

QuickBooks 2006 Network Installation Guide

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Intuit

QuickBooks 2006 has a new way of managing company data that may require some changes in the way you install and configure the software for network installations, compared to previous versions of QuickBooks. If you are not operating in a network environment, you do not need to worry about the new procedures.

Users of QuickBooks Enterprise 6.0 should refer to guides specific to that product, such as the one at http://www.quickbooks.com/support/PDFs/Misc/qbe2006_mui.pdf.

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Introduction

Unlike the simple flat files of prior years, QuickBooks 2006 is built on top of a robust relational SQL database. This new structure has the potential to deliver significant improvements in performance and functionality.

- A *relational database* is not a flat file that contains all the data that's been entered into a file; instead, the data is organized in logical tables (mini-files within the main file) to make it easier and faster to find, link, and verify data. A relational database is easy to extend (grow), which means programmers can add new categories and types of information easily, and structure the new information in a logical manner in order to link related data properly.
- SQL stands for *Structured Query Language*, indicating that the processes involved in accessing the data in the file are based on rules that enhance the efficiency of data retrieval while performing data entry and when creating reports.

To make sure the new database performs as well as it's designed to, you may have to take a few more steps when installing QuickBooks 2006 on a network than you did when installing previous versions of QuickBooks.

The main focus of this document is for the majority of network installations for QuickBooks customers, where users access files over a Windows peer-to-peer network. The document also covers configuration requirements for client/server Windows networks (domains).

Other types of network installations will be the subject of additional White Papers, as Intuit updates its [Network/Multi-User Setup](#) page. Information on obtaining these additional White Papers is available at the end of this document.

Who Needs to Read this Document

You should read this document if you are installing QuickBooks in an environment where company files are accessed across a network – regardless of whether those files are worked on by multiple users or a single user. Following are some examples of the environments that may be affected by the changes in installation procedures:

- Your company files are on a computer running QuickBooks, which is used by a QuickBooks data entry person, and at least one other person, working from another computer, also works on those files.
- Your company (commonly an accounting firm) has multiple computers running QuickBooks, and each computer contains QuickBooks company files that are worked on by the person who usually works at that computer. However, users on other computers occasionally have to access those files, and the person working at that computer occasionally has to access files stored on another user's computer.

- Your QuickBooks company files are on a computer that is acting as a data-only computer. Users access these files from other computers on the network. It is common for accounting firms to create a data-only computer to house client files that all staff members can access. However, some businesses create data-only computers to hold all data files from various software applications, in order to centralize data files and make backups more efficient.

New Components in QuickBooks 2006

Like previous versions of QuickBooks, QuickBooks 2006 contains two important elements: The software, and the data file(s) you use in the software. However, QuickBooks 2006 adds several components that are responsible for the fact that you have to think differently about the way you install and use the software:

- The database
- The database manager
- The data file hosting service

The QuickBooks Database

The database is a component of the software, and is new in QuickBooks 2006. The database is the container for the company file(s) you create and maintain in QuickBooks. The database stores the data in a logical manner, checks the integrity of data entry, and provides data retrieval services when you need reports.

The new database offers many significant advantages for QuickBooks. It helps manage the relationship between different types of data, and these management functions ensure that data that is referred to elsewhere in the database is not inadvertently lost. It makes sure that updates to a set of data happen as a complete “chunk” so that the whole chunk succeeds or fails. This is important because a partial save can corrupt records in the company file, or corrupt the entire data file.

For example, consider a typical Invoice transaction. When you save the transaction, a significant number of records are affected. Items need to have their history updated, inventory items must have the on-hand quantity updated, a variety of accounts (accounts receivable, income, COGS, etc.) need to have balances updated, the customer’s balance and history must be updated, and so on. Using a true relational database ensures that if anything happens (network failure, disk failure, power failure, etc.), either the complete update happens or none of it happens. (Database terminology for this function is database transaction, not to be confused with an accounting transaction in QuickBooks.)

