ROCKTON software

Auditor

For all Great Plains and Small Business Manager versions 6.0 through 7.5
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Rockton Software Auditor

Table of Contents

Introduction

Rockton Software is pleased to bring Auditor to the Microsoft Business Solutions Great Plains community.

Auditor is a system management tool to track data changes in your Great Plains or Small Business Manager accounting system. Auditor answers Who changed What, When, Where, and optionally, Why. Auditor can be configured to track field-level specific changes, when new records are added, and when information is deleted from your system.

Auditor also works with all 3rd party installed products which integrate with Great Plains.

For purposes of this manual, Small Business Manager will also be referred to as "Great Plains", as the setup and use of Auditor is the same for both products. Any instructions unique to SBM will be specifically noted.

For purposes of this manual, "Smartlist" will be referenced, even though in Great Plains versions 6.0 Smartlist was named "Explorer". If you are installing to Great Plains 6.0, Explorer is the same as Smartlist.

What's in This Manual

This manual contains the basic instructions needed for the installation and use of Rockton Software's Auditor. You will find instructions for:

- Installation
- Navigation
- Setting up Auditor

If you do not find the information you need in the following documentation, please contact Rockton Software (see page 6).

Symbols and Conventions

To help you use this documentation more effectively, we have included the following symbols to highlight important information:

This symbol points out suggestions and important notes that assist you in installing and using Auditor.

The warning symbol alerts you to situations in which you should proceed with caution. Notes highlighted with a warning symbol relate to information that affects your entire system—please read carefully!

The "OK" symbol points out helpful tips that can simplify the process and save time.

- Keyboard keys, specific buttons, file names and menu paths are shown in bold print, such as the **Move Right** button, the **OK** key or the **setup.exe** program.

- Window titles and captions are shown in quotes, such as the "Maintenance" window.

Customer Technical Support

Please contact your authorized reseller for support on this product. Or, contact technical support at Rockton Software by phone at (253) 864-7898 or e-mail support@rocktonsoftware.com. You can also visit www.rocktonsoftware.com for more information on Rockton products, including a Frequently Asked Questions section.

Installation

1. From the first computer you wish to install Auditor, copy the **Audit.cnk** file included in the downloaded or unzipped software into your local Great Plains installation folder.

2. Include the new chunk file code by launching Great Plains.

   The following message will appear: "New code must be included in the DYNAMICS.SET dictionary. Do you wish to include new code now?"
   Click **Yes** and a progress bar will display the status of the integrating process until the login window appears. This window will NOT appear for SBM.

   This process will modify your DYNAMICS.SET file to include information relating to the Auditor, and the **Audit.cnk** file will become an **Audit.dic** file.

3. Log into the system as the System Administrator. For installations of Great Plains on SQL Server, you must log in as the **sa** account.

4. Log into any company. Since Auditor maintains data at the system level, it is only necessary to install the software in one company. If you are evaluating the software and do not yet have a registration key, it is recommended that you log into the TWO test company. Without a valid registration key, Auditor will not work in other companies.

5. Installation is now complete. Once you register the product, you can install Auditor on all other network workstations by following steps 1 and 2 above. No further workstation-specific installation is required.

This completes the process for initial installation. See the following sections for setting system options and maximizing the features of Auditor for your site.

Navigation

Because Auditor is designed to be an administrative tool, Rockton Software has decided to NOT install palette entries into Great Plains automatically. With the exception of the system administrator, it is unnecessary for users to navigate to any features of Auditor.

In the event users do want to navigate to a feature of Auditor, adding a Shortcut Bar entry is easy to do.

1. From the standard Great Plains Help Menu, choose Help >> About Great Plains.

2. Once the standard About Box is open, at the VERY TOP of the Great Plains menu structure (i.e. File, Edit, Tools… etc.) will be an Extras menu. Choose Extras >> About Auditor.

3. The Auditor About Box will open. Once this window is open, from the Smartlist menu choose Add >> Current Window.   If you choose to not add an item to the shortcut bar, you can still navigate to the About Box in this manner.

Auditor About Box

The About Box is the primary installation and navigation window for Auditor.

