

**PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR
COMPANIES WHO HAVE
OUTGROWN PEACHTREE**

**MIGRATING FROM PEACHTREE TO
DYNAMICS GP**

ASA RESEARCH - SEPTEMBER 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose of this Report.....3

About Peachtree by Sage3

Peachtree Editions & SRP Pricing3

How To Tell When You’ve Outgrown Peachtree4

Peachtree’s Feature Set5

Peachtree Databases6

Squeezing the Last Few Drops Out of Peachtree9

Evaluating New Replacement Accounting Systems10

The Peachtree to Microsoft Dynamics GP Migration Path10

 1. More Features11

 2. Stronger Database12

 3. Peachtree Data Conversion12

 4. Breadth of Modules12

 5. Affordable Pricing14

 6. Stronger Financial Reporting14

 7. Similar Screen Design.....15

 8. Network Architecture16

 9. Web Browser Access.....17

 10. Access to Data.....18

Conclusion19

Disclosures & Disclaimers.....19

About the Author19

Foot Notes20

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Peachtree is an excellent accounting system for smaller companies, but as companies grow they often find that they need more extensive features and better database performance, hence it is possible for burgeoning companies to outgrow this product. To meet the needs of those companies who have outgrown Peachtree, Microsoft offers a Peachtree to Dynamics GP migration path which includes data conversion tools, affordable pricing options, and implementation assistance to help Peachtree users move up to a stronger accounting system. Accordingly, this report describes the strengths and limitations of Peachtree, provides practical advice for squeezing the most out of Peachtree, and provides guidance for migrating your company from Peachtree to Microsoft Dynamics GP.

ABOUT PEACHTREE BY SAGE

Peachtree by Sage (referred to in this report as “Peachtree”) is one of the world’s most popular accounting systems (behind QuickBooks) with more than one million users. For the money, Peachtree products provide excellent value and an outstanding assortment of features to meet the needs of smaller businesses. However, like all entry-level accounting system solutions, Peachtree products have their limitations, and burgeoning companies can quickly outgrow Peachtree by Sage’s strongest product offering. This article addresses this topic and offers practical advice for squeezing the most out of Peachtree, as well as suggestions for ultimately replacing Peachtree solutions by upgrading to the Dynamics GP.

PEACHTREE EDITIONS & SRP PRICING

Sage’s Peachtree Software produces five⁽¹⁾ editions of the Peachtree accounting system priced at escalating price points, as follows:

Product Name	Users	SRP ⁽¹⁾
1. Peachtree First Accounting 2009	1 user	\$69.99
2. Peachtree Pro Accounting 2009	1 user	\$169.99
3. Peachtree Complete Accounting 2009	1 user	\$269.99
	5 users	\$699.99
4. Peachtree Premium Accounting 2009 <i>(Also available in five different industry editions for accountants, construction, distribution, manufacturing and nonprofits)</i>	1 user	\$499.99
	5 users	\$1,199.99
5. Peachtree Quantum 2009 <i>(Also available in the Accountant’s edition)</i>	10 users	\$3,950.00
	15 users	\$5,950.00
	20 users	\$7,650.00
	30 users	\$9,450.00

Each of these products is essentially the same product, with an increasing number of features and functionality added. For example:

- *Peachtree Pro Accounting provides budgeting, sales orders, quotes, purchase orders, and other capabilities not found in Peachtree First Accounting.*
- *Peachtree Complete Accounting provides screen level security, inventory sub items, job costing by phase, and other capabilities not found in Peachtree Pro Accounting.*
- *Peachtree Premium Accounting provides budgeting, serialized inventory, departmental reporting, and other capabilities not found in Peachtree Complete Accounting.*
- *Peachtree Quantum provides a faster database, more users, quantity break pricing, and other capabilities not found in Peachtree Premium Accounting.*

Companies that outgrow less expensive editions of Peachtree may find adequate solutions by migrating upward to the more expensive editions of Peachtree. Ultimately, larger companies can outgrow even Peachtree's strongest solution – which is the focus of this report. Therefore, references in this report to "Peachtree" are intended to refer generally to all 2009 editions of Peachtree by Sage, including Peachtree's most expensive product offering - Peachtree Quantum.

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU'VE OUTGROWN PEACHTREE

Fast growing companies will typically outgrow Peachtree solutions in two different ways, as follows:

1. As companies grow and expand, the need for more advanced accounting system features expands as well. In general you can tell that you are starting to outgrow Peachtree's feature set when you must implement manual work around procedures, purchase ancillary third party applications, or find an increasing number of needed features lacking in Peachtree.
2. A company's increasing volume of transactions and concurrent users can outgrow the practical database and user capacities provided by Peachtree. In general, you can tell that you are beginning to outgrow Peachtree when you notice an unacceptable delay in the menus and screens when navigating Peachtree, when reports take an unacceptable amount of time to print, or when your number of users needing access to your accounting system exceeds Peachtree's maximum number of users.

These two issues are discussed in depth below.

PEACHTREE’S FEATURE SET

Peachtree provides a core set of features ideally targeted for smaller companies; but larger and growing companies often find that they need more sophisticated features. For example, Peachtree does not support multiple warehouse locations, allocation formulas, intercompany accounts, piece rates, item pictures, demand forecasting, and shelf life tracking. Based on a 2008 feature summary for 35 top accounting system solutions, Peachtree products ranked near the bottom behind 31 other popular accounting products (as shown in the table below).