Further, a true database maintains a *transaction log* that can be invaluable if you have any type of data disaster, recovering accounting data changes that were saved after your last backup. (If you’re currently using QuickBooks 2006 you may have already noticed the filenames with the extension .TLG that exist in the folder where your company file is

located (e.g. *MyCompanyName.TLG*). That file is the database transaction log for the company file with the same name.

Finally, a true database offers the potential (which QuickBooks has only begun to scratch) for dramatic performance improvements, especially when there are a large number of accounting transactions or when the relationships between data are important (such as in Reports, or in the Customer Center when displaying all the transactions for the Customer selected in the center).

Why Can't QuickBooks 2006 Files Be Used across a Network the Same Way as Other Files?

To deliver the advantages discussed in the previous sections, database servers interact with the database file(s) in a manner that differs greatly from the way other applications (for example, earlier versions of QuickBooks, word processors, and spreadsheet software, etc.) interact with their data files. This means that a database server requires a higher degree of reliability and performance when accessing the database file.

In particular, the database server requires very low latency (the time between asking for data from a particular place in the file and when that data begins to arrive, which some users refer to as *speed*, or *performance*). While the performance of networks has improved dramatically over the years, network latency is affected by other things happening on the network, making it unpredictable. The low-latency connections required by a database server cannot be relied upon over a file-sharing network. So, while installing QuickBooks 2006 in the *Alternate Configuration Mode* may appear to work, users will definitely experience poor performance. More important, a variety of connection errors can occur at seemingly random intervals. For example, a connection error can occur if the user (or even some other user on the network) is downloading a particularly large file attachment in their e-mail, causing the network's latency to exceed the requirements of the database.

The QuickBooks Database Manager

The database manager is a software component that manages the database to make sure that data meets certain conditions before it is written and saved. This software also manages users who are working in a company file from another computer on the network. When remote users access a data file, they are actually "talking" to the database manager, which then "talks" to the data file.

The Data File Hosting Service

This is not a software component, it's a service that is performed by the QuickBooks software. Because of the database manager, every data file that is used in QuickBooks

2006 has to be “hosted”. The host’s job is to permit access to the file, and data files must be connected to the hosting service in order to open and use those files.

Configuring QuickBooks 2006 for Success

For best results, Intuit recommends that QuickBooks 2006 be installed on any computer that contains QuickBooks 2006 data files. Intuit calls this the *Recommended Multi-User Setup Mode*.

However, that technical name for this installation mode can be misleading, because the recommended mode is really only an issue for multi-computer scenarios (networks), not necessarily multi-user scenarios. Although most networks have multiple QuickBooks users, many businesses have multiple users working on their QuickBooks company file, but the file is on one computer shared by those users. If you don’t use multiple networked computers to work in QuickBooks, you don’t have to worry about the new installation procedures, no matter how many users work on your company file on a single computer.

Because the recommended installation mode is that QuickBooks 2006 and its database manager be installed on any computer that contains QuickBooks 2006 data files, this means that QuickBooks data files are running in a Windows environment. A side effect of this requirement is that if you are running a Novell Netware or Linux/Samba data file server, it’s not going to work properly as a QuickBooks file server because you need Windows to install and configure the database.

QuickBooks may appear to work with a company file on a data file server where QuickBooks is not installed; however that scenario usually impacts performance, and frequently results in lost connections between the client running the software and data file on the server. A lost connection while performing data entry can damage data files. Therefore, this is not the mode that will guarantee the best performance and reliability of QuickBooks 2006. We call this alternate or non-recommended mode, and it should be assiduously avoided.

At this writing Intuit is looking into the possibility of addressing other operating systems in a future release. For now, your best solution is to provide a Windows-based system as your QuickBooks 2006 data server. If that’s not possible, see the information at the end of this document about obtaining the White Paper on running QuickBooks 2006 in Alternate mode.

To make sure your QuickBooks system runs efficiently and accurately, you must install QuickBooks 2006 on every computer on the network that is involved with QuickBooks, which includes the following:

- Every computer that holds QuickBooks 2006 files, whether or not a data entry person uses the computer to work in data files.
- Every computer that is used by a QuickBooks data entry person, whether or not the computer holds data files.