The following buttons perform these tasks:

Install/Upgrade	Press this button once to install the software, or to upgrade the software from a previous version. This may take several minutes. It will also install the Smartlist Objects automatically, and will set table permissions to all users in the system database.
Add Smartlist Objects	If you wish to manually remove the Audits from Smartlist, press this button.
Remove Smartlist Objects	If you have removed Audits from Smartlist, you can add them back by pressing this button.
Register	This option opens the registration window so you can enter a registration key.
Audit Tables	This opens the primary window for Auditing Great Plains by the Table method.
Audit Windows	This opens the primary window for Auditing Great Plains by the Window method.
OK Button	Press this button to close the window.

An Overview of Setting up Audits

Auditor has two methods for tracking data changes in Great Plains, by Window and by Table. The Window method is the easiest to use, while the Table method is more technical in nature. Try auditing your system using the Window method first. If you cannot accomplish your auditing goals from the Window method, then try the Table method. At any time you can contact Rockton Software for assistance.

The Window method allows you to "point and click" and different screens or windows in Great Plains. By using a wizard, you can simply open a window and click on the fields you wish to audit. Auditor will collect the technical information for you, and begin auditing your selections.

The Table method allows database administrators to monitor table operations in Great Plains. When a record is added, deleted, or modified, you can track who changed what on the record. An understanding of database structures in recommended for using this method.

All audits are tracked by a Record Key, which is usually the primary piece of information that tracks what has changed. For instance, if you are auditing employee information from the Payroll setup window, the Employee ID would be the Record Key. If the Employee Name changed, you would want to know for which employee the name changed, and that would be indicated by the Record Key. You can choose which fields on a window or table to use for the Record Key.

An audit is a logging of a change. When a field changes, you can either "Audit" that field or you can "Audit with Note". Notes are helpful when you want users to explain why they made a data change. For instance, if you are auditing employee information, such as name, address, and status, you may want to use an audit for name and address fields, but place an Audit with Note option on the Department field. By doing this, when a user changes the Department field for an employee, they will be required to enter a note explaining the reason for the change. Notes will be tracked as part of the audit.

You may be tempted to audit everything in your system. This is not recommended. Carefully review the reasons why you want to audit data, and what, specifically, you want to audit. Because an audit is created for every field change (except for the Table method) the audit log can grow very large very fast. An extremely lengthy audit log which tracks everything is often useless to anyone.

Performance Issues with Auditing

Because Auditor has the ability to track so much information, you may want to consider the performance limitations you may encounter by using Auditor.

In general, auditing by the Window method shows a non-noticeable effect on performance and speed. Because auditing is done real-time, only a very fast typist who changes several fields in rapid succession would notice any performance degradation, and this is highly unlikely to be noticed at all. A small amount of processing occurs each time a user enters and exits a field.

When auditing using the Table method, it is unlikely to experience performance degradation unless using a batch process. If you are auditing a table where users are editing one record at a time using data entry screens, the effect is not noticeable. However, if you are posting a batch of transactions, and auditing each record, you may notice a slight delay in processing. For instance, if you are auditing deletes on unposted receivables transactions, and you post a batch of 100 transactions, a normal processing time of 30 seconds may be increased to 32 seconds. Again, the effect is usually not noticeable, but as the scale of auditing increases you may experience a slight degradation in performance.

Most administrative users of Auditor feel the slight performance hit offsets the value of the information being collected. Again, as mentioned above, it is recommended that you carefully choose what you want to audit and not simply "audit everything". There is a performance cost for auditing in any audit system, and you may want to monitor certain audits to determine their acceptability of speed. In general, performance degradation will not be an issue for most users of Auditor.

