Sage View

Frequently asked questions

Overview

What is Sage View?

Sage View is a cloud-based solution that enables accountants to monitor their clients' business. Through powerful dashboards, analysis, and reports, accountants can see the performance of clients in one place without having to request files, create elaborate spreadsheets, and dig into various client accounting packages. Sage View allows accountants to move from a role of data capturing and reporting to more of a proactive business advisor.

Whom is Sage View designed for?

Sage View is designed for accounting professionals who want to provide more frequent and meaningful strategic advisory services to their clients.

How does Sage View benefit me and my practice?

Sage View provides numerous benefits, including:

- Enabling additional high-value, high-margin services you can provide to your clients.
- Saving time—no more spreadsheets or file transfers—as actionable data and alerts are now at your fingertips.
- Positioning you as a valuable advisor to your clients' businesses.

How does Sage View benefit my clients?

Your clients will reap the benefits of having their accountant track their business financial analytics through Sage View with benefits that include the following:

- Save time as data is automatically updated to the accountant, so clients can focus on running their business and the accountant doesn't need to ask for backups and reports in order to understand what's happening in their clients' businesses.
- Help increase profitability by tracking KPIs that help identify areas of potential growth and where to make changes.
- Reduce risk with status indicators, alerts, and analytics that help track leading indicators for early course corrections.

What value does Sage View provide to accounting professionals who use it?

With Sage View, accountants can focus on what's most important to them—their clients—by adding value to the services they provide. This value is achieved by:

- Staying close to client performance with up-to-date financials, including:
  - Monitoring the financial health and performance of all their clients in one place.
  - Drilling down to compare how a client is doing today versus at any other point in time
  - Identifying business opportunities and concerns proactively in order to recommend corrective action.
  - Analyzing up-to-date client data, metrics, and KPIs with clarity.
- Deepening client relationships with high-value advice, including:
  - Going beyond tax services to become the advisor that clients need their accountant to be.
  - Setting performance goals and tracking progress on a continual basis.
  - Creating new revenue streams with financial strategy and planning services.
- Getting more done in a day, including:
  - Eliminating manual reports and cumbersome spreadsheets.
  - Finding answers in seconds, without performing complex calculations.
  - Quickly recognizing urgent priorities and action items that require client follow-up.

What makes Sage View different from other Business Intelligence (BI) tools and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboards in the market?

Sage View offers some clear differentiators that include:

- Automatic updates between client data and the solution.
- An all-clients view.
- More than just a dashboard presentation solution.

Do I need to be a member of the Sage Accountants Network to use Sage View?

No. Sage View is available to any accounting professional providing services to multiple fee-paying clients regardless of affiliation with the Sage Accountants Network.

What accounting products work with Sage View?

Sage View connects with data from Sage One—U.S. Edition, Sage 50 Accounting 2015—U.S. Edition, and Intuit QuickBooks® 2014 U.S. desktop edition.

My clients and I are using Sage 50—U.S. Edition, which is not a cloud-based solution. How does Sage View work with Sage 50?

Once you invite your client through the Sage View invitation process, your client has accepted the invitation to participate, and the connection to the client data is configured, data is automatically linked to the cloud from the desktop environment and is then accessed through the Sage View connection by you.

What system requirements do I need to use Sage View?

Sage View requires an Internet connection (high-speed connection recommended) and a supported browser, including the latest versions of Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, and Internet Explorer (with Internet Explorer supported one version back).

I'm not comfortable with my data in the cloud. How secure is the data?

Sage stores all data on Amazon Web Servers in the U.S. using 256-bit encryption just like your bank. Sage also has mirrored sites and does perpetual backups, which means the data is replicated in different locations and backed up in the process. Mirrored sites provide the ability to switch over instantaneously from one server to another in event of a server failure. In the rare event that the servers need to be restored, Sage has the backups to restore from.

What about the data? Who owns it, and can my clients access it?

Clients own their financial data. Also, although you need to invite your clients to participate in order to have their data uploaded to Sage View, the reporting available in Sage View is currently only accessible by accountants.

If a client no longer wants to share data, how is this done?

Clients can disconnect from the accountant and Sage View at any time by going to Setting > My Services > My subscriptions and selecting Sage View-Client. From there, screens lead the client through the disconnection process.

What is the cost of Sage View?

