Chapter 10: Check Scanning

One of the most time consuming tasks in every church is entering weekly contributions. This process usually involves making a copy of the checks received, then looking up each person in the database and hand-entering all the information on the check.

Excellerate check scanning streamlines that process by allowing you to scan your checks with a check scanner. You simply load your checks into the scanner. Then when you press the scan button, Excellerate automatically looks up the correct person for you, and displays the check image on your screen. All you have to do is enter the amount, and move on to the next check. The check images are even stored for you, so you don't have to make copies.
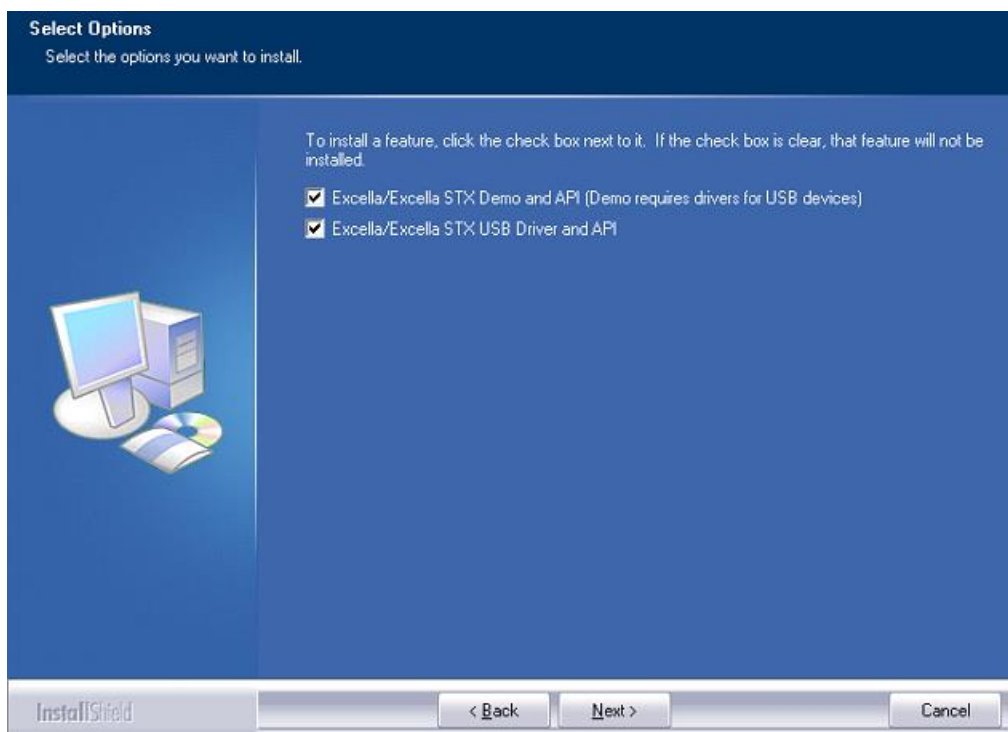
Setting-Up Check Scanning

Make sure Excellerate is closed, and install the MagTek Software & Drivers CD that came with your check scanner. You can also download the latest drivers here:

http://www.magtek.com/support/software/programming_tools/
(The drivers are at the bottom of the page)

Use the default options that are checked:

When the installation is complete, connect the scanner using the USB cable. Windows should report that the device was installed correctly.

Start Excellerate, Go to Options, Preferences, Contribution Options, hit "Setup Check Scanner"
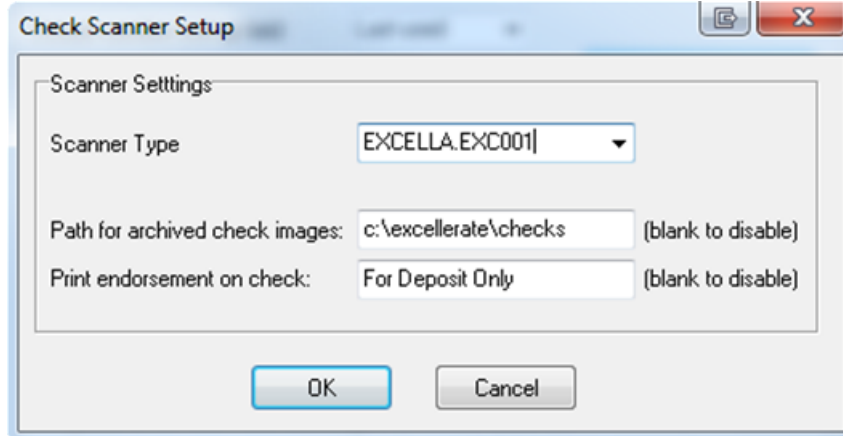
Change the Scanner Type to: EXCELLA.EXC001
Enter the path on your server where you want to store the check images
Enter the endorsement line to print on the back of the check

* Restart Excellerate *

How to use Check Scanning

Insert a stack of checks in to the auto feed hopper - print side facing in to the scanner. (See the scanner user manual for detailed information on using the scanner)

In Excellerate, go to the contribution module, and open a new batch.
Hit the "add" button to enter a new contribution.
Hit the "Scan check" button in the top right part of the screen:

The scanner will scan the check, and show it to you on the screen

Excellerate will automatically pull up the member for you once the checking account numbers are recorded. But when you first start, you will need to find the members manually. This will teach Excellerate what checking account numbers go with what members. So the next time you scan this person check, it will find the member for you automatically.

While viewing the check image, verify the correct name and address then enter the dollar amount that appears on the check image, and specify the accounting fund.

If the check number field turns red, it means the scanner had a problem reading the check number.

You can see the MICR information (routing & checking account #s) that were read from the check in the small area above the check. If you start to see ? characters or incorrect numbers being read, you may need to clean the scanner window.

In the case of multiple funds, you don't need to hit Scan again, just tab to the amount field and enter the amounts for the remaining funds.

After each scan, you should be able to just hit ENTER to scan for the next check. If not, check your contributions options, and make sure the Default Member Lookup field is set to "Last Used".

Check Images

If you configured check scanning to store the check images, you will be able to view those images from the batch or the member's contribution tab. If you right-click on the check image, you can zoom in to see more detail.

You can print check images from the batch report, or by using the custom reports:
Batch with check images
Batch (open) with check images

Other Features

You can use the manual feeder on the scanner for single checks, or if you are processing one check at a time in the case where fund designations are written on envelopes.

If you need to delete checking account numbers that have been assigned to a member, you can do that from the member's contributions tab. Hit the "Check Account #s" button to list the assigned accounts.