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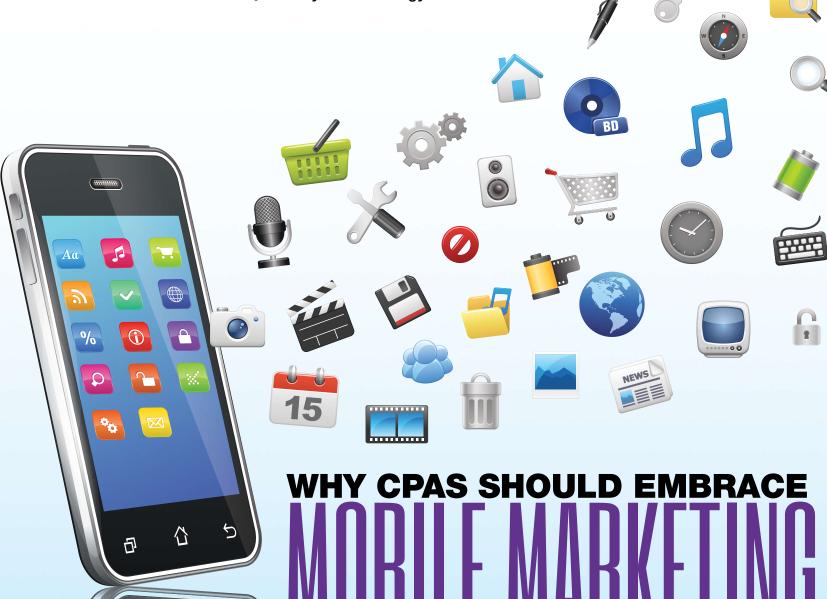An Accountant Testifies to the Profitability of Forensic Accounting

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— Accounting Systems for Nonprofits

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GMS Offers Complete Financial Management for Nonprofits, NGOs and Agencies

Grants Management Systems is a nonprofit accounting and financial management software designed for nonprofit organizations, NGOs, and government agencies that manage multiple grants or projects on a regular basis.

Offered as a complete accounting and financial management system, GMS offers users complete accounting functionality and contains GL, Cash Receipts, Budget Preparation, Cost Allocation, AP, Payroll, Timesheet Accounting, Financial Reporting, and Security features. New this year, GMS offers a lighter version of the GL and reporting system for organizations and entities that do not need AP, Payroll, and Cost Allocation functions. In addition to the accounting module, GMS also offers Revolving Loan Servicing Software. RLSS is designed for organizations that need to track data from multiple funding sources. RLSS integrates with the Accounting and Financial system, making it easy to keep track of loans from multiple sources.

GMS is designed to track all contracts, grants, projects and programs. Users can choose to run GMS using Microsoft Access, or the SQL Service Package. GMS can also be set up to run on cloud-based virtual servers.

GMS is available in 1-2 user, 3-4 user, and 5+ user editions. Designed specifically for those managing grant funding, GMS does not present itself as fund accounting, rather as grant or project management software.

GMS offers a basic chart of accounts structure that uses a 5-digit code. Program elements (activities or components of grants) use a 6-digit code and are pre-linked to automate posting, a good way to limit errors while also controlling costs. Users can easily track data at multiple levels; cost center level, project level, and reporting level – resulting in comprehensive reporting options.

The GMS cash receipts feature allows users to easily code and enter revenue directly into the appropriate grant or project, making it easy to track data and budgeting for multiple grants and projects, even those with different funding periods.

Users also have a choice when handling cost allocations, including common costs, general and administrative costs, indirect costs, fringe benefits, leave costs, and various specialized cost pools.

Users can maintain five types of budgets in GMS: Program, Indirect Cost, Fringe Benefit, YTD Timesheet, and an Agencywide Budget, with budgets able to cross fiscal years. Users can attach relevant documents to all system budgets as needed.

GMS easily handles payroll transactions, and now offers Direct Deposit capability. Users can set up multiple pay codes for deductions, special pay, multiple departments, department positions, workers compensation, state tax, pay codes, leave type garnishment deductions, and multiple pay rates.

The optional AP module can track information such as customer data and payment history, post cash receipts, track customer activity, and contains a customer inquiry screen. Users can create customer invoices or statements from the AR module as well. An optional Purchase Order module provides easy management of all POs in the system, as well as solid tracking capability. An optional Fixed Assets module tracks depreciation levels along with relevant asset disposition detail.

