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Newsletter for Sage Abra HRMS

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Headline News

Sage Software offers free Web seminars. Current offerings include:

- Learn What's New in Version 7.7
- Benefits and ESS for Sage Abra Customers
- Enhance your HR solution with Sage Abra Payroll

For the current Sage Abra Webcast schedule or to register

[Click here.](#)

What's New In Sage Abra

Sage Abra HRMS Version 8.4, and Sage Abra Suite Version 7.7 are scheduled for release this summer. Both include dozens of enhancements, primarily to the Payroll, HR, Attendance, Link, and Workforce Connections modules.

The releases incorporate 47 specific enhancements. Among the highlights are important enhancements to Deferred Compensation plan management, new VETS-100A compliance categories, the ability to mask bank routing numbers, and the ability to reuse a check number.

In this article we'll highlight the changes you can expect. Most changes apply to both the V7 and V8 releases, but we've indicated when a change applies to just one or the other version.

HR Module

The Department of Labor has implemented changes for federal contractors that affect your HR reporting tasks. As such, the appropriate changes have been incorporated into the Sage Abra HR module.

- » The VETS-100 reporting threshold was increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for contracts entered into on or after December 1, 2003.
- » Implemented newly created part, 41 CFR part 61-300, (Report form VETS-100A).
- » New Veterans categories are added to support the new VETS-100A Report. Veteran categories now include: Disabled,



Other Protected, Armed Forces Service Medal (new), and Recently Separated (new).

- » Federal contractors and subcontractors now are required to report the total number of all current employees in each job category and at each hiring location.

Because these amendments apply only to contracts entered on or after December 1, 2003, there are effectively two sets of federal contractor regulations. Contracts entered before December 1, 2003 will use the VETS-100 Report. Contracts entered on or after December 1, 2003 will use the VETS-100A Report. Contractors with contracts entered into before and after December 1, 2003, will be subject to both reports.

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What's New In Sage Abra

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Other changes to the Abra HR module include allowing the Dependent Coverage field to work consistently with other Insurance Tabs by making the field accessible on the employee's Insurance Panel.

Additionally, performance related to the OSHA check box is improved, and there is the ability to enter different benefit coverage amounts for each dependent.

Abra Attendance Module

The following changes were made in the Attendance module:

- » Eliminated causes of an error that occurs when adding a lump sum plan to an employee with specific seniority conditions.
- » Corrected certain lump sum accruals that occur when an employee reaches new seniority levels.
- » Corrected certain accruals associated with anniversary date triggers.
- » Improved the Close Accrual Year Process.

Abra Workforce Connections

In the new versions, you now will have the ability to delete a user from Abra Workforce Connections.

Abra eRecruiter

Now you can designate whether applicants meet minimum job requirements by using a new Qualifications field. EEO reports can be filtered using these flags to help you better demonstrate compliance.

In addition, the new Veteran categories mentioned in the HR section are added to the eRecruiter Applicant Profile. The Veterans category responses will transfer to Abra HR as you indicate the individual is hired.

Abra Payroll Module

For Sage Abra Version 7.7, check numbers

may be re-used when they are associated with different bank routing numbers.

For security, you have the ability to mask employee bank account numbers from a payment device. For example, on an employee's direct deposit advice. You can elect to print the full account number, the last four digits, or none of the digits (the number will be masked with Xs).

Rather than listing the same earnings code multiple times on a check or direct deposit advice, they are totaled and listed once.

Problems that arose when a pay group had a quarter-end date that did not match the quarter-end date in the payroll setup are corrected in this Version.

Abra Employee Self Service (v7)

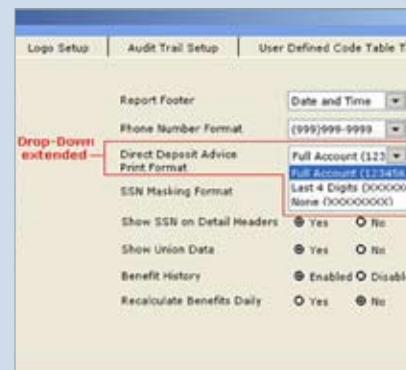
Sage Abra Version 7.7 adds the ability to mask employee account numbers is incorporated into the Sage Abra Employee Self Service (ESS) module.

Should you elect to move from Abra Payroll to Sage Payroll Services, you will be able to see Abra Payroll history in ESS after the move.

Managing Deferred Compensation Plans can be complex, and in Version 7.7 a number of changes provide the ability to:

- » Bundle multiple deferred compensation plans to one limit.
- » Provide deferred compensation deduction limits for: Employee, Employer, and Combination of Employee and Employer.
- » Include Roth 401(k) deductions on the Payroll Analysis Report Gross to Net Current Period.
- » Enhance standard reports so the 401(k) report pulls amounts and matches for the 401(k) plan rather than pull according to the deduction.
- » Link deductions to central legislative limits that will govern the deductions.


ZOOM IN



An extended drop-down box displays new security options that can obscure part or all of the employee's bank account number.

- » Set up multiple deductions for a single employee and ensure the system is using one set of limits for each set of linked deductions.
- » Utilize the System Deduction Limits table, a new database table that will function similarly to the System Tax Table.
- » Update the System Tax Tables to include the installation of the legislative limits into the System Deduction Limits table. Installing the quarterly update also will install these legislative limits.

Learn More

Sage Abra HRMS Version 8.4 and Sage Abra Suite Version 7.7 will ship during August and September. If you have any questions, please give us a call. 