Accounting firms that support QuickBooks clients should install QuickBooks 2006 in its own folder on every computer, to make sure the installation process doesn't replace the previous version of QuickBooks. This ensures you can continue to support clients who are using earlier versions of QuickBooks.

In addition, accounting firms should be sure to create a specific folder for QuickBooks 2006 data files, whether the files are stored on a central computer designated as the data file computer, or stored on individual users' computers. Keeping all versions of client files in a single data folder increases the risk that you will open a client file in a version of QuickBooks later than that used by the client. Once updated to a newer version, the file cannot be used back at the client site until the client installs QuickBooks 2006.

Most accounting firms use a data file folder named for the version of QuickBooks used by the files in that folder, e.g. QB2006Files, QB2005Files, and so on. In each folder, you can either store all the client files for that version, or create a subfolder for each client and store that client's files in its own folder. The latter scenario works best because often the client's QuickBooks data filename is not the same as the name by which the client is known to the accounting firm. For example, your client Smith, Inc. may have a QuickBooks data file named for the d/b/a name, such as **SIWidgetsCo**. In addition, you can use the client folder to store QuickBooks data file backups, spreadsheets, and other documents sent to you by the client, or sent by you to the client.

Installing QuickBooks on the Computers that Hold Files

When you install QuickBooks 2006 on a computer that holds QuickBooks 2006 data files, you have six steps to perform:

1. Create a data folder for company files.
2. Share the data folder.
3. Make sure users can open files in the data folder (see the section "Remote User Access").
4. Install QuickBooks 2006.
5. Configure QuickBooks to host files and enable the database server.
6. Verify that the database service is running.

You need to perform these steps on every computer that holds QuickBooks 2006 data files that are accessed by users at other computers. If you have one computer operating as a centralized data-only computer, you only have to do this once. If you have multiple computers that hold QuickBooks 2006 data files that are accessed across the network (common in accounting firms), you must perform these steps on every one of those computers.

It's best to install QuickBooks first on the computers that contain data files. That way, you can set up and configure QuickBooks so that when users working at QuickBooks software-only computers want to open a file, the files are ready for them.

Remote User Access

Starting with the R3 Update, QuickBooks created more stringent rules for permitting users on remote computers to open 2006 data files. You have two ways to set up QuickBooks so that remote users can work with the data files across the network:

- Open each file once on the server (which can be automated with a utility you can download from QuickBooks).
- Create a local user account on the server for every user that runs QuickBooks from a remote computer on the network.

Opening Each File Once on the Server

When you open a file once on the data file computer, QuickBooks automatically creates a companion file in the same folder where the data file resides. The companion file has the same name as the data file, but ends in the extension **.ND**. The presence of this ND file (which contains information the QuickBooks database needs about the location of the file), automatically lets any remote user open the data file.

Because this means that each time you add a file to the data file computer you must open QuickBooks on the computer holding the data files, even if no user normally opens QuickBooks on that computer, QuickBooks has created a small utility program (called the **File Scanning Utility**) that will create the **.ND** files without the need to open QuickBooks on the data computer and open each file one at a time.

Creating Local User Accounts for Every Remote User on the Network

The user running QuickBooks on a network computer must have **Power User** or **Administrator** rights to launch QuickBooks. Starting with the R3 Update of QuickBooks 2006, the same user must also exist on the computer that holds the data files, with the same permission level (unless you've already opened the company files once on the data server).

- **The user name must be unique to the data file server computer.** If you are running a Windows domain that's not a problem, because all user names must be unique. However, if you are running a Windows workgroup (a peer to peer network), it's possible that two users on separate computers are logging into their own computers with the same user name. For example, you may have a user named Bob on one computer, and a user named Bob on another computer. You can only add one Bob to the data file server (you cannot have duplicate names on any computer), so you must have one of the users named Bob change his login name on his own computer.
- **The user name must have a password, and it must be the same on both computers.** Many companies don't use passwords for logins, because computers are assigned to a particular person, and no other user works on that computer.

This isn't a good idea in terms of computer security, but it's a common habit in companies running Windows workgroups.

If you have a QuickBooks user logging in to his computer without a password, you must add a password to the user account on his computer, and then use that password when you set up the user account on the data file computer.

