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The power behind MYOB Accounting Plus lies in its ability to run on your company's network, with more than one person using the same data file at the same time. Using this power, you'll be able to get more of your accounting functions done more quickly.

Accounting Plus operates a little differently than software programs that don't run on networks. Since your accounting records are vital to your business, it's important for you to understand how MYOB Accounting Plus works in your network environment. This part can help you prepare to use MYOB Accounting Plus data files with other users; it also explains what happens when more than one person uses a data file at the same time.

Preparing to share a data file with other users

The way you set up a data file in MYOB Accounting Plus can affect the people in your company who use the data file.

A variety of setup options, known as *preferences*, are available in MYOB Accounting Plus; they enable you to customize the way you work. You can also set up a password-security system to protect your sensitive business records from those who shouldn't have access to them. Preferences and passwords affect how Accounting Plus is run on a network by more than one person; this chapter briefly describes how Accounting Plus is affected by these functions.

How preferences work in a network environment

Some of the preferences you can choose in the MYOB Accounting Plus Preferences window can affect how *everyone* works with your data file. Since these preferences, known as *systemwide preferences*, may affect other people, it's a good idea to be aware of the effects of each choice you make in the Preferences window.

Each systemwide preference is clearly marked with the word **System-wide** in the Preferences window.

For more information about the Accounting Plus preferences, see Customizing work preferences.

How passwords work in a network environment

You can safeguard your company's accounting data by setting up passwords that prevent people from using parts of the data file that they don't need to use. This ensures that your confidential information will be seen only by authorized personnel. See To create the master password to learn how to set up your company's password-security system.

When you use the Password Access window to restrict access to specific windows in Accounting Plus, you may also restrict access to information shown in lists and reports throughout the entire Accounting Plus system. For details about how passwords affect specific lists and reports, Note: If you've created custom reports with a previous MYOB product.

Sharing a data file with other users

When two or more people use MYOB Accounting Plus simultaneously to keep accounting records for your company, they all access the same data file at the same time. This means that two or more users might be entering sales, writing checks, creating customer cards, and so on, at the same time.

Accounting Plus uses a special function, called **file locking**, that makes it possible for more than one user to enter information in the same data file at the same time. File locking is one of many features built in to MYOB software that allow you and your coworkers to work together in Accounting Plus. The sections in this chapter describe some MYOB Accounting Plus features that are activated when more than one person is

using the same data file at the same time; we suggest that you spend a few minutes to read this information carefully.

Protecting your accounting data using file locking

Since more than one person can use an Accounting Plus data file, you might run into situations where two or more people are making entries at the same time. There also are times when important maintenance procedures affect your entire data file, such as when you back up a data file. In each case, MYOB software uses *file locking* to protect your accounting data. File locking can take two forms: *multi-user file locking* and *single-user file locking*. This section will help you learn more about the two types of file locking.

Multi-user file locking

Multi-user file locking is used by MYOB Accounting Plus when more than one person is entering information into the same data file at the same time. It's used to prevent different pieces of data from "colliding" into each other when they're simultaneously entered into your data file; such a situation, if not prevented, could seriously damage the data file.

Let's use an example to understand how multi-user file locking works. Say two people, Person A and Person B, are using the same MYOB Accounting Plus data file. Person A has created an sale in the Sales window, but she hasn't clicked the Record button to record the sale into the data file yet. Person B has created a purchase in the Purchases window, but he hasn't clicked the Record button, either. Then, at the exact same time, Person A clicks the Record button in the Sales window and Person B clicks the Record button in the Purchases window.

This is when multi-user file locking comes into effect. Both Person A and Person B want to record their entries into the data file at the same time, *but MYOB Accounting Plus will record only one entry at a time* -- so only Person A's entry is recorded first. Person B must wait (he is "locked out" of the data file) until Person A's entries are properly recorded in the data file. Because Person B is "locked out," the message **File is busy; access denied** appears on his computer screen. After Person A's entries are completely recorded in the data file, Person B can then attempt to record his entries again by clicking the Retry button in the **File is busy; access denied** message.

Another way multi-user file locking works

Another instance of multi-user file locking occurs when you're working with a particular record in the Sales, Purchases, Historical Sales, Historical Purchases, Customer Payments, Vendor Payments, Settle Returns & Credits and Settle Returns & Debits windows. In these windows, if you've marked the Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes box in the Preferences window and another person changes or removes the same record you're working with, the window you're using will automatically close.

For example, say Person A is viewing a sale in the Sales window. Person A has marked the Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes box in the Preferences window. Now, Person B removes the sale record. On Person A's computer screen, the message **The Sales window will close because the sale being displayed there has been deleted** will appear.

If you haven't marked the Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes box in the Preferences window, the window you're using won't close until you attempt to change or remove the record you're viewing.

Multi-user file locking: Q&A

A number of other factors affect how multi-user file locking works on your company's network. This section describes those factors.

Q: How does MYOB Accounting Plus **choose which information to record first when multiple users enter information at the same time?**

A: When two people make an entry into the same data file at the same time, it's essentially a "race" between the two computers to see who reaches the data file first. The first computer that reaches the data file is the "winner" of the race. A few factors affect these races, such as:

- Where the data file is located If the data file is located on Person A's computer, the chances are

good that Person A's entry will be made first, while Person B will need to wait.

- Who has the fastest computer If the data file is located on Person C's computer, and Person A and Person B have both made an entry at the same time, the processing speed of the two "competing" computers may determine whose information is entered into the data file first.
- How much physical distance the information must go If Person A's entries must travel a shorter distance over the network to the data file than Person B's entries, Person A has a better chance of saving his or her information first.

Q: The message *File is busy; access denied* is displayed on my computer screen. How long do I have to wait before I can record my entry in the data file?

A: When this message appears on your computer screen, it means that another user is currently updating the contents of your company's data file. As soon as the data file is updated, you'll be able to record your own entry; this should take no more than a few seconds. When you're ready to attempt to record your entry again, click the Retry button in the **File is busy; access denied** message. (If the message appears again, it's possible that other users have attempted to record an entry at the same time; you can click the Retry button every few seconds until the file is "unlocked.")

Q: I just changed a customer's address in the Card Information window. When I was done, I pressed the tab key on my keyboard to move to the next field -- and the *File is busy; access denied* message appeared. What happened?

A: When you enter information in Accounting Plus, your data file is updated in one of two ways. The method Accounting Plus uses depends upon the window in which you made your entry.

Generally speaking, if the window you're using has a Cancel button on it -- such as the Spend Money window -- any information you enter in the window isn't recorded in your data file until you click the window's Record or OK button.

On the other hand, if the window you're using ***doesn't*** have a Cancel button on it -- such as the Card Information window -- any information you enter is recorded into your data file on a field-by-field basis. In other words, as soon as you press the tab or enter key after making an entry in a field, the entry you made will be recorded into your data file. If other people are making entries into the same data file at the same time, it's possible that you might encounter the **File is busy; access denied** message each time you press tab or enter.

Q: All I want to do is print some reports in MYOB Accounting Plus**. Will multi-user file locking affect me in any way?**

A: You can choose to activate multi-user file locking when you're printing or displaying reports -- the choice is up to you. See Printing, displaying and customizing reports in a multi-user environment to learn more about how multi-user file locking affects Accounting Plus reports.

Single-user file locking

A few important MYOB Accounting Plus tasks require that only one user is using the data file. Many of these tasks are file-maintenance procedures, such as backing up and checking your data file for errors, and require the "full attention" of the data file while they're being performed. Single-user file locking ensures that only one user is using a data file when these tasks are occurring.

When you begin to perform a task that requires a single-user file lock, no other users can have the data file open. If you attempt to begin one of these tasks when the file is open on another user's workstation, Accounting Plus will prevent you from starting the task. Similarly, if a single-user file lock is in effect on a data file, no other users will be able to open the file.

When you open a data file, you can specify that you wish to activate single-user file locking. In the Sign-On window that appears when you start Accounting Plus, choose the Single-user Access option.

The tasks in which single-user data file locking occur include:

- Backing up a data file
- Restoring a backed-up data file
- Checking a data file for errors

- Purging journal entries, closed sales, closed purchases and business contacts
- Exporting MYOB Accounting Plus data
- Importing data into MYOB Accounting Plus
- Starting a new fiscal year
- Starting a new payroll year
- Loading payroll tax tables
- Optimizing a data file
- Setting up, changing or removing passwords
- Setting up, changing or removing an employee's payroll information

In addition, the following elements cannot be created, changed or removed when more than one person is using the data file:

- Payroll categories
- Report batches

If you wish to perform a task that requires single-user file locking but other users currently have the data file open, you can quickly determine who is using the data file by displaying the Active Workstations window. To do this, choose Active Workstations from the File menu.

Printing, displaying and customizing reports in a multi-user environment

When other people are using the same data file that you're using, the way you print and display reports can affect how others perform their MYOB Accounting Plus tasks and how your reports look. Also, if you customize any reports, there are some additional concepts you should keep in mind. The topics in this section discuss how Accounting Plus reports are affected by a network environment.

Printing and displaying reports when others are using the same data file

When you're printing reports on your printer or displaying reports on your computer screen and other people are using the same data file, you can choose to activate multi-user file locking yourself.

