



OfficeTools Integrations, Syncs and Imports! oh my!

Let's discuss the What's, and How's of OfficeTools and its 3rd Party integrations.

First, I want to clarify the distinction between an Integration, a Sync and an Import within the context of OfficeTools.

- **Integration** – Allows program functionality to be triggered or affected by another application. May also support Synchronization and Import/export.
 - Example: If you do something in program A, it triggers a native functionality (creating a task for example) within Program B. This is typically a single way; Program A -> Program B **or** Program B -> Program A
- **Synchronization (Sync)**- Mapping of specific data fields that can be updated/changed based on edits made to another application. Functionality is not triggered nor are additional data sets created outside of the pre-mapped data sets. May also support Import/Export
 - Example: Data changed in Program A; updates the pre-mapped data fields within Program B, and changes to Program B update pre-mapped data fields in Program A.
- **Import/Export** – A single way push of specific external data to pre-mapped and defined data fields. Imports do not trigger functionality nor communicate back to the originating source.
 - Example: Data A exported from Program A and is mapped and populated to the defined fields in Program B.
- **Add-ons (PDF Print Driver)** - Allows a 3rd party program to use Windows print drivers to trigger a functionality. While not described as this, it could be called the "OfficeTools Windows Printer Integration"
 - Example: Program A sends a document to the Windows printer (OfficeTools PDF) which then allows Windows to trigger a functionality within OfficeTools (Opens the document import screen)
- **Add-ons**- Allows the sending of native files types directly from 3rd party program to OT DMS

These are important descriptions that help distinguish the differences between the offerings made within the OfficeTools "Integrations" ecosystem. While there are many different use-cases and "gray" areas, this is the general way we want to define these tools.

- [Lacerte Integration](#)
- [Quickbooks Sync](#)
- Outlook Integration
- Excel Importer
- Windows/PDF Add-ons

There are more very specific tools available and will be clarified in another document. Profile, Crexendo etc

Now that we understand where each tool is positioned, let's cover what each one of them do; in summary. This is not designed to be a all-inclusive inventory of each tool, but a general overview of the types of data and functionality they provide.

- **Lacerte Integration**-
 - Data that can be Sync'd/imported-

- Contact info such as names, phone numbers, address, entity types, Account Manager/Preparer, SS # etc can be updated between both programs as well as new contacts being imported from Lacerte. Does not include billing, projects, schedule or any other data outside of the Contacts Tab.
 - Data that is integrated
 - Projects can be created upon import, based on the contacts entity type (Individual = 1040 Project)
 - Lacerte tax form status can be displayed within the Project screen in OfficeTools for common tax project types (1040, 1120, 1120S, 1065 etc)
 - Invoices can be created based on the Lacerte invoice associated to a tax return from within the OfficeTools Project “invoice now” feature, if the amount is pulled from the “Fee” field within OfficeTools.
- **QuickBooks Sync –**
 - Data that can be Sync’d/imported/exported
 - Contact info such as names, phone numbers, address etc can be updated between both programs as well as new contacts being imported/exported between each program. (both ways)
 - Work Codes (OT) can be mapped to Service Items (QB) for invoice line item detail (mapped for import/export functionality of invoices)
 - Staff info (for Internal Payroll needs)
 - Invoices (both ways)
 - Payments (both ways)
 - Time – but only in the context of internal payroll or as part of a exported invoice. WIP cannot be sent to QB
 - Expenses- only as an timecard item that is associated to a invoice; unbilled expenses cannot be sent to QB
- **Outlook Integration-**
 - Data that can be Sync’d/imported/exported
 - Contact info such as names, phone numbers, address etc can be updated between both programs as well as new contacts being imported/exported between each program. (both ways)
 - To-do’s, Calls and Project assignments can be sync’d with Outlook Tasks
 - Calendar/Schedule can be sync’d and updated (both ways)
 - Data that is integrated
 - Emails from Outlook can be imported into OT DMS and placed within specific categories, they remain as a Outlook email file type.
 - Emails sent from OfficeTools via Outlook can also be added to DMS
 - Appointment changes made will be reflected in both programs
- **Excel Importer-**
 - Data that can be imported
 - Contact info – All data fields from Contact Tab can be imported once mapped from an Excel file using the Excel import tool.
 - **OfficeTools Add-on**
 - PDF Print Driver – creates a PDF file from and 3rd party program that can print and imports the file into DMS (used within the Windows Print Screen)
 - Adobe- direct Adobe Acrobat to OT DMS import (Access within Adobe)
 - MS Office – direct Excel, Word, Outlook import to OT DMS, retains native file format. (Access within MS Office Add-in ribbon)

