

HandyWork Newsletter



Summer 2004

X-CHARGE!

x-Charge Added

My front desk staff repeatedly complained that our process of entering credit charge payments needed improvement and that they wanted a keyboard swipe that was connected right into HandyWorks. It seemed like a nice idea, but I had no idea how to do it. Then out of the blue, we were contacted by X-Charge, makers of PC based Point of Sale (POS) software. We had many discussions with them on implementation and also on fees, which turned out to be less than I was currently paying to my regular credit card charge company.

This was good because anytime someone shows me on how to reduce my monthly overhead, I am interested. So we proceeded to buy the three additional hardware items needed to make it work in our office. First was a \$69 credit card swiper from POSmicro.com (item 21080203). Then we bought a receipt printer (Citizen CST-300) for \$250. And lastly, we got an additional internal modem for \$14.95. We were ready to go!

In HandyWorks, we created a form that popped up when you entered a "CR" code in the transaction screen. This form asks 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 lets you know and types a zero for the amount.

As of this newsletter, we have been testing and honing down the system for about a week. We are so happy with it so far that we just purchased 10 rolls of the thermal receipt paper from Staples. We will likely be testing this out for the next few months before we release it to the rest of you in the Fall. We will keep you informed of its progress in our what's new section on our HandyWorks.com website.

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" who 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

Did You Know

Two special keys can be used in the HandyWorks program. They are both a variation of the Function Key F4, located at the top of your keyboard. Ctrl-F4 will close an open window. Alt+F4 will exit from the program. This last key can be very helpful if you get stuck in a weird error loop!

The Network

Just this week, our computer network stopped working. We could tell this because one morning, out of the blue, none of the computers could see any of the other computers in the Network Neighborhood. We suspected it was a problem with the ethernet router and sure enough, its light was out. Replacing the power supply turned on one of the lights but still no real connection. So a new router was ordered from Amazon, and it did the trick as soon as it was hooked up.

The point of the above is that we can maintain our networks because we can physically get to them.

About a month or two ago, one of our users called us up, quite distraught, because she couldn't get HandyWorks to work on her second machine. We spent a fair amount of time exploring the issue, which resolved down to the observation that the computers were not seeing each other in the Network Neighborhood (aka My Network Places in *XP).

At this point we knew that the problem was outside of our scope, but the user got very upset with us and insisted that the network surcharge she paid us required us to solve her network problem. I tried to explain that it is not possible for us to solve HARDWARE problems, or do deep network troubleshooting like she needed. That is for your local service person to do. I am not sure she was satisfied with our answer, but here it is, for the record: Network support starts when the computers can see each other.

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!

Backup Horror

It shouldn't happen here but yes it did! Our very own front desk had missed a scheduled backup and we lost several days worth of data. We were able to reconstruct everything from our End of Day Reports, except for the appointments added, which were not printed. Since then, we have made printing the

Appointments Added Report a "default" for our End of Day reports options screen. We too learn from our mistakes!

So What's New?

We already covered the x-Charge system on page one. This was the major improvement of the last few months. But other changes have also occurred.

Oot Of Memory: By moving the electronic billing module in HW2 into a form we reduced the occurrence of the "OUT OF MEMORY" error that occurs after a lot of billing, payment helper and statement printing is done.

Account Apostrophe: We fixed a bug, in the add guarantor or family member form that allowed creation of an account number with an apostrophe in it. Thank you to the users who helped us track down this elusive problem!

Today's Date is a new abbreviation shortcode for letters or narratives or sopas. The code is &TD.

HCFA Splits: When you reprint a HCFA bill after more service lines have been added to the bill, you run the risk of exceeding the maximum lines allowed on the bill. HandyWorks no solves that problem by splitting the claim.

Statements: We rearranged and enhanced the Statements module, allowing for very specialized statements to be printed. The options now allow for only patient payments, only insurance payments, non-insurance billable services, only insurance billable services, etc.

These specialized statements total up the category, but do not present a balance due. Also, the patient's address in statements has been moved slightly to the right so they fit better into standard window envelopes. The margins can now be adjusted from the Security / Utility drop-down menu. Multiple Page statements now show the first transaction date and we also fixed the starting Balance for statements with Balance Only Option. Lastly, we fixed the balance issue

that occurred when a single statement was viewed and then printed.

Billing Wizard?

While ideal use of the Billing Wizard for bill creation is both simple and easy, some users make it out to be much more complicated than is necessary. We recommend running the pre-bill report as the first step. It speeds up the subsequent billing process and provides you with a report of all that is unbilled and ready to go.

After running the prebilling report, we click on Create and Print new bills. If you want to bill everything that has not been billed before, simply click the printer button and then Green to Go!. In our office, we typically bill by category. So we click next and then choose to bill just Medicare, or BCBS, or Commercial. But after that selection, again, Green to Go! There is no need to put a visit date range in on the last screen. Dates that have already been billed will NEVER show up on a subsequent bill. Capice?

eMails to Users

With SPAM so much on the rise, we find that routine emails fail to get through network filters a good percent of the time. Hence, we have not been sending out bulk emails.

Vacation!

The office will be closed August 28th through September 7th. We are off to Quebec City and Montreal in an effort to beat the heat and find some fun not to far from home.

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