If you have many users accessing the computers that have QuickBooks 2006 data files from remote computers, it's probably easier to open the files once on the data server instead (or use the **QuickBooks File Scanning Utility** to create the needed files on that computer).

If you are running QuickBooks in a Windows domain, and you installed QuickBooks and the data files on the **Domain Controller**, you cannot set up local users. You can move the QuickBooks data files to another computer (recommended because domain controllers should not be used for anything except implementing basic domain functions), or omit the step of creating local users and open every file once (or use the **QuickBooks File Scanning Utility**).

Creating Local Users

If you choose to create local users, take the following steps:

1. Right-click the **My Computer** icon, and choose **Manage**.
2. In the **Computer Management** console, expand the **System Tools** icon in the left pane by clicking the plus sign.
3. Expand the **Local Users and Groups** icon in the left pane by clicking the plus sign.
4. Right-click the **Users** folder in the left pane, and select **New User** to open the **New User** dialog.

Use the following guidelines to fill in the **New User** dialog:

- In the **User Name** field, enter the user's login name, matching the user's login on his or her own computer.
- Enter the password the user enters on his or her own computer (you must enter it twice).
- The **Full Name** and **Description** fields are not required, but you can optionally enter any text you wish to.
- By default, Windows selects the option **User Must Change Password at Next Logon**. Because you've entered the password this user is familiar with, deselect that option and select the option **Password Never Expires**. Click **Create** to save the new user, and make sure the name appears in the right pane of the **Users** folder in the **Computer Management** window.

Putting New Users in the Appropriate Group

Double-click the user's listing in the right pane of the **Computer Management** window, which opens the user's **Properties** dialog. Click the **Member Of** tab, which displays the group named **Users** as the user's entire membership list. You must add this user to the **Power Users** group.

1. Click **Add** to display the **Select Groups** dialog.
2. Click **Advanced** to open the **Select Groups** advanced **Properties** dialog.
3. Instead of going through all of the steps for setting search options, click **Find Now** to display a list of the groups for this computer.
4. Select **Power Users** and click **OK**, then click **OK** again to add the group to this user's group membership list.

Repeat these steps for each user who will access files on this computer.

Creating the Data Folder

By default, QuickBooks assumes data is stored in the same folder as the software, but in a network environment creating a separate folder makes it easier for remote users to find files, and also makes it easier to back up data files.

Some businesses create a data folder as a subfolder in the folder holding their QuickBooks software; and other businesses create a separate folder for data on the hard drive. Accounting firms usually create a data folder on the hard drive, totally unrelated to the QuickBooks software folder.

To create a folder, open **My Computer** and move to the location where you want to place the new folder:

- If the new folder is going to be on a hard drive (the common scenario), open the drive by double-clicking its icon.
- *If the new folder is going to be a subfolder* of an existing folder, double-click the drive icon, and then double-click the icon for that folder.

(If you click the **Folders** icon on the **My Computer** window, you can move through the computer's folders in the left pane, instead of double-clicking icons.)

Choose **File > New > Folder** and give the new folder an appropriate name (e.g. **QB2006DataFiles**). Your new folder is ready to share and configure.

Sharing the Data Folder and Setting Permissions

Sharing a folder in Windows means configuring the folder and its files so that network users can access the folders in those files. For computers running Windows XP, the way

you accomplish this task depends on the type of network you're running: a workgroup (peer to peer network) or a domain.

Sharing Folders in Windows XP in Workgroups

If your network is operating in a workgroup, you need to change the way security is applied on the Windows XP computers that hold QuickBooks 2006 data files. By default, Windows XP uses a file sharing method called **Simple File Sharing** in *workgroups* (not in *Domains*). You can use **Simple File Sharing** to configure permissions on shared folders, but you cannot set permissions on the folder itself. (A folder that's been shared has an identity on the network called a *share*, and also continues to have an identity for the actual folder.)

