

Pegasus Opera II - PACKAGE AND VENDOR BACKGROUND

Product	Pegasus Opera II, Financials
Version Number	3.00
Date released	December 2003
Operating Systems	Windows 2003 Server and Windows XP
Database options:	Microsoft SQL Server or Microsoft Visual FoxPro
Price:	From £550 per module
Reviewed	July 2004 (Updated for Version 4, October 2005)

Introduction

Pegasus has been a major supplier of accountancy software to small businesses since the early 1980s. Where its rival Sage dominates the single-user and entry-level marketplace, Pegasus has traditionally targeted small and medium-size businesses turning over £1m-£10m that require a multi-user installation, often with order processing and stock control in addition to accounts.

Pegasus has been a public company since the mid-80s. In 2000 it became part of the Systems Union Group, which is the author of the SunSystems software family for mid-tier and corporate customers. Pegasus Opera was first released in 1993 and has been installed in some 17,000 companies. The 32-bit Windows version, Opera II, was released in 2000 and reviewed in March 2002. In December 2003 Pegasus released version 3.0, which included new modules such as Bill of Materials. A number of criticisms raised in the first Lab Test were dealt with, particularly concerning Opera II's limited reporting facilities. To address this Pegasus added further analytical facilities via Nominal Dimensions.

Originally developed for the FoxPro database, Opera II version 4.0 introduced in June 2005 included an edition based on Microsoft's SQL Server database. This version was rebranded Opera II Enterprise SQL (see Appendix).

Opera II Enterprise Highlights

- **Ease of use** Opera II proved to be straightforward and easy to use.
- **Nominal Dimensions** in version 3.0 greatly improved cost analysis in Opera II.
- **Bank reconciliation** functions are among the best available at any price.
- **Views** allow users to make very precise enquiries into the accounting database to extract all the management information they are likely to need.
- **XRL** - Excel Reporting Layer links Opera II to Excel so a user can create customised spreadsheet reports, with drill-down and post-back connections to the source data.
- **Pegasus Instant Messenger** can be programmed to send alerts when an event occurs, for example a customer account exceeds its credit limit, or a job goes over budget.

What's new? Enhancements since 2003 Lab Test (see Appendix)

- **Opera II Enterprise SQL** for businesses that run Microsoft SQL Server database.
- **Opera II** version for smaller businesses.
- **Dynamic Views** - Extended to Stock Control modules.
- **XRL** - enhanced with new Query Templates, Cube Analysis/OLAP and integration with Opera II Payroll, Personnel, Costing and Bill of Materials modules.

LAB TEST SUMMARY - Pegasus Opera II v3.0 Financials (Updated for v4.0)

			POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
TRANSACTION PROCESSING	1.1	OPEN PERIOD ACCOUNTING					
	1.2	DIRECT INVOICE ENTRY					
	2.1	UPDATE AND AUDIT TRAILS					
	2.2	ERROR CORRECTION					
	3.1	REQUISITIONS AND ORDERS					
	3.2	NOMINAL JOURNALS					
PAYMENTS	4.1	CREDIT LEDGER ENQUIRY					
	4.2	RECEIPTS/CASH ALLOCATION					
	4.3	BATCH PAYMENTS					
	4.4	BANK RECONCILIATION					
	5.1	MULTICURRENCY					
	6.1	EASE OF USE RATING					
MANAGEMENT REPORTING	7.1	G L CODING STRUCTURE					
	7.2	GL ENQUIRIES & REPORTS					
	7.3	EXPORT TO EXCEL					
	7.4	EXCEL REPORTING (XRL)					

Lab Test methodology

For each software Lab Test, David Carter works with a representative of the software developer to put a series of test transactions through the financial software system. He then works through the application from data entry to payments, procurement, enquiry and reporting facilities. To back the scores awarded in each section in the chart above, the detailed checklist below highlights the features that influenced his conclusions.

Software never stands still. It is not possible for AccountingWEB to Lab Test every version of every product released into the market. But the Lab Tests are updated to reflect new features, bug fixes and other changes that may alter the ratings awarded in the original Lab Test. References will appear in the Lab Test text to some of these changes, which are summarised in more detail in the Appendix at the end of this report. Please note that the update information is provided by the vendors themselves and the capabilities of these enhancements should be investigated more closely in a hands-on demonstration.