2008 Feature Summary For 35 Top Accounting System Solutions ⁽³⁾			
Product Name	Number of Features Provided Right out of the Box	Additional Features Provided if you Customize the Product or Purchase add on Solutions	Number of Features Not Provided Right out of the Box
1 Microsoft Dynamics GP	2,512	511	560
2 Fourth Shift	2,477	557	549
3 Microsoft Dynamics NAV	2,395	640	548
4 Sage MAS 500 ERP	2,340	540	703
5 Sage Pro ERP	2,283	715	585
6 SouthWare Excellence Series	2,251	683	649
7 Microsoft Dynamics AX	2,098	802	683
8 Microsoft Dynamics SL	2,073	830	680
9 Sage MAS 200 ERP	2,041	758	784
10 Sage ACCPAC 200 ERP	2,000	965	618
11 Macola Progression	1,980	838	765
12 TRAVERSE	1,821	498	1,264
13 Certiflex Dimension	1,811	397	1,375
14 eBPCS	1,809	950	824
15 Ross Systems Renaissance CS	1,766	344	1,473
16 iScala	1,758	433	1,392
17 Compiere ERP/CRM	1,752	1,262	569
18 AGRESSO Software	1,697	776	1,110
19 Sage PFW ERP	1,584	800	1,199
20 Everest Advanced	1,500	380	1,703
21 TakeStock	1,455	85	2,043
22 FACTS	1,442	679	1,462
23 Made2Manage Manufacturing	1,441	448	1,694

24	SAP BusinessOne	1,426	953	1,204
25	AccountMate	1,391	1,344	848
26	Sage BusinessVision	1,348	379	1,856
27	Deltek Vision	1,347	175	2,061
28	Libra Signature Series	1,282	133	2,168
29	Cougar Mountain Accounting	1,225	55	2,303
30	UA Business Software	1,165	479	1,939
31	CYMA IV Accounting for Windows	1,153	260	2,170
32	Peachtree Quantum	1,140	180	2,263
33	Peachtree Premium Accounting	1,120	180	2,283
34	QuickBooks Enterprise	1,019	501	2,063
35	QuickBooks Pro	786	85	2,712

Products such as Sage BusinessVision, Everest Advanced, and Dynamics GP provide 208, 360, and 1,372 more features, respectively, than Peachtree’s strongest product offering – Peachtree Quantum. *(Please keep in mind that feature shortcomings in any product can be overcome by implementing manual work-around procedures.)* Obviously, as companies continue to grow, their needs for more accounting system features will grow as well. Ultimately these growing companies will need to consider upgrading to a more sophisticated system.

PEACHTREE DATABASES

The following information is provided to help the reader better understand the merits and limitations of Peachtree’s databases.

Peachtree’s Older Database Solution – One of the ways in which Peachtree targets small businesses is by employing a less expensive database which helps keep the overall price of Peachtree affordable for small businesses. Peachtree solutions offered prior to 2008 employed older versions of the Pervasive database which were perfectly adequate for most small businesses, but encountered performance issues when used by companies with databases larger than 60 MBs *(more or less depending upon a variety of factors such as the speed of the server, the quality of the network, the amount of network traffic, etc)*. In years past many Peachtree users reported to me that as their volume of transactions grew, Peachtree’s performance declined so much that their systems had become virtually unusable.

Peachtree newer Database Solution - To their credit, Peachtree has addressed these reported database performance issues by upgrading the entire Peachtree product line to newer versions of the Pervasive database. Today, Peachtree’s four lower tier solutions employ the Pervasive 10.0 database while Peachtree Quantum uses the Pervasive for Workgroups 10.0 database. The latter solution features new server based posting technology which allows faster response time when multiple users (up to 30) are entering data at the same time. The result is that Peachtree solutions now offer more robust databases than ever before; yet, many users still want to know

“what are the practical database limitations for these newer editions of Peachtree?” This is an important question worth further inquiry because a company’s accounting system is the lifeblood of the organization.

What are Peachtree’s New Limitations? - Sage does not officially publish database size limitations for Peachtree products. However, there is evidence that suggests that these performance thresholds are approximately 200 MB for Peachtree’s four lower tier solutions and approximately 500 MB to 2 GB for the Peachtree Quantum product. The evidence is as follows:

1. Peachtree support personnel reportedly encourage Peachtree users with databases larger than 200 MB to upgrade to the Peachtree Quantum product. This recommendation acknowledges the premise that Peachtree users can indeed reach a point in which the performance of the underlying database diminishes to unacceptable levels.
2. The Peachtree Quantum FAQ page provides the following direct quote *“Peachtree Quantum has been extensively tested at larger database sizes. You can reasonably expect to support database sizes that are 3 to 5 times 100MB, however results may vary based on different factors”*.⁽²⁾

Officially Peachtree maintains that all Peachtree’s databases are technically capable of reaching a maximum file size of 64GB, however these aforementioned facts suggest that the practical limits are far lower than 64GB. *(Please note that these performance thresholds are not toted as maximum limitations in data file size, rather they are offered as points in which performance might start to decline – users may not detect unacceptable levels of performance until after these databases have doubled or even quadrupled in size past these performance thresholds.)*

A Common Entry-Level Problem - Declining database performance is a common problem with virtually all entry-level accounting systems because this class of products tends to sit atop inexpensive databases in order to keep the price of the product low. As a result, these databases typically do not scale very high to accommodate larger volumes of transactions. Eventually, the data files swell up with too many transactions and the system’s performance begins to suffer. In response to this problem, Peachtree has rolled out Peachtree Quantum product – a solution which is basically the Peachtree Premium Accounting product with 20 additional features added and running atop a faster performing database. The drawback to this solution is the higher price point - Peachtree Quantum costs \$3,950 to \$9, 450, compared to just a few hundred dollars for Peachtree’s lower Tier solutions.

