News From GMS

A Publication for GMS Accounting and Revolving Loan System Clients

GMS, Inc. • 10559 Metropolitan Ave., Kensington, MD 20895 • (800)933-3501 • Fax (301) 933-3502 • www.gmsactg.com

Volume 17, No. 8 *August 2005*

GMS Service Chat Room Celebrates First Anniversary!

It has been a year since GMS put the Service Chat Room into place. Currently, we are answering questions from around 40 clients per day using this service. It is a great way for you to get answers to your simple questions immediately, without placing a service call and waiting for a call back. Complex calls still require a service call so we can research those issues, but if you have an easy, quick question, the Service Chat Room is the way to go!

Examples of some of the questions that are answered through chat are: One of my CD batches has the wrong posting period, where can I change it? How can I get financial reports in the middle of the month? Questions such as these are easily and quickly answered in chat, and you can be on your way without waiting for a telephone call.

Here is how Service Chat works. There are two GMS staff members in the chat room all day from 9am until 5pm Eastern time. One person is assigned to answer questions at different times during the day, the other is there to simply monitor. On occasions we will get booted out of the room and not know it, so the second person is there as a backup whenever that happens. You will type in your question and the GMS staff person will type in an answer, possibly asking other questions to be clear on your problem. At times there are several people in the room at one time. When that happens, you may be asked to join a Private Chat conversation, so you don't have to "filter" through all the various conversations on one screen. Private chat will pop up possibly behind the initial chat window, or it may be accessed by an icon on the bottom tool bar. In order to answer in private chat just click on the icon that says

Continued on page 4

Reminder!

You are responsible for backing up your database and DOS Text files

Two great RLSS-Windows Features

There are several features standard in RLSS Windows that were only available in RLSS DOS as supplements. Two of these are Quick Date Listings and Conversations.

Quick Date Listings is designed to provide "tickler" files. The four date fields found in the Loan Master files (approval date, closing date, first payment due date, and maturity date) are always available as search criteria in Quick Date Listings. Additionally, any optional field established as type "date" is also available. A date range is selected, the field to be searched is identified, and the resulting report reflects pertinent information related to the loans found through the search. This information identifies the borrower, includes contact information, and the criteria specified in the search process.

Quick Date Listings can save considerable staff time. If, for example, your borrowers are required to provide you with proof of insurance on a regular basis, an optional field may be established as a date field. Data within that field is entered and updated through Loan Master files. Quick Date Listings could then be used to pull a report reflecting which loans are to provide insurance verification within a specified time, ex: 09/01/05-09/30/05. The report automatically includes contact information for the identified loans, allowing staff to start making follow-up phone calls, etc.

Continued on page 4

In This Issue: Q & A From Annual Conference Pt. 2…DOS Program Backup Request…

Part 2 - Accounting Questions, Suggestions and Comments from Conference

Q: Change the font used in the software to Arial. You are now using Times New Roman and many times the "tails" on characters are cluttering and make for difficult reading.

A: We had to make the decision on what font would be used prior to doing any programming of the software. The staff decided at that time that Times New Roman should be used.

Q: On the GJ entry screen, can we have the option to print all journal entries together and not print each on a separate page?

A: On the GJ entry screen, along with all of the other data entry screens, there is a print button that is for the "print books of entry". It is designed to print one document per page so you can attach documentation for that entry. On the GJ Batch Control Form, the print button is for printing the Batch report which includes all of the journal entries in that batch.

Q: When entering budgets with multiple elements, it would be easier if each project's elements came up separately when entering prior year amounts or editing existing budget amounts.

A: A budget name should be assigned to each grant/contract. If your budget is for the entire project, then the budget name should contain all of the elements within that project. If each element within a project is for a separate grant/contract, then you should have assigned a budget name for each element. If a budget name has not been assigned to a grant/contract, if you roll forward that project or element, it will use the description as set up in the masters files for the budget name and will ask you what the start of your budget year is.

Q: When entering new expense GL codes and it asks the question, "Do you want to include GL code ##### in the indirect base?" The NO button should be highlighted not the YES button.

A: It only asks the question for those agencies that have "Other Direct Costs" checked in their Indirect Cost Setup. When checked it means that you have direct costs in addition to personnel costs in your indirect base. It is more common for GMS clients that have that checkbox marked that their base include all direct costs with the exception of a few GL codes. That is why the Yes button is highlighted.

