PBS Tips and Tricks #8 – Print to Disk and Posting Reports/Journals

Print to Disk and Posting Reports/Journals.

In our tech support work we encounter customers who simply print any posting reports i.e. posting journals, to a (physical) printer and file the paper. While this is not a flaw or a problem, there is a better way and only costs a few more keystrokes: Print/save the journal to disk using the "Print to disk" option from the Select printer menu:
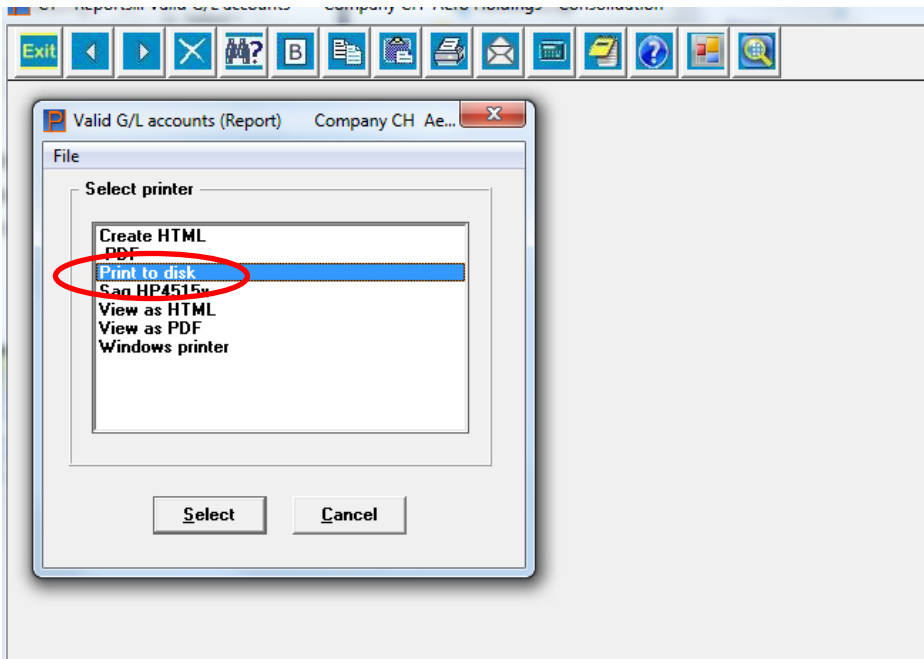

What is this and why is this potentially a better option?