The Trend Towards Stronger Databases - The introduction of new Peachtree Quantum product in 2005 helps address the slower performing database problem for many Peachtree users, but this approach is not unique. In 2002 Peachtree’s chief rival – Intuit released QuickBooks Enterprise – a solution that is essentially the QuickBooks Premier product running atop a faster database. Priced up to \$9,000, QuickBooks Enterprise provides a migration path for QuickBooks users who’ve outgrown the database performance of the lower tier QuickBooks solutions.

Objective Database Performance Data is Elusive – Accounting software vendors are careful not to acknowledge performance issues with their underlying databases; to do so might provide rivals with competitive marketing ammunition. This explains why it is often difficult to exactly pinpoint file size limitations for any specific accounting system. Still there are telltale signs that Peachtree’s database performance is an issue throughout the Peachtree product line. For example, Peachtree by Sage’s support web site states: *“the Peachtree Purge Wizard can be used to purge jobs, inventory and their related transactions...resulting in a more efficient company file size, should provide improvements in overall system performance.”* This sentence seems to acknowledge that an increasing volume of transactions in Peachtree can hinder database performance. With or without official acknowledgement, it is widely documented in the real world that after a certain level of transactions, Peachtree’s performance decreases as a company’s number of transactions increase. Ultimately, as with all entry-level accounting systems, Peachtree’s performance will decline as the data files grow, and eventually performance may fall to unacceptable levels.

Peachtree Database File Statistics - Peachtree displays database size and number of records information when you select Help, Customer Support and Service, File Statistics from the Peachtree main menu. An example of the resulting Data file screen is shown below. This screen shows that the sample company database file size is 10.1 MB. This particular information can be useful to determining how close you are to outgrowing the Peachtree system. Specifically, each transaction posted in Peachtree was found to increase the data file size by 2 to 40 kilobytes⁽⁵⁾. While the size of a transaction in Peachtree depends widely on the type of transaction and number of lines used, let us assume that a simple 3 line recurring invoice in Peachtree increases the Peachtree database size by about 4 Kilobytes. This means that a company that processes 50, 100, 500, or 1,000 transactions per day will grow their databases by approximately 50 MB, 100 MB, 500 MB, and 1 GB MB in a given year, respectively. Compare these grow rates to the 200 MB and 2 GB performance thresholds discussed above, and you can easily see that after just a few years, Peachtree’s data files can swell up to unacceptable levels for many companies.

Name of File	Number of Records	Size in Kbytes
Forecast Detail	1431	222
General	7	56
Groups	3	11
Imported Account Info...	0	42
Imported Transaction ...	0	56
Inventory Tag	1093	300
Job	7	82
Jrnl Header	588	1161
Jrnl Rows	6262	3060
Jrnl Serial No.'s	37	76
Line Item	166	940
Memorized Trx Headers	9	222
Memorized Trx Rows	16	148
Predefined Rpts	0	3
Raise History	31	52
Reconsolidation	Not Opened	Not Found
Report Styles	4	24
Tax Authorities	6	6
Tax Codes	5	8
Tax Table	20	44
Template	8	38
Tickets	0	84
UPS Information	0	6
UPS Shipments	0	40
User	1	18
Vendor	29	164
Grand Total		10143

Directory: C:\Program Files\Sage Software\Peachtree\Company\BCS

Concurrent User Limitations - You can tell that you are starting to outgrow Peachtree when you have a growing need for more users to simultaneously access the accounting system than Peachtree allows. For example, the President, CFO and bookkeepers obviously need to access the accounting system each day; however larger companies often find it increasingly useful to also allow accounting system access to the purchasing clerk, sales manager, payroll clerk, order entry clerks, warehouse workers who are receiving inventory and packing shipments, etc. Accounting systems have evolved from basic trial balance and financial reporting solutions into sophisticated information systems. Accordingly, virtually everyone in your organization has a legitimate need to have access to the information contained therein.

Both Peachtree First Accounting and Peachtree Pro Accounting are limited to a maximum of just one user. Peachtree Complete Accounting and Peachtree Premium Accounting are limited to 5 concurrent users. Peachtree Quantum is limited to a maximum of 30 users. Outgrowing these thresholds is a sure sign that you need to migrate upward to a stronger solution.

SQUEEZING THE LAST FEW DROPS OUT OF PEACHTREE

If you determine that you have outgrown Peachtree, or if you are on the verge of outgrowing Peachtree, there are several measures that you can take that might temporarily relieve the problem allowing you to squeeze the most out of your Peachtree application. These measures are listed below in order of easier steps to increasingly more drastic steps:

1. **Update** - Update your Peachtree software to reflect the latest patches and tune up files. Recently Peachtree has released several updates that are designed to improve your experience. The installation of these patches and updates might alleviate your problems, or at least help.
2. **Turn Off Features** - Turn off selected Peachtree options in the Maintain Global Options dialog box such as Check spelling as you type, or change this setting from "Slow but accurate" to "fast but less accurate". Also change the settings under the Improve Performance tab to turn off Automatic field completion, drop down lists, and page length to gain a little more speed.
3. **Defragment the computer hard drive** - Initially, your computer saves all data sequentially on your hard drive – like using a single groove on a vinyl record item. However, over time as you erase small files from your hard drive, empty segments are created through the hard drive. Thereafter, Peachtree saves data files on these separate empty segments, causing the file to be fragmented and physically located on numerous parts of your hard drive. The defragmentation process will rewrite your Peachtree data files into one sequential location on your hard drive. The result is that Peachtree will then operate faster.
4. **Purge Data Files** - Purge the Peachtree Data files using the built in Peachtree Purge Wizard tool located on the Tasks, System menu. (Remember to first make a copy of your Peachtree data on hard drive so you can access it later if necessary). This tool will allow

you to remove transactions from closed periods, and purge inactive customers, vendors or employees from the system.