Auditor Window Maintenance
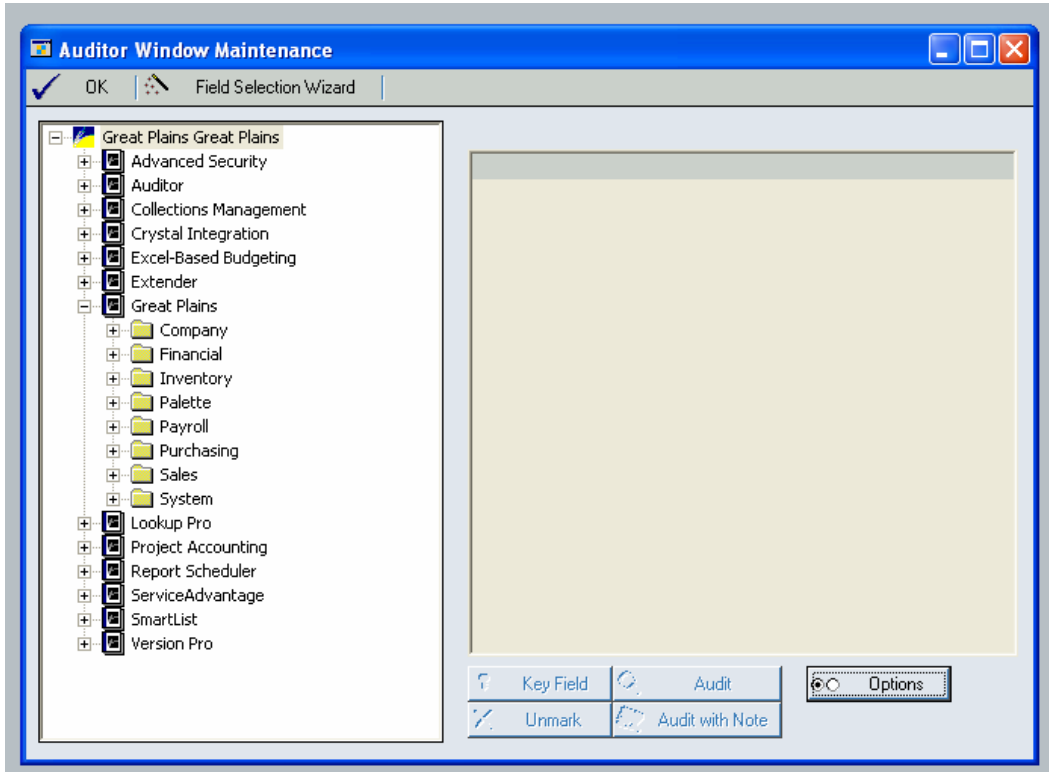
Auditor Window Maintenance is an interface to track audits by product, series, and window. The tree view on the left lists all products loaded in your system. Expanding a product will list the modular series. Expanding further you will find under series the list of forms, and then the list of windows on a form.

A form is a "container" for windows, and often a form contains one window with the same name as the form. When you select a Window, its fields will list on the right side. By selecting a field, you can mark that field as a Key Field, Audit, or Audit with Note. An icon will appear next to the field designating its purpose. A field can not be audited if it is a Key Field.

The easiest way to set up a window to be audited is by using the Field Selection Wizard, located at the top of the window. Press this button to start the Wizard.
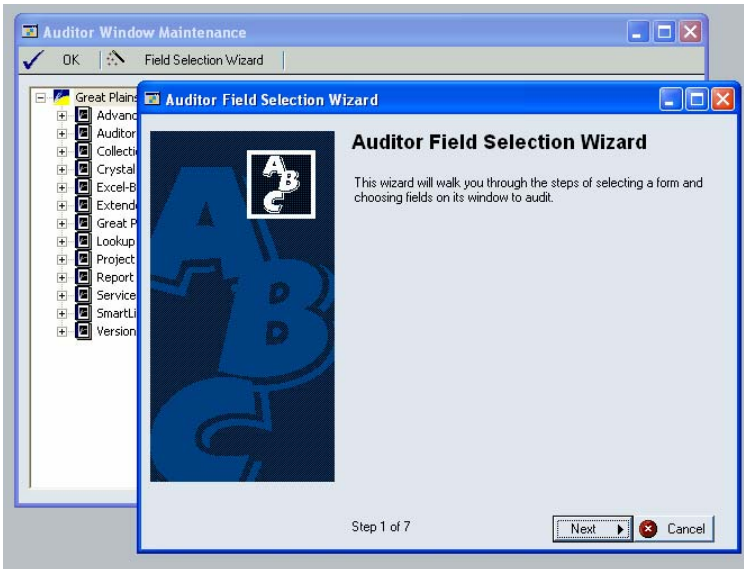
Once the Wizard has started, press Next.

