



SAGE MAS 90 & MAS 200 NEWSLETTER

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Emergence of the Distributed Workforce

Business operations for many of today's companies have spread far beyond the four walls of the "main office." Innovative strategies that leverage the latest technology have created a prolific trend toward small and medium-sized businesses with multiple locations and a widely-dispersed workforce. From remote employees that work in a home office to "road warrior" executives and a traveling sales force, today's small and mid-sized business can literally extend its presence globally, establish multiple locations to serve local markets, and tap into a wider labor pool to attract the most talented employees nationwide. The question: How does your business create the technological foundation to prepare itself to take advantage of this opportunity?

The Distributed Workforce

The trend toward a "distributed workforce" holds tremendously positive implications for small and mid-sized companies. In the past, managing multiple offices, warehouses, remote employees and tapping into opportunity beyond the local business community was better left to a large enterprise with deep pockets. But today's small business can operate just like a large company while remaining nimble and keeping overhead costs in check. *Communications* and *Access to Information* are two of the most important aspects of successfully decentralizing operations. The ability to operate as if everyone was in the same office with access to the same information, anywhere and anytime, is a key component of leveraging the benefit of a mobile or distributed workforce.

A Quick Note About Communications

Just like email that reaches its recipient regardless of where he or she is located, your telephone communications infrastructure must make it easy for customers and vendors to reach the intended contact within your company. Web-based Virtual Phone systems and Voice over Internet Protocol ([VoIP](#)) provide technology that can easily route incoming calls to a home office or mobile phone just about anywhere in the world...a task that is tremendously more difficult with a traditional land line telephone system. Internet telephony is often significantly less expensive than traditional phone lines, offers a wider range of features, and requires minimal equipment. Most importantly to your customers, it appears as if they are calling your main office and are seamlessly routed to the appropriate personnel within your company ... wherever they may be located.

Access to Information

With multiple locations, remote employees, field service personnel and a sales force that is perpetually on the road, quick and easy access to information in your business system becomes vitally important to ensure that those remote and/or mobile employees remain efficient and productive. Your Sage MAS 90 or MAS 200 system is built on technology that will support this objective. There are a variety of solutions and options for configuring your MAS 90/200 system for remote access. One of the keys in deciding how to best support your endeavor to provide timely access to important information is to classify members of your remote workforce in one of two categories: full-time operators and part-time users.

Full-Time Operators

These are employees, such as Accounting Department personnel, that are trained on the system, process transactions regularly, and require access to the full set of features within MAS 90/200. These folks are basically running MAS 90/200 remotely as if they were sitting at a desk in the office. A few of the options for enabling full remote access to MAS 90/200 include a Virtual Private Network ([VPN](#)), Microsoft Terminal Server, and GoToMyPC ([Click Here](#) to learn about GoToMyPC for Sage Software customers). Beyond just your MAS 90/200 system, these remote solutions can also provide access to other applications such as email, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, etc. Of course all of these solutions offer the security of password protection and encrypted data.

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Part-Time Users

The needs of part-time users can vary, but essentially these folks need only occasional access to MAS 90/200 to run a report, for example, or check a customer's credit history before placing an order. To distinguish from full-time operators, part-time users are not heavy transaction processors and typically only need to reference information (like inventory levels or customer history) prior to making a decision in the field or on the road. Although, occasionally this group may enter data into the system. An example might be a project-based company that collects time and expense data from employees in the field. [Sage Timesheet for MAS 90 and MAS 200](#), a time and expense tracking module that is integrated with Job Cost, Payroll, Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable, offers a web-based interface that makes it easy for project personnel to enter their time and expense using any computer with a web-browser. For your traveling/remote sales force, [Sage CRM solutions](#) offer mobility features that provide real-time information about customers, inventory, shipping status and open orders directly to a Smartphone, wireless mobile device or PDA. And in the case of busy executives who are often away from the office, [Business Alerts](#) (delivered via email) and [Business Insights Dashboard](#) (accessible through Internet Explorer) ensure that they stay on top of key metrics that monitor the financial health of operations.

Today's technology offers tremendous opportunity for small and medium-sized businesses to improve connectivity among remote staff, effectiveness of sales teams and globe-trotting executives and efficiency of personnel at a remote office or warehouse so that your business can be anywhere and everywhere ... just like a big enterprise!

Reminder: Sage Summit Customer Conference

Sage Software's annual conference for MAS 90 and MAS 200 customers will be hosted November 3-6, 2007 at the McCormick West Convention Center in Chicago, IL.

[Click Here](#) for more information or to register.

5 Fantastic Google Secrets You Need to Know

As you know, Google is one of the top search engines on the internet. But many people don't use Google to its full potential. Most of us simply type in a search term and hope for the best. But did you know that Google goes far beyond simple search engine capabilities? The following 5 secrets provide advanced search tips and other Google services that can improve your internet experience.

- 1. Advanced Operators** – these are query words that have special meaning to Google. For example, including *"intitle"* in your query restricts the search results to just the titles of web pages. A search for *"intitle:google"* will return documents that mention the word "Google" in their title. Another handy Advanced Operator is *"define"* which provides a definition of the word you enter after it. *"define:elephant"* for instance, returns a definition of the word elephant (which includes both a 5-toed pachyderm and the symbol of the Republican Party). A listing of Advanced Operators can be found at www.google.com/help/operators.html.
- 2. Currency Conversion** – Google also provides a built-in currency converter. Simply typing "5 USD in GBP" into the standard Google search box will convert \$5 US dollars into the equivalent in British Pounds (and it isn't worth much these days!).
- 3. Google Alerts** – provides email updates of the latest news on topics that you choose. This comes in handy when you are trying to stay on top of developments or competitors in your industry. Creating alerts is simple and can be set up at www.google.com/alerts.
- 4. Free Google Software & Tools** – Google offers a collection of free software and internet browsing tools to enhance your web surfing and computing experience. A few of these tools include Norton Security Scan, Spyware Doctor, StarOffice (includes free Word Processing and Spreadsheet applications), and a Web Accelerator to improve web page performance. [Click Here](#) for information about Google Pack software and [Click Here](#) for the Google Web Accelerator.
- 5. I'm Feeling Lucky** – Ever wonder what that button on Google's search page means? It's a shortcut that will take you directly to the first (and presumably most relevant) web page that Google returned for your query. You will not see the thousands of other search results which means you spend less time combing through results and more time surfing relevant sites.



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