5. **Faster Computer** - Purchase a faster computer with a faster hard drive and RAM. The speed of the processor chip, hard drive, and RAM all effect the overall performance of the computer. Currently, computers are widely available running processors from 1.0 GHz to 4.0 Ghz; hard drives from 5400 RPM to 7200 RPM; and RAM speed from 400 Mhz to 667 Mhz. Upgrading from an older computer to a newer computer with these faster options can lead to a significant performance gain in Peachtree.
6. **Faster Network** - Install faster network cards, routers, hubs and cables (installed properly) on your local area network.
7. **File Server** - Instead of running Peachtree on a peer-to-peer network, install Peachtree on a top class file server (instead of an employee's workstation computer).
8. **Upgrade to Peachtree Quantum** – Peachtree offers a version of Peachtree running on a faster and more robust database called Peachtree Quantum. However, this product is priced from \$3,950 to \$9,450 and offers about 20 additional features. The Peachtree Quantum database accommodates larger file sizes and more concurrent users. While this is a legitimate option for many Peachtree customers, if you've outgrown Peachtree Premium performance, chances are good that you have also outgrown its feature set as well. While Peachtree Quantum does offer about 20 additional features, if you've reached this point then perhaps another accounting system option with more features and an even faster database may be a better option – especially when considering the higher price tag associated with Peachtree Quantum.

While these measures will not permanently solve the problems, often these measures can buy you sufficient time to conduct a proper evaluation, selection and implementation of a new replacement accounting system.

EVALUATING NEW REPLACEMENT ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS

Once you've determined that a new accounting system is necessary, a full evaluation and selection process is warranted. You can view a 25-step selection process at this web site <http://www.asaresearch.com/articles/blueprint25.htm>.

THE PEACHTREE TO MICROSOFT DYNAMICS GP MIGRATION PATH

Peachtree is widely considered to be one of the strongest entry level accounting systems on the market; therefore if you've outgrown Peachtree's performance and feature set, it is most likely time for your company to step up to a middle market accounting system solution designed specifically for companies with revenues from \$2 million to \$200 million. While there are at least two dozen excellent middle market solutions available, only a few of these products deliver a specific migration path from Peachtree. Microsoft Dynamics GP does offer a specific migration path for Peachtree and is worthy of consideration for the following reasons:

1. **More Features** - Dynamics GP provides 1,372 more features compared to Peachtree Quantum. (According to a report from the most recent version of “The Accounting Library” comparing the two products, Dynamics GP provides 2,512 features while Peachtree Quantum provides only 1,140 features⁽⁴⁾). For example, listed below are 35 key features provided by Dynamics.GP that are not found in Peachtree.

1. Allocation calculations
2. Intercompany accounts
3. Statistical accounts
4. Built-in workflow capabilities
5. Attach supporting documents to journal entry
6. Drill down displays offsetting entry or entries
7. Attach vendor contracts to vendor master file
8. Supports landed cost tracking
9. Tracks effective dates for pricing
10. Forecasted demand based on formulas
11. Minimum order quantity
12. Tracks delivery time
13. Multiple ship to on same order
14. Material receipt triggers automatic voucher
15. Automatic tracking of vendor performance
16. Automatically distribute freight costs to items
17. Partial pay invoice for partial receipt
18. Assign default bank account for each vendor
19. Item substitution notation
20. Default printer destination by invoice type
21. Automatic calculation of late fees
22. Display mechanical drawings and schematic diagrams
23. Supports multi-dimensional items
24. Tracks shipping dimensions
25. Supports shelf life tracking
26. LIFO and FIFO inventory methods
27. Applies sales tax rates by item
28. Support multiple warehouses
29. Supports scrap factors
30. Item margin pricing as a percentage of cost
31. Suggest stocking levels
32. Freezes inventory while taking a physical count
33. Lot number tracking
34. Serial number tracking
35. Supports RMA (return material authorizations)

2. **Strong Database** - Dynamics GP offers a more robust database. Dynamics GP can handle millions of transactions without slowing down whereas Peachtree’s database performance can start declining after just 75,000⁽⁴⁾ transactions for users of Peachtree’s four lower tier solutions, and after 185,000⁽⁴⁾ transactions for Peachtree Quantum users. Specifically, Dynamics GP offers three database options, as follows:

1. Microsoft SQL Server for an unlimited number of users.
2. Small Business Server (SBS) Premium Server Edition for up to 75 users.
3. Microsoft Desktop Engine (MSDE) for up to 10 users.

These three database options are essentially the same SQL Server database with differing features, functions, and administration requirements in order to target different sized customers. Microsoft SQL Server is considered to be one of the top databases in the world, and has been the top selling database world-wide for more than 10 years. The Microsoft SQL Server database can accommodate millions of transactions without slowing down. By contrast, Peachtree offers accounting solutions on two different Pervasive database platforms - one limited to 5 users and best suited for database sizes up to about 200 MB, the other limited to 30 users and best suited for databases up to about 500 MB.

