

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Practice Management Software

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stratford notes

This newsletter and probably newsletters for several more months will concentrate on the new Stratford program which is in the final phases of beta testing.

Our most common support issues at this time with the current, dos-compiled program are people who are buying new computers with Windows ME and Windows 2000.

Our most common support issues at this time with the new Windows-only compiled program, currently in "beta" are conversions from the old program database structure. As of the end of January, 2001 we have no outstanding unsolved issues. If you have been unable to convert data in the past, you should download the newest version of the "beta" software and try again. You must follow the tutorial for converting data. In the past 90 days we have had some large databases converted while using Microsoft terminal server and some versions of Citrix. If you have any problems at all, you should immediately notify us as we are nearing the time that we will begin putting smaller accounts on the new program. If there are no significant problems in the first 90 days, we will begin offering the new program to all licensed users of the Stratford practice management software.

Some "beta" users in the past reported problems getting the new Microsoft HTML help system to work on some types of computer hardware. We believe that all these issues are resolved now. If

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Stratford has almost **4,500** licensed users

you are unable to get the help screens to appear from any data entry form when pressing F1 you should report it immediately so we can get this resolved. The reason is that we plan to open on-line access to the help screens soon. This will enable those customers with continuous Internet access to always have current help available.

If you have been considering installing a DSL line or cable modem, you should do it now. Many service providers such as ATT ATHOME cable are offering 60 days free service with no long-term contract required. This may not be available in your area. •

Pre-paid support customers may use email for the fastest response:

support@stratfordsoftware.com

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 \$275

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

We are beginning the initial testing process for FTP claim transmission with one large clearinghouse. FTP is one of the most common methods of file transmission over the Internet. Initially, the transmission may be to a private bulletin board similar to the existing method of electronic claims transmission. When an acceptable encryption method is approved, the transmission will be quickly moved to the Internet. The advantage of Internet transmission is that there is no cost for phone calls other than the cost to access the Internet. In other words, there will be no difference in cost to transmit a claim from Los Angeles to Los Angeles or Los Angeles to Boston. •

HIPAA INFORMATION

Many providers think this law is never going to go into effect. It may seem that way, depending on your viewpoint, but we have seen steady progress in the implementation over the past few years. It is extremely difficult to implement a law like this which changes almost all the ways that healthcare business is being transacted. It is obvious that no one real-

ized how difficult it would be to require a new format for claims and that is one very small part of the HIPAA law. No health-care provider anywhere in the world used the ANSI X.12 format in 1992.

The current implementation date for requiring ANSI transmission is October 16, 2002 for Medicare and all large payers and clearinghouses. Some smaller payers will have an additional year. When this part of the law is fully implemented, there will be penalties for transmitting or receiving healthcare information in any other format. This means that many providers will be required to change to a new software package. Stratford began moving customers to the ANSI format in 1994. At this time we have almost all our users transmitting in the ANSI formats if the payer will accept it. All providers who use the Stratford program already meet the requirements and will have updates available to keep them in compliance with the new law as changes are introduced.

MA82 DENIALS

Medicare requires a provider who is a member of a group to use the group number when billing for services. Most Medicare contractors are now enforcing this requirement. This means that the rendering provider number must only be used for the service and the group number must be used for payment purposes. If you have received a MA82 denial, Stratford support can assist you in setting up the software so that your numbers will appear in the proper place whether you are billing electronically or on paper. •

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'S NEW PROGRAM

Here are some questions and answers about the new program in 'beta' now.

Q: I tried the "beta" several months ago and I could not get the tutorials to work on my computer. I didn't want to put a 'shortcut' on my desktop so I haven't used the beta. When can I try again?

A: Now. The tutorial is working on all hardware configurations now. We only support Windows 98/SE/ME/2000, however so if you have an older version such as Windows 95 or Windows 3.x you may need to upgrade your operating system.

Q: I want to convert my old data but I can't find the menu selection that is mentioned in the tutorial. Why not?

A: This means you are not in the non-healthcare trial account. We are using the non-healthcare trial account for all administrative (non-healthcare) purposes. In the future this account will be able to have a special password protection so large groups can limit the access that any particular user has to the program. If you are in the Medical or Dental trial account, you won't see these selections on your menu. The Medical trial account is meant to be used like a "real" medical account. You can use it to try things to see how the software works without changing any of your "real" data.

Q: I am very interested in the scheduler in the new program. I have heard that I can use a mouse to 'drag' an appointment from one doctor to another without losing the time or other information. Is this true?

A: Yes. We encourage you to convert your old account and use your "real" patient information to test the scheduler. If

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.



you used the scheduler in the old dos-compiled program, all that information will be converted into the new scheduler. Of course, the new scheduler has many additional features so you will need to go through the setup process.

Q: I tried the scheduler but I was confused by some of the setup screen functions. For example one of the little boxes had a value of -1. What does that mean?

A: The scheduler setup maintenance screens have the value that is used by the program visible at this time for testing purposes. As we go from "beta" to production status, these will be replaced with more user-friendly values. In these cases, you probably should not change anything anyway unless the tutorial specifically instructs you to do so. Most of these values will not be user-editable in the final version.

Q: I have the minimum hardware requirements for the new program. It seems to be slow.

A: We will probably be able to speed it up as time goes on. Many users will want to get at least a 600 MHz computer with 128 or even 256 megs of memory. Memory is the most important hardware factor. •

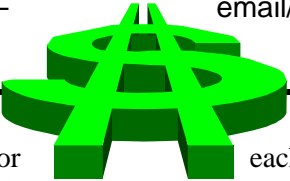
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

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

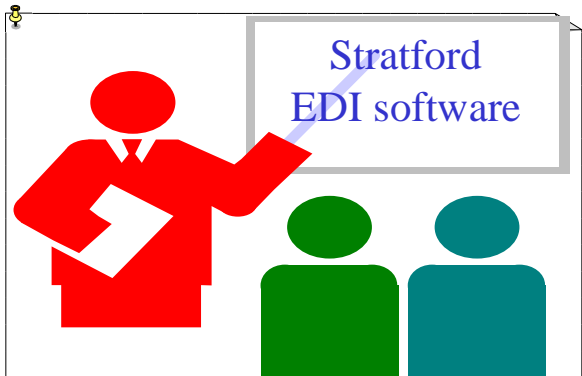
We can receive many support requests in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we 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 best by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. We check our email constantly — at least every 5 minutes. We are putting most of our resources into email and other methods that utilize the Internet. If you have an ICQ number, we can support it. Let us know.

We are interested in hearing from people who would like to receive support by Internet — email/ICQ, etc.

Stratford  will pay you \$100 for you refer who each person* purchases 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

You may be able to get cable modem service in your office and/or home:

<http://www.athome.att.com/>

At this site you will be able to put in your phone number and address to find out if the ATT AtHome service is available to you. You may be eligible for a special offer.

Here are some sources for free email taken from www.altavista.com by entering "free email". Be sure to read the contract to be sure it is really free and that it is what you want.

www.juno.com (Internet access & email)

Stratford Newsletter

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