

SOFTWARE REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS AND AGREEMENT

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1. SOFTWARE REVIEW PROCESS

The software listings and reviews are a joint initiative of CGAP and the EU/ACP Microfinance Programme. The aim is to help microfinance institutions (MFIs) make informed technology decisions by facilitating access to information on commercially available information systems (IS) products. CGAP began conducting software reviews in 2002 and has completed thirty reviews since that time. Twenty five reviews are planned for 2009.

Reviews are based on information provided by vendors, an analysis of test cases performed by independent evaluators, and user feedback. This document is designed to provide a quick overview of the product and vendor, analysis of various aspects of the product, and basic pricing information.

Reviews are conducted by independent evaluators and the process is managed by Horus Development Finance in coordination with CGAP. Vendors which elect to be reviewed must agree to have the review and supporting documents posted on CGAP's website and in the Microfinance Gateway library. Vendors will have the opportunity to submit a response to the review, which will also be posted online, but will not be able to refuse publication of the review once they agree to these terms.

The evaluation process follows three main steps:

1) A complete users list ("Reference Request" document) must be provided. These clients can be of any institutional type—bank, MFI, cooperative, credit union—but must be serving microfinance clients as part of their client base. These institutions should currently be using the product being reviewed. Our intent is to follow-up with these organizations with a written user satisfaction survey.

2) The “Request for Information” (RFI) document must be completed, either in English, Spanish, or French. Response to each question should be as concise, specific and informative as possible. The information provided, along with supporting documentation, including the user feedback, screenshots and other materials sent, will be posted on CGAP’s website. If you feel appropriate to send us information or materials that you would prefer not to make public, please tell us, so that we can restrict its use to the Software Review management team and CGAP.

3) A demonstration of your software product is required. The evaluator will contact you to schedule the demonstration which should take place using a desktop sharing tool or similar method, in addition to being in contact over the phone or skype. The evaluator will provide in advance a series of test cases, and they may ask questions, capture screenshots, or add test cases as appropriate during the course of the demonstration. Whenever possible, a version of the demo (i.e. CD, internet version, etc.) should be made available to the evaluator so they may reference it after the live demo. In some cases a site visit may be organized at an MFI user site.

Once all information is collected, the reviewer will evaluate the software and write the review. If required, the evaluator may clarify some points with the software vendor. Once the report is written, the Software Review management team organizes a peer review by one of the other independent reviewers.

The reviewer team comprises individuals with extensive experience in microfinance, systems development, and software evaluation to ensure that levels of consistency, fairness, and transparency are adhered to during the process.

The software vendor will receive a copy of the final review and will have a chance to submit a response to CGAP. **All information will be published on CGAP’s website: review, RFI, link to demo, screenshots, user opinions, and vendor response.**

2. SELECTION CRITERIA

To be eligible for review, software products must meet the following minimum criteria. CGAP is responsible for the final decision to review a software product.

The selection criteria to review software are:

- Commercially available software
- Currently used by at least 3 MFI not affiliated with each other
- Covers at minimum loan portfolio management
- Capacity of the company to market, support and enhance its products

Even if a product is not eligible or is not selected to be reviewed, all products which cover loan portfolio management, at a minimum, may be included in the software listings on CGAP's website.

3. RATING CATEGORIES

The five rating categories are:

Functionality of the software covers topics like loan portfolio, deposit, shares, client information, and accounting.

Ease of Use looks at navigational architecture, user resources, and intuitiveness of the interface and emphasizes user feedback, in particular product satisfaction and operational improvement.

Management Reporting and data analysis covers the ease of obtaining useful and accurate information out of the system.

Services covers Implementation, Training, and Support, with a heavy emphasis on user satisfaction.

Technical Capabilities looks at the architecture of the solution, connectivity and hardware requirements, methods and development tools. This category also includes backup and recovery and security.

It is important to note that these software applications are not being compared against one another; some are meant to serve large regulated banks or credit unions, and others are meant to serve the needs of medium to small microfinance organizations. Rather, the applications are being compared to generally accepted industry standards, either in microfinance, software, or accounting.

4. INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVIEWS

To confirm your participation in the review process, you should follow these steps:

- a. Confirm as soon as possible by e-mail that your company understands the review process and is willing to undertake it to the end. Full cooperation will require you to:
 - Complete in full the "Request for Information" (RFI) document.
 - Submit a full list of clients and corresponding contact information.

- Conduct a product demonstration for the evaluator based on pre-defined test cases.
- b.** Complete and send the "Reference Request" document with a full list of your users, including contact information. Due within one week of confirming your participation.
- c.** Complete and send the RFI either in English, French, or Spanish. Due within two weeks of confirming your participation.
- d.** Prepare for the demonstration using desktop sharing or similar method. The evaluator will provide test cases It is also requested that you make a demonstration of your software available (CD, electronic file, download accessible on your website).
 - The demonstration may generate additional questions (through email or telephone) from the evaluator so please be prepared to answer some questions, if necessary.
 - The demonstration may be complemented by a site visit in certain cases.
- e.** After the peer review process is completed, all information will be sent to the vendor for response. The vendor has an opportunity to post a response along with the documents published on the website, but must accept the final version of the review as completed by the review team.
- f.** All information is posted on the software listings website (www.cgap.org/softwarelistings): review, RFI, user feedback, and if applicable, vendor response to the review.

5. UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION ON THE CGAP WEBSITE

The software listings and reviews are now hosted on CGAP's website and no longer the Microfinance Gateway. If your product was registered on the old website, all information concerning that product has been migrated, but might need to be updated.

The following paragraphs describe steps to update your company and software profiles:

1. Access the "**Software Listings and Reviews**" link from CGAP's Technology Program website : www.cgap.org/softwarelistings
2. Click on the "**Software Company Login**" link
3. Enter your User ID and password (they have been sent to you in a previous email). If you can't remember your login information, send an email to softwarelistings@cgap.org.

4. Click on “edit” to update your company profile, or scroll to the bottom of the screen and select your product(s) to edit a product.

Click on “add a product” if you have a new software to register.