The monthly base subscription cost for an accountant to use Sage View is $79. This includes up to five client businesses to be connected to Sage View. For each additional client business connection, the cost is $25.

How am I billed for Sage View?

You are billed on a monthly basis. The cost billed depends on how many clients you have connected to Sage View.

What does the base subscription include?

The Sage View subscription is for two administrative users and unlimited collaborators within a single accounting firm (one location). The base subscription includes access to Sage View and five client business connections. As part of the subscription, you receive automatic product enhancements and new features for the base product, a designated support team, and unlimited access to phone support.

Are multiple users in a firm allowed to use Sage View?

Yes. There is an administrative functionality related to setting access for additional users within an accounting firm.

Is there a trial offer available?

Yes! You can see the real value and experience the benefits of Sage View with our initial free 15-day trial. There is no additional trial for each client business connection.

Can I download Sage View instead of purchasing it through a subscription?

No. Sage View is a cloud-based solution, so there is no download necessary.

Where can I get more information on Sage View?

You can always find Sage View information on our website at http://na.sage.com/SageView. We're also available to answer any of your questions by email at AccountantsNetwork@sage.com or call us at 1-866-749-7243.

Functionality

How do I invite clients to use Sage View?

Once the accountant has subscribed to Sage View, the accountant uses the invitation process within Sage View to send invitations to clients. As each client accepts an invitation, the client is instructed how to "connect" to the accountant and start sharing client data. The connection process is easy, and once it is established, data will flow to Sage View until either the accountant or the client disconnects from the solution.

What is the process for starting to view client data in Sage View?

This process consists of five simple steps:

- Step 1. The accountant invites a client.
- Step 2. The client initiates a one-time connection process.
- Step 3. The accountant confirms the fiscal year.
- Step 4. The client confirms the chart of account mapping.
- Step 5. The accountant configures the KPIs for the client and indicates which ones he wants to show on the client dashboard.

How long does it take for client data to upload?

In general, the client data upload process takes less than one hour, and in many cases far less time. The actual time it takes is dependent on two main factors:

1. The amount of data that needs to be uploaded (less data means a quicker upload)
2. The network connection on the client's side (a faster connection means a quicker upload)

When will the client know that the data upload is complete?

As part of the client invitation acceptance process, the client will know immediately when the connection is active through an on-screen message.

How does Sage View make the chart of account mapping process easy?

During the initial data upload process, Sage View applies a default chart of accounts template that is based on the client's accounting software package.

How are the KPIs that appear on the dashboard determined?

For completeness and consistency, all KPIs can be generated for all periods, regardless of whether the KPI is best associated with either short-term or long-term performance. The actual KPIs that appear on the dashboard can be tailored to suit the specific needs of the accountant in analyzing client data.

As Sage View expands the flexibility of the dashboards, reports, and graphics, the accountant will be able to select KPIs and durations in a manner that leverages different time periods across KPIs even where these time periods may not be traditionally used. Future releases will add additional KPIs and respective information such as aging.

Are the dashboards customizable?

Yes. The accountant can customize the data that appears on a dashboard by selecting a date and calculation type. This causes Sage View to immediately change all the calculations and data on the dashboard to a different view based on those two parameters. So, rather than changing formulas within a spreadsheet, an accountant can make a single change and discover new findings within client data that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Also, because all clients are unique in their requirements, an accountant can create unique dashboards within Sage View for each client by selecting which specific KPIs appear on a dashboard.

What are the KPIs that Sage View tracks?

There are currently 12 predefined KPIs that enable the accountant to monitor liquidity, efficiency, profitability, and leverage. Future KPI enhancements for Sage View will include additional standard KPIs as well as customized KPI builders.

How does Sage View turn KPIs into client advice?

Sage View presents KPIs in an insightful and actionable way that allows accountants to provide valuable information to their clients. In this way, accountants can use their expertise to create valuable advisory services to clients.

Some of my clients have special requirements. How does Sage View take this into account?

Sage View alerts can be configured to monitor specific values for KPIs and can automatically report when performance falls outside of these predetermined values.

How do alerts work in Sage View?

Alerts are business rules that the accountant can establish and save on a per client basis within Sage View. Then, Sage View constantly monitors these business rules and alerts the accountant when any of the business rules' conditions are met.

What information is displayed on the initial Sage View landing page?

