

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Management Software

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stratford notes

September was the month that we passed the 'Y2K 100 day mark'. The final government reports came out showing the United States' "Y2K readiness". As you probably know, they say most government agencies are in good shape and no major interruptions are expected.

The area that received the worst marks was healthcare. Specifically they say that less than 40% of physician's offices are ready. This includes various kinds of equipment such as ECG machines and, of course, their computers. We believe that this may be correct. We have many customers that still require 5.25 inch diskettes. These are the large, black diskettes that cause the most problems when trying to load an update. Most of the computers that require 5.25 diskettes are 8+ years old. Most computers are only reliable for 3 to 5 years. Of course, you may have a computer that runs perfectly well and is 10 years old.

The real problem is that many computers more than 5 years old are not Y2K compliant. What this means is that, even though the Stratford program has always been 'Y2K compliant', your computer may still have problems because the hardware cannot process dates correctly.

During the past several years we published articles in this newsletter about testing your computer to be sure it is 'Y2K compliant'. We also have posted links on our web site for places you can go on the Internet to get test programs. In one week

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Stratford has almost **4,000** licensed users

in September 1999, we documented calls from many customers who have computers that are probably not Y2K compliant. In every case, the customer stated that 'they weren't worried'. They planned to just go out and buy a new computer if they had problems. While that may be an acceptable backup plan, it has a major potential flaw. If Stratford receives calls for help from 500+ customers the first week of the year 2000, it will certainly mean that most of those customers will have extended downtime. Their bills may not go out. They may not be able to collect because they miss deadlines. Some of our customers will probably suffer major financial harm. Also, 15 of the customers mentioned above do not subscribe to regular software support. This means that we have not been tracking their software needs. We do not know what payers they are billing and what updates they need. As always, we will take care of our customers who maintain continuous monthly support first. Do you know that you can purchase 10 months support and get 12? •

You can find Stratford's Internet server at this address:
<http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/>

Training Classes *SHS Software Basic Training*

In the Stratford Classroom:

By Appointment only \$225

Call for class availability at least three days in advance. On-site training with a certified Stratford trainer may be available (*by appointment only*).

FROM THE EDI CORNER

In the latest newsletter from WPS Medicare (Wisconsin), back page, there is a write-up regarding Y2K testing. They go through some steps for creating a test. They give special phone numbers, etc. Whether or not you transmit to WPS, you may receive notices like this. As you have read here many times, the Stratford program is Y2K compliant and always has been. Even so, you may need to do a special test with some or all of your payers. WPS has given clear, easy to follow instructions. If you have any problems doing any required Y2K tests, please fax the information you have to us here at Stratford: (650) 692 1073 and we will help. Do not put this off until the last minute. If you wait until the end of the year, your payer may stop accepting your claims and we may be backed up and not be able to help you as quickly as usual. Do not let this happen. •

DON'T FORGET TO REORGANIZE YOUR DATA

Many of you don't know what this means. It is documented many times in the manual along with backups, etc and all those other mundane things that you are sup-

posed to do with your computer. You should be doing this at least once per week. The procedure is simple. First, plan a time when you won't be using your computer for awhile, such as night time. Then you can set up form type 193 in the batch processor or go to the file maintenance menu.

Q: What is reorganization?

A: This is a special program that looks at all the records in all the files in your database.

Q: Why do I care about reorganizing?

A: As you add new information and change old information you are constantly opening and closing patient records. When you do this, you look at the account information and if you see something wrong, you will correct it or if it is something serious, such as a file error, you may call Stratford for support. This is fine for those accounts that you look at. What if you have thousands of accounts and you only look at 20-50 per day? This means that there are probably many accounts that you never look at all. If an error occurs in those accounts that you don't look at, you won't know it. However, at the end of the month or some other 'bad' time, this damaged account may stop your insurance or EDI from processing.

Q: Can an account get damaged spontaneously, or for no apparent reason?

A: Yes. There probably is a reason like 'old age' which for a computer is 3 years or more. Another reason is power fluctuation. Maybe you have the computer on the floor and the cleaning people hit it with the vacuum.

EDI "per-claim" charges
Stratford does not have any "per-claim" or other charges related to transmitting claims to Medicare or any other carrier. We only charge (optional) for providing software support.