In this review the terms Nominal Ledger (NL) and General Ledger (GL) mean the same thing and are used interchangeably. The former term is British, the latter American. Similarly PL means Purchase Ledger (AP in US) and SL means Sales Ledger (AR in US).

Pegasus Opera II version 3.0 - David Carter's Lab Test verdict

With the introduction of version 3.0 Pegasus addressed many of the weaknesses and established Opera II as a strong contender in its marketplace. All-round this is a pretty good set of Financials. If there are any sophisticated management accountants out there who think that Pegasus is a bit too basic for them, they might be pleasantly surprised to find out what they can now do with Opera II.

The care taken in some of the quiet, but important areas of the application shows that Pegasus has studied what users do and tried to make Opera II as usable as possible.

Highlights

- **Ease of Use** Generally, Opera II was clear and easy to use throughout. The screens are clearly designed and easy to read. Pegasus has made a lot of functionality available to the user without making the package too complex.
- **Accelerator Keys** Most data entry screens include F key shortcuts. In cash receipts/allocation, for example, F5 pays an invoice in full, F6 part pays. If you misallocate, F4 will unallocate the payment from the invoice and so on.
- **Help screens** Help in Opera II is rather good. Pressing F1 in the Purchase Invoice Entry screen, for example, calls up a flowchart showing the steps involved in processing a purchase. Main Fields lists explain what the individual fields on each screen are for. All this context-sensitive help is exemplary and gives a lot helpful feedback to the user.
- **Bank Reconciliation** The bank account is so important and yet so many packages seem to give it only cursory treatment. By contrast Opera II gives a full and thorough treatment and is one of the best bank reconciliation programs I have seen at any price.
- **Credit Control** Opera II has some good features, including the ability to email copy invoices and statements directly to the customer from the screen, a summary screen of customer activity, and Instant Messenger distribution of regular reports.
- **Nominal Dimensions** Since version 3.0, Opera II provides two additional floating codes not linked to the GL code. These codes can take whatever name suits you and provide Opera II with sufficient dimensions to make serious management accounting possible.
- **Views** Pegasus has done good work in enabling users to design their own enquiry screens by adding and removing fields, sorting the data any way they want.
- **Publish facility** allows you to send off any ledger screen as an email. You can email a copy of an invoice to a customer as a PDF file which can be read in Adobe Acrobat.
- **XRL (Excel Reporting Layer)** offers a direct link with Excel. If a manager clicks on a total in an XRL report, it fires up a list of the source transactions. It can also write-back data from budgets, price lists and stock adjustments into Opera II.

Issues of concern

- **Navigation** In spite of the innovative F keys, if you want to go back a field, the Up Arrow key doesn't work in some places and you have to use Shift-Tab.
- **Error correction** - Lack of error correction facilities seems to be a general feature of Opera II. Users do make errors and it should be easier to correct them.
- **Supply codes** make it possible to analyse costs without having to create an overlong chart of accounts, but can be confusing when you are starting out.
- **Purchase Order Processing** is weak and primarily designed for stock-oriented manufacturing businesses. Look for enhancements in version 4.

Lab Test Feature Checklist

1.1. System Design - Open Period Accounting - GOOD

- You can have up to 24 periods per year in Opera II. Against each one you can set up the period start date.
- However, you can only have one open period at a time in Opera II. So the sales ledger entries for the new month are accumulated in a temporary batch file and not posted to the GL until the GL and PL have been completed and the period closed. However the new SL transactions do go on to the sales ledger straight away so that aged debtor balances are up to date for credit control.
- If you go back to enter a new invoice to a prior period, Opera II does not recalculate the carried forward balances and therefore is not a fully open period accounting system.
- Once a period is closed in Opera II you cannot post any transactions to it. The only way to post back to a prior period is via a GL journal. You can post a GL journal back to a prior period or, in the case of auditor's adjustments, to a prior year.
- Rebuild Periods option can review current year's transactions and re-assign them to a new set of periods - useful if the company is acquired or the year-end is set wrongly.

