ADAGIO FILLS A UNIQUE NICHE

In the late 80's and early 90's ACCPAC Plus dominated the accounting software market in Canada. However, when it came time to migrate to the Windows platform most accounting software vendors, including ACCPAC International, moved up scale with complex, pricier solutions. As a result, a significant share of the ACCPAC Plus user base did not make the move to Windows accounting software. There were a number of reasons for this decision. One being, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Another being the cost of implementing a complex accounting solution.

Softrak Systems, one of the largest ACCPAC Plus third party developers, recognized this void in 1999 and launched Softrak Adagio, a full featured suite of modules designed specifically to service the market niche previously serviced in the DOS world by ACCPAC Plus. The profile for the typical Adagio users are companies with some accounting expertise on staff and a $5,000- $10,000 budget to meet their accounting needs.

To allow ACCPAC Plus users a simple and straightforward migration to Windows-based accounting, Softrak designed Adagio to keep a client's data unchanged on their hard disk. This unique approach allows an Adagio customer to move to Windows-based accounting without any data conversion. Their ACCPAC Plus and Adagio modules can run side-by-side, even accessing the same data at the same time. The hundreds of add-ons developed for ACCPAC Plus over the years continue to run. Adagio can also run completely standalone and nothing is required from ACCPAC International at an Adagio client site.

Adagio currently consists of five core modules (G/L, A/R, A/P, O/E, I/C), and two smaller modules (Invoices and Checks) that provide specialized capabilities for invoicing and expense recording respectively. Time & Billing is under development and a special version of Crystal Reports for Adagio (required because of the private database) should also ship shortly.

Each Adagio module shares a common "look and feel". Data entry can be driven entirely from the keyboard. However, ACCPAC Plus users must get used to the Windows standard of tabbing through fields and using Enter to close a form. There is no option to use the Enter key to move from field to field as was the convention in ACCPAC Plus.

Adagio Ledger is batch based and supports either a 12 or 13 period fiscal calendar, with a year of history and one set of budgets. The Ledger can retrieve any batch designed for retrieval by ACCPAC Plus. Its spreadsheet based Financial Reporter converts specifications from ACCPAC Plus and allows users to create new Financial Statements by dragging and dropping a range of accounts onto its spreadsheet. Adagio Ledger's financial reporter does not require Excel. All cells on the sheet are created using formulas, which allows a company's financial statement to be independent of the structure of its chart of accounts. Adagio allows you to drill from a figure on a statement, all the way down to the detail transactions posted to an account.

Adagio Receivables has unlimited control accounts and distribution sets to ease revenue account allocation. Adagio has a straightforward, built-in fax manager (shared by Receivables, Invoices and Order Entry), that allows users to fax statements and invoices to customers. Adagio Receivables also manages a notepad for unlimited customer comments and a chronological history of contacts and conversations. This dual notepad is also included in Payables vendors and Inventory items.

Adagio Payables manages vendor accounts and expense distributions. By storing the G/L distribution with transactions after they're posted, Adagio makes it easy to determine expense allocation. Adagio Payables also improves a company's cash flow management by allowing last minute changes to a system check run to "fine-tune" the amounts and invoices being paid – an important issue in these tough economic times.

Adagio Inventory is rare in its support of multiple costing methods and units of measure. LIFO, FIFO, Average, Standard and User Defined Costing are all available. With a 16 character item number in (up to) four user defined segments, most numbering schemes are supported.

Adagio OrderEntry fits the bill for traditional wholesale distribution companies. Running standalone with a price list or integrated in real time with Adagio Inventory, OrderEntry allows future orders, standing orders and active order processing. Softrak allows copying and restoring of orders between customers, complete with order repricing from inventory as the new order is created. Orders can be imported from external systems, and a complete order, invoice and credit note history is maintained for reporting, restoring and reprinting of these forms.

Adagio uses Crystal Reports for all its management reporting. Batch listings, overdue receivables and payables reports, are laid out using Crystal 7.5. Softrak expects to be shipping Crystal Reports for Adagio, based on the Crystal 8.5 release, shortly. Most accounting products also use Crystal Reports to create invoices, statements and other company specific documents. Because forms design is complex in Crystal Reports, Softrak provides a straight-forward, drag-and-drop forms designer instead.

Multi-part invoices are easy to create since each element on a form may be selected to print on one, many or all copies of a form. Adagio does not support multi-currency directly, but requires accounting system work-arounds such as separate control accounts by currency. Softrak will have to address this shortcoming in the future.

Competitive products at this price point mostly use online processing through to the general ledger, Crystal Reports for form design and a third party database for their data storage. Softrak chose batch processing for control, a report designer specifically created for forms, and a database that isn't easily accessible by every casual user.

Softrak has created a capable, full-featured accounting solution, easily supported by an accountant recommender, that deserves consideration as a migration path off ACCPAC Plus and a new environment for companies outgrowing Simply or QuickBooks.

Quick Info

Pricing: Pricing for the single user five core modules plus invoicing is $4,600. The price for a five user version is $6,000.

Pro: A transparent and easy to implement upgrade path for ACCPAC Plus users who want to finally move to Windows. Also a viable solution for companies needing to move from an entry accounting solution to the feature set enjoyed by beginning middle market accounting software.

Con: The lack of multi currency and purchase order modules.

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