Alerts Provide Proactive Communication Tool

We all rely on our calendars to help us remember important tasks and events. The trouble is, we have to add the events and tasks to the calendar in order to benefit from the reminder. What if you had someone—or something, constantly on the lookout for upcoming events and tasks who could remind you at just the right time? You have that capability with the Sage Abra HRMS Alerts module.



How Alerts Works

Sage Abra Alerts automatically sends e-mail messages to employees, managers, and/or job applicants based on dates and events occurring within Sage Abra HRMS. Its purpose is to monitor the system and automatically notify you, your staff, and job candidates when notable events take place. Alerts reduces the administrative burden on your HR and payroll staff by automatically performing many of the functions you are currently performing manually.

The alerts can be both time and date sensitive and can be configured to include pertinent Sage Abra data such as names and dates. When the Alert runs, it scans the database to determine whether the specific condition that it monitors exists. If the alert condition is found, an e-mail notification is sent to the recipients you define.

Customize Your Alerts

You can create new alerts or customize one of the numerous existing alerts to fit your company's needs. Use Sage Abra Alerts to attach correspondence, literature, or other files to your e-mail messages. Try using this feature to send the training manual when confirming an employee's registration in a training course or to send an updated organization chart to managers when a new employee is added.

Alerts can be configured to include

pertinent data from your Sage Abra database. For example, you can send your employees a notice when their vacation accrual reaches its maximum and include the Used and Available hours in the e-mail.

Beneficial Alerts

Here are a few examples to give you some idea of how Alerts could improve your business processes.

Management Information

- » E-mail the CFO a list of voided checks each pay period.
- » Notify appropriate managers when items such as paid time-off balances fall below the minimum.
- » Notify the supervisor when an employee completes important training.

Proactive Communication

- » Automatically notify the system administrator when an employee is hired or terminated.
- » E-mail a monthly list of birthdays to supervisors.
- » Create an Excel spreadsheet listing all employees who have worked overtime since the time of last notification and e-mail it to a designated person.

Verify Database Changes

- » Verify an employee's W-4 change, address change, or direct deposit change with an

automatic e-mail.

- » Send Direct Deposit verification and notification of change to employees.

Timely Reminders

- » Remind the HR department when an employee's I-9 re-verification is due; even include a form attachment to the e-mail.
- » Be reminded of time-sensitive events such as annual reviews or verification of enrollment in required training courses.

Sage Abra Alerts allows your business to respond to rapidly changing business conditions, head off potential problems, and stay in control of business operations. Call us for more information. ✨

For Your Information

Demand For HR Executives Is On The Rise

Despite a weak economy, increased hiring activity for human resource executives was revealed in the ranking of the [Jobfox Top 25 Most Wanted U.S. Job Candidates: June 2008](#).

Human resource executives now rank as the 25th most wanted job candidates, according to the Jobfox report—Recruiting/Staffing professionals ranked as 24th.

Rob McGovern, CEO of Jobfox says, "Most companies continue to place a premium on the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals. There will be layoffs, but most companies are depending on human resource managers to keep talent losses to a minimum. And many companies continue to aggressively seek new sources of talent from their recruiters."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Online Recruiting

As an HR professional, one of your top concerns is finding and retaining talented employees. One of the most effective tools for recruiting talent is the growing online recruiting market. An overwhelming majority of Americans now regularly use the Internet and studies show they are looking for job opportunities online.

According to a recent recruitment sourcing study by CareerXRoads, the Internet accounts for 29.6 percent of new hires, second only to employee referrals. While you might think it is the big online job boards like Monster.com, Yahoo Hotjobs, and CareerBuilder that are generating most of that activity, in fact corporate Web sites are responsible for more. Just over half of the new hires in the study reported using the company Web site as their source of introduction to the company.

What areas should you focus on to improve your company's online recruiting efforts? In this article we will offer some suggestions.

Corporate Web Site

A study completed in 2005 by CareerXRoads and the Wall Street Journal Web site CareerJournal, found that 85 percent of respondents reported visiting a corporate Web site for reasons other than job search but nevertheless looked at the company's open positions. Even more notable is the fact that at least 64 percent subsequently applied for jobs discovered in this way. This is compelling evidence that your company's Web site, and particularly its career page, should be treated as a significant recruiting tool.

A number of best practices can be deduced from this study—techniques you should consider when designing your company's career site.

- » Include a link to your career page in the navigation presented on every page.
- » Target your content to your desired audience. Speak of travel opportunities if you are seeking a mobile workforce. Mention your flexible work schedules if you are seeking part-time staff.
- » Craft a clear message. Engage potential candidates with memorable messaging that answers the question, "why would I work here instead of another company?"
- » Include relevant content that answers questions about your company, your open positions, and corporate culture. Go beyond describing available jobs and benefits; offer information about the local area, corporate values, and more.
- » Acknowledge and respect those who take the time to apply. Confirm that a resume or application was received and thank candidates. Keep the candidate informed of the status of review and send a rejection when they are eliminated from consideration.

Dot-Jobs Domain

If your company doesn't yet have a .jobs Internet domain, consider it now. These URLs are available to any company wishing to create a Web site to promote job openings. Each URL follows the same format (www.companyname.jobs).

Sage Abra Can Help

eRecruiter is a Web-based module for Sage Abra HRMS. It allows you to track both applicants and requisitions throughout the hiring process.

Easy to install and configure, eRecruiter is customizable to your Web site, and can be configured to meet your company's processing needs.

Call us with your questions or to receive a free white paper about online recruiting. ✨

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