Mun-Ease News

Release 8.75 ships!

This newsletter will highlight our new 8.75 release (shipped free-of-charge with this newsletter to all our current 8.0 customers). Almost all of the enhancements included in this release are the result of requests from our user community. They are listed on the backside of this newsletter. Take a look. If you have called us with comments or suggestions, there is a good chance that your suggestion has been implemented.

Record Sales for 1997

As we close 1997, we are extremely grateful for your support and patronage. This past year was our most successful ever! We now have over 600 installations of DOS and Windows versions of Mun-Ease. We realize though that the software industry is extremely competitive and that the only way to ensure continued success is to constantly improve and enhance our products and customer support. We intend to do just that. Stay tuned!

Arbitrage Regulations Now Online!

In early September, we placed the arbitrage regulations on our web site (www.mun-ease.com). You can use our search engine to quickly find a particular section or topic of interest. We've also added the SLGS rules to our site with their own search capability.

If you haven't yet used our site, try the following: After signing onto the Mun-Ease web site, click on the arbitrage button from the Mun-Ease main menu and select section 148 for review.   From there, try finding the desired subject material. You'll see how easy it is!

1998 User Group Meeting

Our 1998 user group meeting will be held at the annual GFOA conference in San Francisco. We have tentatively scheduled the meeting at 3:00 Tuesday afternoon, June 30, 1998. Be sure to check the conference schedule for any last minute changes.

During the meeting we will demonstrate upcoming enhancements and take questions from our users. The meetings also provide an opportunity for our users to voice their opinions about enhancements that they would like to see implemented. If you can possibly attend, please do so. We will be demonstrating many important new features.

Classes for 1998

We plan to hold three Mun-Ease classes during the second half of 1998. The dates will be announced later this quarter. Mun-Ease classes are held in Chicago over 2 ½ days. Check the GFOA newsletter or our web site for the exact dates.

Y2K OK

Over the last six months, we've received many phone calls from the audit departments of customer organizations asking for documented proof that Mun-Ease is year 2000 compliant. *(It is and always has been.)* After the first few phone calls, we began to see a pattern. Most of the phone calls originated from banks or financial institutions that were subject to federal regulation.

It now appears that CPA firms are also including this question as part of their yearly audit of government organizations. From our perspective, this question is a no-brainer. Because interest calculations that occur over 30-40 years are the essence of Mun-Ease, we have always taken into account year 2000 issues.

Tips: Installed Fonts

Reports of 8.x version of Mun-Ease use several fonts. They are Times Roman, Arial, Arial Narrow, and Garamond. These fonts automatically reside on your system if you are running Windows 95. If you are running Windows 3.1 though, you may want to verify that these fonts are installed. If not, you can usually load these fonts from the installation diskettes of one of several word processing packages.

The 8.75 Release - Feature Summary

< We've dramatically increased the speed of the Mun-Ease splash screen by using a pre-set gradient fill rather than painting one as the program initializes.

< *Combo Numeric Data Entry/Calculator fields* - When entering a numeric field, there are many times when it would be handy to have a calculator. Mun-Ease now contains a new field type which does just that. Click on the down-arrow to the right of the field and you'll have a calculator ready for use.

< We've revised all of our report specs so that they will work with both the 16-bit and 32-bit versions of ReportSmith.

< We now allow you to use an existing bond ID when you are sizing a new bond issue (both refunding and sizing modules). *Background:* In essence, sizing and refunding analyses are modeling exercises. Because you typically run these calculations many times with slight variations, it is quite easy to clutter your database with old obsolete bond issues. With this new feature, you can automatically avoid this situation. If you choose an existing bond ID under the 8.75 release, we'll ask if you want Mun-Ease to delete the bond issue. If you answer affirmatively, Mun-Ease will delete the old bond issue from your database allowing you to size a new issue with the existing bond ID.

< We've included a new feature that allows a user to delete all cash flows for a particular investment while in the arbitrage data grid. (Click on the "delete nonpurpose cash flows button", then enter the group ID in the dialog box.)

< We now provide the ability to generate the combined debt service schedule (report #04) showing only summary totals. (*Background*: Because of some limitations within ReportSmith, we were not able to print this report on a summary level. We've modified Mun-Ease to circumvent this limitation.)

< We've added three new securities to the bond calculator. There are repos, bankers' acceptances, and commercial paper.

< We've streamlined the data entry screen for securities under the Arbitrage|What if menu and Refunding|Open Market Securities menu.

< We've revised the "Other TIC Options" tab so that the credit enhancements will display correctly if you have chosen to calculate credit enhancements as a fixed amount on each debt service payment date.

< We've enhanced the rounding routines within the sizing module to structure the debt service more accurately.

< We've also revised the allocation reports (#32-36), and the sizing debt service schedule, (#14), arbitrage reports (#09a, 15). We fixed a problem in the report #09a report specification which caused the present value factor column to display zero values.

< We eliminated a bug in the allocations module which caused Mun-Ease to abort when a bond issue contained a variable rate schedule.