

Three Ways To Optimize Your QuickBooks Setup

I've worked with QuickBooks since the early 1990s. I install QuickBooks Multi User for clients and use it in my own business. My time tested installation methods work very well with all five user or less network installations of versions Pro through Enterprise 2006 to 2011, with computers running Microsoft Windows XP Pro, Vista and Windows 7 and functions exceptionally well in all types of businesses. Following this guide will solve most of the performance issues customarily associated with QuickBooks.

QuickBooks Network Secrets

These three steps will make your QuickBooks installation sizzle! This guide teaches you QuickBooks Network Secrets that took me years to learn. If your business uses multi user QuickBooks, you know that QuickBooks sets up on a primary computer used to share company files. Then, other computers have QuickBooks installed to access the company files on the primary computer. This setup is called the basic client-server QuickBooks setup and is well documented in QuickBooks help files and tutorials. Without optimizing the basic client-server setup, typical QuickBooks performance holds you back, slowing you down in your everyday bookkeeping tasks. Most users report that QuickBooks gets slower and slower over time. You can't afford to miss what a well designed optimized QuickBooks setup can help you accomplish. Imagine no more error messages, manual backups or QuickBooks restarts again! QuickBooks will perform the way you expect it to perform.

First - Networking QuickBooks computers cannot be wireless and needs to be a step up from the norm.

QuickBooks networking runs best with ultra fast gigabit networking. Each QuickBooks computer must have a gigabit network interface, connected to a gigabit switch, using gigabit certified cabling. One can easily achieve gigabit networking by using an off the shelf eight port gigabit switch and manufactured cables. Plug a cable from the new switch to your current network outlet. That gets your new gigabit network on your existing network. Then plug cables from each QuickBooks computer to the new gigabit switch. Now your QuickBooks computers are talking to each other as fast as possible. If you're thinking wireless, there is a different way to run QuickBooks on a wireless network. The basic client-server setup will not work correctly on a wireless

network. If you have a laptop, get off wireless and plug in the cable. Most newer laptops have a small switch or use a key combination to turn off the wireless.

Second - Each QuickBooks computer must meet the minimum requirements listed below:

QuickBooks computers need to be commercial grade computers with robust specifications designed to get the most robust application performance in a business environment.

- XP Professional SP3, Vista Home Premium, Business or Ultimate, or Windows 7 Home Premium, Professional or Ultimate
- 2.0GHz or faster processor
- 2GB or more of RAM for XP, 4GB or more of RAM for Vista or Windows 7
- 5GB or more free hard drive space
- Each computer must have a gigabit (1000MB) network interface
- Firewall software must be turned off while connected to the local network

It's very important to distinguish between firewall or security software and antivirus software. Each desktop computer that runs QuickBooks needs an antivirus program. However, do not use comprehensive security software. One or more firewall software installations on a QuickBooks computer will cause QuickBooks to run very poorly or not at all. Turn off the Windows firewall and remove any security software except a single antivirus program.

A firewall's place is at the gateway to the Internet. Install a Unified Threat Management device as your only firewall. Consumer firewalls don't cut it. Use a commercial UTM device, something like SonicWALL TotalSecure device to protect your business network. Maintaining your network's security cannot be overstated. UTM devices prove themselves superior to any other method in protecting your business computing investment day after day. While your competitors worry about malware, phishing attacks and slow moving accounting software, you'll be speeding around in QuickBooks and surfing the Internet without fear.

Third - Install all production QuickBooks company files on a dedicated QuickBooks computer

That dedicated computer will become your QuickBooks production server. Your valuable QuickBooks company files must be in a safe, secure location. A dedicated QuickBooks server is a computing device that has no keyboard, mouse or monitor. It usually resides in an out of the way closet or shelf. Only QuickBooks and QuickBooks add on software is installed on a dedicated QuickBooks server. Long story short; you simply do not want to host QuickBooks company files on a dynamically changing computer used on someone's desk every day.

Yes, I know that QuickBooks can be hosted on a user's desktop computer; however, I've seen multitudes of problems with desktop computers becoming unstable due to virus, other malware and unintended user problems, causing file damage and rendering QuickBooks data unavailable to other network users. In order for your QuickBooks multi user setup to work correctly and your QuickBooks environment stay robust and productive over time, your business demands a dedicated QuickBooks Server and gigabit networking infrastructure.

A QuickBooks Server performs automated tasks within QuickBooks and other "QuickBooks add on" software such as nightly off site and local backups, order downloads from your website to QuickBooks and keeping each of your QuickBooks desktop computers updated to the latest QuickBooks version. Setup a nightly backup process to keep your company files compressed, verified, well maintained and fast. I've successfully deployed QuickBooks servers into many businesses. They've frequently run over a year without requiring reboots or service.

Your dedicated QuickBooks production server can be a repurposed Windows XP Pro computer setup as the primary QuickBooks computer in the basic client-server QuickBooks setup. You can follow Intuit's documentation or [purchase "Build Your Own QuickBooks Production Server"](#) from [painlessquickbooks.com](#) "Build Your Own QuickBooks Production Server" provides a step by step guide to setting up and configuring a dedicated QuickBooks server for the basic client-server QuickBooks setup.