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

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Producing Reports from Your Old Fiscal Year

Several Windows clients have asked GMS staff how they can produce reports from their old fiscal year without reversing the roll forward process. We have suggested that they can set it up to allow logging in under GMS1 or GMS2 which will look at their final year end copy of their database and allow them to produce reports only.

In order for this process to be effective, you will need to make a copy of your database at the time you have completed the year end closeout procedures. Instructions to set up this directory are as follows.

- ❒ Using Windows Explore, setup a folder called FY____ database. i.e. FY05 database will be used in these instructions.
- ❒ Copy and paste the conversion.mdb that contains your final year end data into the FY05 database folder.
- ❒ From your Start menu, click on Control Panel. For Windows 98 and 2000, control panel will be listed under Settings on your start menu.
- ❒ In Control Panel, select Administrative Tools, Select Data Sources (ODBC).

For Windows 98, Data Sources (ODBC) is listed on the control panel.

- ❒ Select the System DSN tab.
- ❒ Unless you have more than one database, you should only have Convert listed in this window. Some of you may have previous backups listed also. Click on the Add button.

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Remember to Back Up Your Database!

GMS Service Chat Celebrates Second Anniversary!

It has been two years since GMS put the Service Chat Room into place. Currently, we are answering 20 - 30 client questions 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!

To enter the Service Chat room, while in GMS click on Help, GMS Web Help, Service Calls, Service Chat and Downloads. (Or if you are still using our DOS software, you can go to our web site, www.gmsactg.com.) 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.

Following is a list of important do's and don't's for the chat room:

DO

- ➨ Use your client number and name to log in (i.e. 0111_Sara)
- ➨ Ask quick easy questions.

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RLSS Master Query: It's Easier Than You Think

Master Query is probably the most powerful and versatile component of the GMS-RLSS program. Beyond the standard selections on the Reports menu, Master Query can provide you with a variety of additional reports. All fields found within Loan Master file, including Optional Fields, can be queried to create a comprehensive report.

Although it might take a bit of practice to become proficient in using Master Query, there are only a few basic steps involved. We've tried to make it as simple as possible to create reports, including numbering the steps taken to do so.

1 **Select the fields you wish to search** – clicking on the drop menu will produce a list of all fields found within Loan Master, as well as some fields related to loan activity, an example being new balance. Think about which loans you want to appear on the report. For example, if you are looking for loans over $10,000, select "loan amount". If you are looking for loans that have made a payment recently, select "activity date."

2 **Search Criteria** – once you have identified which field to search, step 2 gives you opportunity to determine what data you want to find within that field. If you are looking for loans over $10,000, select "greater than" and enter 9999. If you are searching for loans that have made a recent payment, select "greater than" and enter the date as mm/dd/yy.

Note: once you have completed step 1 and 2, a screen prompt will appear asking "Do you wish to make more selections?" The search can be narrowed further by clicking on "yes" and making more selections in step 1.

3 **Fields to be included on report** – the field(s) selected in step 1 should also be included in step 3 to allow verification that the proper loans were identified, and is selected by clicking on the desired field. Any other available field in step 3 may be included on the report. To select more than one field in step 3, hold down the ctrl key and click on the additional fields.

4 **Report Format** – select "list the data" or "labels".

5 **Sort Options** – reports can be sorted by either the loan number or alphabetically.

Once the 5 steps are completed, there is an option to include the borrower's address. Another option is to save the report selections. This may be especially useful when creating a report that may be needed on an ongoing basis. If the saved criteria is later retrieved and the report created again, it will use updated information recorded in your database through adding or editing Loan Master files or through posting loan activity.

Once you click on "prepare report" the program will launch Microsoft Excel and move the data into a spreadsheet. At that point, formatting, sorting, adding formulas and saving the report become Excel options.