1.2. Direct Invoice Entry - VERY GOOD

- Invoice entry screens are bland, but clear and functional. Within a predominantly grey screen, the fields where you type in data have a white background. The cursor a thin, vertical line, but bold and readable.
- Invoices can be entered directly on to the system, automatically created from a purchase order/delivery note, or entered into the Purchase Invoice Register (PIR), a temporary file where invoices sit awaiting authorisation.
- If you don't know the supplier code, you can either list the suppliers and scroll down to find out, or you can use the Ctrl-F String Search facility: enter part of the supplier's name, for example "Bank", and up comes a list of all suppliers with that string in their name - Bank of Scotland, Lloyds Bank, and so on.
- Once you've found your supplier, there is an Action button listing all the tasks you can do on it. This could get a long-winded, but Opera II has accelerator keys (Ctrl-N for New Invoice, F8 for Authorise etc), which will speed up data entry for the experienced user.
- Opera II has two date fields for invoice entry - a Tax Point field (relating to VAT) and a Date field. There is no concept of periods in Sales and Purchase Ledger - transactions are dated, then linked to the relevant nominal period.
- The Due Date for payment is automatically calculated from the supplier record. Opera II handles payment terms like end of month following. You can also at this point assign the invoice to the manager who is going to authorise it.
- One of two Reference fields is mandatory, so the operator must enter the supplier's invoice number.
- Analysis Codes can be set as defaults when entering purchase invoices. This automatically analyses each line of the invoice to a pre-set Supply code, GL code, project code and department code, saving you the task of keying them in each time.
- In the top half of the Detail screen you enter the Analysis Codes, narrative and amount for each transaction line of the invoice. Once a line has been entered, it is then displayed in a grid in the bottom half of the screen. This is clear and works well, although it would have been nice to have a copy from previous line facility.
- The detail lines of an invoice in Opera II are not analysed to the GL account as with other packages, but to a Supply code. Each of these is tied to a GL code, so analysing to the Supply code automatically updates the GL account as well. This is unusual. The idea

behind Supply codes is that you can make detailed analysis of costs without having to create an overlong chart of accounts.

- VAT analysis is sophisticated. You can give different items in an invoice their own VAT codes, which will automatically calculate the VAT amount for each line. You can overwrite the VAT amount for any line and if calculated VAT differs by 1p or so from the invoice, you just amend the amount on one line to make them match.
- Normally the person against whose department a cost would be allocated would be the person to whom it was being sent for authorisation. Opera II has captured this person earlier in the Assign field, but you are not able to default from this value into the invoice detail lines. You should be.

1.3. Invoice Authorisation - VERY GOOD

- Users can choose to activate Authorisation processes in the setup parameters. If Authorisation is on, invoices entered into the system cannot be posted to the ledgers, but go into the Purchase Invoice Register (PIR). The program can be set to ask the user if they want to analyse the invoice to the GL at the time of entry or later.
- Assigned To field on the invoice records the manager to whom it should be sent for authorisation. It was very easy to interrogate the PIR screen and see a list of the unauthorised invoices outstanding for each manager.
- When invoices are returned as authorised, it is a quick and easy to retrieve them on to the screen and authorise them: Select the authorising manager in Authorisation Criteria, and Opera II will show a list of his or her invoices. Rather than having to go through ticking the entire list on screen, you can tick the whole lot in a single click, and then untick any you don't want to authorise. A good time-saver.

2.1. Update to Nominal and Audit Trails - VERY GOOD

- Opera II allows you to print the audit trail to screen, or printer, a file, or email. You can choose to print off Today's transactions, or This Period's, or Advanced only, or a Date range. Then you can decide what order you want to print them in - either the order they were entered, or sorted by supplier account, or by reference number.
- Pegasus has gone to the trouble of creating a Daybook to print off a list of the transactions entered today, to cater for those who want to check work done.
- A real-time Update facility is offered, so that users can update transactions straight to the GL after they have been saved. This is OK, but it only makes sense to update the GL immediately if you are able to correct errors later, which you cannot with Opera II.

