

"Software Review"

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ImagineTime from Both Worlds Software is a time and billing and practice management suite that includes an integrated due-date monitoring feature and a productivity monitoring function. With customizable features and multiple time entry methods, the software was developed by CPAs, and its time management and client billing applications are always geared toward the firm management needs of public accountants.

Recommended minimum system requirements for program installation include a 200MHz Pentium processor, 32MB of RAM and 100MB of hard drive space for program files. Additional space is also needed for client and employee data files, as well as reports and other features. The program can integrate with common productivity tools including Microsoft Word for word processing, Excel for analytical tools, and Outlook for added contact management and e-mail functionality. ImagineTime can operate on stand-alone computers running Windows 95/98/2000/NT/XP or in networked environments. The program has also been used on wide-area networks. Security levels and user authorizations are set up during initial installation and can be changed by system administrators.

After setting up at least one user and logging in, ImagineTime opens into a well-designed Windows environment with a single toolbar across the top that includes pull-down and icon selections. The Main Menu subwindow opens in the middle of the screen, providing access to functions in the program that have been divided into four categories: Data Entry, Daily/Monthly Reports, Utilities, and Management Reports. Most common functions such as entering time slips and payments are accessed through the Data Entry section, which also provides access to client setup and staff management functions that feature controlled access. The Daily/Monthly Reports section offers a good selection of master file reports, client activity, statements, aging reports, client lists and note features that assist in monitoring operations. The Management Reports provide analytical insight into profitability, client and staff performance, history reports, project management assessments, and graphs for staff and client revenue. The program keeps complete client and staff histories that include both billing adjustments and time slip production for virtually an unlimited number of periods.

The latest version of ImagineTime includes a new rates templates feature that enables rate templates to be assigned to clients or work codes. Time can be entered onto the program's time slips before or after a work activity, or by using the timer function. Users can also access client information remotely and add time slips and expenses from Palm Pilots, then synch the data to the main ImagineTime database. The program can still integrate with Microsoft Outlook, but, in this year's version, the developers have included a pretty strong contact management utility that offers good scheduling functions, including full, side-by-side staff calendars or calendars for individuals for several time periods, and due-date monitoring.

Impressive new task and project management features further aid in scheduling and managing firm personnel and resources, including engagement and forecasting report options that provide historical information for past periods by client, staff and work code. This report can be exported into an Excel or Lotus spreadsheet for analysis. As well, customizable billing templates and customer letters along with standard bill and task explanations help maintain a professional quality to all client deliverables. The full manual is now available in a web-based HTML format, in addition to being available in print form for an additional fee. ImagineTime integrates with QuickBooks for client data sharing, and Word and Excel for reporting and customization of statements, letters and invoices.

ImagineTime is a very strong time & billing application that is flexible enough to support small to medium-sized practices and other professional services firms and provides good reporting and analysis features. A single-user license is \$295 for the base product and \$525 for the complete package, which includes add-ons like the Tax Tickler, Contact/Calendar function and remote data entry. Multi-user packages start at \$595 for the base package. Annual support subscriptions start at \$195, and training packages are also available.