

REPRINTED FROM FEBRUARY 2009

PAYTECH

A Beginner's Guide to Employee Self-Service

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Business leaders across the nation are learning how to do more with less. One easy, time-saving solution is found in a payroll feature known as Employee Self-Service, or ESS.

ESS allows an employer's workforce to easily access personal payroll information, such as direct deposit, W-4 status, or tax withholdings from any computer with an Internet connection, 24/7. Employees can also view, print, and download detailed information such as salary, benefits, accrued time-off, expense reimbursement, and pay history.

Until recently, ESS was predominantly implemented in larger corporations, due to the complex system configurations and fees associated with the service. Today, ESS is available to businesses of all sizes. Many payroll providers charge a fee, but in some cases, ESS is available at no cost from select providers as part of their bundled service.

Although ESS features vary from one provider to the next, there are several common benefits. Employers get quick, 24/7 access to answers to their most frequently asked payroll questions without incurring payroll department labor costs. ESS also puts employees in control of their personal information, improves employee satisfaction, and results in fewer interruptions for payroll or finance managers.

Employees can quickly access their



personal payroll information through a secure ESS interface. Whether they need to review details about a direct deposit account or want to view a

visual representation of past earnings—including deductions as they occurred over time—ESS can provide a personal resource around the clock.

Since the data is viewed online, this eliminates the need for printing and distribution of payroll documents, which also results in an additional savings of time and money.

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ESS Features and Benefits

- **Part of the package:** Often included at no cost as part of services from premier payroll providers.
- **Saves staff time:** Reduces time-consuming methods of providing your workforce with answers to their most frequently asked questions.
- **Environmentally friendly:** Since data is viewed online, it eliminates the need to print, distribute, or store various payroll documents.
- **Flexible and convenient:** Access 24/7 from any computer with an Internet connection.
- **Self-service:** Workforce can review payroll information such as: salary, pay history, benefits, direct deposit, and voluntary deductions.

employees, including W-2s, W-4s, and 1099s. This information can be particularly valuable to individuals who need to access their tax information on a quarterly basis or for those who want to adjust their withholding using Form W-4.

Other self-service features have expanded to address contemporary needs, including bilingual presentations. New to the industry is a feature that allows personal payroll information to be viewed in English or Spanish.

While no two payroll providers are the same, an ideal ESS application should be easy to access,

intuitive, and require little or no employee training. The service features should meet both the needs of the business and its employees, including those with a bilingual workforce. Security of data should be a priority, and ESS providers should use the latest encryption methods and follow strict security protocol.

ESS isn't just a flexible, convenient tool that saves both time and money; it's a

new way for businesses to improve performance and free up time for payroll and finance administrators. ESS is a great way for businesses to do more with less. ■

Today, ESS is available to businesses of all sizes.

ESS can be offered to an entire workforce, including full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees, and independent contractors. Important tax documents can be made accessible to

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