On Step 2, choose a form by opening a window. Simply use standard Great Plains navigation methods to open up the window you want to audit. The details of the window, including its name, its form, and other windows on that form, will display automatically in the wizard. Click back on the Wizard window when you are done to review that it has captured the correct window you want to audit, then press Next.


Next, the Wizard will inform you it will set up the window. Press Next. The window you wish to audit will close and reopen. Once it reopens, you will click on the Key Fields you wish to use

to track your audits of the window. In most cases, this will be the first field on the screen. An audible beep will occur each time a field is selected, and the fields selected will appear in the Wizard.
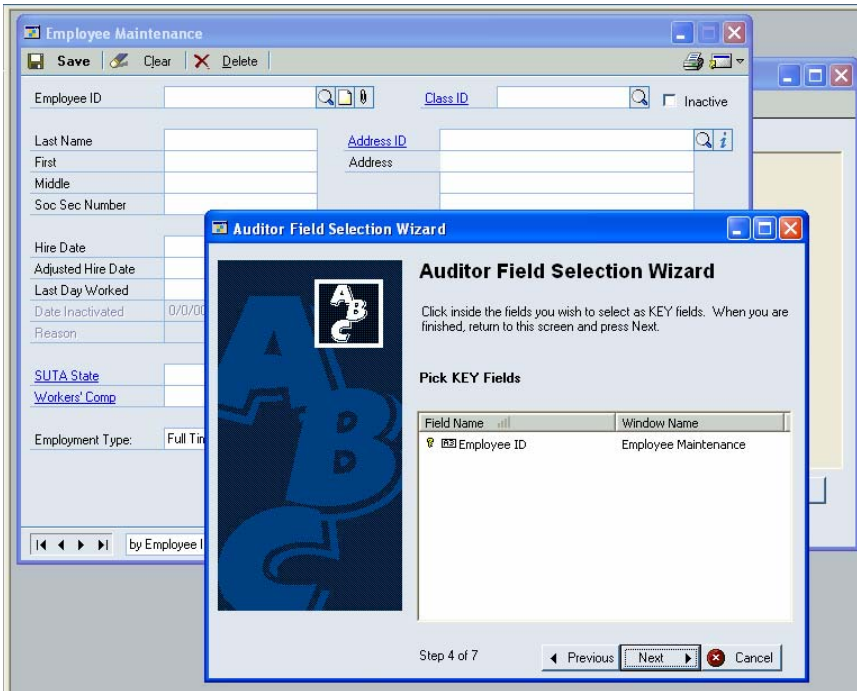

Continue following the instructions on the wizard to choose fields to Audit and fields to Audit with Note. Each time a field is selected you will hear an audible tone.
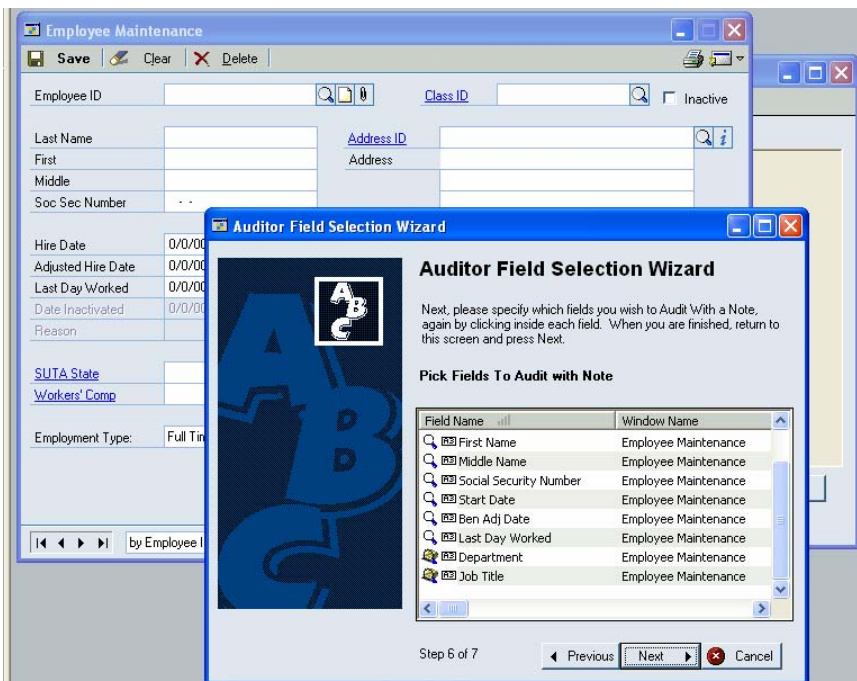
Once you have selected all fields, close the Wizard. The Auditor Window Maintenance window will refresh and display details about what you just selected.

