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Sage Abra HRMS Newsletter

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SAGE ABRA SUITE VERSION 9.1

Sage recently announced the release of Sage Abra Suite Version 9.1. Customer feedback played a significant role in the development of a slew of fantastic new usability enhancements that make Sage Abra easier than ever to use. Here's a quick look at the new release.

Little Things with Big Impact

Sometimes it's the little things in life that count. That's why we think you'll like the collection of usability enhancements with Sage Abra 9.1. For instance, support for **Microsoft Active Directory** eliminates the need for multiple logons for various Sage Abra components – a nice convenience and real time-saver. Also when you get stuck and need some assistance, you can access Sage **Abra Support via Live Chat** directly from the built-in Help system.

A few other enhancements worthy of note include even faster search using Employee Find, new SSN/SIN masking (on all reports and secure queries) that keeps employee data safe, and automated employee notification to indicate that Open Enrollment (OD) or Life Event (LE) elections were successfully submitted. Plus, the approval notice for OE and LE now includes the summary of elections as well as the employee and employer costs, so your employees understand the full value of their benefits package.

Employee Self Service – More Than Just a Pretty New Face

Sage ESS (*formerly Abra Workforce Connections*) has both a new name AND a modern look offering improved usability. From the moment you log on, you'll notice updated navigation, modern icons, and the ability to customize the look of your Sage ESS system using new cascading style sheets. Plus, new ESS Gadgets provide a snapshot of Current Benefits, Pay History, Time Off Summary, and Recent Messages.

HR Managers will like the new **Time Off Calendar** – a handy tool to quickly browse your employees' pending, approved, and rejected time-off for the month. Sage ESS in **Version 9.1 has also gone mobile** and works with your favorite handheld devices including iPhone, Android, Blackberry, Windows CE, and more.

Sage Employee Analytics Dashboards

Sage Employee Analytics can now be used with Sage Crystal Dashboard Design (optional) to create your own graphical employee dashboards, transforming complex workforce performance data into simple, actionable insight. You get fast access to visual analytics with the ability to drill down into your Sage Abra data when you need to move from the 'big-picture' to 'nuts-and-bolts' analysis.

Contact us to register for a series of **free webcasts** running throughout September and October, demonstrating the new features of Sage Abra Version 9.1. In the meantime, feel free to download the What's New in Sage Abra v9.1 brochure for more detail.

Reducing the Cost of Benefits Management

For many companies, benefits represent the second largest workforce expense after salaries and wages. And as you already know, the cost of employee benefits - and particularly the cost of health insurance - has been rising at a staggering rate. In an effort to contain these costs, some companies choose to pass a larger share of the premium increases onto employees. But there's another option for cost containment that's somewhat under-utilized … that option is technology.

A Benefits Management Solution can lower the overall cost of providing services to your employees while helping address the fastest growing source of rising costs.

Administrative Nightmare

Many employers offer multiple benefits such as health, life, and disability insurance. This requires multiple insurance carriers, each with complex packages and plan options. Each individual plan must be set-up and administered by HR, and each plan requires an employee enrollment with transmission of census data to the benefits carrier. Adding to that complexity is this simple fact … nothing generates more employee questions and requests to HR than benefits. It's no wonder that HR spends up to 30% of its time on routine benefits administration activities.

Introducing Sage Abra Benefits Enrollment

Sage Abra Benefits Enrollment enables employees to **self-enroll** in programs, review their benefits data, and report life event changes online. By empowering employees to make their own elections and manage open enrollment online, you can save your HR staff hours of unproductive administrative work, paper shuffling, duplicate data entry, and countless other inefficiencies of a manual paper-based process.

Automation at Its Best

Don't worry, your employees are not left on their own. An easy-to-use wizard guides them through the process, prompts employees to choose plans based on eligibility criteria, and helps them compare costs and coverage of previous elections against new offerings. Then when the open enrollment has been completed, Abra HR is automatically updated with the benefit election updates. **No duplicate data entry necessary!**

Benefits … Let Me Count the Ways

In addition to eliminating the cost of distributing and collecting paper enrollment packets, Abra Benefits Enrollment can:

- **Shorten Enrollment Cycle** – The open enrollment process takes 2-3 weeks instead of 6-8 in a paper-based system.
- **Reduce data errors** – Employees enter their own information with better accuracy, avoiding time-consuming mistakes.
- **Reduce calls to HR**– Employees have access to complete information that helps them answer most of their own benefits questions.

Employee satisfaction and retention correlate with benefits satisfaction, so it is important to find cost-containment strategies that do not sacrifice the quality of benefits.

Contact Us to learn more about adding Benefits Enrollment to your Sage Abra HRMS system.

HR Best Practices & Tools Online

Keep your finger on the pulse of the HR industry as well as the latest and greatest developments related to your Sage Abra. Visit the **HR Online Resource Center** where you'll discover a wealth of content and tools including recorded webcasts, in-depth White Papers, and industry reports.

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