2.2. Error Correction - FAIR

- Users do make mistakes. To correct an error in Opera II, the user has to post a manual journal, in effect compensating for the original error by entering another one.
- There are no facilities to amend the source transaction under password (while also maintaining details of the original entry). A disappointing omission.

3.1. Requisitions and Orders - FAIR

- Opera II has standard Purchase Order Processing and Invoicing modules, but no Requisitions facility.
- The purchase invoice can be created either from a delivery note or directly from the purchase order. The process was a bit long-winded with several screens to go through.
- The Purchase Order screen is designed for stock, with numerous fields to hold data like part number, discount percent, price, delivery date, warehouse and so on. This is not really suitable for raising orders in a service organisation.
- Should you want extended text facilities for orders in a service business, the Extended Description tab provides a large free text format area.

- Once you have created the order, you can email it to the supplier as a PDF file.
- Opera II allows you to set up multiple contacts for each supplier, each with their own contact details.

3.2. Nominal Journals - VERY GOOD

- Opera II offers a variety of types of nominal journal, and a menu of all the available types is shown on the initial Nominal Journal screen.
- Entering a posting as a New Journal is straightforward. As with invoice entry, once lines are entered they appear in a grid in the bottom half of the screen.
- Search facilities are available to find the GL account by number or description.
- You can automatically copy a narrative from the preceding line. All the nominal analysis codes such as Project and Department code are there too.
- Since GL journals are the only way you can post transactions to a previous period in Opera II, there are options to post not just to the current period but to prior periods of this year or the last period of the previous year.
- From the journal header you can choose to enter a journal as a standard one-off entry, or you can choose to define it as Recurring, Retained, Reversing or VAT Analysis. Recurring journals are for repeating items such as direct debits or wages journals. A Retained journal means will be available for re-use at a later date.
- Opera II's VAT journal facility allows you to capture VAT for the VAT return in a Nominal journal too. If you tick VAT journal on the header screen, when you go into the main journal screen the VAT box will un-grey itself. You can then capture the VAT and it will be recorded on the VAT return. In comparison to other packages this is strong.
- If you set up a Distribution account, the program will display a list of Cost Centres, allowing you to apply a percentage to each. Excellent.
- Although Opera II is multi-company, you can't make inter-company postings from the one GL journal.

4.1. Credit Ledger Enquiry - VERY GOOD

- The account enquiry screen for each supplier or customer shows the address and contacts, together with useful information such as the current balance, order balance, date of last invoice and cash receipt, and date account was created or started.
- Choosing F12 takes you to the detail of the account. You are asked if you want to see All transactions, ie a complete account history, or Outstanding only, and there's the ability to select a date range too.
- The Account View screen shows a list of outstanding transactions in a grid, together with the Aged balances spread across the bottom of the screen, plus any Unallocated balances. One complaint: unauthorised invoices sitting in the PIR are not shown.
- The list of transactions has columns for Debit, Credit and Balance - the Balance remaining if the invoice has been part paid. Against each item is a Stat column showing the status of the invoice. If it's blank, the invoice is outstanding. the Status field contains a sequential number, so that a payment with P046 in the Status column has paid off all the invoices marked A046.
- Double clicking on the Account View screen shows only a summary of the invoice details; there's no link to the original transaction in the database, so it is not possible to drill across to related transaction such as a purchase order.
- To see which invoices a cheque was allocated against, you can simply highlight the cheque on the screen and press F8, which will display a list of invoices paid off.
- As in many other screens, Opera II has no facilities for correcting allocation errors.
- For accounts in foreign currencies, the Aged Balance at the bottom of the Account View screen is shown base currency; pressing the F11 key will show the aged debt in the local currency as well as base.