You may want to modify behavior on specific fields. For instance, a Radio Group or Drop-Down List will be tracked in your system by an integer, which isn't meaningful in most audits. You may want to map values of fields to their more meaningful counterparts. Take the example from SOP Entry. There are five document types, Quote, Order, Invoice, Return, and Back Order. However, when you track the SOP Type in the system, only the digits 1-5 will be recorded. By using the options screen, you can map these values as shown.
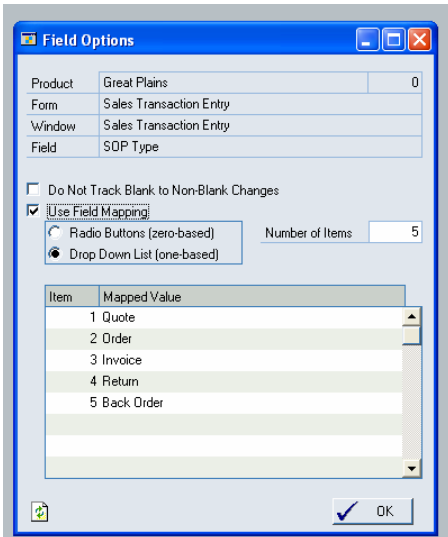
Auditor Table Maintenance

The Auditor Table Maintenance screen is the primary setup window for tracking audits at the table level. It allows you to select what tables and table operations to audit.
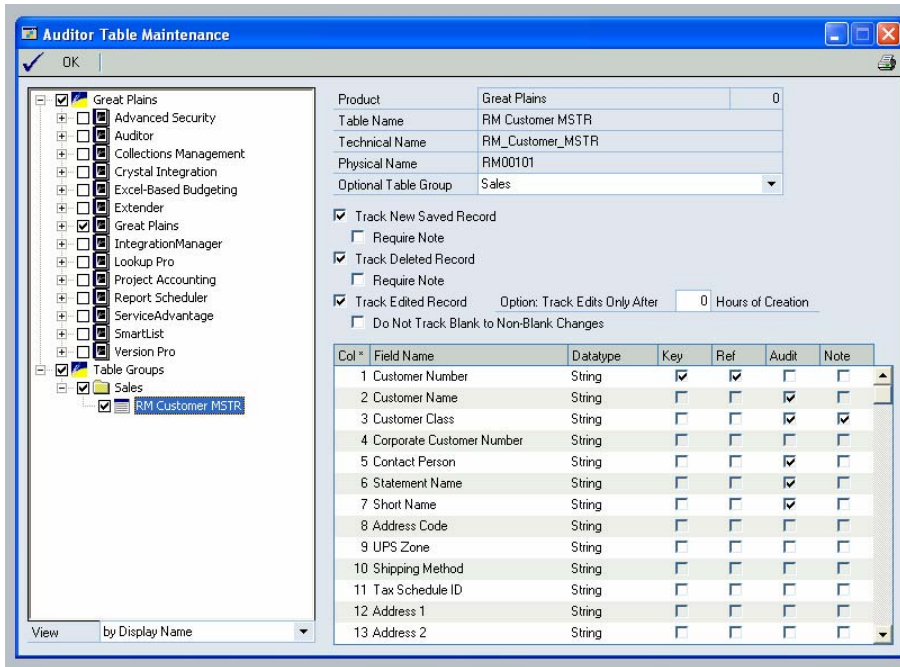
On the left is a tree view which lists all products, their table groups, and the tables themselves in a hierarchy. Once a table is selected in the tree, information on the right can be edited for that table.