Things to Remember: Some fields selected in step 1 relate to combo boxes within the Loan Master file. A good example is "gender", which when selected results in a display of "male" and "female", allowing you to check which gender is to be included on the report. Once you have selected the desired response, tap the enter key to move automatically to the "equal to" field in step #2. Click on the circle to the left of "equal to", then tap enter again to move the choice made in step 1 automatically into step 2.

If the data to be included on the report includes a date range, it is necessary to select that field twice in step 1. If, for example, you want to pull a report reflecting loans closed in 2006, in step 1 select "closingdate" and in step 2 enter "greater than" 12/31/05. When prompted for more selections, respond "yes" and again select "closingdate" in step 1. This time, in step 2 enter "less than" 01/01/07. The resulting report will show all loans with a closing date within 2006.

Using Optional Fields in the report requires a few more steps, and is outlined in the Help section of the program.

With a bit of practice, you'll be able to create reports as needed. As always, feel free to call GMS Service if you need assistance with Master Query.

Have You Had A Change in Staff?

GMS just recently upgraded their client tracking and billing system. As we were converting the data and also making calls regarding converting to the Windows software, we realized that some of you may have had some changes in staffing within your agency that we were not aware of. Could you please take a minute and update us? Our system shows the name of your Executive Director, Fiscal Director and any staff member who is a contact and could call in for service on any of your GMS software.

On our website www.gmsactg.com you will find an option on the menu (left hand side of the page) called Client Information Update. This makes it very easy to provide the new information for us to input in the system. Another way is to just send an email to service4gms@gmsactg.com with the information as to who has left and who replaced them. It is really helpful for us to have this information correct in the system and helps us provide better service in the future!

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- ❒ From the list of drivers, double click on Microsoft Access Driver (*mdb). Once selected it will return you to the ODBC Microsoft Access Setup Form.
- ❒ In the Data Source Name field, type convert1. (If convert1 already exists, use convert2).
- ❒ Click on Select. In the boxes on the right, click on the driveand directory in which your FY05 database folder exists and double click on it. (This will put conversion.mdb in the screen on the left.) Double click on the conversion.mdb. This will put \FY05 database\conversion.mdb in the ODBC Microsoft Access Setup screen to the right of the word **Database.** If on the F drive it should say F:\FY05database\conversion.mdb. Click OK.

You will now be back at the System DSN tab and convert1 will be highlighted.

- ❒ Click on OK, close out of the Control Panel and return to the desktop.
- ❒ When you log into the GMS Accounting System, from the Organization combo box, select GMS1 if your last year database is set up using convert1. Select GMS2 if you set it up using convert2.

Note 1: If your agency currently has an IT person on staff, you can have him or her change the login information on the GMS Accounting System login screen to identify what fiscal year you are logging into. To accomplish this, everyone will need to be out of GMS. The IT Person will need to go into your current conversion.mdb file located in your \convert directory. Go into Tables, and locate tblCompanies. Double click to open the table. Once in the table they may see under the Company column GMS1 and GMS2. Depending on which directory you have selected in the process above (convert1 or convert2), you can change GMS1 and GMS2 in this table to FY05. Once the table has been changed, they may exit the table and exit the database. Now when you log into the GMS Accounting System you will see FY05 instead of GMS1 or GMS2.

Note 2: If your agency anticipates accessing this database in the future, you will need to update this database with the GMS Windows Accounting Revisions that are currently being posted to our website quarterly. You will want to continue updating the copy of the previous year's database for as long as you intend to access it for report purposes in order to ensure compatibility between the database and the program.

GMS Service Chat Room…
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- ➨ Keep questions as short as possible. If too much information is typed in it won't be displayed on the screen.
- ➨ Log out when the conversation is finished.
- ➨ Pay attention to the chat conversation. Don't get distracted by others in your office and forget about the chat conversation. Our time is valuable too.

