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Choices CD Edition

What's New for 2005?

For starters, we have changed the name of Choices to *Choices CD Edition* — as we enhance the Choices product line.

This year we've introduced our online planning product *Choices Planner*, renamed our CX Online exploration product to a more appropriate *Choices Explorer*, and now complete the suite with our renamed software-based planning product *Choices CD Edition*.

Interface Enhancements

Start Screen -- To save you time and help you better implement Choices, we have made some changes to the Choices Start screen. The Start screen is now larger, to show more information and include the modules from the Planner menu. Now all options available in Choices are displayed on one screen.

We removed some things…

- User Guide (replaced by the new Guideways activities)
- What Have I Used So Far? (replaced by checkmarks that visually show items that have been used)
- Export to eChoices / Import from eChoices (eChoices has been discontinued)

We moved some things to a new *Professional Tools* menu…

- System Manager
- OnTrack Accountability Reports
- Support and Resource Materials

And we added some things to make Choices CD Edition easier to use…

- News Bulletin is summarized with the full story only one click away
- Guideways
- Planning Tools

Functionality Enhancements

- **Guideways** – Practical and easy-to-follow, a Guideway is a self-directed tool that suggests next steps for users based on what they've started or completed. The Guideways modules will replace the User Guide, as they provide more relevant guidance in the kernel window and document progress in a mini-portfolio as users make their way through the program. Users choose which Guideway best suits their objectives -- three Guideways are available for high school students, and two for adults.
- **Related Occupations feature now available on the Start screen** – Users will save more time by researching their related occupations directly from the Start screen.
- **"My State First" Post-Secondary Schools**– Whenever post-secondary schools are listed, the schools in your state will be shown first, followed by schools in other states.
- **High School Plans Planner Module** – Users now have direct access to the Your High Schools Courses page (used to record and track courses taken) from the beginning of the module. They also have the option to choose courses from a list, or type in their own course title.
- **Resume Builder** –The "Your Employment Objectives" screen now offers greater flexibility with a link that allows users to skip the "Your Skills and Qualifications" section which may not be applicable for some student users.
- **Send Letters** – To eliminate confusion on what to use when sending letters, "Write letters" and "E-mail Letters" have been merged and renamed "Send Letters".

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- **Send Mail** – The familiar default e-mail application on the computer running Choices will now be used to send mail, keeping the process straightforward and simple for users.
- **Default Web Browser** – Choices will automatically select the appropriate browser eliminating the added confusion of selecting a default Web browser.
- **Auto Save** – The new auto save feature prevents important user information from getting lost. It can also make it faster to exit from Choices.
- **SCANS Skills** – The SCANS Skills module has been renamed "SCANS Skills (Necessary Skills)".
- **Operating System** – Technicians will encounter fewer problems when trying to install Choices CD, as it is now compatible with more operating systems, such as Windows conversion to 32 bit.
- **Majors Search Topic** – Users' focus list will be automatically used when the Majors Factor Selection dialog is opened.

Information and Resource Enhancements

- **Job Search Activities** – The Ability Profiler has been added as a new optional step in the Job Search Activities module.
- **Post-Secondary Plans –** Students will get better instruction from the addition of two new steps to the Choices College Planning Timeline. ACT and EXPLORE have been added to 8th Grade, and ACT and PLAN have been added to 9th Grade.
- **Updated Content** - Information in the Choices databases are updated annually to provide you with the latest occupational and school information using sources such as the O*NET occupational database.
    - **New Regionalized Labor Market Outlook and Wage Data for all 50 states**– The following 13 states and the District of Columbia now have regionalized labor market and wage data available for installation, making researching careers more effective than ever before.

Alaska	District of Columbia	Idaho	Nebraska	Oregon
Arkansas	Georgia	Maryland	Ohio	West Virginia
Delaware	Hawaii	Montana	Oklahoma	

    - **Updated Occupation and Education Information** - To help users stay better informed, Choices has been given substantial updates to the Occupation and Education data. The following areas were updated:
        - **Occupations**
            - Basic Skills
            - Physical Abilities
            - Work Conditions
            - Earnings – including narratives and graphs from the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2002 Employment Statistics Wage Survey
            - Occupation and Outlook
            - Similar Occupations
            - For More Information
            - Websites
            - Education, Training and Work Experience (Levels and Narratives)
            - Related Resources
        - **Education**
            - Undergraduate Database – web update will be available in the fall using the 2000 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)
            - Financial Aid – new data was added this year from The College Board
            - Technical Schools
            - Graduate Database

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Assessment Enhancement

- **Ability Profiler** – A new upgraded assessment to replace the Career Aptitude Survey can be added to Choices CD 2005. The *Ability Profiler* is a computer-administered assessment designed to take full advantage of the psychometric, technical, and operational enhancements in the latest (paper-pencil) O*NET Ability Profiler. It includes a comprehensive view of the test-taker's strengths in verbal ability, numerical aptitude, spatial perception, clerical perception, and a score for "form perception" not measured by the Career Aptitude Survey. Users can explore occupations that match their strengths and discover areas in which they may want to expand their training.

  The Ability Profiler replaces the Career Aptitude Survey and must be purchased separately if you wish to install it with Choices CD Edition.

Professional Resource Enhancements

- **Guideways OnTrack Accountability Report** – This new OnTrack accountability option provides you with the ability to track users' progress through Guideways.
- **Education Planning Assistant** – Saves you more time by tracking students' work and automatically creating transition statements ideal for individual education plans.
- **Deletion of Session Files in OnTrack** – This year you will find greater flexibility in deleting session files and OnTrack records. When OnTrack records are selected for deletion, the practitioner will also be asked if the session files for the selected accounts should also be deleted if they are accessible. The session file name will also be printed on the User Report.
- **Planning Tools Print Dialog** – A new user name field is available in the Planning Tools Print dialog, allowing you to add user names to printed materials in order to track individual progress more effectively.
- **Parent Connection** – Extend the effectiveness of your career and education planning program with the ability to e-mail parents or guardians about students' progress. Simply enter the parent or guardian's e-mail address in the "Before you begin" dialog.