Before you print or display a report, open the Report Filters window for the report. The Report Filters window contains a box labeled **Prevent Data Changes During Report Generation**. This box allows you to activate multi-user file locking and prevent other users from adding, changing or removing any information from the data file while MYOB Accounting Plus is generating the report. When you print or display the report while this box is marked, the report will be as up to date and accurate as possible.

Keep in mind, however, that a few MYOB Accounting Plus reports take some time to be generated. You might want to consider printing these lengthy reports at times (for example, at the end of the work day) when other users won't be forced to wait for the report to be generated before they can begin making entries into the data file again.

You can also leave the Prevent Data Changes During Report Generation box unmarked. When you do this, other users will be able to continue to make entries into the data file, but your report may not look exactly the way you intended. If another user changes information that affects the report as it's being printed or displayed, that particular entry may be indicated by zeroes or blank spaces on the report. In addition, new entries that other users make might affect the total amounts on some reports. With this in mind, you should consider printing or displaying the report at a time when you know no entries are being made that will affect the completeness of the report.

Printing user-activity reports

Some Accounting Plus reports allow you to view the entries made by a specific user during a specific time period. Accounting Plus tracks activity using the User ID; a User ID is the ID each user enters in the Sign-on window during the process of opening a data file. You can use these reports to determine who made a particular entry. You can also review your own entries during a certain time period.

- You can print a General Journal, Sales Journal, Purchases Journal, Disbursements Journal, Cash

Receipts Journal and Inventory Journal that lists all the activity of a single user, or all users, for a range of transaction dates and/or session dates.

- When you're finished using a data file at the end of the day, you can review your entries by printing a Session Report. The Session Report will show only the entries that you made during the time you had the data file open. (If you want the Session Report to be printed automatically whenever you close a data file, open the Preferences window and mark the Prompt for Session Report Upon Closing box.)

Click below for the step-by-step procedure:

To print a report showing entries identified by user IDs

To print a report showing your entries for the session

To automatically print a report showing your entries for the session

Storing custom reports on a network

When you create custom reports in MYOB Accounting Plus, the information about the custom reports is stored on your workstation's hard disk, not on the network. Other users of the same data file won't be able to use your custom reports unless you copy the custom reports' information to the appropriate locations on their workstations. (You may want to ask your system administrator to perform this task.)

Your custom report information is stored in the CUSTOM folder inside the folder on your workstation in which MYOB software is installed. (For example, if MYOB Accounting Plus is installed in C:\MYOBAccounting Plus, your custom report information is stored in C:\MYOBAccounting Plus\CUSTOM.) You can use Windows Explorer to copy the custom report files onto other users' workstations.

Lists and reports are affected by password security

When you restrict access to specific MYOB Accounting Plus windows using the Password Access window, you also may limit the information that appears in various lists and reports throughout the entire system.

If you've restricted access to any of the following windows, you've also limited some access to the information in at least one corresponding list or report. Users will still be able to view or print such lists and reports, but the lists and reports may not contain complete information. Keep this in mind if someone who is assigned a particular password is viewing lists or printing reports in MYOB Accounting Plus.

Note: Having problems with single-user access? If you're the only user of a particular data file but Accounting Plus still won't allow you to begin a task that requires single-user access, some problem may have occurred when one of your coworkers last closed the data file. (For example, it's possible that someone didn't exit MYOB Accounting Plus properly when the data file was open, or a power interruption caused a workstation to shut down unexpectedly.)

To fix this problem, exit Accounting Plus, then start Accounting Plus again and open the data file. (When you use the Sign-on window to open the data file, you might want to consider choosing the Single-user Access option to ensure nobody else will open the data file.) You should now be able to perform the task. **Note: If you've created custom reports with a previous MYOB product** If you've created custom reports with a previous MYOB product, you may not be able to display and print them using MYOB Accounting Plus Version 10. Because of the addition of new report fields, changes of field names or changes to the length of information that will display and print for a field, your custom reports may not be available in Accounting Plus Version 10. You may need to recustomize those reports.

• General Journal Entry	• Receive Money
• Historical Purchase	• Purchases
• Historical Sale	• Sales
• Inventory Adjustment	• Spend Money
• Inventory Transfer	• Write Paychecks

Keeping the information on your computer screen up to date

Each time you open a list window (such as the Inquiry Register window) or display a report in the Screen Reports window, the information that appears matches the contents of the data file as of the moment you opened the list or displayed the report. However, if you keep the list or report displayed on your computer screen for some time, the data that other users enter during that time may make the information on your screen obsolete or incorrect. With this in mind, it's a good idea to keep the information that's displayed on your computer screen as up to date as possible; that way, you'll be sure you're equipped with the latest data when you make your company's financial decisions.

You can update the information displayed on your computer screen automatically or manually. The following instructions explain both of these methods.

Click below for the step-by-step procedure:

To set up MYOB Accounting Plus so on-screen information is updated automatically

To update on-screen information manually

Working with your data file on a network Overview

Note: Automatically refreshing information will make the system operate more slowly for everyone Carefully consider whether you need to have on-screen information refreshed automatically. If you choose this option, MYOB Accounting Plus will operate more slowly for everyone who's accessing it. If speedier data entry is a priority for you, we recommend that you choose to manually refresh information often instead.

To print a report showing entries identified by user IDs

If you haven't already read the Networking Overview, see Printing user-activity reports for more information.

1. Open the Index to Reports and choose one of the following reports:

General Journal

Sales Journal

Purchases Journal

Disbursements Journal

Cash Receipts Journal

Inventory Journal

2. Click Filters and choose All User IDs or choose Selected and enter an individual user ID.
3. Complete other fields in the Filters window if you wish and then click OK.

To print a report showing entries identified by user IDs

To print a report showing your entries for the session

If you haven't already read the Networking Overview, see Printing user-activity reports for more information.

1. Choose Index to Reports from the Reports menu.
2. Choose Session Report from the General Ledger tab.

To print a report showing your entries for the session

To automatically print a report showing your entries for the session

If you haven't already read the Networking Overview, see Printing user-activity reports for more information.

1. Choose Preferences from the Setup menu.
2. Click the Security tab.
3. Mark the Prompt for Session Report When Closing box.

To automatically print a report showing your entries for the session

To set up MYOB Accounting Plus so on-screen information is updated automatically

If you haven't already read the Networking Overview, see Keeping the information on your computer screen up to date for more information.

1. From the Setup menu, choose Preferences to open the Preferences window.
2. Click the System tab in the Preferences window, then mark the box labeled Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes.
3. Click OK to close the Preferences window.

Once you've completed this task, entries that other users make in the data file will appear immediately in any lists that are currently open on your computer screen.

To set up MYOB Accounting Plus so on-screen information is updated automatically

Note: Another automatic way your on-screen information stays up to date Your on-screen information may also change automatically when you're working with a particular record in the Sales, Purchases, Historical Sales, Historical Purchases, Customer Payments, Vendor Payments, Settle Returns & Credits and Settle Returns & Debits windows. In these windows, if you've marked the Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes box in the Preferences window and another person changes or removes the same record you're working with, the window you're using will automatically close.

For more information about this functionality, which is part of the MYOB Accounting Plus **multi-user file locking** feature, see Another way multi-user file locking works.

To update on-screen information manually

If you haven't already read the Networking Overview, see Keeping the information on your computer screen up to date for more information.

- If you don't want your on-screen lists to be updated automatically, you can update the lists yourself. To do this, choose Refresh All from the Window menu
- To update an on-screen report in the Screen Reports window, you'll need to redisplay the report, using the procedure you originally followed to display the report.

To update on-screen information manually

Networking with MYOB Accounting Plus Overview

An introduction to networks

Putting it all together

Computing can be confusing enough when you're working with only one machine. Add a few more computers on a network to the mix, and you're suddenly dealing with enough terms, concepts and technologies to make your head spin.

Fortunately, not all network situations are as frightening as they may seem. MYOB networkable accounting software is designed to run on a simple network made up of a few similar computers. If you want more than one person to access the data file at the same time, you must purchase addition workstation licenses. For more information about purchasing additional workstation licenses, see http:// www.myob.com/us.

With a little background knowledge about networks, even computer users with little experience can get their MYOB software up and running in a short time on their company's network. We want to provide you with that background knowledge so you can enjoy a positive experience with your MYOB Accounting Plus network.

The information is intended to:

- Help you understand some networking fundamentals so you can evaluate and purchase network equipment for your company
- Outline the choices you have for setting up a network in your company
- Help you understand how Accounting Plus works on a network
- Help you get the best performance out of Accounting Plus on your company's network

The topics presented here are divided into two general areas. First, we'll discuss basic networking concepts in the section titled An introduction to networks. Then we'll dive into the details of setting up your system and making it all work together flawlessly in the Putting it all together section.

This information is by no means comprehensive on networking with personal computers. A trip to your local library or bookstore will give you an indication of the vast array of information that's available on this topic. After reading this information, though, you should have sufficient working knowledge of this technology to set up and run your company's Accounting Plus system on a network.

If you need to learn more about networking, we recommend that you contact an MYOB Certified Consultant for expert assistance in setting up your Accounting Plus system. You can find a Certified Consultant in your area by visiting our World Wide Web site at http:// www.myob.com/us/service/consultants/index.htm.