DON'T'S

- ➨ Don't place a service call and then come into chat. This is a waste of time. If we can't answer your question in chat we may ask you to place a call, but please don't do both.
- ➨ Don't start a private chat conversation unless asked to by the service person.
- ➨ Don't ask questions about involved issues. As an example, year-end questions are really not a subject for the chat room.
- ➨ There are two service staff members logged into the chat room. One is taking the lead on the questions for the time they have been assigned. The other one is there to make sure the designated staff person doesn't get too busy with too many different chat conversations. If you are in the middle of a chat conversation with one staff member, DON'T request the other service staff to go into private chat and ask the same question. The service staff are all trying to respond to all of our client's chat questions and service calls. It is a waste of time and too confusing if you are having two conversations at the same time with two different staff members.

If there are several people in the room at one time you may be instructed that you will receive an answer through private chat. When that happens 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 has that service person's name. When you are finished with your conversation, you simply close out of the chat room window.

If you would like to print the chat conversation, you can highlight the entire conversation, then hit CTRL C on the keyboard. This will copy the highlighted conversation, then you can open a word document or notepad and paste. You can print from there if you wish.

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!

Hint for Calendar Date Fields

Do you want to go back in time quickly? Although this isn't possible to do with your life, you can do it with the GMS software. Whenever you have a date field with the little arrow pointing down, you can bring up a calendar and click on the appropriate date. If you find that you want to go back more than one month, rather than clicking on the left arrow at the top of the calendar, click on the month name. This will bring up a listing of all twelve months that will allow you to quickly select the appropriate month. Likewise, if you want to go to a previous year, click on the year that appears and you'll receive up/down arrows to cycle through the years.

In the GMS Accounting system, you'll find this very helpful in the Outstanding Check Reconciliation and in supplements such as Fixed Assets, Schedule of Federal Assistance and Personnel History.

Within RLSS, this is beneficial for Quick Date Listings, Conversations, Late Notices, and Loan Coupons.

Tricks with List Boxes

"List boxes" allow you to select one or more items to be included in your reports. By clicking on just one item, you'll receive only that item for your report. If you want several items that are in a continuous series within your list box, you may select these items by simply dragging your mouse to highlight these items or use shift click on the first and last items in your range. Should you want multiple items that are not in a continuous series, hold down on your Ctrl key as you click on your selections.

To quickly get to an item to be selected that is in the middle or end of your list box, you can select code order, click with your mouse in that list box, and then type in the first number of the item you are wishing to search for. You will automatically be taken to the first occurrence of that number.

A good example is if you are in the General Ledger with Current Detail and wish to only print code 50000 Salaries. Simply click in the left hand list box so the computer knows the code you are looking for is contained in that list box and not the list box to the right. Next, type the number 5. You will immediately be taken to the first instance of codes beginning with 5. You may then click on 50000 with your mouse and it will be included in your report.

Another possibility is you may wish to find a certain vendor code in your Payment History supplement. By removing the checkmark in the All Vendor box and then clicking on the Vendor Code box you will bring up the list box of vendors. Click once in this list box and type in the first digit of the vendor code you wish to go to. The first vendor code beginning with that number will appear in your list box.

Supplement #327 Complete Purchase Orders

If you're looking for a comprehensive system to produce and monitor purchase orders, try the GMS Complete Purchase Order supplement. Data entry features include entry of requisition number, optional and default shipping detail, as well as a separate tab for obligating program expenses and finding requisitions. PO's are cleared through voucher data entry. A voucher can reference an unlimited number of PO's and expense distribution detail is automatically transferred to the voucher. When obligating expenses to programs, it checks for the availability of funds against the budget less expense and other obligations. In the Ask for Purchase Order reporting option you may include a range of PO numbers, to and from dates, all or specific vendors, projects, elements, expense codes and status. The status of a purchase order may be designated as approved, denied, requested, and completed. This information may be displayed, printed, or exported.

The Complete Purchase Order program can, in addition to producing and printing a purchase order, produce Revenue and Expenditure reports that reflect the overall financial condition, including outstanding purchase order amounts of your programs to assist management in procurement decisions.

Schedules You Should Have Ready 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.

- 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