Q: In Existing Budgets, the combo box needs to include the project number with the name. Most projects have 2 in one year.

A: GMS recommends that when you enter the budget names, you begin the name with the project or element code, depending on whether or not the budget is for the entire project.

Q: We have 26 pay periods in the year. We have two deductions that we only withhold 24 times a year. Is there a way for the system to set up a maximum monthly amount to be deducted?

A: No. At the present time, under the payroll setup for deduction codes, you have the option to set the deduction up with a pay period maximum or a year-to-date maximum. You also have the option to take the yearly deduction amount and divide it by 26 and that is what you withhold each pay period. However, doing that makes it more difficult to manage with new hires and terminations. That is why we ask "All deductions?" when preparing payroll.

Q: When you print reports to the screen, can it default to 75% size rather than 100% so I don't have to scroll to the right to see all of the columns on the report?

A: We prefer to keep the default at 100% since that is the normal size. However, it you would rather not change each report from 100% to 75%, you have the option to make your display resolution higher so the characters print smaller.

Q: It would be nice to be able to print just the active project codes, not both active and terminated. I heard this was on the work program, when can we expect this?

A: What is on the work program related to this is expanding Supplement #521 Terminate Elements to also include Terminate GL codes. When that supplement is installed, you have the option to print Active and Terminated program elements separately or include both. That option will also be available for GL codes when that supplement is revised, which hopefully will be done in 2005.

Q: When you enter a new vendor, can the vendor code be automatically assigned to the next available code?

A: We purposely did not make the vendor code field an auto number field because we have had many GMS clients in the past who reserved groups of vendor codes for various groups of vendors or people. Displaying the highest code used is irrelevant in so many cases because that would be the highest number for the highest group.

Q: When will drill down software be ready on the Balance Sheet and R & E Reports?

A: We have not determined an exact time to purchase the third party software that will allow the drill downs. Because of several work program items, a couple of

Continued on page 3

Accounting Questions and suggestions…
continued from page 2

new supplements, archive software and automatic installation routines that need to be completed in 2005, I'm hoping we can research and purchase the third party software and incorporate into our program sometime in 2006.

Q: When we print a report to the screen, why can't we scroll through all pages without using the arrows to change pages?

A: Crystal Reports default to using page breaks. When we first started writing the program we would have had to do additional programming to get around that default.

Q: What would be the recommendation if a vendor changes names mid year? Should we create a new vendor code with the new name or change the existing vendor code to the new name?

A: Change the vendor name of the present code that is set up.

Q: In both the Accounting and RLSS programs, why can't you have multiple reports open at one time?

A: It is because of the way the reports were designed using the crystal report viewer. A lot of additional programming would have had to be done to allow this which would have increased the size of the program drastically.

Q: Could you add a button on the A/P Check form for reprinting checks with check numbers?

A: That is currently on our work program.

Q: We received a couple of notes requesting that we make the Complete PO supplement more secure.

A: We need more specifics on what you are looking for the supplement to do. Send an email to service4gms@gmsactg.com, attn. Linda.

Q: A couple of questions were put in the suggestion box requesting that read only writes be added to the security tables.

A: This is already on our work program. You will be able to assign full rights, read only rights (not allow making changes) and no rights at all.

Q: In DOS, in the Ask for YTD Information, you could choose to include remarks which would include the description. Can this be added to the windows Transaction Code Listing?

A: This option is available in Supplement #337 Cost Summary.

Send DOS Program Backups In Please

All GMS clients using GMS DOS software should make program backups of all GMS software they use and submit it to our Maryland office no later than August 31, 2005. Additional program backups should be made for your files. For the accounting system, backups should be made from your current directory.

Up-to-date program backups make it easy to assist you in getting your accounting, RLSS, and fixed assets systems up and running properly should problems occur with your computer. If it is necessary for GMS to redo program revisions due to not having a recent program backup, we will charge $75 per hour.

Program backups are requested in February and August. However, if program changes occur during the year, we strongly encourage you to make a new program backup at that time. Below are instructions for preparing program backups. If you need assistance, please contact our service staff.

[ ] New or reformatted diskettes should be used for each set of program backups.

