

A very special thanks to Ed, Shannon, and Peter of the Intuit Developer Network Team for taking a few moments of their time to talk about what they feel are the most important changes with the release of QuickBooks 2006, improvements made to the IDN Program, the Solutions Marketplace, and what they would like to see happen in the future. Here's what they had to say.

What are you most excited about with the release of 2006?

We think, first and foremost, the addition of the Merchant Services SDK, POS SDK, and the changes in QuickBooks 2006 to support storing the details of merchant services credit card transactions that took place outside of QuickBooks. From a customer and accountant perspective, this means that all credit card transactions, whether they happened directly in QuickBooks, at the customer's web store, or through a PDA, can be automatically reconciled within QuickBooks, including transaction fees, etc. So the customer and the accountant can look to QuickBooks as a *single* point of reference for all sales data, regardless of where it took place!

What do you feel are the 5 best enhancements in the QuickBooks Product Line/SDK for 2006?

- 1. The new database!** It's been a lot of work to get this first release with the new database out the door, and there's certainly a lot more that can and should be done, but it's a key piece that had to happen to set us up for the future. We are really excited about that.
- 2. The new "Centers" concept in the UI --** Finally, there's a single place where you can go to see all the important information about a customer or a vendor in one place, including the transactions for that customer or vendor. No more clicking through a stack of invoices or bills!
- 3. The integration with MS Outlook --** for two reasons: First, we think it's been an important pain point for our customers, but even more so because the only way this feature happened was through partnership with a developer! It's an opportunity for IDN to show greater value not only to our developers (i.e. the possibility of doing more

than just listing an app on Solutions Marketplace) but also to Intuit by delivering a new feature to QuickBooks users through the SDK.

- 4. The bundling of qODBC with the Enterprise version of QuickBooks --** a lot of people think that just by having a SQL backend it will suddenly mean that they can read and write data through Excel, Crystal Reports, or other tools built around SQL, but unfortunately they don't think about the security or data integrity issues that would imply.

By working with FlexQuarters' qODBC, which is built on top of the SDK -- we address the security concern AND the data integrity concerns because everything goes through the QuickBooks business logic (via the SDK). Again, IDN had the opportunity to deliver real value to Intuit and to our customers!

For those who don't have Enterprise, you can still get the same version of qODBC directly from the folks at FlexQuarters!

- 5. The broadening of SDK support for the entire QuickBooks Financial Software product line, including Simple Start.**

There was an initial misconception at Intuit that Simple Start users wouldn't have need for 3rd party tools because their accounting needs were simple. We've seen that to be true with a segment of the user base, but for others, their accounting needs are simple, but their business needs are significant, and the ability for an integrated application to prevent duplicate data entry is great for them. The eBay Accounting Assistant is perhaps the clearest evidence of that, and we look forward to seeing what else our developer community builds to work with Simple Start in the coming year.

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How do you feel these enhancements will benefit ProAdvisors, Developers, and ultimately the end user?

We've hinted at this a bit in the above -- from our interaction with you and other ProAdvisors, we think one of your key concerns is the accuracy of the data going into QuickBooks, especially when folks have sales coming from their place of business, their web store and their PDAs.

The new integration offerings for POS and Merchant Services ensure that data comes directly from the source and goes to the right place!

For the developer, we think the opportunity to provide a richer set of offerings, including credit card processing, etc. is just more opportunity to become a more important part of the customer's overall business solution, one that is truly **"Right for the Customer"**.

Finally, for the end customer, we think it all rolls together -- having a suite of solutions that works *with* them and addresses their unique set of needs while eliminating double or even triple data entry, saving time, and improving accuracy; while allowing them to provide even better service to *their* customers means they make their customers happier and maybe even get some of their life back!

In your opinion, what were the best enhancements to the IDN Programs for 2005? (Membership benefits)

In 2005, for the first time, IDN marketed integrated applications directly to the QuickBooks user base, in a much more targeted fashion. We featured specific developers in industry specific catalogs, direct mail and email marketing campaigns in order to drive traffic to the Solutions Marketplace and deliver qualified leads to Developers.

The redesign and overhaul of the Solutions Marketplace (www.marketplace.intuit.com) is another major enhancement for IDN and our Developers. We've made it easier for end-users and Advisors to not only find what they are looking for by organizing the site by Industry and area of need.. Due to this overhaul IDN is now driving 1 ½ to 2 times more qualified traffic directly to developer's sites.

The introduction of an SDK for Merchant Services, Point of Sale, and SDK support for Simple Start; was a big enhancement which offers Developers more flexibility and allows for

the creation of a broad range of new applications.

What were Intuit's best marketing programs for building Developer awareness to end user's?

We feel that the targeted email campaigns, industry specific catalogs, Search Engine Optimization, and Search Engine Marketing of the Solutions Marketplace were all great programs for building user awareness of Developer Applications.

Please give us 5 traits that you feel will help Advisors & Developers to create lasting relationships, and/or any ideas on how to bridge the gap.

1. Developers should attempt to better educate Advisors about their products rather than just try to *sell* the Advisor their product.
2. Developers and Advisors should be selective in their relationships and realize that not everyone is the same or has the same needs.
3. Follow-up and follow-through – don't leave each other hanging; that is not a good business practice.
4. Be easy to do business with.
5. Be proactive.

One of the best pieces of advice that we can offer up for bridging the gap, is for Developers to provide appropriate tools for Advisors to evaluate their products. These tools could include:

- On-line training
- On-line demo's
- Free product trials
- Case Studies

Can you give us a glimpse of what we can expect to see from IDN over the next 12 months?

First and foremost we will continue to build end-user awareness of third party applications and continue to drive more qualified leads to the Solutions Marketplace, and ultimately to the Developer.

We will be introducing some advanced "credibility tools" for ProAdvisors and end-user's in order to help them choose the best solution to fit their needs.

These tools will provide answers to the technical quality of the application, customer satisfaction, as well as product capabilities.

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