STRATFORD NEW SERVICE CAPABILITIES

Our redundant NT Exchange servers are up and running flawlessly now. Whenever you fax, whether to our direct support fax lines or regional numbers, all faxes now come to us in the same manner as email. We hope to have all our voice mail connections in place by January 1, 2000. In addition to our Exchange servers, we also have an NT server dedicated to our full-time Internet connection. We also have 2 NT servers dedicated to monitoring our 4 separate Internet POP servers. We believe we are now fully prepared for whatever may be in store for us (and you) on January 1, 2000 and also February 29, 2000.

You may use any of the following numbers for faxes. We will be installing new regional fax numbers as the number of customers in a given region justifies the cost.

San Francisco peninsula:
(650) 692-1073 (multiple lines)
San Francisco City and County:
(415) 723 7300
Arizona and Southern California:
(520) 752 6263
Ohio and the mid-west:
(419) 844 2433
Massachusetts/New England
(413) 451-7722

On Monday, September 27, 1999 we opened our Florida office. This will enable us to handle calls up to 3 hours earlier than before. We have thousands of healthcare offices/clinics in New England

Stratford will run your Stratford software related classified ad in our monthly newsletter *free*, upon SHS approval! Fax your ad to us at (650) 692-1073.



using our software (not yet counted as licensed users). As more of them begin subscribing to support, we need to be able to respond more quickly. We hope to have our Boston Mass location running by March, 2000, however, that will depend on the volume of calls and our ability to respond.

Our main incoming support email address is:
support@stratfordsoftware.com

You may direct your email to an individual here at Stratford by simply putting their first and last name separated with a dot before the '@' symbol. For example if you want to send email to John Doe you would address it like this:
john.doe@stratfordsoftware.com

For those of you with Microsoft Net meeting, if you wish to be able to call in directly to the support group, please fax your Internet information to us here at any of the above fax numbers. We will enable this depending your computer literacy. You must have this working already and be 'fluent' with it. We cannot help you set it up. •

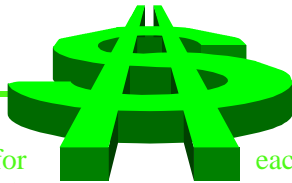
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 1 **Faxed requests for support get Priority Service.**
- 2 **If you send a fax with a description of the problem, your call is given priority over other faxes.**
- 3 **Do not call more than one time. The second call places your first call at the bottom of our callback list.**

We can receive many calls in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we can to avoid "phone-tag". Hand-written faxes can be almost impossible to read, so please type them whenever possible. Include the best time to call you.

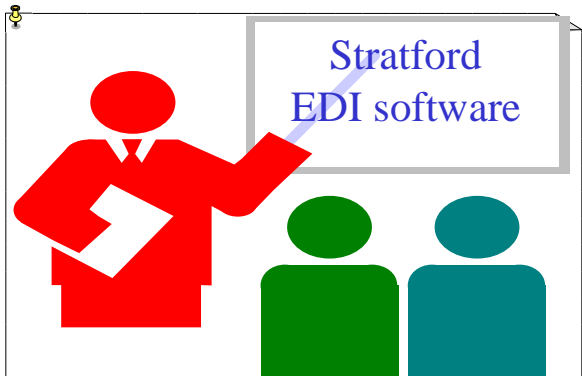
At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or three times each day. As the volume increases, we will put more resources into email.

We are interested in hearing from people who would like to receive support by email. •



Stratford you \$100 for you refer who Stratford Software at full price (\$895). Simply fax or write to give us your referral. We must receive the referral notice in advance of the sale. We cannot pay for a referral if you notify us after the sale.

*[Subject to restrictions](#)



INTERNET RESOURCES

We are less than 100 days away from January 1, 2000, so here are some web sites with relevant information:

[Http://www.y2k.com](http://www.y2k.com) (this will transfer you to cnet.com)

[Http://www.year2000.com](http://www.year2000.com)

<http://unix.cc.wmich.edu/rea/Y2K/>

<http://www.microsoft.com/y2k/>

We would appreciate hearing from you regarding any specific concerns you may have regarding Stratford, Y2K, etc. Please email to

y2k@stratfordsoftware.com

Stratford Newsletter

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Internet: mail@stratfordsoftware.com

<http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/>

New Software Sales Only (800) 274-4594