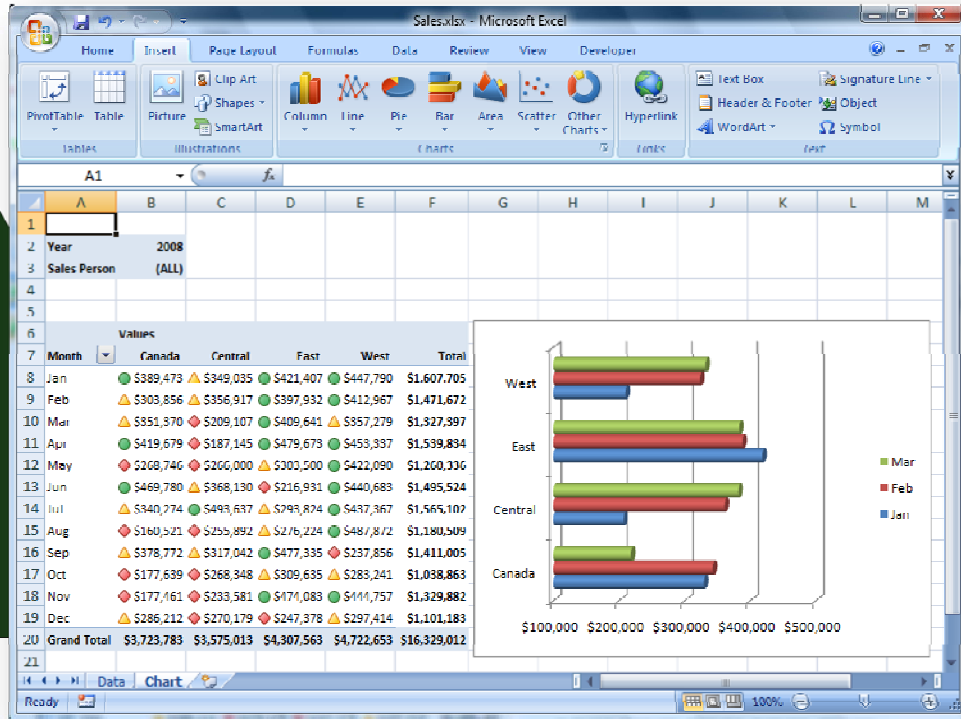
3. **Peachtree to Dynamics GP Data Conversion** – Microsoft offers the Dynamics GP Data Conversion Tool which automatically converts both Peachtree master file data and transaction data into a Dynamics GP format. To use this tool simply follow the interview wizard and provide the necessary Dynamics GP setup information, then browse to the Peachtree data file. The tool will then build the Dynamics GP company database, input all the setup requirements, export the source accounting data from Peachtree, clean and prepare the data for the conversion and automatically import all Master Records and all Transaction history data. The procedure is quick and many Peachtree customers have already used this proven migration process to accomplish this transition.
4. **Breadth of Modules** - Dynamics GP offers a wider range of modules to meet a diverse range of company needs. In the final tally, Dynamics GP provides 50 modules compared to just 18 for Peachtree. For example, Microsoft Dynamics GP offers advanced distribution, manufacturing, supply chain, field service, human resources, project accounting, business intelligence, business portal, and collaboration functionality. A complete listing of all of the modules distributed by each product is presented in the table below.

Dynamics GP Modules	Peachtree Modules
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advanced Distribution 2. Advanced Picking 3. Analytical Accounting 4. Analytics 5. Available to Promise 6. Bank Reconciliation 7. Bill of Materials 8. Business Portal 9. Cash Flow Management 10. Collections Management 11. Crystal Reports 12. Customization 13. Demand Planner Module 14. eBanking 15. eConnect 16. eExpense 17. Electronic Document Delivery 18. Engineering Change Management 19. Enterprise Reporting 20. eOrder 21. Field Service 22. Fixed Asset Management 23. Foundation 24. General Ledger 25. HR Management Self-Service Suite 26. Human Resources 27. Integration 28. Inventory Management 29. Job Costing 30. Manufacturing Order Processing 31. Materials Requirements Planning 32. Microsoft Forecaster 33. Microsoft FRx Professional 34. Multicurrency Management 35. Not for Profit 36. Payables Management 37. Payroll: Canada 38. Payroll: United States 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Ledger 2. Accounts Receivable 3. Accounts Payable 4. Purchase Orders 5. Sales Orders 6. Inventory Control 7. Payroll 8. Advanced Job Cost 9. Report Writer 10. System Manager 11. Bank Reconciliation 12. Online Banking 13. Estimating 14. Time Tracking 15. Fixed Assets 16. Point of Sale 17. Web Store 18. Kitting

- 39. Process Server
- 40. Project Accounting
- 41. Project Time and Expense
- 42. Purchase Order Processing
- 43. Quality Assurance
- 44. Receivables Management
- 45. Report Writer
- 46. Requisition Management
- 47. Sales Forecasting
- 48. Sales Order Processing
- 49. Security Management
- 50. System Manager

5. **Affordable Pricing** - Dynamics GP offers “Business-Ready” pricing of \$2,250 per user. This pricing automatically includes all 50 Dynamics GP modules (listed in bullet five above) in addition to more than 100 additional add-on solutions designed to complement the Dynamics GP system. This pricing approach makes hundreds of thousands of dollars of solutions available to smaller companies for just a few thousand dollars. By contrast, Peachtree’s higher end solution - Peachtree Quantum is priced at \$3,950 for 5 users, and up to \$9,450 for 30 users).
6. **Strong Financial Reporting** - Dynamics GP provides stronger financial reporting in many ways. The whole point of an accounting system is financial reporting and Dynamics GP offers far more reports (700+ standard reports) than Peachtree (143 standard reports). While both Dynamics GP and Peachtree allow users to edit reports and send them to Excel or Word, only Dynamics GP allows users to view reports in real-time through an integrated intranet business portal. Further, Dynamics GP provides more than 200 out of the box Excel reports that contain an active ODBC link to the Dynamics GP database, ensuring data is never out of date whenever the Excel file/report is opened. Dynamics GP also provides over 70 standard SRS reports based on SQL Server Query technology.