Networking with MYOB Accounting Plus Overview

Note: What is a system administrator? A network environment requires more attention than individual computers do; in most cases, setting up and maintaining a network goes beyond merely "hooking up" a few computers with cables. Similarly, network software such as Accounting Plus requires more attention than other software. If your company doesn't have much experience working in a network environment, or if your computer and network responsibilities have always been performed "by committee," now might be a good time to consider designating one employee as your company's system administrator.
The basic duties of typical system administrators include installing network hardware and software, maintaining existing network systems and acting as the company's main resource for network-related questions. In addition, a system administrator often performs specific Accounting Plus tasks, such as installing Accounting Plus properly, backing up your company's vital financial data and setting up a password-security system. These important tasks play a large part in determining how well Accounting Plus contributes to the success of your business.
These responsibilities may not require the full-time effort of an employee who is highly skilled in network issues, but they often require a person's immediate, knowledgeable attention. With this in mind, your system administrator may need additional training to fulfill the needs of your business. More information about networks can be obtained from a number of sources, including MYOB Certified Consultants, computer stores, bookstores and the Internet.

An introduction to networks

Click any of the sections below to begin learning about networks.

What is a network?

LAN technologies

Network hardware and software

Network cabling

Network hubs

Network software and their protocols

Network topologies

Constructing your peer-to-peer network

Optimizing your network to ensure that Accounting Plus runs at peak performance

What's best for Accounting Plus -- our recommendations

An introduction to networks

What is a network?

There are a number of networks in the computing world today, ranging from tiny two-computer local area networks (LANs) to the biggest network of all, the Internet. Networks vary a great deal, but they all share one simple idea: they allow people to extend the reach of their computers beyond the devices that are sitting on their desktop. Networks give computer users the power to use the resources-such as hard disks, printers and CD-ROM drives-of other computers without forcing anyone to physically move to those other computers to use them. Before the development of network technology, individual computers were isolated from each other and limited in their range of applications. By linking these individual computers over networks, the computers' usefulness and productivity have been increased enormously.

A network is made up of a few physical elements in addition to the computers, printers and other devices that are the main components of the network. Simple networks include such items as network interface cards (NICs), network cables and hubs. More sophisticated networks also use items such as bridges, switches and routers to connect the devices in the network. Using network hardware, the computers and other devices in a specific area are literally hooked up to each other. After the connections are made, special networking software is enabled on the networked computers so the computers can communicate with each other. The manner in which all these items are connected is often referred to as a network topology. You'll learn more about network hardware and software components and network topologies as you read this information.

In regards to Accounting Plus, what does a network do?

On a network, Accounting Plus allows multiple computer users to use a single set of accounting data at the same time. You can add, change or delete information, print reports and perform analysis functions while your coworkers perform the same tasks. Without a network, only one person would be able to perform these functions at a time.

Local-Area Networks (LANs) and Wide-Area Networks (WANs)

A local-area network (LAN) is a computer network which is enclosed in a room, a building or a group of adjacent buildings. The term *LAN* is most often used to refer to networks created using a specific type of networking equipment which is tailored for computer communication over a short distance. LANs can connect nearly any number of computers, and they are well-suited for small organizations of five or fewer computers.

A wide-area network (WAN), by contrast, is capable of spanning long distances. WANs are built in a similar manner as LANs, but they're usually built on a larger scale than a LAN and use equipment that's capable of transmitting information much further than a LAN can. WANs can span long distances, but they aren't required to; adjacent buildings may use a WAN instead of a LAN if they need to. Typically, WANs are used to connect many-from dozens to hundreds-of computers.

Other than the distances they can reach, the major difference between LANs and WANs is the type of equipment each uses. Networking equipment for LANs usually transmits data at a higher rate than WAN equipment; because a LAN is transmitting data a shorter distance than a WAN, the LAN equipment doesn't need to work as hard to cover that distance. As a result, LANs send information more quickly-and more cheaply-than WANs.

What does this mean in regards to Accounting Plus?

Your Accounting Plus software is best-suited for use on a LAN. We'll spend the rest of this report discussing that type of network.

Types of LANs

Companies with a small amount of computers, printers and other devices (also known as *nodes*) usually have two different types of LANs to choose from: peer-to-peer and client/server.

A **peer-to-peer network** is typically best suited for companies that have six or fewer nodes to connect on the network. On a peer-to-peer network, all the computers on the network are connected together, often

using a hub as a central connecting device. In this scenario, the hard disks and other devices of each computer on the LAN can be "shared" by the network's other computers. Since each computer shares devices in the same way, each computer is considered a "peer" of the other computers on the network.

Peer-to-peer networks are inexpensive and simple to set up, but they usually aren't the best solution for larger companies or companies that work with great amounts of data.

Companies that have more than five nodes may want to consider installing a **client/server network**. Client/server networks use a dedicated central computer on the network, known as a *server*, to store files for the other computers to use. The server, typically a high-performance computer, is usually not used on a day-to-day basis by any one person.

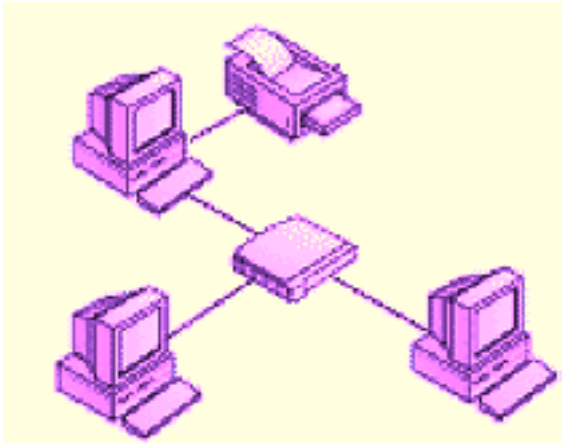
By incorporating a server, a company can store large amounts of files-including programs and data-and expect that all computers accessing those files will be able to use those files at about the same speed. Because client/server networks require an additional computer, they are more expensive and can be relatively difficult to set up.

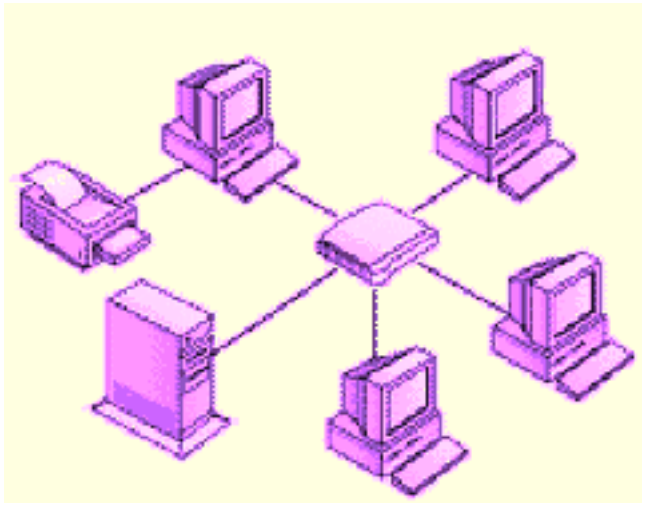
Which type of LAN works best for Accounting Plus?

Your Accounting Plus software is specially designed for peer-to-peer networks. When you purchased Accounting Plus, you automatically received a single workstation license. You can purchase additional licenses, which means that more than one computer user can access your accounting data using Accounting Plus at a time. If you find the need to spread your accounting tasks among more people in your company, you can purchase additional workstation licenses as your company's needs grow. Each time you purchase an additional workstation license, another person can access your accounting data.

We'll discuss the best ways for setting up Accounting Plus on a peer-to-peer network.

What is a network?





Note:

MYOB Accounting Plus in a client/server environment At this time, Accounting Plus doesn't work as a true client/server application; however, you can still attempt to use Accounting Plus if your company uses a client/server network. Currently, the only way this can be done is by storing your Accounting Plus data on your network server. The Accounting Plus program and associated files must still be installed and run from the computers on the network (the "clients"); it cannot be stored on the server.
By storing your Accounting Plus data on a server, it's possible that you may encounter reductions in performance. If this occurs, we recommend that you move the data to an individual computer.

LAN technologies

Regardless of whether you use a peer-to-peer network or a client/server network, you'll end up using a specific LAN technology to help the devices on your network communicate with each other. LAN technologies are special combinations of hardware and software that make networks work in a certain way and at a specific speed. If you purchase any of the popular "network-in-a-box" packages on the market today, you'll notice that a specific LAN technology will already be included as a part of the package.

Some of the most popular LAN technologies these days are Ethernet, Fast Ethernet, Token Ring and FDDI. Some companies-usually larger ones-may use more than one type of technology at a time, possibly because they're evolving their equipment from one technology to the other and they can't spare any network "down time." When this is the case, a special device called a *bridge* or *router* must be used to help the two technologies communicate with each other. This probably won't affect your small business, but it's important to remember that two different LAN technologies cannot coexist without special (and quite expensive) additional equipment.

Following is a brief description of each of the major LAN technologies.

Ethernet The most widely used LAN technology in use today is Ethernet, and it's the technology we recommend for Accounting Plus (unless you don't mind the extra expense of Fast Ethernet, described below). It strikes a good balance between speed, price, ease of installation and supportability. Approximately 80 percent of all LAN connections today use Ethernet. Ethernet networks run at a data rate of 10 million bits per second (10 MBps). This means that when a computer transmits information using Ethernet, it travels along that medium at 10 MBps.