When you 'print to disk', you create an image of the report as a text file saved in the RWPRT folder within the main (top level) PBS folder:
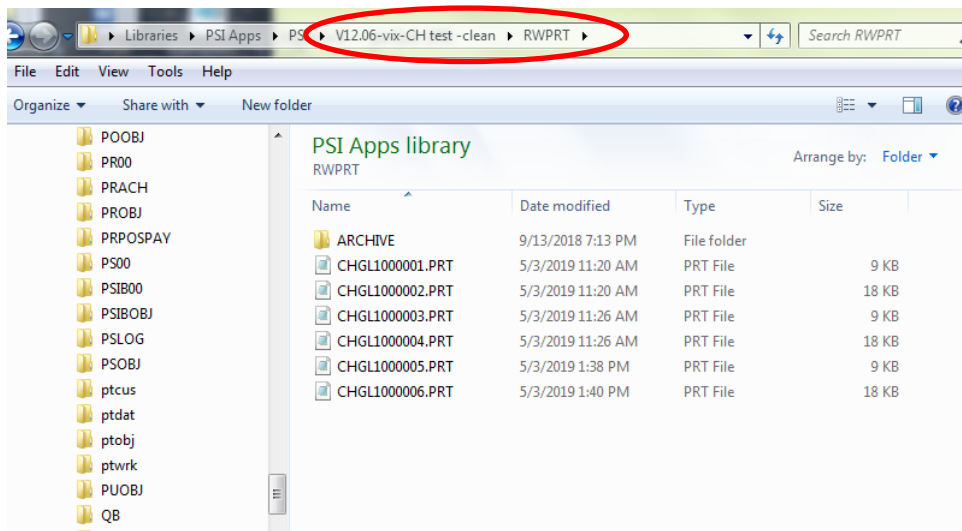
Each of the '.PRT' files in the RWPRT folder is one report saved in text format. These are available for viewing and printing from within PBS using the CTL/Print reports from disk/Print a report submenu:
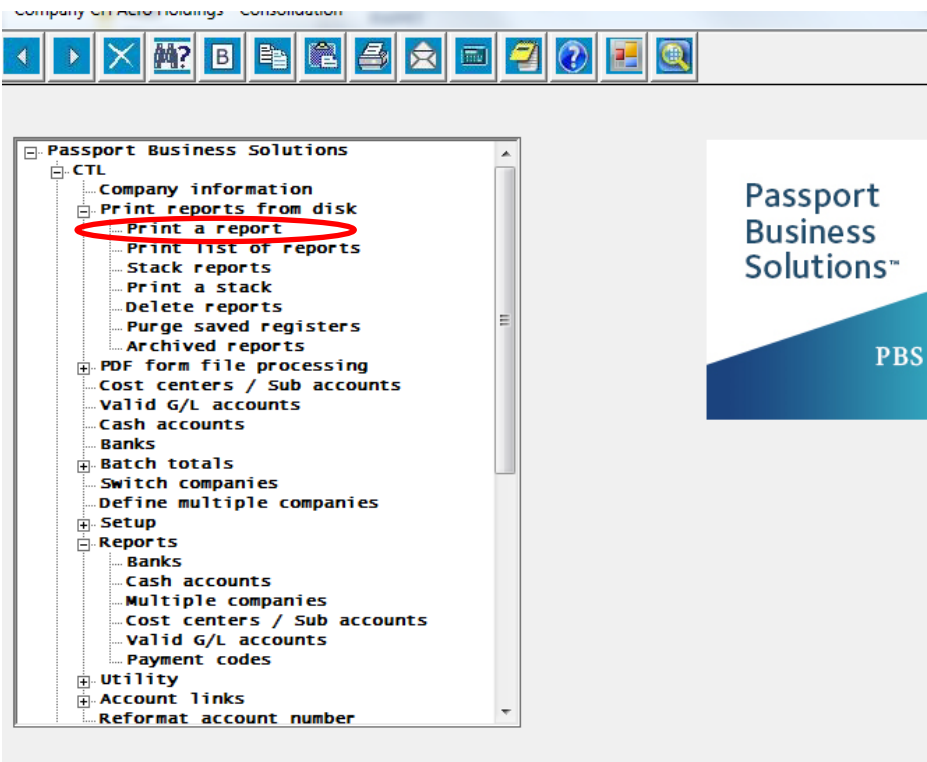
Selecting 'Print a report' produces a screen, shown below, from which the report may be selected that was just printed (top of the list) and viewed as a PDF or HTML file, or select a printer and print it. Notice a preview of the report is shown at the bottom of the screen to confirm the selection is correct.

Using this Print-to-Disk function means that whether you print the report to paper or not, a permanent record of the posting filed away in PBS. Optionally, the journal can be left unprinted if the posting was good, and/or print it later as needed. As noted above you can also take a quick look at the report by viewing the report as a PDF or HTML file.

There are many reasons that print-to-disk (P2D) for journals and other important reports is advantageous:

1) We hear the "printer didn't print" a posting report. This is usually during a tech support session where we ask to see the posting report to dig into a problem. Using the P2D function simply eliminates the possibility of not saving the journal report.
2) Related to 1) is the similar statement that the report DID print but the paper was subsequently lost/misplaced/thrown out.
3) Simple columnar reports such as many posting journals can be converted into a spread sheet if that is desirable. So, you can easily create a cumulate picture of what is happening by taking the newly posted results and adding them into a spread sheet with the data from previous postings, all organized the way you need it.
4) During an audit or support session the P2D report is proof that that items in question were posted and showing the values stipulated. For audits, being able to produce a copy of a posting journal (simply by reprinting the P2D report from the list) is significant proof of the accuracy of your statements to the auditor. In a support environment the P2D saved report can confirm for the support technician that your statement of the issue is as you have described. The P2D function can "save the day" when someone says "I just discovered this issue in my GL today but the data involved was posted 2 weeks ago". Support can locate the posting using its date/time stamp and therefore be able to see what the posting did. This ability can be used anytime there is a requirement to go back and review accounting transactions recorded/posted in the past.

Are these everyday events? No. Are there major consequences for not having these reports saved as P2D text files? Often not. By why take the chance when using this P2D functions is so easy? Plus, it organizes all your postings for you and potentially eliminates paper.

In the next Tips & Tricks we will discuss a feature that, in effect, makes the creation of Print-to-Disk reports for journals automatic.