

Tutorials Covering 10 Areas of Use are Available



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By Glenn Gordon

Collection applications often are commissioned by large firms seeking to carve out a new market, but sometimes are born from the needs of one individual. The latter is the case with Totality Software, Inc., of San Diego, Calif. Evan Zucker, an attorney, found he had a need for a computer program to handle his small, yet growing collection practice. After hiring a programmer to create the application, Zucker found the application gaining popularity among other attorneys, leading to the 1995 commercial release of the Totality program.

Targeted toward the management of a contingency fee collection practice, Totality also serves the collection needs of firms administering their own receivables, as well as companies working in other industries, including medical billing and property management. Totality has made the entry point exceedingly attractive for small users, providing three price levels depending on the maximum number of active claims or accounts. The company considers its application to be unique in targeting small- to mid-sized firms with a small, low cost, easy-to-use collection solution.

Features

Totality starts with a screen displaying the expected icon bar below a pull-down menu row. The screen also displays a Quick-



List window and a large Navigator window. The latter guides the user to the most frequently used features. It is separated

into new items (New Claim, New Payment, New Debtor) on one side, and several list, search and report functions on the other. The Navigator window can be closed and the same functions accessed either from the icon bar or pull-downs.

Totality functions on a claim (debt) basis, with any number of claims associated with any number of debtors. When the application starts, a Tickler Queue automatically runs to display accounts needing immediate attention. The QuickList window mentioned above provides an instant view of claims in the database. The list can be filtered by changing the sort criteria from all to drill-down selections of client, creditor or status.

The Quick Report selection from the Navigator allows the user to run the most frequently used reports with the most common options. For less frequently used reports, the Report Manager provides access to all reports in Totality. To keep cost and complexity low, Zucker and his staff chose not to incorpo-

rate a full report writer in the application, but any report can be saved as a file in a variety of formats, such as Microsoft Excel and Word, and then customized by the user. However, custom reports can be created by the Totality programming staff.

Demand letters, pleadings, customized statements and invoices, and other documents can be generated in Word or Corel WordPerfect formats.

Product help is available through several means. Tutorials covering 10 areas of use are available from the Help pull-down menu, as are complete user instructions and selections to email support. New users would probably take advantage of a separate set of tutorials available from Totality. These tutorials—high-quality animated guides to seven different areas—are particularly helpful to getting started with the program.

Totality Software deliberately chose to maintain a simple interface, while providing plenty of power under the hood. Considerable customization capability is built in—18 custom fields are available for any purpose, and almost any label can be changed to correspond to the user's needs.

Support

A Totality purchase includes 30 days of free tech support. After that period, an ongoing maintenance plan is required for a small monthly fee, but includes unlimited technical support and program updates within the current version. Each time the application is run, a check is automatically made for an updated version, which, if available, can be downloaded in a few minutes.

Telephone support is available 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pacific time. Email support is easily accessed from within the program and responded to on an around-the-clock basis.

Summary

Totality created an attractive, simple interface without skimping on the essentials that enables the small office user to efficiently administer collections. Married with an equally attractive pricing structure, Totality has much to offer this segment of users.

Totality Software, Inc.

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