Fast Ethernet An extension of the popular Ethernet standard, Fast Ethernet transports data at 100 MBps. Fast Ethernet takes advantage of many aspects of the familiar Ethernet technology. Two types of Fast Ethernet are available: 100BASE-TX, which uses cabling that's similar to telephone wire, and 100BASE-FX, which operates over multimode fiber-optic cabling. Not surprisingly, you pay for the 10-fold increase in speed over Ethernet: Fast Ethernet is more expensive than Ethernet. (However, if you're able to afford Fast Ethernet, we recommend that you purchase it for use with Accounting Plus.)

Token Ring Another major LAN technology in use today is Token Ring, which can run at two different data rates, 4 MBps or 16 MBps. Token Ring gets its name from the manner in which the network is set up (in a ring-like configuration) and from the way the network passes information (using a special "packet" of information called a token) from computer to computer. Token Ring networks are slightly more expensive and more difficult to set up than Ethernet networks.

FDDI Fiber Distributed Data Interface, commonly known as FDDI, transports data at 100 MBps. Originally, FDDI networks required fiber-optic cable, but today they can be run on telephone-like cable as well. FDDI is used primarily as a part of a large LAN; for example, it can be used in a network that links several individual workgroup or department LANs together in a single building. It's also used to link LANs in several buildings together in a setup that's referred to as a "campus environment."

Which type of LAN technology works best for Accounting Plus?

As mentioned above, we recommend using Ethernet for your LAN technology. It's reliable, inexpensive and easy to set up and maintain. If you don't mind the added cost, however, Fast Ethernet is even a better choice.

LAN technologies

Note: What does "10 MBps" really mean? When we say that an Ethernet network transmits information at 10 MBps, we're not saying that you can copy files and move other data along the network at that speed. Instead, only a special type of information-called a *packet*-travels along the network at that speed. A packet consists of a message that's sent from one computer to the other on the network. An example of a time when a packet is sent is when you print a document on a networked printer; as soon as you begin printing the document, a packet is sent to the other computers on the network, informing them of your action. In this case, the packet would display a message (such as "Document X is printing") in the Print Manager window on the other computers.

Network hardware and software

Today's LANs are powerful, flexible and easy to use, but they incorporate many sophisticated technologies that must work together flawlessly. For a LAN to benefit an organization, it must be designed to meet the organization's changing communications requirements. Building a LAN is a process of choosing different hardware and software components and matching them together so they meet your current needs and are capable of expanding with your growing business.

Fortunately, there's a growing number of all-inclusive and inexpensive "network-in-a-box" solutions on the market that simplify your decisionmaking process. When you purchase such a package, you receive all the necessary hardware and software you need to connect your company's computers.

Not everyone will want to purchase a network-in-a-box package; there may be some situations that lend themselves to buying individual network components instead. Even if you do purchase an all-inclusive product, it's probably a good idea anyway to learn about the individual components of a network and how they function together. The following sections will discuss these items.

- Hardware: Network interface cards, cables and hubs
- Software: Network software and their protocols

Network interface cards

Network interface cards (NICs) are one of the essential parts to a network. Network interface cards work with your network software to send and receive messages on the network. Each computer that you want to connect to the network must have a network interface card installed in it. Network interface cards are available for desktop and laptop computers.

Types of network interface cards

You have a few choices when you shop for network interface cards. If you wish to set up a simple Ethernet network, you can purchase standard 10MBps cards for your computers. If you're in the market for faster performance, Fast Ethernet cards (100MBps) are available. There are also special 10/100MBps cards that allow you to start your network at the 10MBps Ethernet speed and upgrade to the quicker 100MBps Fast Ethernet type later without forcing you to purchase new cards.

Installing network interface cards

Installing an Ethernet network interface card is as easy as installing any other type of card-simply insert the card into one of the computer's expansion slots. Before you become dismayed at the thought of opening up your computer case, keep in mind there's a possibility that you may be able to avoid any installation process at all; many new Windows computers are now pre-equipped with an Ethernet network interface card. If you're shopping for a new computer, you might want to check to whether a network interface card is part of the computer's standard features.

After the interface card is installed, you connect the computer to the network by plugging one end of a network cable into the card. The other end of the cable connects to the rest of the network. We'll discuss network cables in the next section.

What type of network interface card works best for Accounting Plus?

Since we recommend that you use the Ethernet or Fast Ethernet LAN technology, you have a choice between three types of network interface cards: 10 MBps (Ethernet only), 10/100 MBps (Ethernet with the option to upgrade to Fast Ethernet) or 100 MBps (Fast Ethernet).

Network cabling

Once your network interface cards are in place in your business's computers, you're ready to begin connecting the computers using special network cabling. For a small business with only a few devices to hook up, there are really only a couple types of network cables that can be considered a reasonable choice: coaxial and twisted pair.

Coaxial cabling resembles the wire used for hooking up cable television, and it was the first cable used for networking personal computers. It has a low cost and is relatively easy to install, and it doesn't require a hub in its network. However, it's not very easy to expand a network that consists of coaxial cabling, and there can be physical limitations to using this type of cable, especially if you want to have freedom to move your computers around.

Twisted pair cabling is a newer type of network cable, and it has a number of benefits over coaxial cable. Although it resembles ordinary telephone cable, twisted pair cabling has more stringent specifications regarding its susceptibility to outside electromagnetic interference than common telephone wire. Twisted pair cabling comes in two forms: unshielded twisted pair (UTP) and shielded twisted pair (STP). As the names of the two types imply, shielded twisted pair has more defense against electromagnetic interference than unshielded twisted pair; however, UTP is usually good enough for most companies.

What's the best network cabling to use with Accounting Plus?

By far the easiest cabling to purchase and install is twisted pair cabling. We recommend it for use with all networkable MYOB products.

What type of network interface card works best for Accounting Plus?

Since we recommend that you use the Ethernet or Fast Ethernet LAN technology, you have a choice between three types of network interface cards: 10 MBps (Ethernet only), 10/100 MBps (Ethernet with the option to upgrade to Fast Ethernet) or 100 MBps (Fast Ethernet).

Network cabling

Note: Ethernet network terminology At this point, you've learned enough about networks to understand some of the terms that you might see at your local computer store when you're shopping for networking equipment. Armed with this knowledge, you should be able to choose-and talk about!-the proper equipment for your business.
10BASE-T This is the technical name for an Ethernet network that uses twisted pair cable, and it's probably the best choice for an affordable Accounting Plus network. 10BASE-T stands for 10 MBps (the speed in which information travels along the network), baseband signaling (a method used by Ethernet networks to communicate), using twisted pair cable.
100BASE-TX This type of network equipment is for Fast Ethernet, which travels at 100 MBps using twisted pair cable.
10BASE5 10BASE5 is an Ethernet network that uses a thick coaxial cable. It's not used very much anymore.
10BASE2 This type of Ethernet network uses a coaxial cable that's thinner than the 10BASE5 cable. It's still used, although infrequently, in small office networks.
10BASE-F This type of Ethernet network uses fiber optic cable, and usually only in large office networks.

Network hubs

Along with the network interface card and cabling, the *network hub* is one of the most important parts of a LAN. A basic hub is usually a small box that serves as the central connection point for the wiring of the network. All computers on the network are linked to each other through the hub. Hubs are normally used in networks that use twisted pair cable.

A typical Ethernet hub, sometimes known as a "repeater," has a number of ports (holes in which cables are inserted) to which computers and other devices are attached. One twisted pair cable can be inserted into each port. The other end of each cable is inserted into the network interface card of each computer.

When a computer transmits information to the network, the information travels through the computer's network interface card and cable to the hub. In the hub, several copies of the information are made-one copy for each computer that's connected to the hub. Once the copies are made, one copy is sent to each computer on the network.

Since hubs are usually the central point of LANs, they're often placed in a location in an office that's at the center of things. Many offices designate a particular area to house their hubs and other networking equipment.

Types of hubs

There are a number of varieties of hubs that allow you to control the manner in which your network operates. Following is a brief description of several types of hubs.

Standalone hubs are box-like products with a number of ports, typically fewer than 12. Many standalone hubs also can be connected to other standalone hubs-either by connecting them together with coaxial cable or linking (or *cascading*) them using twisted pair cable between ports on each hub. This allows you to expand your network as your company grows, or connect two separate LANs. This type of hub is least expensive-a normal five-port standalone hub can cost less than $60. They are best suited for small, independent workgroups or offices typically with fewer than 12 users per LAN. A standalone hub will probably serve the needs of most small businesses who wish to use MYOB products.

Stackable hubs look and act like standalone hubs except that several of them can be stacked or connected together, usually by short lengths of cable. The advantage of using stackable hubs is that, when connected, the hubs can be managed as a single unit by a network administrator. (More information about managing hubs appears below.) As time passes and your network grows, you can add more stackable hubs to accommodate more users on the network. Stackable hubs are ideal for companies that don't want to make a large initial investment in their network but are certain that their network will expand over time.

Modular hubs are larger units that can accommodate many network users. A modular hub is made up of a chassis that can contain anywhere from four to 14 slots. Each slot in the chassis can hold a communications card, which works like a standalone hub. Each communications card (also known as a *module*) can support around 14 computers and other devices. When several communications cards are placed in the chassis, the computers connected to the cards are able to communicate with each other in the same manner as they would if they were part of the same card. Modular hubs can be easily managed by a network administrator.

