



DEBT\$NET™

Collection Software from TCM • The Computer Manager



Newsletter

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SPECIAL EDITION

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INTRODUCTION TO RELEASE 7.0:

WHAT'S A SQL SERVER AND WHY DO I NEED ONE?

It's time to unveil the new direction we are taking with Debt\$Net™ in the next release. Debt\$Net™ Release 7.0 will be developed using SQL Server. This involves a major effort on our part, but is critical in keeping pace with the needs of many of our users. Because of the work we have on the SQL Server portion of the project, we plan to hold the addition of new features and functions to a minimum. So, basically, the functionality of Release 7.0 will be almost identical to Release 6.9.

- *So, back to the question, what is a SQL Server and Why Do I Need One?*

The term "SQL" stands for Standard Query Language. This is just another term for a database system. It is a piece of software that runs on a computer that manages the distribution of data. It takes control of the Debt\$Net™ files. What you get from a SQL Server is higher levels of security, better capabilities for doing backups, and increased data integrity. Workstations which crash will no longer corrupt the

data file. The SQL server has all kinds of checks to make sure that data is ok before updating the database. Wide area networking access is also available, allowing you to go get data from other places than workstations that sit in your office. It may even allow access to multiple companies's databases by changing where you can pull data.

A SQL Server also solves the problem of database size restrictions. Two gigabytes is the maximum size allowable in the Windows™ environment. Many of our customers have already hit limits on file size, for example, in debtor notes. These companies have had to develop strategies and workarounds, such as deleting or archiving notes. SQL Servers are not limited in this way.

- *So, how much is this going to cost?*

The good news is that for many of you the SQL Server software will be free. SQL Server comes in several editions. The basic package, SQL Server Express Edition, is available free from Microsoft. I know, we were stunned, too. This edition can be downloaded from their web site. The Express Edition will meet the needs of most of our users. For those few that need more power and size, other SQL Server editions are available. These will cost you per "seat", but will be able to handle even larger databases.

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Our mid-size to large companies will want this as they can benefit from the increased security and data integrity.

- ***Are there any other reasons its better than the Windows™ Release?***

A SQL Server will open up the portability and expand the usability of your data. Because data bases reside in the SQL Server, any programs designed to use this type of database can be used to develop reports.

- ***Will I need new hardware?***

You may or may not. The software SQL Server will need to be installed on a hardware server. Because more processing occurs at the server, you may need to upgrade your existing server hardware.

- ***How will it affect productivity?***

When we looked at this in the past, we thought the SQL server was not fast enough to process typical collection agency files. The performance has improved and we now believe that business processes will not experience any decline in performance. However, there is another level of IT work that needs to go on to manage the server. This is more in the nature of new tasks that must be accomplished. i.e., there is some trade off, but we believe the advantages in data integrity and security will offset these disadvantages.

- ***When will it be ready?***

Spring 2007

- ***Will my custom programming still work?***

Our strategy over recent years has been to set external “hooks” into

Debt\$Net™ from the custom program piece, so that data can be extracted and processed outside the core program. This has been done so that custom programming doesn't have to be rewritten every time we have a new release. The same protocol will work in SQL Server. Most programming, particularly that already working in Release 6.9, won't require anything because it will handle the data sent to it. However, some will require updating in order to talk to the SQL Server. Again, if you have already moved to 6.9, you are way up on the curve on this process.

- ***What if I don't want it?***

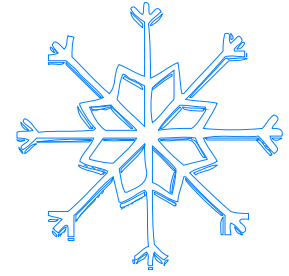
As we have always done in the past, we will continue to support users on prior releases for a period of time. What we don't know until the Release 7.0 has been in use for awhile, is whether it will develop into a new product line or replace our Windows™ versions completely. We will listen to what our users have to say before making any decision.

- ***Will we need extra training?***

The goal is that the look and feel will be the same. But as always, when you make a significant change to the underlying system, changes will occur. Again, we plan to keep these to a minimum by keeping the functionality as close to Release 6.9 as possible.

- ***So, where do I sign up?***

As always, we like to have volunteers for the Beta Version. Please let us know if you would like to be on this list.



WE ARE ON THE MOVE!

The date has been set and the moving trucks are on their way. While we missed our original target date of mid-December, anyone ever involved in a remodel or construction project will understand the delays that happen. However, we know now that the carpet will be down the first week of January. This means we should be moving on January 15th. We expect to have phones up and running again by Monday morning. Look for a fax and email confirming this move date and other information regarding the move in early January.

Contest Reminder

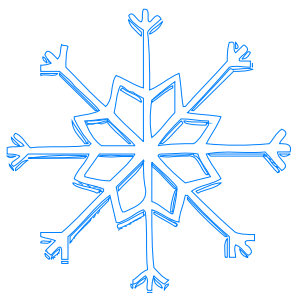


Don't forget! You have until December 31st to submit your entry for the Best Ever Contest. We have already heard from many of you in each of the following categories:

- Most Memorable TCM Moment
- Best Picture of You with a TCM Staff Member

- Best Excuse You Ever Heard from a Debtor
- Worst Last Minute Demand from a Client
- Best Rescue out of a Jam by Tech Support
- Most Naive Concept you had When Starting Business

Email your entries to info@debt.net. Enter as often as you like, in as many categories as you like. Just for entering we are going to send you each a small gift. Just a token of our appreciation for your participation!



CLEAR MONTH TO DATE, CLEAR YEAR TO DATE



It's once again time to zero out both month to date and year to date activity numbers in Debt\$Net™.