WARNING on WINDOWS XP HOME EDITION: *You can only disable Simple File Sharing on a computer running Windows XP Pro; not on a computer running Windows XP Home Edition. Therefore, you cannot use a computer running Windows XP Home Edition to hold data files that other users access from other network computers (but you can use Windows XP Home Edition to run QuickBooks and access files on another computer).*

To permit access to QuickBooks 2006 files, QuickBooks requires configuration changes to both the share and the actual folder. You must disable **Simple File Sharing** on every Windows XP computer that holds QuickBooks 2006 files, using the following steps:

1. Open **My Computer**.
2. Choose **Tools > Folder Options**.
3. Click the **View Tab**.
4. In the **Advanced Settings** box, scroll to the bottom of the list to find the setting named **Use Simple File Sharing (Recommended)**.
5. Click the check box to remove the **check** mark and disable **Simple File Sharing**.
6. Click **OK** to return to the **My Computer** window.

Now you can proceed to the task of creating a share and setting permissions on the share, and on the folder itself.

Creating a Share

Creating a share works the same in Windows 2000, Windows 2003 Server, and Windows XP Pro. To create a share, right-click the folder you created to hold data and choose **Sharing and Security** from the right-click menu. Then move to the tab labeled **Sharing**. Select the option labeled **Share This Folder**. Windows automatically inserts the **Folder name** in the **Share Name** text box. You can change the **sharename** if the folder name doesn't clearly indicate the contents of this folder. Optionally, enter a description of this share in the Comments text box. (**Note:** The description text appears when remote users open **My Network Places** with the **View** set to **Details**.) You don't have to change (or

worry about) the other options on the dialog; the share is now created, and you can move to the task of setting permissions for remote users.

Setting Share Permissions

Click the Permissions button to open the share's **Permissions** dialog. If you haven't created users on this computer to match the users on all the computers that access these files, select the **EVERYONE** group, and then select the **Full Control** option. This is the fastest and easiest way to make sure everyone who works with the QuickBooks data files can save the data they enter in the files.

If you've created local users for all the remote users who access the files in this folder, click the **Add** button and follow the prompts to assign **Full Control** to the **Power User** group, the **Administrator** group, or both (depending on which groups you used for the local users you created). You can alternatively enter the specific user names you created for those QuickBooks users.

Click **OK** to return to the folder's **Properties Dialog**.

Setting Folder Permissions

In addition to setting permissions for the share, starting with QuickBooks 2006 R3 *you must also set permissions for the folder itself*. To do this, click the **Security** tab in the folder's **Properties** dialog.

Use the same process described in the previous section for setting share permissions to give **Full Control** to the **EVERYONE** group (if you didn't add local users to this computer), or the **Power User** or **Administrator** group, or to individual users.

Installing the Software on a Computer that Holds Data Files

After you start the QuickBooks installation process (by inserting the CD), you see a series of dialogs, most of which are self-explanatory and easy to follow.

If this is your first installation of QuickBooks, the install process offers to install QuickBooks in a subfolder in your **Program Files** folder. You can change that installation location by entering a different location such as **C:\QuickBooks** (you do not have to create the folder first; QuickBooks will create it for you).

If you already have a version of QuickBooks installed on the computer, the installation program will find it and use that location as the target folder for QuickBooks 2006.

- If you are a business that is updating to QuickBooks 2006, accept that folder and QuickBooks will replace your older version.
- *If you are an accounting firm*, you should enter a new location (for example, **C:\QB2006**) so you don't overwrite your previous versions of QuickBooks (which you need in order to support clients on those versions).

Enabling the Database Manager

If you purchased a multi-user product (i.e. QuickBooks Enterprise 10-seat license or a Pro or Premier 5-Pack), you see dialogs asking whether you intend to host company files on this machine. If you answer yes, and the software you purchased is running R3 or higher, QuickBooks will proceed with installing the database server and launching it, so there's nothing further you need to do. Hereafter, the database server starts automatically when you start the computer. If you're using software CDs that are earlier than R3, you have to install the database server from within QuickBooks.

If you don't see dialogs during installation that ask whether you intend to host company files, or you didn't select Yes, you merely need to install the database manually, within QuickBooks. Open QuickBooks, and choose **File >Utilities > Host Multi-User Access**. (You do not have to open a company file to use this menu command.) Follow the prompts in any ensuing dialogs that appear, to confirm your action.