Dynamics GP’s FRx advanced financial reporting tool allows users to schedule reports to be printed automatically at regular intervals, and automatically delivered to the appropriate predetermined recipients via e-mail or publishing to a business portal web site. This feature ensures that the desired reports are generated and delivered on time, every time automatically without any effort required by the bookkeepers. Using the FRx tool, users can create entire booklets of reports including title pages, cover letters, table of contents, reports, logos, charts, graphs, and graphic images- and thereafter, FRx will generate and deliver these booklets automatically incorporating the latest data into the booklet of reports. An example report produced in Dynamics GP and published in Microsoft Excel is shown below:

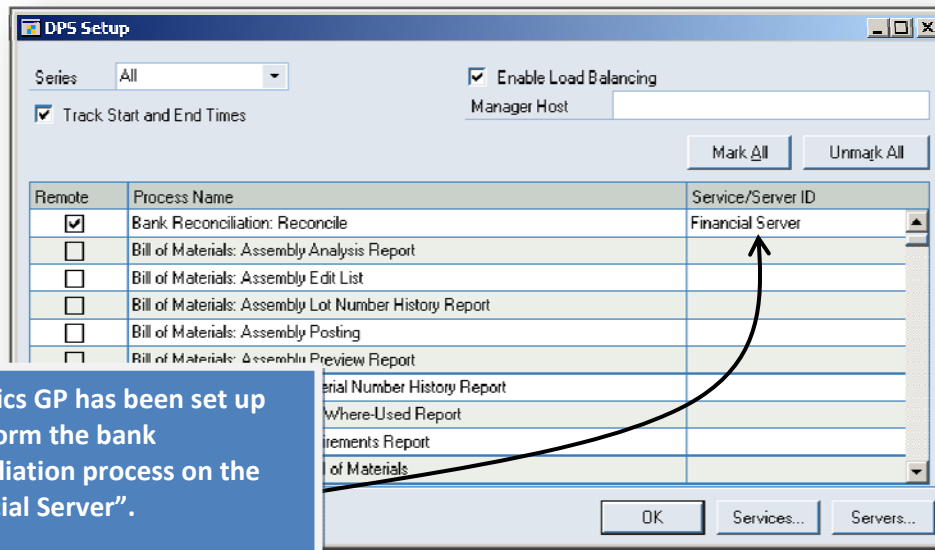


- 7. **Similar Screen Design** - To help Peachtree users feel more at home, Microsoft has added data entry screens in Dynamics GP that look and feel similar to the Peachtree screens you are already used to. Presented below is the check writing screen for Microsoft Dynamics GP.

Account	Description	Debit	Credit
Distribution	Reference	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total		\$0.00	\$0.00
Difference		\$0.00	\$0.00

8. **Networking Architecture** - Dynamics GP and Peachtree use different approaches when it comes to server deployment. Technically, Peachtree offers only a two-tier solution, while Dynamics GP offers two-tier, three-tier, and n-tier solutions. Technical definitions for these three methods of server deployment are presented below:

1. Two-tier systems support processing only at the server and workstation, hence, only two computers are involved.
2. Three-tier systems allow users to separate the database from the application and place them on different servers. For example, Dynamics GP order entry may reside on its own server, separate from the rest of the accounting system. With a three-tier system, three or more servers can be deployed to accommodate the various Dynamics GP applications.
3. N-tier systems allow users to define where processing for specific operations will occur. For example, the processing of reports may occur on its own server, separate from the rest of the accounting system. With an n-tier system, an unlimited number of servers can be deployed to accommodate the various Dynamics GP processes. This type of technology is commonly referred to as distributed processing.



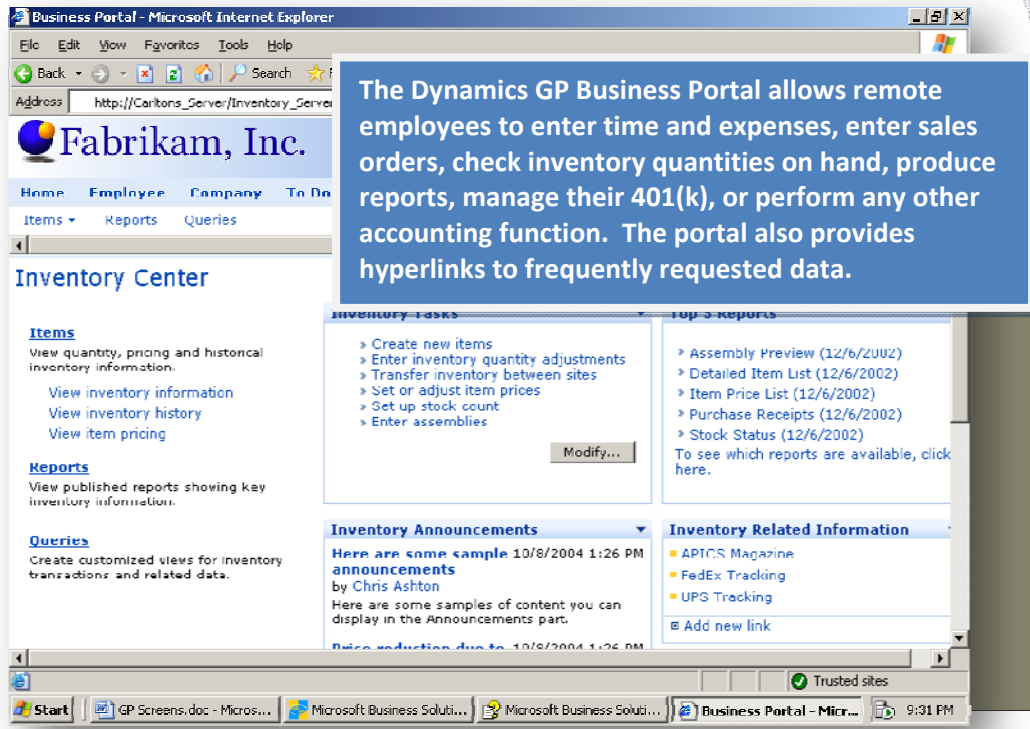
Configuring Distributed Processing in Dynamics GP