GMS offers good reporting options, with the system providing a variety of reports during month end processing, including a Monthly Timesheet, General Ledger Activities, and Cost Allocations. Financial reporting options include a Balance Sheet, Revenue and Expenditures by Project, and Revenue and Expenditures by Program. Users can utilize an optional Report Writer module to develop custom reports using GMS data.

The 1-2 user core GMS system is $3,500, with add on modules starting at $1,200. Support is required for the first year of use, and GMS requires on-site training at the user's location, with 2-3 weeks of training typically required for a 1-2 user system.

For more information, including access to GMS white papers or to download a free demo, visit www.gmsactg.com.

FIRST-HAND

Making a Difference in the Community

Helping the community is something that drives Janet Saunders, and has led to her involvement with various community groups. Now, as the CFO of the Community Action Program Committee in Pensacola, Florida, she oversees the finances and organizational management of a group that runs a variety of programs for children, families, elderly residents and those who may need assistance in transitioning between residences or jobs.

The nonprofit is most well known for running the Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the area, with a main office and 16 satellite classrooms on area school district properties. The programs are focused on promoting school readiness and enhancing social and cognitive development of children through health, educational, nutritional, social and other services.

CAPC's other community programs include a young entrepreneurs academy, youth work certification programs, healthy living programs for seniors and disabled residents, weatherization, self-sufficiency classes, and even summer arts and enrichment classes.

With such numerous programs and a $17 million annual budget funded by a variety of state, federal and pass-through grants, managing the finances for the organization is a full-time job that requires a powerful nonprofit accounting system. Saunders, who has been involved with the organization since 1990, said they were non-computerized until 1995, when they decided to try more effective management techniques. She attended a local technology conference and discovered GMS Software and saw how much more effective they could be with the system. They bought the software in 1996 and have been using it since then.

"We really didn't need to convert any data, since we were running everything on paper," she said. "We just needed to get it all set up, and the representative from GMS helped us do that, setting up all of our accounts and programs and projects."

The GMS system is specifically designed for nonprofits, with a core general ledger package that includes cash receipts, GL, budgeting, monthly processing, cost allocation and month-end reporting. The system also has available AP and payroll functions, which CAPC relies on heavily, since it has about 190 full time staff. The system also helps manage the nonprofit's assets, which include multiple vehicles, computers and other equipment.

For year-end closing and reporting, Saunders said she really appreciates the peace of mind that she gets from using an optional service from GMS where an experienced professional visits in person to close out the books, roll things over to the next year and print out all reports and functional statements for their auditors. The organization uses the regional accounting firm of Saltmarsh Cleaveland & Gund to do its audit work, and Saunders said the firm likes that the year-end close book is prepared in such a way.

"The best thing about GMS is that I can get any report anytime I want, and then I can easily customize it to include exactly the data I want," Saunders said. "It also has a full report writer, so that I can create new reports based on our needs and the information our board or other stakeholders need."

In the 20 years that the Community Action Program Committee of Pensacola has been using GMS for its accounting and nonprofit management needs, Saunders says that the program has always stayed up-to-date with technology and changing reporting needs, while being user friendly and easy to train new staff on. GMS staff include specialists in grant and contract accounting, which Saunders said also makes her feel comfortable with the advice and tips they offer her group. ●

Visit GMS Software Online at:
www.GMSActg.com

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EXPERIENCE.
RELIABILITY.
TRUST.

GMS

For over 30-years, Grants Management Systems, Inc. has provided NFP organizations with experience, reliability and trust. GMS's cost-effective, fully integrated NFP accounting and financial management software includes:

- Integrated Cost Allocation
- Budgeting, Accounting & Reporting for Multiple Grant Years
- Integrated Payroll, Leave Accounting & Labor Distribution
- Document Attachment & Automatic PDF Reports

- Over 60 supplemental options to further customize your system including Report Writer, Accounts Receivable, Fixed Assets Inventory and Purchase Orders
- GMS also offers Revolving Loan Servicing Software

Services Offered:
- On-site training by nonprofit accounting professionals
- Continuing service and support by phone, live chat and email
- On-site assistance in year-end closing and audit preparation

"GMS software is an excellent accounting management tool for non-profits. The software allows users to track individual grant program revenues & expenditures with ease. GMS also utilizes current technologies to import and export to computer files eliminating the need to keep countless paper records, which is important in today's paperless environment. With quick response times and a knowledgeable staff, the support GMS provides is unmatched to other software providers I have been involved with."
- Sam Johnson, Regional Transit Authority

Visit www.gmsactg.com to download your free 90-day trial or
call 800.933.3501 ext. 420 to schedule a live demo and receive pricing.