

# Three Ways To Access Your QuickBooks From Anywhere

QuickBooks remote access is anything if not confusing. I hope to clear up the confusion by breaking down remote access into three setup scenarios that work and dispel some myths about those setups that do not work. "From Anywhere" means you can access your production QuickBooks company files from any Internet broadband network connection. When we hear "From Anywhere," we tend to think about doing work from the local coffee shop, out by the pool or on the beach someplace. However, "From Anywhere" could just as easily be from a client's office, one remote location to another within a large business or three partners from China, Germany and Canada working together in their export business. "From Anywhere" means a lot of different things to different people in different organizations.

For the sake of clarity, "From Anywhere" means remote access to a running QuickBooks application and the appropriate company files including any add on databases like QuickBooks integrated shipping with label printers. "From Anywhere" does not mean using a third party application to access QuickBooks company file data; something like Method Integration, which by the way is a remarkable product.

## First - Remote Desktop Control Product To Access Your Desktop or Laptop Computer

Google returns over nine million pages for a search on "remote control desktop software" including all of the well known brands, countless variations of VNC and myriad sets of instructions. Remote control desktop software like LogMeIn, GoToMyPC, VNC and pcAnywhere are household names among computer users. All of the products have in common the ability to access a single computer from another computer on the network or across the World via the Internet. Most of them require no purchase and just a small bit of computer savvy to get up and running.

Accessing QuickBooks requires one to install a remote control desktop software product, set the computer to never turn off or never go to sleep and leave the computer on all of the time. It helps to leave a desktop computer plugged in to a UPS or battery backup to avoid power problems when one is away from the computer for an extended time. Countless people use this method to connect to computers. Check this out from TeamViewer's website. "TeamViewer connects to any PC or server around the world within a few seconds. ... Find out why more than 100 million users trust TeamViewer!" 100 million is a lot of folks.

## Second - Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) To Access A Virtualized Desktop On Your Desktop Computer

Microsoft introduced the first version of Remote Desktop Protocol or RDP with "Terminal Services", as a part of Windows NT 4.0 Server, Terminal Server Edition. Microsoft designed RDP to support multiple users and login sessions simultaneously on a single server. During the 90s, the original group of Microsoft Applications Service Providers or ASPs pioneered the Terminal Services architecture in building their businesses. The RDP client has been included in every Microsoft operating system since XP. Today, Microsoft's official client software is currently referred to as Remote Desktop Connection, formerly "Terminal Services Client".

With a bit of configuration, one can access any computer with Terminal Services running from any other computer with the RDP client software. With a bit more firewall configuring, one can access the computer from another computer on the Internet. The availability of free remote desktop control products has all but stopped users from setting up RDP for single computer access, even though the RDP client is so easy to use and prevails across many operating systems and mobile devices.

## Third - Desktop Virtualization To Access A Virtualized Desktop On A Server From Your Computer

The ease of use of the RDP client and the prevalence of broadband Internet connections across the World has led to an explosion of applications hosting providers and "Cloud Computing." The notion of "Private Clouds" have further pushed virtual computing into main stream companies that desire to control costs with standardization and ease of management. Today, virtualization is the de facto standard in computing. Many products exist to virtualize a desktop to the end user, even in a very inexpensive way. Today, one can take an off lease XP Pro computer, install a clean version of XP Pro, install a \$99 version of Thinstuff, install QuickBooks Pro 2011 three user and have a dedicated server for three users to access virtualized desktops, all for under five hundred dollars. With a little firewall tweaking, one can access that off lease XP Pro computer from the Internet.

## Third Again - Application Virtualization To Access Virtualized QuickBooks From Your Computer

Ah, but you say there's four ways to access QuickBooks from anywhere instead of three. What gives? Desktop and application virtualization are both subsets of the same technology. User experience defines the primary difference. Desktop virtualization delivers a complete unique second desktop to the user, complete with multiple applications, desktop icons and folder/file storage. Application virtualization results in

the user clicking an icon on their own desktop to start the virtualized application; just as if they were clicking any icon to start a local application. Typically, users don't know the difference between a virtual application and a local application.

### **Methods of remote access that do not work consistently**

Virtualization requires very little bandwidth from a broadband Internet connection to function optimally. For the most part, only small amounts of data are transferred between the host computer and the client computer; just enough to render the screen and transmit mouse and keyboard data. Try to download your QuickBooks company file from the host computer to your laptop client computer while at Starbucks and you will quickly understand the limits of the broadband connection. Other technologies essentially mirror the action of downloading the entire company file as QuickBooks struggles to work with the company files.

One cannot use something like DropBox or any other Cloud file sharing solution to access the company files from within QuickBooks. If your company file resides on a shared folder on the company server across town, opening it in QuickBooks will cause data and application performance problems. If one uses VPN to connect, data damage will occur. The rule of thumb in remote access situations is unless you're in the same building and on the same local wired network with the QuickBooks company files, look to remote control, desktop virtualization or application virtualization to gain remote access to QuickBooks.

### **Accessing QuickBooks from anywhere can be a complex process**

Both application virtualization and desktop virtualization are today's standards for high performance, remote access to applications, reducing costs and providing uniformity. Both should be your first choice when considering QuickBooks remote access for multi user QuickBooks. Building a QuickBooks application virtualization and desktop virtualization environment that performs and scales from five to thirty users entails high expense in terms of both capital costs and ongoing support. Offering your QuickBooks virtual environment to clients exposes one to security and liability risks. Short of building your own virtual environment, consider partnering with an Intuit certified, Citrix built QuickBooks hosting provider for multi user QuickBooks deployment across your widely disbursed business environment. Your partner built and maintained virtual Microsoft- Citrix environment can be structured to profitably suit both yours and your clients' business needs and remain completely under your control. [Please contact us](#) for further information about partnering with [Painless QuickBooks](#).