Quantity required:

Accounting-	at least 5 diskettes
RLSS -	2 diskettes
Fixed Assets-	1 diskette

[ ] Go to the Main Menu of the applicable system

[ ] Select Backup Procedures

Accounting -	Menu selection #8
RLSS -	Menu selection #6
Fixed Assets -	Menu selection #5

[ ] Next Select

Accounting - Menu Selection #4 Program Backup

RLSS - Menu Selection #3 Program Backup

Fixed Assets - Enter Start to begin

[ ] The automatic program backup will begin. Follow screen prompts.

[ ] Label each diskette with "GMS Program Backup", your agency name, type of system (accounting , RLSS, Fixed Assets) client number, and current date. Number the diskettes in the order they are used during the backup - this helps us locate programs faster.

[ ] Mail diskettes to GMS, ATTENTION: BACKUPS.

[ ] Prepare a second set of program backups for your files - repeat the above steps for each system.

Schedules You Should Have Read for Your Auditor

A major contribution you can make for a smooth and efficient audit is to assemble and have available a number of reference schedules and documents. Your auditors may have specific requests for certain schedules, but following is a general list.

- ❐ Chart of Accounts
- ❐ Current Year Indirect Cost Plan & Rate Agreement
- ❐ Bank Reconciliations
- ❐ Schedule of Prepaid Insurances
- ❐ Schedule of Other Prepaid Expenses
- ❐ Schedule of Advances/Schedule of Deposits
- ❐ Schedule of Fixed Assets
- ❐ Accounts Payable Listing
- ❐ Schedule of Accrued Leave By Employee
- ❐ Schedule of Cost Allocation and Supporting Rate Calculations
- ❐ Schedule of Federal and State Accounts Receivable
- ❐ Schedule of Other Accounts Receivable
- ❐ Schedule of Accrued Interest Income Calculation
- ❐ Schedule of Accrued Interest Expense Calculation
- ❐ Schedule of Deferred Revenue/Refundable Advances
- ❐ Schedule of Grant and Contract Cash To be Returned To Grantors
- ❐ Summary of Agency Revenue and Expenses
- ❐ Summary of Revenue and Expenditures by Project

For more detailed information on the above schedules and documents, refer to your Help or electronic user manual under Year End, Auditing the GMS System.

RLSS Two Great RLSS Features…
continued from page 1

Conversations was originally designed to document phone conversations between the lender and the borrower. Entry includes an automatic date (which you can override if desired) and entry of pertinent data. Any information that is entered is then easily accessible on all workstations running GMS-RLSS software.

Conversations is also a great way to save staff time. It offers a speedy way to share information among staff without making phone calls, sending emails, or putting "little yellow stickies" in the loan folder. If desired, conversations may be printed in total or by date range, or deleted entirely when no longer pertinent to the loan.

If you have not yet ordered the RLSS Windows upgrade, you can do so at our website: www.gmsactg.com., Contact Liz Collins, 800-933-3501, ext 2 if you have any questions.

GMS Service Chat Room…
continued from page 1

ann4gms, or the appropriate service person's name. When you are finished with your conversation, you simply close out of the chat room window.

To enter the Service Chat room, while in GMS click on Help, GMS Web Help, Service Calls, Service Chat and Downloads. Click on Service Chat. Type in a login name (you do not need to pre-register), using your agency number and first name, such as 0111_Sara, then just login. You do not need a password. If you have problems logging into chat, your IT person may have to make some adjustments to your web browser settings. Our web browser site is on port 21, and you need to be able to open that port.

Come join us in chat with your quick, easy questions! It is a great time saver, and is a big hit with those clients who use it regularly!

Split Bi-Weekly Payrolls and Using Ask for Hours

Service calls are occasionally received asking what to enter when the message "Please enter the hours this employee worked this pay period" is displayed when you are entering two timesheet batches for one pay period for an employee who is set up on Ask for Hours. This would be done if the pay period had days in two different months and you wanted to charge the time properly to the month the work was performed, especially at year end. To explain the calculation, the example has four days worked in one month and 6 days worked in the following month. First, for the timesheet batch to be charged in the first month, you would take the total number of hours an employee worked for the four days, divide the total by four which gives you the average hours worked in a day times 10 days in the pay period.

The calculation would be as follows:

Total hours worked in four days: 36

$36 \div 4 = 9$

$9 \times 10 = 90$

The total number of hours to be entered for this employee would be 90. It will then calculate the correct hourly rate so the total salary cost will be accurate.

Footprints in the sands of time were not made by sitting down.