

HandyWork Newsletter

Winter 2009

Goodby HW2!

End of the Road The New C-4

Since 1994, HW2 has served as the foundation version for HandyWorks. And many of you still use it. However, all good things must come to an end and sadly enough, this includes HW2.

There is no need to panic! The phase-out is gradual and will take place over the coming year. We simply ask that those of you using HW2 begin the transition process.

The reason we are doing this is simple. HW2 is an old program that newer machines and newer operating systems won't run very well anymore. Another problem with HW2 is that because it predates the Internet, we can't take advantage of many newer connectivity features we would like to design in.

Technically, HW2 is a dinosaur. It is a 16 bit program in a 32 and 64 bit world. By the way, this why HW2 users get "out of memory" errors when their system is flush with memory. As we move HandyWorks into the future, HW2 acts like a drag on our growth.

So what are you, the end user, to do? For starters, please begin looking on eBay for a copy of Access 97 or Access 2000. No need to get the entire office package, just the Access component.

Now please don't all of you go out and do this at the same time because you'll all be bidding against each other. Go slowly and methodically.. Once you have Access 97 in your hands, give us a call and we'll walk you through the upgrade process.

If you are one of our lucky New Yorker, then you probably know that the workers comp board has replaced the old C-4 claim form with a new and improved C-4.

This new C-4 comes in two delicious flavors, a four page form for the initial report and a simple 2-pager for all follow-up claims. We have been programming HW to fill out these forms, which, by the way, is a joy like no other.

First we modified the bill record so it remembers which of the two forms its data belongs on. Then we fixed to Billing Wizard to ask whether you are creating (or reprinting) the Initial or Follow-up form. If you've created an Initial form for a patient once, HW will know to put subsequent bills in the Follow-up format.

The only real problem with our current solution is that some info asked for on the forms is not collected by HW. You will have to fill this info in by hand.

To look these forms over, please visit the NY workers comp website and go to the forms download page.

X-Charge it!

Each month, more users switch their credit card processing over to X-charge. Not only are they saving money with reduced fees, they are saving time because X-Charge fully integrates into the HandyWorks Transaction screen.

It is convenient, fast and reliable. If you are tired of paying high rates for credit card services, why

don't you call Sandra Laue at 800-637-8268 ext. 206 or email her at Sandra.Laue@camcommerce.com She'll ask you to fax her your current credit card services bill and show you how you can start saving money right away.

Data Bloat

Recently one of our users called us because her program was running very slowly. We looked at her database and saw that it was over 160 MB. So we suggested she make an archive of her data and then delete records of patients who hadn't been in for several years. We expected that this would significantly reduce the database size and make the system run faster. But even after deletion and compaction the database was hardly smaller and certainly no faster. Why?

We ran the financial report with the option of Case Owes anything but zero, which produced a 27 page report. Most of the entries were for very inactive patients with trivial balances who could not be deleted automatically. Once they got cleared, the database compacted and really sped up.

The point of this is to suggest that you look at this report. If you have a lot of patients on this list consider whether there is truly a credit or collectible balance. If the outstanding balance is not collectible write it off. If the credit balance is true, either refund it to the patient or if it was generated from some other accounting function feel free to do a negative off.

Usage Tip: Medicare Cross

Handling Medicare secondary crossover claims is done automatically by HandyWorks. The trick is to make sure that the secondary carrier is set up in the insurance screen as insurance "type" Medicare crossover.

This process works when a new visit is being set up because this is when the billing flags in the middle of the Transaction Screen get set. If there is a primary carrier in Case Data, then an "X" gets marked in the primary area of the Transaction Screen. If there is a secondary carrier, then an "X" gets marked in the secondary box as well.

If the primary carrier is "type" Medicare then HandyWorks will ask if the secondary carrier is "type" Crossover then it will un-"X" the secondary box in the transaction screen.

Regardless of whether the secondary box is checked or not, when HandyWorks prints the primary Medicare form, it enters the secondary carrier information automatically. Medicare uses that information to forward its determination of coverage to the secondary carrier automatically. That is why it is called a crossover.

Don't Upgrade

We say this a lot, and there is a reason. Recently, one of our longtime users of HandyWorks 97 was approached by a friend who offered to upgrade him to Office 2007. Afterwards, HandyWorks stopped working.

This is because in the process of upgrading, the Office 2007 saw an older version of Microsoft Access and decided to eliminate it. You might think that reversing this would be easy, but in fact it turned out to be very difficult.

We uninstalled Office 2007. Then we reinstalled access 97. Still it wouldn't work. This is because the installation of office 2007 had disabled a critical runtime library

needed by HandyWorks. We spent an hour trying to re-enable the disabled library module but in the end a techie who was helping us had to wipe out the hard drive and reinstall the Windows operating system and then Access 97. Needless to say, while everything worked out well and no data was lost, that this was a costly and time-consuming mistake

As we've done in nearly every edition of this newsletter, we caution you not to upgrade your computer, particularly the Office Access components without first speaking to us. There is a way to upgrade to Office 2007 but not the way it was done initially. So be sure to call us before you make a change that may later turn out to be disastrous.

Up, Up & Away

As Internet use for business becomes more ubiquitous, a number of our users have started asking us if there was some way to make HandyWorks more Internet compatible. We thought about this a lot and have decided to explore the option of allowing patients to make appointments via the Internet. This would not preclude you from maintaining or using your current appointment scheduler, but would provide you with another option.

At the time of this writing we are in the early stages of exploring how to do this in such a way as to seamlessly integrate with HandyWorks while maintaining patient privacy and security of your data.

Backup Horror

Nothing new recently so I am redoing an old story! One of our clinics here in NYC had a real problem. To start, they decided to forego tech support for the current year! (I can already hear the tsk tsk from longtime users!) Secondly, they stopped doing backups (Don't laugh, its true!). Third, they developed a weird checksum error in their data file that would not allow

them to do any new billing. And then they waited a few weeks until it became critical.

Kind hearted as we are, we took them back in and started working with them. We asked for a copy of their data, but because of the checksum error, a backup could not be made!! So we rolled up our figurative sleeves and jumped into their mess. It took many hours to copy valid tables out of their semi-corrupt database into a brand new, pristine one, and in the end, they were able to recover almost of their data. Whew!

Two things to learn from this. One, stay current with tech support for both our sakes, and two, Backup, Backup, and Backup again. Because you never know when a problem will occur!

How to Backup

There are two types of computer users out there. Those that have lost data and those that will. Backing up is your ONLY insurance against a computer failure. If you don't have a backup and you lose your data, it will be no one's fault but your own.

We used to recommend backing up on either a R/W CD or Iomega Zip disk. But recent improvements in Flash Memory cards (Cruzer from SanDisk) have made USB backups even faster and easier. We have written a very simple backup batch file (think back to DOS) that pretty much automates the entire process. This backup routine is basically one line, but varies slightly for each day of the week. Here it is for backing up enjoyment. copy c:\hww\hwdata.mdb g:\friday, where friday is a folder on our Cruzer USB disk, found in drive g:.

HandyWorks
140 East 28th Street (1F)
New York, NY 10016
(800) 255-0668
(212) 889-8878
(212) 889-8830 (f)
www.HandyWorks.com