This means that Peachtree can only operate on a single server, while Dynamics GP can be distributed across multiple servers. Larger organizations that use Dynamics GP can increase speed and productivity just by adding additional servers to accommodate

increasing volumes of transactions. Companies that use Peachtree are limited to the performance provided by just one file server.

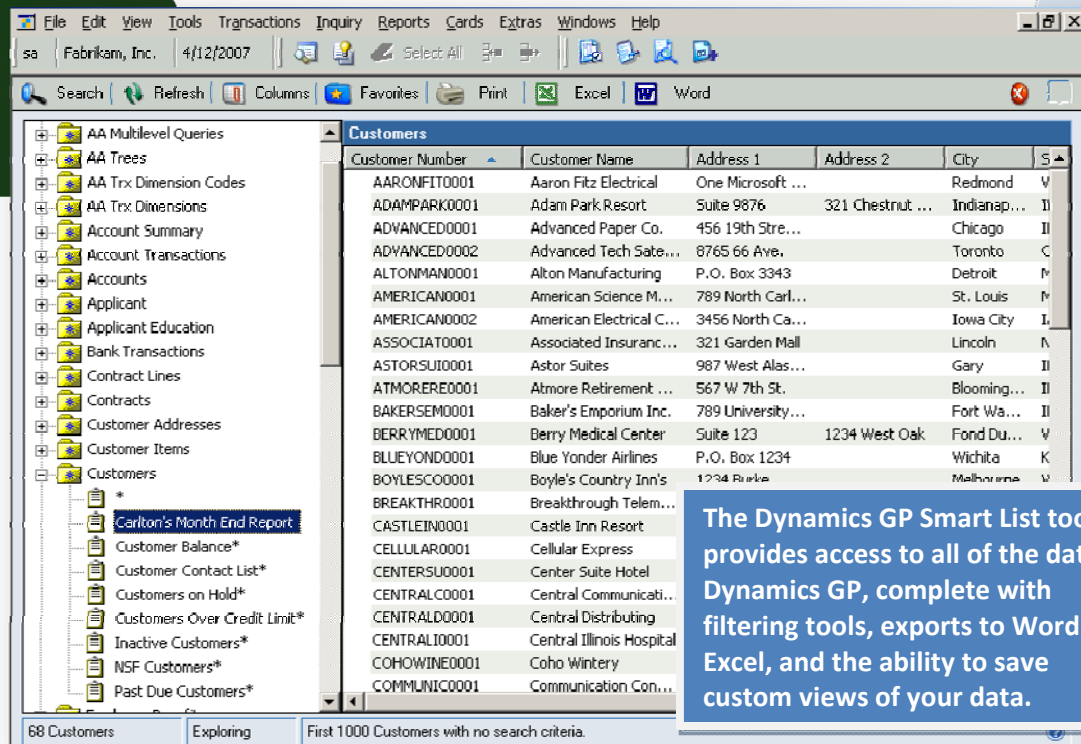
Another benefit of distributed processing is that workstation resources are freed up, thereby allowing users to work faster, which increases employee productivity. When you consider that a ten-minute increase in staff productivity each day amounts to a savings of more than 40 hours each year per staff member, you can better appreciate the efficiencies of this type of technology. Dynamics GP also supports load balancing, which enables the system to automatically redirect processing from busy servers to available servers as required.

- Web Browser Access** - A recent trend among top accounting solutions has been the introduction of systems that allow employees to access the accounting system using a common web browser. Dynamics GP offers a web browser solution called the business portal. Browser-enabled systems reduce the cost and complexity of setting up user desktops, and permit organizations to support a single common access environment, regardless of whether users are on site using the local area network or accessing the system while traveling via the Internet. The screen below presents the Dynamics GP web browser portal that provides users with secure, encrypted access to the complete Dynamics GP accounting system from any location in the world.



Dynamics GP Business Portal

10. **Access to Data** - One of the most important capabilities that an accounting system can offer is an ability to easily get to the underlying data. Many poorly designed accounting systems capture data but then fail to make it easy for users to access that information. Dynamics GP provides one of the best features for accessing data available in the market, regardless of the system complexity and cost. The Dynamics GP SmartList tool contains more than 100 standard reports, and provides access to all data tables in Dynamics GP. For example, the default customer report displays just 8 columns of data, but with just a few mouse clicks, users can display up to 175 total columns and create an unlimited number of user-defined reports. The screen below shows the SmartList main menu, along with an example user-defined report.



The Dynamics GP Smart List Tool

Smart List also offers a search tool that is better described as a filtering tool. With this feature, users can refine their report by any criteria, or any set of criteria for any column or columns of data. For example, we could have instructed SmartList to provide us with a list of only those customers whose "city" was "Chicago." SmartList reports can be transferred to Microsoft Excel or Word with a single click. This capability provides the user with the ability to do additional analysis with their accounting data in these familiar applications. For example, once the data is transferred into Excel, users can easily produce charts, pivot reports, or do sensitivity analysis.

