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### Headline News

Best Software, soon to be Sage Software, announced that it is expanding its hosted service offerings with the new Sage Payroll Services for mid-market companies and organizations—including Sage Payroll Service for MAS edition, and Sage Payroll Service for Abra edition, and a stand-alone service edition for companies using any in-house accounting system. Look for more information in upcoming issues of \*info.



SAGE MAS 90 SAGE MAS 200  
SAGE MIP FUND ACCOUNTING  
SAGE BUSINESSWORKS ACCOUNTING

## Customizer Version 4.1

**M**AS 90® from Best Software provides an ideal business management solution for tens of thousands of businesses across hundreds of industries. Part of what enables MAS 90 to meet the enormously varied needs of this diverse client base is its ability to be customized and personalized for the way you do business. And with the Custom Office Module, much of that personalization and customization can be done without hiring a programmer.

**Customizer**, a powerful component of the MAS 90 Custom Office module, is the tool behind much of this customization capability. The upcoming 4.1 release of MAS 90 will include substantial changes to Customizer available within the Accounts Receivable, Sales Order, Bank Reconciliation, and RMA modules. In this article, we'll start with an overview of the new features planned for the upcoming Version 4.1 release. In the second part of this article, we look at ways Customizer can help you do business your way.

### Changes In Customizer Version 4.1

#### In The Same File

Prior to the 4.1 release, User Defined Fields

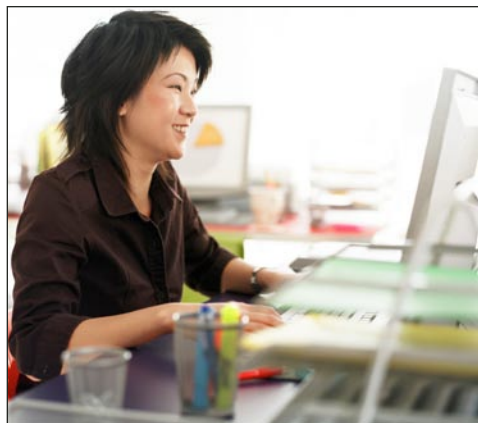
(UDFs) have been stored in a separate UDF data file. To include the UDFs on a report, or to import into or export out of, you often had to create a link between the primary file and the file holding the UDFs. A customer-related UDF for example, was stored in its own UDF file and then had to be linked to the Customer Masterfile. With the release of 4.1, using UDFs becomes more straightforward.

With this upcoming release, Best Software has completely restructured the way UDFs are stored. UDFs you create in version 4.1 are stored directly within the related file. Customer UDFs are stored in the Customer Masterfile. Sales Order Header UDFs are stored in the Sales Order Header file, and so on. By providing this table

extension, you can easily access the UDF from the appropriate data entry screen, lookup, or Crystal Report allowing you to fully integrate UDFs into your business processes.

#### Source Defaults

The restructuring of the way that UDFs are stored is more efficient too. Let's say, for example, that you have established a Customer Maintenance UDF to hold *Territory* data and you need a separate Sales Order Header UDF to hold that same data. You'll now be able to specify that the Terri-



Customizer gives you the ability to easily customize MAS 90 to meet your specific needs.

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# Customizer CONTINUED

tory UDF on the Sales Order Header UDF is to be populated with the Territory value from the AR Customer Maintenance UDF. Or you could default Item UDFs into Sales Order Line UDFs to hold a warranty code. You also can specify that the default value of a UDF is a fixed value or a value from another MAS 90 data field.

This change will make using UDFs easier, it will speed data entry as users won't always need to enter the data, and it broadens the usefulness of the UDFs.

## Validation Tables

With version 4.1, Best Software is introducing **User-Defined Tables**. The tables are used to ensure that the data entered into UDFs remains consistent and useful. With this release, these tables are available only for the Accounts Receivable, Sales Order, Bank Reconciliation, and RMA modules.