Active numbers keep track of many types of data, breaking activity down by the current month's numbers, current year's numbers and total activity numbers. Debt\$Net™ tracks items like number of accounts

assigned, total of accounts assigned, number of payments received and total of payments received to name a few. These activity numbers are updated for each client, collector and salesman every time there is activity associated with that item.

One of the end of month processes is to run 'Clear Month to Date'. This is done monthly after printing off client activity reports, collector activity reports and salesman activity reports. This process zeros out all month to date fields so Debt\$Net™ can start keeping track of the next months batch of business.

How do I clear my year to date numbers?

If you run the Clear Month to Date process anytime between December 16th 2006 and January 15th 2007 the year to date numbers will be zeroed at the same time the month to date numbers are. Be sure to print your activity reports before running this feature so you have your activity numbers for the year 2006.

WARNING!

Clear Month to Date is a date sensitive function and should be run after entry of payment and accounts which you would like to show on the month/Year (in this case) that is ending. However, run this **prior** to entry of payments and accounts which you would like to internally effect those activity figures for the new month/Year that is about to start. We advise running Clear month to Date at the end of the last business day of the year or on the morning of first business day of the new year.

If this is your first time to do the end of year process, call and set up an appointment with Justin, who can walk you through it. Remember,

“training” hours are less expensive then tech support time.



ANTI VIRUS SOFTWARE AND DEBT\$NET

When configuring your Anti Virus software you should always exclude the Debt\$Net™ folder from being actively scanned. Scanning the Debt\$Net™ folder can affect the speed at which data can be delivered to users at the least. We have seen Anti Virus software qualify some or all Debt\$Net™ files as possible viruses and remove necessary files. The loss of these files can cause all or part of Debt\$Net™ to become incapacitated.

Recovery from this loss might be as simple as getting necessary files out of quarantine. In extreme cases you would need to restore from your last night's backup.



COLLECTION ADVISOR TECHNOLOGY EXPO

Cheri Carr just returned from the CAT Expo in Las Vegas. A highlight of the event for TCM was being recognized by Collection Advisor Magazine as one of the Top 100 providers of Collection Technology Products. Debt\$Net™ 6.9 received the accolade in the category of Mid-Range Collection Software. Just wait until they all see our Release 7.0!



NORTH KITSAP FISHLINE

You may recall from last month that we will be featuring a different charitable organization in each newsletter. We would like to hear suggestions from you on worthy organizations that are making a difference in our world. For this first article, we have chose North Kitsap Fishline, a local community based food bank and thrift shop.

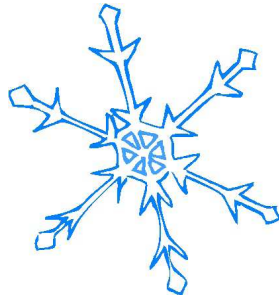
Founded in 1967, the North Kitsap Fishline serves people within the boundaries of the North Kitsap School District. Dedicated to “Honor the dignity of each individual”, this organization provides emergency food boxes, Holiday baskets, school supplies, assistance with transportation to medical appointments, and assistance with home heating/power/water utility payments in addition to the self-serve local produce and food product

outlet. The North Kitsap Fishline works with other community food banks in the region including Northwest Harvest, Washington Food Coalition, and the Salvation Army.

Each year at this time, The Computer Manager, Inc. holds a food drive in support of the North Kitsap Fishline. Recent reports indicate that food banks across the country are experiencing shortages, a great concern during the holiday season and winter months. We encourage each of you to consider sponsoring a similar company event or making individual donations to the food bank nearest you. If you have more time than money, these organizations also have a great need for volunteers.

Learn more about North Kitsap Fishline at:

<http://www.northkitsapfishline.org>



su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Just for fun, we are going to be putting in a Sudoku puzzle in the newsletter for the next few issues. For those of you that have never done a Sudoku puzzle, we will start out very easy. If you are a pro, impress your colleagues with how fast you can complete this one.

What is Sudoko? It’s a puzzle with numbers. The object is to fill out the empty spaces in the grid using the

number 1 through 9. The trick is that each number can only appear once in a block, and only once in a row (both horizontally and vertically). Do you have to use arithmetic? No! Nothing has to add up to anything else. Instead, you solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

8	1				7	3
			6	7		8
9		2	3	1	6	
	4			7	5	6
		7	9		1	2
	6	3		4		9
		4		9	2	1
6			5	4		
7	8					5
						9

V.EASY

1

For example, take a look at the Very Easy puzzle. Let’s try and place a 7 in the top-left box (call it “box 1”). You could just guess where the 7 goes, but that might get you into trouble. It’s more fun to reason it out.

Note the 7 in box 3 (the top-right box). It’s the 7 for the whole top row, so the 7 for the box 1 cannot go in Box 1’s top row. Box 2 also has its 7 already. It is the 7 for the whole 2nd row, so the 7 for box 1 cannot go in Box 1’s middle row. That leaves just the 3rd row. In box 1, there is only one empty cell in the 3rd row – so we can write the 7 in, between the 9 and the 2.

Each newsletter will have another puzzle, increasing in difficulty. We will publish the solutions for each puzzle in the following newsletter. If you like these puzzles, check out the computer version of Sudoku at www.sudoku.com Have fun!



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US AT
THE COMPUTER MANAGER!**

Customer Support/
Training

Rachel & Justin

Gary

Tony

Administration

Nadine, Rennie,
Christina & Julie

Tech Support

Marl, Allison, Clay, Mike, Ken

Sales

Cheri & Mindy

Programming

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Ron & Joyce

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