Managing hubs

If you want to keep track of your network, one method you can use is *hub management*. When you manage your network's hubs, each port on the hubs can be configured, monitored, enabled or disabled by a system administrator from a piece of equipment called a hub management console, along with special software. Depending upon the tools you use, you may also be able to acquire statistics on a variety of things about your network, such as the amount and types of information that pass through the ports on the network. Most vendors who develop hubs also produce hub management consoles and the software needed to run them. If you're interested in learning as much as possible about the performance of your network, we suggest that you consider investing in a hub management console.

What kind of hub works best for an Accounting Plus network?

The hub that will best fit your business depends upon your current needs, but it also depends upon how

much you expect to see your network grow over time. If you have fewer than five computers at your company and you don't expect to see that number grow much (or at all) in the next few years, you'll probably do just fine with an easy and inexpensive standalone hub for your network. On the other hand, if you're already dealing with a dozen computers now and you expect to see a need for a steady increase in your network capacity, you'll probably be best served if you investigate stackable or even modular hubs for your company.

For nearly all small businesses, hubs provide the flexibility to easily expand a network. If your business grows, simply purchase another hub to accommodate your additional computers-it's often as simple as that.

Network hubs

Network software and their protocols

For your network to operate properly, each computer on the network must use software that supports networking.

Operating systems

Network-ready operating systems such as Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000 Me, Windows 2000 Professional and Windows NT allow the devices on a network to properly communicate with each other. If your business is like most businesses, your computers already have an operating system that's ready for a network.

Network software protocols

Just because you have the proper operating system doesn't necessarily mean that your network will run the way you want. Special controls in a network operating system, called *protocols*, must be present in your operating system to ensure that the programs you run on the network-including Accounting Plus-are able to send and receive messages with the other computers on the network. These protocols determine how messages are delivered across the network. Fortunately, these protocols are already present in most network-ready operating systems; the most you might need to do is activate them (we'll perform this step later in these lessons).

What network software does Accounting Plus require?

The operating systems that work well for peer-to-peer networks include Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000 Me, Windows 2000 Professional and Windows NT. These operating systems support the NetBIOS, NetBEUI and TCP/IP protocols, of which one must be active on your system to run Accounting Plus. (If you wish, you can also run special networking software on these operating systems. One such software product, Artisoft LANtastic, runs well with Accounting Plus. LANtastic supports the LANBIOS protocol, which is a NetBIOS protocol.) Windows networks are easy systems to set up and maintain; in addition, these systems support the dual-speed 10/100MBps Ethernet/Fast Ethernet network interface cards.

We'll discuss how to check your computers to see whether the proper protocols are enabled.

More information about NetBIOS, NetBEUI and TCP/IP

Interested in these strangely named network protocols? Here's some basic information about how each protocol works.

NetBIOS and NetBEUI Several years ago, IBM and Microsoft developed NetBIOS (Network Basic Input Output System) and NetBEUI (NetBIOS Extended User Interface) with the goal of drawing up network protocols that would work on small networks of Windows computers. The design goal was to build small and fast protocols that would allow for human-assigned names of devices, such as "MyComputer," that are easy to remember.

The assumption was that there were only a few devices on the network and that devices would be appearing and disappearing at random. Therefore, it was best to be able to locate a device by "broadcasting" a packet of data across the entire network until the device for which the data was intended was found. NetBIOS and NetBEUI were designed to use this broadcast method as the sole means of locating devices.

When one device needs to communicate with another device in a NetBIOS/NetBEUI network, it broadcasts a packet of data to find the remote system. (For example, if Computer1 is trying to send data to an Accounting Plus data file on Computer2, Computer1 will broadcast its intentions to the entire network-in effect, it will say, "Where is Computer2?"-until it finds Computer2.) Obviously, a large network could become bogged down in all this broadcasting, so NetBIOS and NetBEUI networks are generally restricted to 30 or fewer devices.

Once a device has found the device with which it wants to communicate on the NetBIOS/NetBEUI network, the two devices can communicate directly. However, there are times when this process breaks down, and the computers will need to find each other through the broadcast process.

TCP/IP TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) is the protocol that's used in many large networks-including the Internet-but is increasingly popular in smaller networks, as well, mainly because of its speed.

As opposed to NetBIOS and NetBEUI, TCP/IP has a much more direct method of transferring data from one device to another. Each computer in a TCP/IP network is assigned a specific, unique IP address that identifies the computer to the network and the rest of the world. All IP addresses are stored in a centralized registry or a distributed directory service, often located within a company using a router, or outside of a company at an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

When one device needs to communicate with another device in a TCP/IP network, it sends a packet of data to the centralized registry. The registry then locates the intended device's IP number and directs the packet immediately to that device. (For example, if Computer1 is trying to send data to an Accounting Plus data file on Computer2, Computer1 will send its request to the centralized registry. The registry will then pass on Computer1's request directly to Computer2.) This direct process eliminates the possibly time-consuming NetBIOS/NetBEUI work of "broadcasting" to all devices on the network.

Like the NetBIOS/NetBEUI process, once a device has found the device with which it wants to communicate on a TCP/IP network, the two devices can communicate directly. Since each device on a TCP/IP network has a fixed address by which it is identified, however, the devices rarely lose contact with each other until the connection is intentionally broken.

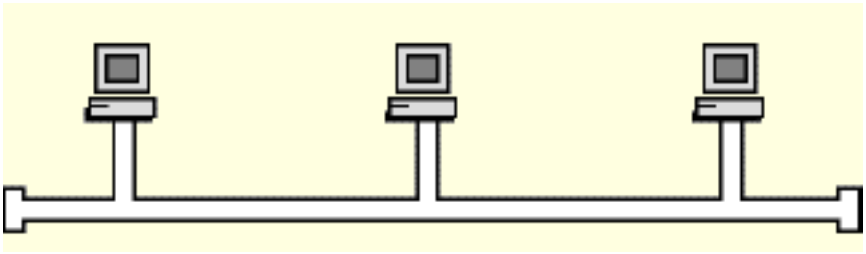
Network software and their protocols

Network topologies

Before you make any purchasing decisions about your network, it's important that you consider the physical environment in which your network will exist. The placement of the computers and other devices in your office play a large part in determining the organization, or *topology*, of your new network.

There are three major types of network topologies in use today: *bus*, *star* and *ring*. Ethernet networks-the type we recommend for use with Accounting Plus-can be configured in either a bus or a star topology, while the ring topology is most often used with the Token Ring and FDDI network technologies.

The bus topology



The original network topology was the bus topology, which connects all devices on the network using a coaxial cable. Hubs aren't used in a bus topology; the strings of cables are simply connected together along the network. When information is sent out to the network from a computer, the data is copied and sent "down the line" to all the other computers on the network.

The bus topology is rarely used in new networks these days because it's somewhat difficult to add new users or move current users to new locations on the network. Monitoring the network and troubleshooting problems on this type of topology is also relatively difficult.

The star topology

The hub is the central device in a star topology. In the star topology, each computer in the network is connected to a hub using twisted pair cable, forming an organization that resembles a star. As we discussed in the *Network hubs* section, when information is sent from a computer to the network, the information is copied at the hub and then sent out to all the other computers in the network.

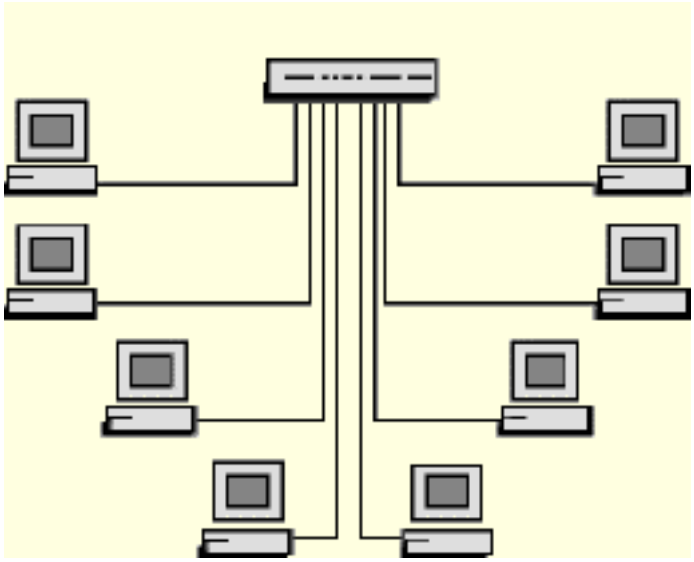
The ring topology

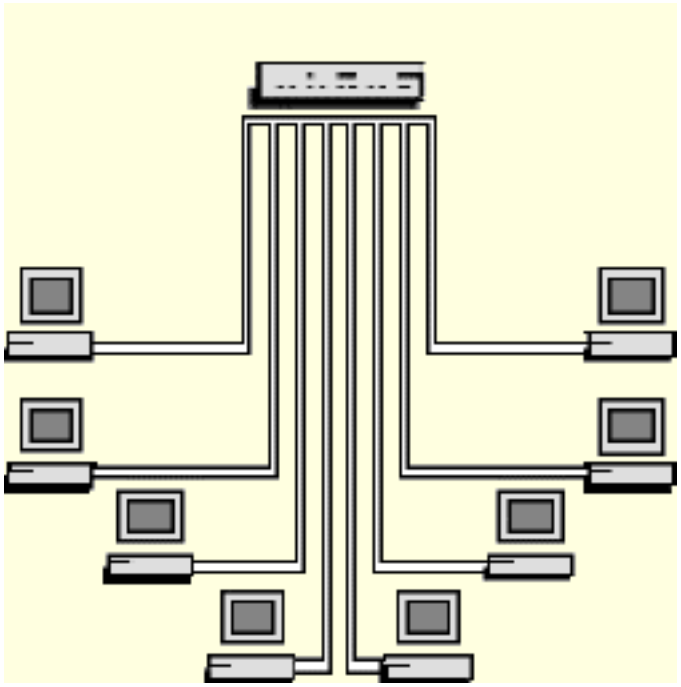
The organization of the ring topology looks similar to that of the star topology, but the manner in which information passes among computers on the network is different. In the ring topology, each computer is attached to a hub-like device called a multistation access unit (MAU), which is usually stored in a central closet area like a hub. When information is passed from a computer to the network, the information isn't passed to the MAU and copied to other computers on the network, as it is with the star topology. Instead, the information is simply passed from computer to computer, one at a time, across the entire network, until the information arrives at the desired location. Additional equipment must be connected to the cable (which can be either twisted pair or fiber-optic) to transmit and receive information in this manner.