- Among features that will be useful to the credit controller is the ability to email a copy invoice or statement directly to the customer from the screen.
- Double-clicking on the Debtor Days field on the Account screen will show a month on month summary of this customer's activity over the past six months. For each month you see the aged balance outstanding, value of gross invoices, value of payments received and value of monthly net turnover. All of these are combined into a calculation showing the number of debtor days for each month. A nice screen.
- There's also a Customer Notes screen where you can write down a note after talking to a customer. The credit controller could send this to a salesman as an email with a request for action.
- The Customer Notes file can be printed out in any order you want. Since you can attach a Due By date to any message, you can sort on this Due By date to create a regular Action List report for next week, this month and so on.
- Pegasus Instant Messenger (PIM) allows you to create regular reports, and then distribute them. A Task Manager screen shows all the regular reports to be run and when they are due. PIM will then send them out automatically.
- The Customer Ledger enquiry screen demonstrates the flexibility of the screen grids in Opera II, providing some good data extraction features. If you right click on a column heading a menu appears. From here you can sort the transactions on the screen into any order you want, you can hide columns or re-arrange them, and you can pick which fields you want to be displayed.
- Once you have designed your screen you have several options for what to do with it: Ctrl-P will output it to the printer as a hard copy report. Or you can export it to Excel.
- Opera II's Publish facility allows you to send off any ledger screen as an email. Also, as mentioned earlier, you can email a copy of an invoice to a customer. It will go as a PDF file which can be read in Adobe Acrobat.

4.2. Receipts & Cash Allocation - VERY GOOD

- When entering cash receipts in batches you can enter a pre-list batch total and a paying-in slip number, so that Opera II closely resembles the way most users do their daily banking.
- Paying-in Slip Number field means that all the items within one paying-in slip will be summarised into one total for the bank reconciliation. Good.
- When posting cash singly and allocating, Opera will display a list of outstanding invoices once you've entered the cash amount
- As with all Opera II screens, accelerator can speed things up: F5 pays an invoice in full, F6 part pays. If you misallocate, F4 will unallocate the payment from the invoice. F11 will mark an invoice as in dispute.
- Once a payment has been allocated, clicking on it will show a list of the invoices it's been allocated against.
- If you have a really big payment to allocate against lots of invoices, there's an Exhaust facility which automatically allocates against the oldest invoices.

4.3. Batch Payments - VERY GOOD

- On the supplier payments side, you can pay cheques individually or you can pay in batches.
- For batch runs, Suggested Payments report allows you to specify which bank account(s) you want and which currency, and you can put in a processing date a few days ahead for when the payment actually goes through.
- When the Suggested Payments report comes back authorised from the manager, it is very easy to bring the list up on the screen. Then just down arrow and F4 to de-select

the ones not to be paid and the grand total payable at the bottom is reduced accordingly. Very quick and easy.

- You can set a supplier up either to be paid via BACS or via cheque. For suppliers paid by BACS, Opera II will generate a BACS output file.
- If you do print cheques Opera II has some good features. At the start of the print run, it asks for the first cheque number. After the print run you get the message Printed OK? If the paper got scrunched up you can click on to "No", which scraps the cheque numbers and you can start over again.

4.4. Bank Reconciliation - VERY GOOD

- At the outset you can set your bank accounts up as Cashbook Types to make reconciliation easier.
- When the Reconciliation procedure is run and a bank account is selected, Opera II will check for recurring entries not yet run and ask if they should be posted. Good.
- The Reconciliation routine compiles a list of unreconciled items on the selected bank account, including cheques and paying-in slips for receipts that may have been paid in previously. These entries - shown as "P/Slip X" summarise the receipts into a single total. Double-clicking the P/Slip entry brings up another screen listing the constituent transactions, while ticking it will mark all items within it as reconciled. Excellent.
- You tick transactions in the good old-fashioned DOS way of tapping the space bar. To untick an item, just hit space bar again. If there are a lot of transactions to be reconciled and you haven't balanced to the statement yet, you can still exit the screen and come back in later to finish the job.
- F5 Post function allows you to post entries such as direct debits, bank charges and interest directly while in the middle of the reconciliation. You can select whether the entry will be a Nominal, Sales or Purchase Ledger type payment and Opera II will bring up the appropriate menu.
- The Post option is the final step in the Reconciliation routine. This command prints a Cashbook Reconciled report showing items with automatically generated line numbers. The line numbers combine the statement number and reconciliation sequence, which is shown in order along with a running balance, so it matches the statement exactly.
- All this is admirable. Opera II has one of the best bank reconciliation programs I have seen at any price.
- For automatic reconciliation, the previous version of Opera used to have an Electronic Cashbook facility that linked to Barclays and would automatically download a statement. However, that is not available with Opera II. Pegasus should consider resuscitating this feature.