The Sage View landing page is an “all-clients” view that includes the current status of five KPIs as well as any alerts that have been generated for any of the clients. The five KPIs are:

- Quick ratio
- Gross profit percentage
- Debt to assets
- Return on assets
- Inventory turnover

Sage View also shares important status information relative to Sage View and the clients. In addition, a tally of active alerts is available per client business connection.

Also, a secondary client-specific dashboard will be accessible in future releases by clicking Client Business within the landing page.

What reports exist within Sage View?

There are two main categories of reports:

- Accountant-facing. Accountants have a list of available reports in the first release of Sage View (with more reports available in future releases). Reports that are currently available include:
    - Client business-related reports, including a KPI Value Summary Report and a Chart of Accounts Report.
    - Administrative reports that include collected client business information about the number of active and pending clients for specific time periods. These reports enable the accountant to reconcile against the product billing and invoices.
- Client-facing. These reports enable the accountant to generate client-facing reports and customize them with the accountants’ notes and information. These reports will be available in future releases.

Can you publish or export reports out of Sage View?

Yes. The accountant-facing reports can be printed, saved to a PDF, or exported to Excel (Mac is not currently supported).

What time periods and date ranges are available?

Ranges that are currently available within Sage View include Today, Month-to-Date (MTD), Quarter-to-Date (QTD), and Year-to-Date (YTD). Sage View has also defined a Rolling 365 calculation that is on the Sage View roadmap. Other calculation durations, such as Week-to-Date, will be considered for future releases.

With Sage 50—U.S. Edition being a period-driven system, how is daily data extracted from it?

The data upload process accounts for collection of data as far back as 24 months provided the data exists in the client's Sage 50 software.

With QuickBooks desktop edition being a date-driven system, how is period data extracted from it?

The data upload process accounts for collection of data as far back as 24 months, provided the data exists in the client's QuickBooks client software and the file is open.

Does Sage View allow you to track budget performance?

At this time Sage View does not support budget tracking. However, Sage View does allow the accountant to input goal and threshold values. In this way, each dashboard and KPI can be compared for all available date ranges against these values. In addition, the goals and thresholds can be prorated against duration calculations. Sage View provides graphic representations as to how the KPIs have performed over time against each goal.

In future releases, Sage View will look into enhancements that allow seasonal and product-line-specific goals and performance reporting. At this time, Sage View is not intended to duplicate functionality currently provided by general ledger systems. The KPIs give the accountant information that can be investigated further using existing financial data.

Does Sage View offer a daily net income calculation?

Yes. This daily analysis is provided to benefit customer businesses that update their transactions on a real-time basis. With current data input, the alerts features can be utilized to its fullest capability to provide accountants with early warnings of risk to financial performance and allow the accountants to advise customers on corrective action if necessary.

In addition to the net income calculation, there are several other KPIs available that can be configured at the accountants' discretion, including Gross Profit and Sales Income. For the first release of Sage View, there are 12 KPIs available with a total of 85 KPIs having been defined that will be available in future releases. There are also over 50 different account balances available. The Sage View roadmap includes a customized KPI builder that will enable complete flexibility for accountants to be able to build, save, track, and report on KPIs they create based on their normalized chart of accounts.

In some cases, there’s the possibility there will be a “lag” in the client data, such as entering A/P bills in the daily net income and in updating payroll. How is this addressed in Sage View?

The accuracy of the client accounting data impacts the validity and value of the data that Sage View shares. If the client business accounting data is maintained in a timely manner and the transactions are entered regularly, the shorter durations will provide useful information.

What are the document exchange portal capabilities of this product?

There is no in-product document exchange at this time. Once Sage View has the client-facing reports in place, Sage will look at this type of functionality.

Are there any industry-specific features and functionality in Sage View?

The first release of Sage View does not supporting industry. There are several roadmap features to add capturing the industry, creating default templates by industry, and providing benchmarking against industry and other firmographics.

Is there a way to add notes within Sage View so I can communicate, for example, actions taken on a client that might be facing a challenge?

No. Adding notes is not a supported feature in the first release. It is on the product roadmap and will be available in a future release.

What are some future enhancements that Sage View is looking to incorporate?

Sage is constantly looking for new features and product enhancements that improve the value of Sage View to both accountants and their clients. Once Sage View has been in the market and Sage can assess the demand for certain features, Sage will be releasing new versions with these features.