Which topology is best for a network running Accounting Plus?

In most cases, we expect that the star topology will be best suited for a small business that's running Accounting Plus on a simple Ethernet network. Its combination of low cost, simple setup and flexibility for change and growth make it a logical choice.

Network topologies





What's best for Accounting Plus -- our recommendations

We covered the basics of what you need to build a network for your business. Now, let's get your network running! Here we'll help you set up your network.

Here's a summary of each item that we recommend for a network running Accounting Plus. If you're planning on discussing your network needs with a retailer or consultant, you might want to show them this list. (Consult Appendix 2, "System requirements," for a complete list of system requirements for Accounting Plus.)

Type of network: Local-area network (LAN)

Type of LAN: Peer-to-peer network

LAN technology: Ethernet or Fast Ethernet

Network interface cards: Any that support Ethernet (or Fast Ethernet, if you choose that technology).

Network cabling: 10BASE-T twisted pair (shielded or unshielded) for Ethernet; 100BASE-TX twisted pair for Fast Ethernet. One cable is needed for each computer you wish to connect to the network; additional twisted pair cables are necessary if you plan to connect two or more network hubs together.

Network hub: Depends upon your business size; use a standalone hub if you have six or fewer computers. If you have more than six computers, you can either connect two or more standalone hubs or use stackable hubs.

Operating system: You can use Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000 Me, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows NT or LANtastic.

Network software protocols: Your operating system must have the NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP protocol enabled (or LANBIOS, if you use LANtastic). (We'll show you how to activate these protocols in the Setting up your network software.)

Putting it all together

We've now covered the basics of what you need to build a network for your business. Now, let's get your network running! The topics below help you set up your network.

Constructing your peer-to-peer network

Optimizing your network to ensure that Accounting Plus runs at peak performance

Setting up your network software

Checking and installing network protocols

Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file

Setting up file sharing, mapping network drives and creating shortcuts

Optimizing Accounting Plus to ensure it's running as fast as it can

Putting it all together

Constructing your peer-to-peer network

Listed below are the basic steps for setting up the physical elements of a typical peer-to-peer Ethernet network. When you purchase your network equipment, we strongly recommend that you carefully review the documentation for the equipment so you know what the manufacturers of the equipment recommend for its use.

1. First, decide where you want to install the hub(s). Pick a central location that's relatively close to all the computers that will be on the network. Many network equipment manufacturers recommend that your computers be within 328 feet of your network hub.
2. If you plan to connect two or more hubs together, do so at this time. (Note: If you plan to do this, be sure to connect the hubs using the proper ports on the hubs. Some hubs use special "uplink" ports for connecting to other hubs.)
3. Be sure that all the computers and other devices that you plan to add to the network are turned off.
4. If your computers do not have their network interface cards or installed yet, do that at this time. (If you received setup software for your network interface cards, be sure to install that software, as well.)
5. Connect one end of a network cable into one of the hub's ports, then connect the other end of the cable into one of your computers. Repeat this step for each computer you want on your network.
6. Plug your hub(s) into an electrical outlet and turn on your computers.

At this point, your network hardware is ready to go. Congratulations! Before you continue the setup process, we suggest that you immediately optimize your network to ensure that Accounting Plus runs at peak performance; the following instructions will help you with this process. After network optimization is complete, we'll show you how to set up your network software.

Constructing your peer-to-peer network

Optimizing your network to ensure that Accounting Plus runs at peak performance

Because Accounting Plus relies heavily upon your network to accomplish its tasks, it's important that your network is set up to run as fast as it can. Even the slightest drag upon your network's resources might slow down the processing of the tasks you perform in Accounting Plus. Use the topics in this section to give your computers and network a performance checkup before you begin using Accounting Plus.

On your computers' hard disks

- Be sure your computers all meet (or, better yet, exceed) the minimum system requirements for Accounting Plus. The requirements are printed on your Accounting Plus box, as well as in the Getting Started manual.
- Consider upgrading the processors of the computers on your network, especially if you currently use computers that are equipped with slower processors. By doing this, your computers can send and retrieve messages across the network more rapidly.
- Upgrade your computers' operating systems so all computers are using the same operating system. By doing this, you'll lessen the amount of work a computer must perform to receive information from other computers on the network.
- If possible, try to keep a substantial amount (several megabytes) of free hard disk space on your computers. We recommend that at least five to 10 percent of the size of your hard disk should be unused. Windows operating systems will use free hard disk space for random access memory (RAM). The more free hard disk space on a computer, the faster its performance. In addition, when a hard disk has very little free space, it's possible that files-including your Accounting Plus data file-can become fragmented on the disk-a situation you usually want to avoid.
- Even if you have plenty of hard disk space on your computers, you can still experience file fragmentation. To avoid this condition, optimize your hard disks from time to time. Several programs, such as Disk Defragmenter, are available to help you optimize your hard disks.
- On the computer that will be used to store your Accounting Plus data file, check to see whether additional shared files or databases on that computer are accessed by the computers on the network. If such files do exist, keep in mind that the increased activity on the hard disk may slow the performance of the disk. You might want to consider moving the files to other computers on the network.

If the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is stored uses the Windows NT operating system, there are a few extra items on your hard disk that you might want to check. A Windows NT computer will run faster if:

Its hard disk uses the SCSI parallel interface. SCSI (Small Computer System Interface; pronounced "scuzzy") is a parallel interface for attaching peripheral devices to computers. Another type of disk, IDE, isn't as fast as a SCSI disk.

Its hard disk is partitioned. Windows NT takes less time to work on a computer with a large hard disk when the hard disk is partitioned into a number of smaller drives. There is an entire sector of the software industry devoted to utilities that help you partition your hard disk.

In your computers' memory

- Although Accounting Plus can run on computers with 16 megabytes (MB) of RAM, you'll find that increased amounts of memory will improve your system's performance. If possible, upgrade your computers to 32MB of RAM.
- If you're planning on running additional programs while Accounting Plus is running, we strongly recommend that you purchase additional RAM.

On your network

- Simply put, the faster your network, the faster Accounting Plus will send and receive messages across the network. If you currently use an Ethernet network that runs at 10MBps and you're not satisfied with the speed of your network, you may wish to upgrade to a 100MBps Fast Ethernet network.
- Be sure your network uses high-quality twisted pair cable.
- Keep your network components as clean and dust-free as possible.
- If possible, we recommend that you keep your network as free of traffic as possible when Accounting Plus is in use. Accounting Plus requires a significant amount of attention from the network when it's recording and processing your company's financial data; if other programs are requesting network resources at the same time, you'll probably experience slower performance in Accounting Plus.

Optimizing your network to ensure that Accounting Plus runs at peak performance

Note: What is file fragmentation? Fragmentation is a frequent condition in a computer in which files are separated on a disk into small, separated fragments.
File fragmentation is a natural consequence of creating, deleting or modifying files on a disk over time. When a file is saved on a crowded disk that no longer contains contiguous blocks of free space large enough to hold it, the file is automatically split into two or more chunks, or fragments, and placed on separate parts of the disk. If left untreated, file fragmentation can slow down a disk's access speed. **Note: Windows NT hard disk performance tips** **The partition on which the data file is located uses the NTFS file system.** The NTFS (New Technology File System) is the standard Windows NT file system. Other types of file systems such as FAT and HPFS aren't as efficient as NTFS on Windows NT. **Note: Windows NT memory performance tips** If the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is stored uses the Windows NT operating system, there are a couple extra memory items that you might want to check. A Windows NT computer will run faster if:
EDO memory chips (SIMMs) are used instead of "regular" RAM SIMMs. EDO (Extended Data Out) SIMMs are newer and faster than other SIMMs. (Note: Be sure your computers are compatible with EDO SIMMs before you attempt to switch to EDO RAM.)
The RAM cache size is set at 512K or higher. A RAM cache is a reserved section of the computer's main memory that's used to store frequently used data for quick access. Refer to your Windows NT documentation to learn how to increase your RAM cache.

Setting up your network software

Now that the physical aspects of your network are assembled and ready to go, it's time to sit down at each of your computers on the network and prepare them for Accounting Plus.