5.1. Multicurrency - VERY GOOD

- Opera II can hold customer and supplier accounts in foreign currency. Values are held in both original and base currencies. Opera II can hold different currencies in the same account, so you can invoice a customer in dollars and receive payment in euros.
- For customer accounts containing transactions in more than one currency, the Foreign Currency Statement prints a statement with sections showing totals for each currency.
- You can operate different exchange rates simultaneously in Sales Ledger, Purchase Ledger and Nominal Ledger, but there is no exchange rate history screen.
- You can hold a particular rate for a specific invoice by overwriting the default rate.
- A Sales and Purchase Currency Revaluation report recalculates all outstanding foreign currency transactions using the latest exchange rate stored and shows the losses and gains on foreign currency transactions that arise from the conversion.

6.1. Ease of Use - VERY GOOD

- Generally, Opera II was clear and easy to use throughout. The screens are clearly designed and easy to read. Pegasus has done a good job in making a lot of functionality available to the user without making the package too complex.
- Data entry was quick and clear, with good navigation around the screens.
- Experienced users wanting fast data entry via the keyboard will like the F keys, but if you want to go back a field, the Up Arrow key doesn't work in some places, so you have to use Shift-Tab.
- Opera II screens are flexible and Pegasus has done good work to let users design their own screens by adding and removing fields, and sorting the data any way they want.

7.1. GL coding structure - VERY GOOD

- A typical Opera II GL account code is A110 - Land and Buildings. To each GL account code you add Type and Sub-type codes which determine which P&L or balance sheet group it will be included in (Current Assets, Overheads, etc).
- You can choose whether postings to an account must also be analysed to additional dimensions such as Project and Department. The additional analysis can be designated as mandatory or optional.
- A GL code can also be mapped to a Supply code or Sales Code, which Opera II uses for analysis to Purchase and Sales Ledgers.
- You can define a GL account as a Distribution account to apportion an amount over all your cost centres at a pre-determined rate, or you can define it as a Private account, so that something like directors' salaries can be hidden from view.
- Nominal Dimensions introduced in Opera II 3.0 are two floating codes independent of the GL code, available in all the Opera II screens, and very useful for cost analysis. You can apply names to them in System Preferences such as Project and Department.
- Pegasus has integrated the new dimensions well throughout Opera II, although they are not displayed on the purchase invoice grid. It should be possible to amend the grid to show them instead of less important fields such as the VAT Code and VAT Amount.

8.1. GL account enquiry - VERY GOOD

- For each account, Opera II displays a list of monthly balances. Highlighting a month and double-clicking it shows a list of the individual transactions within the balance. As with the customer ledger enquiry, you can modify the grid of the transaction enquiry screen: you can rearrange the columns to show them in the order you want, you can pick from a list of fields those you wish to display, and you can sort the screen in the order you want. Excellent!
- For costing analysis, Opera II holds on-line balances only at GL account level, so any balances at Project or Department level have to be calculated at run-time from the transactions.
- Version 3.0 has a View facility which enables you to slice and dice the transaction database into any dimension you want. As with the GL enquiry screen, you can customise the grid and choose which fields to see, rearrange the columns or change the sort order.
- The project-level view has lots of options - so many that it may take time to find your way around them all.
- Once you have set up your view, you can save it to reuse later. Clicking Refresh will display a list of the Views you have already created; you can then highlight which View you want, and choose to see History (ie the monthly balances) or Transactions (a list of the individual expenses).

8.2. Links to Excel - VERY GOOD

- Once you have created a View and the results are displayed on screen, it is very easy to cut and paste the whole lot into Excel. However, this resulted in some typical data errors. Dates came over OK, but the numbers came out as text like "121.09 DR" that would not add up correctly in Excel. This is a niggle and needs tidying up.
- Because the Views can be saved, the management accountant can write them specifically for departmental managers. The managers can run the View to display the data, then paste it into Excel, where they can play with it to their heart's content.
- Matrix Reports presents totals in a table-like form, but you have to calculate any totals via a formula - a drawback that suggests this is an older feature.