You can define tables to validate UDFs, and even define custom tables to validate some existing MAS 90 data fields. For example, you may wish to have a selection of possible Project Codes that will ultimately be assigned to a new project UDF. The User Defined Tables would be used to maintain the allowable Project Codes and descriptions. Maintaining the tables is simple, and you can even include data from the tables in Crystal Reports and forms.

Now that you see how Customizer will be enhanced in Version 4.1, let's take a look at the power of Customizer that exists right now.

## The Power Of Customizer

If you have not yet used Customizer, here's a look at what else you'll find as you explore this useful tool.

### Add Fields And Buttons

Customizer enables you to add UDFs to virtually any entry screen. You can add a field for *Support Technician* to the Customer Masterfile, or a field for *Referral Source* to the Sales Order header. The UDFs you create may be printed on forms, included on Crystal Reports, imported into, and exported out of. Their use is limited only by your imagination.

In addition to creating new data fields, you can use Customizer to add buttons to screens that will launch application tasks or other Windows applications. Get creative with this func-

tion; add a button to display a map of your customer's location, or to play back a sound annotation of the correct pronunciation of a difficult customer name. Include a photo of employees in the masterfile, accessible by a new button linked to the image file. Scan contracts, credit reports, vendor invoices, and other important documents and link them to the appropriate record through a new button. You can create your own Help screens and provide instructions to users that are available with the push of a new custom button during Invoice Data Entry. In what way could Customizer make your workflow smoother and more efficient?

### Field-Level Security And Data Validation

With Customizer, you can bring security to the individual field level. Create field-level security by hiding particular fields from the view of specified users or user groups. Designate other fields as View Only. Add data validation characteristics to certain fields, such as a range or list of allowed values. These characteristics can vary by user, so you can limit certain users to using a defined list of General Ledger accounts or hide the Item Cost from another user group.

### Rearrange Fields To Fit Workflow

Customizer allows you to change the layout of any screen by moving fields to suit your data entry process. You can ignore unused fields, designate a field as a tab stop, and define the initial value for a field. Consider making the Credit Hold field in the Customer Masterfile default to *Yes* when creating new customers, until you review their credit application. Make an important field stand out with bold font or by designating it to appear in red.

### Relabel Fields And Add Text

Do you refer to your customers as clients, or refer to your item numbers as part numbers? Use Customizer to relabel any field to suit the terminology of your business, or to enable the field to serve another purpose.

Customizer allows you to add text to any screen for additional information, reminders, or instructions for your users. For example, you can add an on-screen message in Sales Order Entry to operators reminding them to tell customers about your upcoming summer sale.

## Windows Scripting

The **Windows Script Control** feature of Customizer allows you to execute an external script to perform calculations or to start up external applications from a button you create in MAS 90. Think of a script as a mini program written to perform a specific task. Typically, a script is used to draw data from one program and write results to another program.

You can select values from a MAS 90 screen to pass to the script and designate values to be returned by the script after processing is complete. The script can be simple or complex. It can even contain a series of If/Then statements and different levels of calculations using data within MAS 90 and from an external program. You could use Customizer to perform a custom discount calculation in Sales Order Entry, or insert values into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet or Microsoft Word document. Program logic that would normally be executed if you manually changed the field will be performed automatically, thereby protecting the integrity of your data.

Imagine performing customized freight calculations, calculating customer-specific discounts, defining a new commission structure, writing sales values to an Excel spreadsheet, creating an instant dunning letter in Word, or automatically creating new Outlook contacts by simply clicking a button within your MAS 90 software!

The Microsoft Windows Scripting Host must be installed and operational in order for you to use this feature. If you plan to create your own scripts, a good working knowledge of VBScript (Visual Basic Script) and/or Jscript (Microsoft's version of JavaScript) is also a requirement. If you don't have that knowledge, we can assist you in creating your scripts.

As you can see, Customizer is a tool that any business can use to maximize the power of MAS 90. From simple field relabeling to complex scripting, Customizer can turn your MAS 90 application into a tailored, optimized business solution.

Call us for full details on the MAS 90 Custom Office module. 