CONCLUSION

Peachtree offers an excellent solution for small businesses, but ultimately companies might outgrow the features and capacity of the Peachtree product. For companies in this situation, there are measures you can take to squeeze the maximum utility out of Peachtree. While these measures can help some, reaching this milestone is usually a clear sign that an upgrade to a stronger accounting system is warranted. Companies seeking to upgrade from Peachtree should consider Microsoft's migration path to Dynamics GP based on the increased features and performance, the affordable pricing, and the conversion utilities.

DISCLOSURES & DISCLAIMERS

This report was prepared at the request of Microsoft Corporation, and the author was compensated for this effort. Therefore please be duly advised that the author was not independent in the preparation of this document. This paper is presented as the author's opinion, and not as fact. While it is believed to be accurate, the products discussed in this report are complex systems containing thousands of features, the presence or absence of which can be open to subjective interpretation. The author concedes that there may be features and functionality that were overlooked or not fully considered in the preparation of this report. There also may be simple "work around" procedures or clever tricks that can be employed that were not considered, and there may be third party add-on applications that were not considered that compensate for various missing features. We strongly recommend that you confirm any and all data contained herein with another source before relying on it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author of this report is nationally recognized accounting system analyst J. Carlton Collins, CPA. He has personally purchased, installed, used, recommended, and supported Peachtree solutions for almost two decades. He has delivered hundreds of live, full-day lectures and presentations throughout the country featuring Peachtree products. He has authored many articles featuring Peachtree (in part), including a top-rated article which appeared in the March, 2006 issue of the Journal of Accountancy. He has provided consulting services and advice to Peachtree Software Corporation on numerous occasions. Mr. Collins holds a very high opinion of Peachtree by Sage and does not hesitate to recommend Peachtree by Sage to any small business.

Mr. Collins also recommends Microsoft Dynamics GP. He was a Microsoft Dynamics GP reseller from 1989 to 1992 and he has delivered numerous lectures at the annual Microsoft Dynamics GP conference. He has also presented hundreds of live, full-day accounting system courses over the past two decades featuring Microsoft Dynamics GP (in part), and he continues to present those courses today. He has authored numerous articles featuring Microsoft Dynamics GP and has provided consulting services and advice to Microsoft Corporation on many occasions during the past two decades.

FOOT NOTES

- (1) *Peachtree Premium 2009 is available in five industry specific versions as follows: Accountants, Contractors, Distributors, Manufacturers, and Not-for-Profit organizations. Peachtree Quantum 2009 is available in an industry specific version for Accountants.*
- (2) *Direct quote from the Peachtree Quantum FAQ page as of August 20, 2008. <http://www.peachtreequantum.com/features/faq/>.*
- (3) *The 2008 feature summary for 35 top accounting system solutions was produced using the latest edition of the Accounting Library – a software selection database with feature information for more than 130 accounting systems as provided by the accounting software vendors for their respective products. The 35 products included in the listing were selected for their popularity in the entry level and mid markets.*
- (4) *This data was compiled using the latest edition of The Accounting Library as of September 2008. The Accounting Library is an accounting software selection tool which includes a listing of features for more than 130 accounting software products. Each year, accounting software vendors are asked to contribute updated information related to the features and functionality provided by their respective products.*
- (5) *Amounts used in Calculations - Sage does not officially report a level in which performance starts to decline, and the actual point in which performance starts to decline depends on many factors such as the speed of the computer, the amount of RAM, the speed of the hard drive, the speed of the RAM, the speed of the network, etc. The 200 MB threshold is based on reported recommendations by Peachtree personnel to upgrade from Peachtree by Sage's lower tier solutions at 200 MB. The 2 GB threshold is based on the fact that Sage has tested and publically endorsed Peachtree Quantum's database sizes up to 500 MB. However, we found evidence of some companies using Peachtree Quantum with database sizes approaching 2 GB reportedly with adequate performance; therefore we used the higher of these two numbers. We measured the Peachtree Quantum database size before and after posting a sampling of invoice, bill, and payment transactions and found that this action increases the database size by 2 to 40 kilobytes, depending upon the number of line items in the transaction. From this data we calculate that 75,000 transactions times 4 KB will cause data files to exceed 200 MB and 185,000 transactions times 4 KB will cause data files to exceed 500 MB.*

END NOTES

1. **Disclosures** – This report was prepared at the request of Microsoft Corporation, and the author was compensated for this effort. Therefore please be duly advised that the author was not independent in the preparation of this document.
2. **Disclaimers** – This paper is presented as the author's opinion, and not as fact. While it is believed to be accurate, the products discussed in this report are complex systems containing thousands of features, the presence or absence of which can be open to subjective interpretation. The author concedes that there may be features and functionality that were overlooked or not fully considered in this review. There also may be simple "work around" procedures or clever tricks that can be employed that were not considered, and there may be third party add-on applications that were not considered that compensate for various missing features for all products. We strongly recommend that you confirm any and all data contained herein with another source before relying on it.
3. **Nick Names** – For expediency, we referred to some of the products in this report using their nicknames, and not the full product names. The practice of referring to these products by their nickname is common in the industry. Presented below are the full proper product names, parent company names, and headquarter locations for each product mentioned in this report: Dynamics GP, Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA; Peachtree, Intuit, Inc., Mountain View, CA
4. **Trademark Notices** – Dynamics GP, Peachtree, Peachtree pro, Peachtree Premier, Peachtree Enterprise, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, COGNOS, FRx, and Crystal Reports and are registered trademarks for their respective corporations.

CONTACT INFORMATION

ASA Research, A Division of Accounting Software Advisor, LLC
Norcross, GA 30092, 770.734.0950