8.3. XRL (Excel Reporting Layer) - Excellent

- Opera II has integrated the Vision reporting tool from SunSystems with its own data tables to create an application called XRL, the Excel Reporting Layer.
- An IT-literate user can use XRL to create a set of customised reports for individual managers and control what data they see (for example only that relating to their own department). XRL offers a direct link to Opera II, so if a manager clicks on to a total in an XRL report, it will fire up a list of the source transactions.
- XRL also has a write-back feature whereby, for example, budgets, price lists and stock adjustments entered in Excel can be updated directly into Opera II without the need for any rekeying.
- In addition to XRL and the View facilities, Opera II has a Report Writer for creating regular printed reports. All the tables are available to it and the report writer includes run-time Select options and calculated fields, and you can suppress fields until a sort value changes.

Pegasus Instant Messenger

- Opera II reports do not have to be distributed via email, or be restricted to registered users of the core application. Instead the optional PIM (Pegasus Instant Messenger) module can provide a real-time reporting and alerting system, running reports to a user-defined schedule and sending the results in a message that pops up on the user's machine.
- You can also use PIM to send business alerts to managers whenever a particular event occurs - for a customer account going over the credit limit, a job goes over budget, and so on.

David Carter
August 2005

Opera II Lab Test Update - Version 4.0 - October 2005

A number of functional improvements requested by customers have been included since the original 2003 Opera II Lab Test. Listed below are a few examples:

- **Stock to Nominal Integration** - Nominal is updated in real time (batch option also available) when stock is moved.
- **Number of Companies** - This has been extended to hold up to 1296 companies.
- **Dynamic Views** - Already available in Nominal, Sales and Purchase, Views have been extended to the Stock Control module to provide enhanced data analysis facilities including transactional drilldown, output to Excel and graphical representation.
- **Dormant Records** - The ability to mark obsolete Sales and Purchase Accounts and Stock Records as dormant but still having the ability to access the transactional data.
- **Purchase Orders** - The ability to set-up Model Purchase Orders.
- **XRL** - Enhanced features and greater integration including Query Templates, Extended Drilldown, Cube Analysis/OLAP and integration with Opera II Payroll, Personnel, Costing and Bill of Materials modules.

Software Author's Response

We are pleased that this new update continues to highlight Opera II as a serious contender in the market place today. New features, such as nominal dimensions, views, XRL (Excel integration) and PIM (Pegasus Instant Messenger) have significantly enhanced Opera II's reporting and analytical capabilities, which have contributed to the sales of Opera II increasing by 40% in 2004.

We are also delighted that David has both recognised and rated other features within Opera II favourably, especially Cashbook, where he commented that it was one of the best bank reconciliation programs he had seen at any price. We have taken note of other comments regarding open period accounting, error correction and purchase order processing, and plan to revisit these areas in the future.

Opera II v4.0 not only offers a series of functional improvements (see Appendix below) but it also offers today's SMEs three solutions, depending on their business requirement:

- **Opera II Small Business** - aimed at smaller businesses that may not need the same level of scalability, analysis and reporting facilities
- **Opera II Enterprise** - ideal for growing businesses requiring greater scalability, financial analysis and reporting capabilities
- **Opera II Enterprise SQL** - as per Opera II Enterprise, but provides an alternative solution for those businesses that have chosen to standardise on Microsoft SQL Server as part of their IT strategy

Visit www.pegasus.co.uk for more details.

What's next? Future developments planned for Opera II

- Pegasus Construction Industry Solutions (CIS) - a new contract costing solution that integrates with Opera II (and Sage) Financials and Payroll modules - ideal for businesses in the construction and allied industries
- Sage Line 100 Data Migration Tool - a tool to assist with the conversion of Sage Line 100 (7.x) datasets to Opera II
- New release of the Developers Integration Tool - used by Partners to customise installations of Opera II
- Visual FoxPro 9 - technological uplift
- Payroll History and Views - allow users to build their own enquiries and reports for the current and historical tax years with full drill-down
- Open Period Accounting - development underway
- Purchase Order Processing -functional improvements to POP

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