
Mun-Ease News

Visit our web site at www.mun-ease.com

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Release 8.50 ships!

This newsletter will highlight the new Mun-Ease 8.50 release (shipped free-of-charge to all our current 8.0 customers). The enhancements included in this release are extensive and are covered in a **three-page addendum provided to our users**. We also included over 8 pages of documentation with the software. Among the new features of this release are (a) mark-to-market capabilities for arbitrage investments, (b) a customizable data grid for entering arbitrage cash flows, (c) "best fit" modeling for sizing a new bond issue, and (d) improved transaction logging that is especially valuable in a multi-user environment. Call us if you would like to know more about these and other enhancements.

Release 8 - Our Most Successful Product To Date!

It seems hard to believe that we have only been shipping our Windows version of Mun-Ease since December, 1996. (The development of our Windows version took well over two years.) In the seven months since we initially shipped release 8, we have sold over 150 copies! We think that these numbers are just tip of the iceberg. We continue to improve Mun-Ease and are dedicated to providing first-class support to all our customers at **no charge!**

Where We're Heading...

In the old days, (10 or so years ago), companies could relax after a new release. Those days are long gone. Since we began shipping release 8 in December, we've made many enhancements including new millage impact reports/graphs, mailing label capabilities, and a variable rate simulator. As we mentioned earlier, this is just the start. We're working with portfolio management software vendors to interface their software to Mun-Ease. We're also adding a major new capability to our web site which will make **arbitrage calculations much easier**. (This capability should be

implemented by late summer.) And finally, we're listening to you, our users, to find out what new capabilities you'd like us to implement. In short, we're committed to having the best product at the lowest price.

Newly Revised Class Schedule

Mun-Ease classes are challenging, hands-on, and use real-life examples. Attending class is the best way to learn about Mun-Ease. Please call our training department at (312) 977-9700 if you are interested in attending. We have scheduled two more Mun-Ease classes for 1997:

9/15/97-9/17/97	- Chicago
10/22/97-10/24/97	- Chicago - (<i>New Date!</i>)

ReportSmith - Where to Buy

Mun-Ease generates all of its reports through the ReportSmith utility. We provide a run-time version of ReportSmith when you purchase Mun-Ease. Our reports can be easily customized by you if you purchase the full-featured version. ReportSmith can be purchased from Strategic Reporting Systems (SRS), Peabody, MA. Their phone number is (508)531-1007. (Note: SRS recently obtained the master license for ReportSmith from Borland, International.)

On the Legislative Front...

As reported in the 6/27/97 GFOA Newsletter, it now appears unlikely that any substantive changes will be made to the arbitrage rules in this year's budget bill. The Clinton administration had supported a new three-year exception. However neither the Senate nor House bills include this provision. Also a proposal by Senator Moynihan to deny tax-exempt financing to professional sports facilities was not included in the budget bill by either house. The one possible change is an increase in the small-issuer exception. The Senate bill increases the limit to \$10 million for bonds used to fund educational facilities.

In this issue...

<< release 8.50 features, classes, legislative news, purchasing ReportSmith, and installation tips. >>

The www.mun-ease.com Website

We developed our web site for a variety of reasons. First, it provides useful information to people interested in purchasing Mun-Ease. Secondly, it allows us make enhancements available to you on a much faster basis. You can check the “what’s new” section for our latest changes, then download the revised version if you think that it will be useful to you. Finally, we’ve included links to other web sites that you can use in connection with Mun-Ease. These sites include those that post current-day SLGS rates, municipal bond yields, and treasury prices. We also have a link to a site where you can download MIDI files for free. (The Windows version of Mun-Ease can play MIDI files while you are performing calculations and viewing graphics.)

As mentioned in a previous section, we are working on a major upgrade to our site. This upgrade will be especially helpful to people who use the Arbitrage and Refunding modules. We hope to have this change implemented by late summer.

New Hardware Key Drivers

When you install the new 8.50 release, you’ll notice a new icon in the Mun-Ease group. This icon allows you to install a Windows driver for the hardware key. The manufacturer of the hardware key (Rainbow Technologies), now recommends that all communication with hardware keys now be done through drivers. While use of the drivers is optional with Windows 3.1 and Windows 95, it is mandatory when you are running Windows NT on a client PC. (Windows NT is designed with a hardware abstraction layer that prohibits software applications from communicating directly with any hardware device.)

LAN Installation Tips

LAN administrators often install application software as well as data on a site’s network server. From an administrative standpoint, a plausible argument can be made for this philosophy. However, most Windows applications are becoming quite large in size. Thus a network can be overburdened just by the traffic of moving application software (and not the data) across the network.

We believe a much better alternative is to install application software on the individual PC while keeping just data on the server. Because almost all of Mun-Ease calculations are recursive in nature, it is even more important to keep its executable code off the server. (We also recommend installing ReportSmith and the Database Engine (BDE) on the local PC.) If you follow this philosophy, there will be virtually no impact on the LAN performance with the installation of Mun-Ease.

BDE Configuration Tips

Mun-Ease stores and retrieves information using the Paradox database utility. Paradox is a powerful multi-user

database. The core access routines of Paradox are contained in the Borland Database Engine (BDE). If you install your database on a network server, you must define the directory where the Paradox Network Registration file (Pdoxusr.Net) resides.

The Registration file contains a list of all users who are currently logged on to the database. We recommend that you place the Registration file in the <x>:\Wmuni directory where <x> is the network drive. All Mun-Ease users must define the same directory location for the Registration file.

To define the location, click on the ReportSmith group icon, then double-click on the Database Engine Configuration icon. In the *Driver Name list box*, choose Paradox. On the right-hand side, click on the row titled *Net Dir*. In the *Net Dir* edit box, enter the directory where the Registration file is to reside. Save the configuration through the File|Save menu option then exit the Configuration utility. Repeat the same process for each Mun-Ease user. Refer to pages 158-159 and 497-498 in the User Guide if you have additional questions about these steps.

Note to DOS Mun-Ease Users

Are you still unsure about upgrading to the Windows version? We have two suggestions. First, purchase the demonstration version for \$30. You’ll get to see all the features, calculations, and reports for a pre-defined set of data. Secondly, just purchase the live version with the knowledge that you have a 30-day, money-back guarantee. We’re confident that once you use the Windows version, you’ll see the benefits of upgrading. (Mun-Ease 8.50 requires 16 megabytes of memory and a 486 DX-2 processor. A Pentium computer is recommended.)