Option	Explanation
Optional Table Group	Type any group name you wish to identify this table. This allows you to group several tables together into a group for easier maintenance in the future. Once a group is specified for a table, the tree view at left will redisplay and show Table Groups at the bottom of the tree.
Track New Saved Record	Check this option if you wish to audit when users add records to this table.
Track Deleted Record	Check this option to track deletions of records from this table.
Track Edited Record	Check this option to track specific field-level changes (which must be selected in the field list below). You can also optionally choose to track edits only after a certain number of hours of adding a new record. This is useful in case you are not tracking new records, and it is likely that insignificant edits will be made in the first few hours of a new record being added.

|	
Do Not Track Blank to Non-Blank Changes	This option is used to ignore field level changes when a user adds information to a field that was previously blank. In many data entry screens, it is typical to save a record before all data entry is completed, in which case editing a record occurs even though it appears to the user that they are adding a new record. This option is often more useful than not.

The field list can be sorted by the column headings, and the following options are available for each field:

Column	Explanation
Key	This column informs you what the primary key fields on this table are, to help you choose which fields to use for Reference. This column is not editable.
Ref	Use this column checkbox to mark field which represent the Primary Key or primary data element that makes records in this table unique to track. For instance, the customer table has a Primary Key of Customer Number. These reference fields are used to track specific records in the audit log, so choose them carefully.
Audit	Mark the fields for which you wish to track changes. Only the fields marked will be audited.
Note	When a field is audited, you can optionally check the Note checkbox to force a user to explain why a field was changed. Users are prompted with note entry after they modify a record if this box is checked. The user can close the note window, but they will be prompted repeatedly until they complete the notes.

When you have completed setting up what to audit, click the OK button. Auditor will now audit the tables and fields you have set up.

Audit Reporting

All system audits are tracked in a single table in the system database, and can be reported using Smartlist. Smartlist is the only tool built into Auditor for directly viewing audits. Using the features of Smartlist, you can filter and sort your audits and export them to Word or Excel for further evaluation. The Audits object appears automatically in Smartlist after the product is installed.
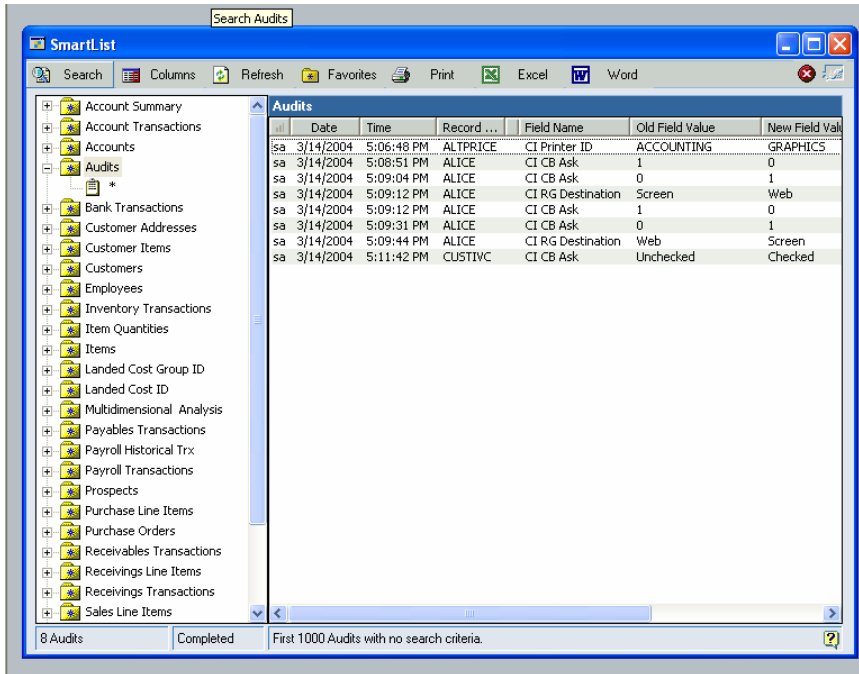
For more technical reporting of audits, you can access the audit table directly in SQL system by querying the table RSAS015 in the DYNAMICS database.