Data that CANNOT be integrated, Sync'd or Imported (using the built-in tools)

- Billing data not in QB- including WIP, Invoices or Payments
- Any Projects, Workflow, Due Dates or Statuses of Work
- Documents/Folders (there is a document index solution but requires trainer consultation)
- Calendars/Task from anything other than Outlook

So now we know the difference and the basic usages for each, let's talk about how an office would use these.

In my first example I will describe the best-case scenario; a Office that uses all of them.

In this Office (Phares CPA's) they want to maximize all the tools available. So, the first thing we would do is the Lacerte Integration as it contains very specific Tax related data (entity types) and tends to be the most accurate. This will then allow them to keep Lacerte and OT up-to-date as far as contact data as well as auto create new projects when adding new contacts to Lacerte.

Then we would match/sync QuickBooks contacts, codes and Staff, as Lacerte is only Tax contacts, we don't want to miss other accounting-only clients. Again, this will allow the syncing of QB and OT, which will also now also update Lacerte. Perfect. This also allows them to do their billing within OT, which is recommended, and send/receive billing from QB as needed. This is a huge boost to their billing workflow.

Now when we get to Outlook things get a little weird as Outlook Contact data is usually pretty bad, and includes a lot of non-client data, and generally messy formatting. What we would recommended is taking the nice, clean OT data; which is also the Lacerte/QB data and syncing it to a brand-new clean Outlook contacts folder, eliminating the mess and sync'ing all 4 program together. Additionally, syncing the Outlook/OT calendars, tasks and email allow for a seamless transition between programs.

Then we would install the Add-ons, this will let the office send Documents from ANY application directly into OfficeTools DMS. This would include Lacerte Tax Returns, Adobe PDF's, Outlook emails etc

At this point, were done. Phares CPA's have now centralized their core applications within OfficeTools. They will still use Lacerte and QB and Outlook, but the frequent and high error functions, like updating contact info, are automated and streamlined.

In the next Office (Well's CPA) we have a different use-case, they don't use Lacerte, or QB or Outlook. So what do we do here? Honestly, we are more limited, but there's still options.

First, we'd want to follow the same "Tax Prep" first methodology, so we'd export their contact data from "XYZ Tax Prep Software". Then we'd want to do the same for their GL/billing software. Then we would follow up with any other contact info they would want from any other software they have. It could be a digital rolodex, a time tracking software, doesn't matter. If it has contact data and they can export it (to excel), we can bring it in. Once we have the exported data, we can use the Excel import tool to map it to the correct fields within OT and BAM! We're done with the Contact import.

We would then use the OT "beginning balance" and Time Tab to manually input billing info (done by client btw). Which just leaves documents, so we'd want to install the Add-ons, and this will let the office send Documents from ANY application directly into OfficeTools DMS. This would include XYZ Tax Returns, Adobe PDF's, Gmail emails etc. And that's it, were done.

So obviously this office does not get the benefits of Integration nor Synchronization. However, they still get their basic data into OT, and they can do this again at anytime. They can still use all of the great OT functionality, and begin changing their office into something better because of it.

I want everyone to understand OfficeTools is NOT about integrations. Sure they are great, they can be a good selling point, and can help with the initial onboarding process. They can make getting phone numbers wrong and updating an address a lot better, and can even streamline a billing process.

However, at the end of the day OfficeTools is about Practice Management, not integrations, so don't be scared of reaffirming that even if they don't have Lacerte, or QB or whatever, that we still have great solutions to help them get going and making sure that OfficeTools provides huge value outside of just contact data integration.

Last point I want to make is that this document is for general information and should not be used as a final detailed outline of every option or feature available within the Integration ecosystem.