! 'Nuff Said!

Medicare Mods

Use of the CPT modifier codes of AT, GA and GY is only permitted when you have had the patient sign an ABN waiver. You must have this signed waiver on file in your records. (A blank ABN Waiver is available from the HandyWorks download page).

If you have not already added any of these modifiers to your CPT codes, Handyworks will automatically add them for you when printing a Medicare HCFA claim form. However, this will only occur if the ABN Waiver signed box is checked on the Case Data Diagnosis screen. Having this box checked is now the default on any newly entered patients, but older patients may not necessarily be checked. As an aid to checking this box, HandyWorks will ask you if you want it checked, if, during Bill Creation, it finds it unchecked.

AT will appear next to any manipulation code, unless their treatment phase is Maintenance. In this case, it will print GA. All other services will have a GY code, meaning statutorily excluded or does not meet the definition of any Medicare benefit. We also add the GA code after it to show the ABN waiver was signed. Ultrasound, muscle stim, and diathermy will have a GP modifier to indicate a P.T. modality.

HandyWorks
140 East 28th Street (1F)
New York, NY 10016
(800) 255-0668
(212) 889-8878 (NY)
(212) 889-8830 (fax)
www.HandyWorks.com