- If this computer is a data file-only server, and no user works in QuickBooks from the computer, you can close QuickBooks. As long as the computer is running, the database manager is running, so users on other network computers can work on the files you install on this computer.
- If this computer is used for QuickBooks data entry, you can start working on files; and other users on the network can also work on the files on the computer because the database manager is running.

Verifying the Database Service

It's a good idea to make sure the database service is running, and the easiest way to perform that task is to look for it in the **Windows Task Manager**. To open **Task Manager**, right-click a blank spot on the **Taskbar** and choose **Task Manager**. Move to the **Processes** tab and look for **QBDBMgrN.exe**. By default, the **Processes** tab is arranged alphabetically by **Image Name** (the name of the process), so it should be easy to spot **QBDBMgrN.exe**. If that column isn't displayed alphabetically, click the column heading to rearrange the display.

Installing QuickBooks 2006 on Computers That Do Not Hold Files

You need to install QuickBooks on the computers that are used by QuickBooks data entry persons who are working on files on other computers on the network. Technically, we call the computers that hold files *servers*, and we call the computers without files that run QuickBooks *clients*.

Configuring a client computer is not that much different from what you are used to doing with QuickBooks in prior years, and you only have to take these three basic steps:

1. Install QuickBooks 2006
2. Map a drive letter to the network file share (optional but customary)
3. Open a company file on the remote computer to verify your connection to the database.

Installing the Software

Simply install QuickBooks 2006 from your software CD. If you purchased a multi-user product, you see the dialogs asking whether you plan to keep company files on this machine that will be accessed by users on other machines (which is, of course, asking whether you want to turn on **Hosting** mode). Just select the option labeled **No/Not Sure/Will Decide Later**.

Mapping a Drive Letter to the Data Folder

Mapping a drive means you assign a drive letter to a shared folder on another computer. On the computer that's mapping the drive, some drive letters are already used, such as **C:**, **D:**, and perhaps even more (depending on how many hard drives, CD drives, or removable media drives are already attached to the computer). When you open **My Computer**, you see all the drives on the computer. When you *map* a drive to a shared folder on another computer, you see that mapped drive in the **My Computer** window, too. It also appears as a drive in the drop-down list you see at the top of any software **Open** dialog. This makes it easy to find the shared folder on another computer when you use the **Open** dialog in QuickBooks. Open **My Network Places** and navigate to the computer that holds the files you want to work on. When you double-click that computer's icon or listing, all the shared resources on that computer are displayed. You may see multiple shared resources, because the computer may be sharing a printer or sharing other folders.

Right-click the folder with the name that indicates it holds the QuickBooks 2006 data files, and choose **Map Network Drive** from the right-click menu to open the **Map Network Drive** dialog. By default, Windows XP selects **Z:** for the first mapped drive, and then works backwards through the alphabet as you add more mapped drives.

Windows 2000 offers the next available drive letter (usually **E:** or **F:**, depending on the number of drives attached to the computer) and works forward. You can accept the default drive letter, or choose a different one from the drop-down list.

Be sure the option **Reconnect at Logon** is selected, so every time you start your computer it links to the folder on the server represented by the mapped drive letter. Otherwise, you have to go through the process of mapping the drive every time you start your computer, or navigate through your network to reach the server and the shared folder every time you want to work with the QuickBooks files on that computer.

In accounting firms, if you have multiple computers holding QuickBooks 2006 data files, repeat the process to map a drive to each of those computers that the user of this computer needs. You can also opt to skip the mapping of drives for additional computers if the work you do at this computer almost always involves data files from the shared folder you already mapped. Then, if you occasionally need to access a file on another computer that has QuickBooks 2006 data files, just click the **My Network Places** icon in the QuickBooks **Open a Company** dialog and navigate to the computer and its QuickBooks 2006 data file shared folder.

Staying Current

Intuit will continue to update its guides and White Papers at the [Network/Multi-User Set Up](http://www.quickbooks.com/support/networking/) page. This page is found at <http://www.quickbooks.com/support/networking/>. Start at this page for the most recent drafts of White Papers and other information on network installations.

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