Not all of these tasks need to be performed in a particular order, but you might discover that it's easier to prepare your systems if you do these steps in the order shown below.

1. Checking and installing network protocols
2. Installing Accounting Plus
3. Setting up file sharing, mapping network drives and creating shortcuts
4. Optimizing Accounting Plus to ensure it's running as fast as it can

Setting up your network software

Warning: Only advanced computer users should perform these tasks Although we recommend that the designated system administrator in your office or one of our MYOB Certified Consultants handle the tasks of setting up your network software, you can attempt to perform these steps yourself. Keep in mind, however, that we strongly recommend that a qualified network specialist perform these tasks.

Checking and installing network protocols

As we discussed, special network protocols must be enabled to ensure that the programs you run on the network-including Accounting Plus-are able to communicate messages among the computers on the network. Your computers must be using the NetBIOS, the NetBEUI or the TCP/IP protocol.

When you create a data file in Accounting Plus and when you begin each session in Accounting Plus, you'll have the opportunity to specify which protocol you wish to use in multi-user mode-depending, of course, upon whether you have more than one protocol installed on your computer.

The first step in setting up your network software is to check to be sure that these protocols are installed and ready on your computers. If they're not, you'll need to install them. To check protocols for computers running Windows 95, Windows 98 and Windows 2000 Me, see the procedure that begins below; for computers running Windows 2000 Professional, see page 212; for computers running Windows NT 4.0, see page 1736.

Checking and installing network protocols in Windows 95/98/2000 Me

Follow these steps to check to see which network protocols are installed on computers running Windows 95, 98 or 2000 Me.

1. From the Start menu, choose Settings, then choose Control Panel. When the Control Panel is displayed, double-click Network to open the Network control panel.
2. Under the Configuration tab, check to see whether NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP (or LANBIOS, if you use a LANtastic network) are listed in the box labeled **The following network components are installed**.

If NetBIOS or NetBEUI are listed and you wish to use one of these protocols, the computer you're using should be able to run Accounting Plus without problems. After you've performed this check on all the computers on your network, feel free to skip ahead to the *Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file* section on page 1738.

If TCP/IP is listed and you wish to use it, you'll need to assign an IP address to the computer before it's ready to run Accounting Plus in multi-user mode on your network. See *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)* on page 1737 to learn more about this process.

If none of the protocols are listed, or if the protocol you wish to use isn't listed, continue to the next step.

3. Check to see whether Client for Microsoft Networks appears in the **The following network components are installed** box. If it is, skip to step 8. If it's not, continue to the next step.
4. Click the Add button. The Select Network Component Type window will appear. In the list, double-click Client to open the Select Network Client window.
5. In the list in the left side of the Select Network Client window, click Microsoft. A list of protocols appears in the list in the right side of the window.
6. Choose Client for Microsoft Networks, then click OK. The Network Control Panel appears again, with Client for Microsoft Networks listed in the **The following network components are installed** box.
7. Next, check again to see whether NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP are listed in the **The following network components are installed** box.

If NetBIOS or NetBEUI are listed and you wish to use one of these protocols, the computer you're using should be able to run Accounting Plus without problems. After you've performed this check on all the computers on your network, feel free to skip ahead to the *Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file* section on page 1738.

If TCP/IP is listed and you wish to use it, you'll need to assign an IP address to the computer before it's ready to run Accounting Plus in multi-user mode on your network. See *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)* on page 1737 to learn more about this process.

If none of the protocols are listed, or if the protocol you wish to use isn't listed, continue to the next step.

8. Click the Add button. The Select Network Component Type window will appear. In the list, double-click Protocol to open the Select Network Protocol window.
9. In the list in the left side of the Select Network Protocol window, click Microsoft. A list of protocols appears in the list in the right side of the window.
10. If NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP appears in the list, choose the protocol you want, and then click OK. If none of the protocols are displayed in this list, you'll need to install the protocols using your Windows CD or diskettes. (Refer to your Windows documentation to learn more about installing Windows system software.)

If you plan to use the NetBIOS or NetBEUI protocols, skip to the next step; if you plan to use the TCP/IP protocol, see *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)* on page 1737.

11. That's it! This computer is ready to run Accounting Plus on a network! Close the control panel windows that are open, and don't forget to check all the computers on your network using these steps.

Checking network protocols in Windows 2000 Professional

Follow these steps to check to see which network protocols are installed on computers running Windows 2000 Professional.

By default, all necessary network protocols are automatically installed with Windows 2000 Professional, so don't be concerned if you don't need to make any changes to your system when you read these instructions.

1. From the Start menu, choose Settings, then choose Control Panel. When the Control Panel is displayed, double-click Network and Dial-up Connections to open the Network and Dial-up Connections control panel.
2. Double-click the Local Area Connection icon to open the Local Area Connection Properties window.
3. In the box labeled **Components checked are used by this connection**, check to see whether NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP (or LANBIOS, if you use a LANtastic network) are listed.

If NetBIOS or NetBEUI is listed and you wish to use one of these protocols, be sure the box next to the protocol is checked. If it is, the computer you're using should be able to run Accounting Plus without problems. After you've performed this check on all the computers on your network, feel free to skip ahead to the *Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file* section on page 1738.

If TCP/IP is listed and you wish to use it, be sure the box next to it is checked. Next, you'll need to assign an IP address to the computer before it's ready to run Accounting Plus in multi-user mode on your network. See *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)* on page 1737 to learn more about this process.

If none of the protocols are listed, or if the protocol you wish to use isn't listed, refer to your Windows 2000 Professional documentation to learn how to install the networking components you need.

Checking and installing network protocols in Windows NT 4.0

Follow these steps to check to see which network protocols are installed on computers running Windows NT 4.0.

1. From the Start menu, choose Settings, then choose Control Panel. When the Control Panel is displayed, double-click Network to open the Network control panel.
2. Under the Protocols tab, check to see whether NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP (or LANBIOS, if you use a LANtastic network) is listed.

If NetBIOS or NetBEUI are listed and you wish to use one of these protocols, the computer you're checking should be able to run Accounting Plus without following these instructions any further (remember, however, that you should perform this check on all the computers on your network); if this is the case, feel free to skip ahead to the *Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file* section on page 1738.

If TCP/IP is listed and you wish to use it, you'll need to assign an IP address to the computer before it's

ready to run Accounting Plus in multi-user mode on your network. See *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)* on page 1737 to learn more about this process.

If none of the protocols are listed, or if the protocol you wish to use isn't listed, continue to the next step.

3. Click the Add button. A list of available protocols will be displayed. If NetBIOS, NetBEUI or TCP/IP appears in the list, choose the protocol you want, and then click OK. If none of these protocols are displayed in the list, you'll need to install the protocols using your Windows NT CD or diskettes. (We recommend that you refer to your Windows NT documentation to learn more about installing network protocols.)

If you plan to use the NetBIOS or NetBEUI protocols, skip to the next step; if you plan to use the TCP/IP protocol, see the following section, *How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)*.

4. That's it! This computer is ready to run Accounting Plus on a network! Close the control panel windows that are open, and don't forget to check all the computers on your network using these steps.

How to assign an IP address to a computer (TCP/IP users only)

1. In the Network control panel, highlight the TCP/IP selection in the **The following network components are installed** box (in Windows 2000 Professional, the box is labeled **Components checked are used by this connection**) and click Properties to open the TCP/IP Properties window.
2. In the TCP/IP Properties window, set up the IP address, subnet mask and other identifying features of your computer.
3. After you've made all the necessary entries in the TCP/IP Properties window, click OK to save your changes and close the window.

Checking and installing network protocols

Note: If you have a Novell network If you have a Novell network that consists of computers running Windows 95/98/2000 Me, you may need to perform a few extra steps to ensure that the proper protocols are being used. Before you check your network protocols, follow these steps.
Under the Configuration tab, check to see whether the term "Client32" (or any combination of words that include "Client32") is listed in the box labeled The following network components are installed.
If "Client32" does appear in the list, it's possible that the protocols installed on your computer won't work properly on a peer-to-peer network with Windows 95/98/2000 Me computers. In most cases, you'll need to uninstall the Client32 software and install software that works properly with Windows 95/98/2000 Me. These steps require the assistance of a trained Novell representative; we recommend that you contact Novell or an MYOB Certified Consultant for help.
On the other hand, if "Client32" does not appear in the list, you should be able to continue with these instructions without any problems. **Note: If your company uses a LANtastic network** If you use a LANtastic network, your network will use the LANBIOS protocol instead of NetBIOS or NetBEUI. Please note, however, that the LANBIOS protocol also requires that the Client for LANtastic Network is also displayed in the The following network components are installed list. (Client for Microsoft Network isn't sufficient.) To install the Client for LANtastic Network, follow these steps:
1. Click the Add button. The Select Network Component Type window will appear. In the list, double-click Client to open the Select Network Protocol window.
2. In the list in the left side of the Select Network Protocol window, click LANtastic. A list of clients appears in the list in the right side of the window.
3. If Client for LANtastic Networks appears in the list, select it and click OK. If it isn't displayed in the list, you'll need to install the client using your LANtastic CD or diskettes. (Refer to your LANtastic documentation to learn more about installing LANtastic client software.) If you wish to use the TCP/IP protocol, each computer on the network that will run Accounting Plus in multi-user mode must be assigned an IP address. An IP address is a set of numbers that identifies each computer on a network that uses the TCP/IP protocol. These numbers can be assigned manually or by using a server. These instructions will help you set up TCP/IP to a certain extent; however, the choices you make for configuring your TCP/IP connection to your network depend upon how your network is set up. If someone else set up your network connection, you should consult that person for assistance here. You (or the person who set up your network connection) might also find it helpful to speak with your Internet service provider (ISP) to learn how you can receive permanent IP addresses for each of your computers. (Keep in mind that if your computers are assigned IP addresses only when they have an active dial-up connection to the Internet, your computers will encounter various problems communicating to each other when you're using Accounting Plus-unless those computers are *always* connected to the Internet while Accounting Plus is in use.)

Installing MYOB Accounting Plus and creating a data file

After you've ensured that your network protocols are installed properly, the next step is to install Accounting Plus.

Go ahead and install Accounting Plus on your network's computers at this time. When you're finished with the installation process, you'll be ready to either create a new data file or upgrade an existing Accounting Plus data file. Before you create or upgrade your data file, however, please read the section below.

Choosing a location for your Accounting Plus data file

When you create or upgrade your data file, you'll need to choose on which computer your data file will be located. The computer you choose will be the machine that all Accounting Plus users will need to access after you've created or upgraded the file.

To help you decide on which computer you want your data file to be located, ask yourself the following questions about how your company plans to use the Accounting Plus system:

- Which computer on your network is the most powerful? As is the case with most computer programs, Accounting Plus can be used most efficiently on computers that have higher amounts of free hard disk space and random access memory (RAM). You may want to consider placing the data file on your company's most powerful computer.
- Which computer will use Accounting Plus the most? If one employee at your company will use Accounting Plus more than anyone else, you might want to consider placing the upgraded data file on that employee's computer. Doing this will increase the speed with which that employee can perform his or her Accounting Plus tasks.
- What are the job functions of each person who will use Accounting Plus? For example, a data-entry clerk who enters and changes information in Accounting Plus throughout the workday will require more computer "horsepower" than a manager who merely views the company's financial data from time to time. Placing the data file on the clerk's computer, and ensuring that the clerk's computer is a more powerful machine than the manager's, will increase the efficiency of your company's accounting activities.

If you're upgrading a data file from another MYOB product

After you upgrade your data file so it works with Accounting Plus, use the Accounting Plus Data Optimization Wizard to ensure your data file is streamlined for peak performance. Then be sure to verify the data file's integrity by choosing Verify Data File from Accounting Plus's File menu.

Setting up file sharing, mapping network drives and creating shortcuts

At this point, your network hardware should be set up, Accounting Plus should be installed on each of the computers on your network, and your company's data file should be located on one of the computers on the network. In the steps below, we're going to walk you through the process of making the Accounting Plus data file accessible to all computers on the network.

Be sure you follow the steps below in the order they're presented:

1. Setting up file sharing
2. Mapping network drives
3. Creating shortcuts to your Accounting Plus data file

Setting up file sharing

Before all the computers on the network can begin making entries into your company's Accounting Plus data file, you need to be sure that all the computers can access the file. To do this, you need to designate the folder on the computer in which your data file is stored as a shared folder. This process, known as "setting up file sharing," needs to occur only on the machine in which your data file is stored.

For instructions on setting up file sharing on a computer using Windows 95, Windows 98 and Windows 2000 Me see Setting up file sharing in Windows 95/98/2000 Me. For information about setting up file sharing in Windows 2000 Professional, see Setting up file sharing in Windows 2000 Professional. For instructions on setting up file sharing in Windows NT 4.0 see Setting up file sharing in Windows NT 4.0.

Setting up file sharing in Windows 95/98/2000 Me

Follow these steps to set up file sharing on a computer running Windows 95, 98 or 2000 Me. Remember: You need to follow this procedure only on the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is located.

1. From the Start menu, choose Settings, then choose Control Panel. When the Control Panel window appears, double-click Network to open the Network Control Panel.
2. Click the Identification tab. In the Computer name field, enter the name you'd like to use to identify this computer on the network. If necessary, you can also enter the workgroup in which the computer exists. (If you're unsure whether your network uses workgroups, consult the person who assembled your network.) If you want, you can also enter a brief description of the computer.
3. Next, click the Configuration tab, then click the button labeled File and Print Sharing. The File and Print Sharing window appears.
4. Mark the box titled **I want to be able to give others access to my files**.
5. Click the OK button in the File and Print Sharing window, then click the OK button in the Network Control Panel. Close the Control Panel window, as well. At this point, Windows might display a message that asks you to restart your computer. If you see this message, click Yes to restart the computer.
6. From the Start menu, choose Programs, then choose Windows Explorer. When the Explorer window appears, click once on the Accounting Plus folder to select it, then choose Properties from the File menu. The Properties window for the folder you selected appears.
7. In the Properties window, click the Sharing tab, then click the Shared As button. Leave the Share Name field exactly as it is (if the folder's name is PLUS10, this field should display PLUS10 in the Share Name field).
8. The next step depends upon the type of network you've got set up.

If the Properties window has three buttons below the words Access Type, choose either Full (if you want users to access this folder without entering a password) or Depends on Password (if you want to require that users enter a password before they access this folder). If you choose Depends on Password, enter a password in the Full Access Password field.

If the Properties window has a box with the words Name and Access Rights above it, click the Add button below the box. The Add Users window appears. In this window, click either the Full Access button or the Custom button to display the text The world in the appropriate box. If you click the Custom button and then click the OK button, you'll be allowed to choose the amount of access you want each user to have; be sure you choose, at the least, Read Files and Write to Files.

9. That's it! The data file's folder is shared. Close any windows that are still open by clicking their OK button.

In the next procedure, you'll visit each computer on the network and map a network drive to the folder you just shared. See *Mapping network drives* for more information.

Setting up file sharing in Windows 2000 Professional

The file and printer sharing component is automatically installed and enabled in Windows 2000 Professional. Follow the steps below to share your Accounting Plus folder with other people on your network. Remember: You need to follow this procedure only on the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is located.

1. From the Start menu, choose Programs, then choose Windows Explorer. When the Explorer window appears, click once on the Accounting Plus folder to select it, then choose Properties from the File menu.
2. In the Properties window, click the Sharing tab. Click the Share this folder button. Leave the Share Name field exactly as it is (if the folder's name is PLUS10, this field should display PLUS10 in the Share Name field).
3. Next, click the Permissions button to open the Permissions window for the folder.
4. Review the list of users who currently have access to the Accounting Plus folder. If you wish to change the settings in any way, do so at this time. (If you want everyone on your network to be able to access the folder, be sure that the Everyone and Full Control options are selected.)
5. That's it! The data file's folder is shared. Close any windows that are still open by clicking their OK button.

In the next procedure, you'll visit each computer on the network and map a network drive to the folder you just shared. Go to *Mapping network drives* on page 1744 to begin.

Setting up file sharing in Windows NT 4.0

When you create a folder in Windows NT, the folder usually becomes shared automatically. You are designated as the owner of that folder on the network, which means that you can control who can access the folder. The process of allowing access to a folder in Windows NT is known as setting permissions. You'll want to set permissions for your Accounting Plus folder as soon as possible, especially if you don't want specific people on your network accessing your company's financial data.

If you don't have much knowledge about permissions in Windows NT, we strongly recommend that you ask your network administrator or an MYOB Certified Consultant for help.

Follow these steps to review the permissions on a computer running Windows NT 4.0. Remember: You need to follow this procedure only on the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is located.

1. From the Start menu, choose Settings, then choose Control Panel. When the Control Panel window appears, double-click Network to open the Network Control Panel.
2. Click the Identification tab. In the Computer name field, enter the name you'd like to use to identify this computer on the network. If necessary, you can also enter the workgroup or domain in which the computer exists. (If you're unsure whether your network uses workgroups, consult the person who assembled your network.) If you want, you might also be able to enter a brief description of the computer. When you're finished, click OK to close the Network Control Panel.
3. From the Start menu, choose Programs, then choose Windows NT Explorer. When the Explorer window appears, click once on the Accounting Plus folder to select it, then choose Properties from the File menu.
4. Although folders are usually shared automatically when they're created in Windows NT, it doesn't hurt to check. In the Properties window, click the Sharing tab. If the Not Shared button is marked, click the Shared As button. Leave the Share Name field exactly as it is (if the folder's name is PLUS10, this field should display PLUS10 in the Share Name field).

5. Next, click the Security tab.
6. Click the Permissions button.
7. Review the list of users who currently have access to the Accounting Plus folder. If you wish to change the settings in any way, do so at this time. (If you want everyone on your network to be able to access the folder, be sure that EVERYONE or Full Control is entered or selected in the appropriate list.)
8. That's it! The data file's folder is shared. Close any windows that are still open by clicking their OK button.

In the next procedure, you'll visit each computer on the network and map a network drive to the folder you just shared. Go to the following section, *Mapping network drives*, to begin.

Mapping network drives

After file sharing is set up on the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file resides, you need to set up each of the other computers on the network so they're able to access the shared folder. This process is usually known as *mapping*, and it needs to occur only on the computers that are *not* storing your Accounting Plus data file.

Follow the steps below on all of your network's Windows computers that are *not* storing your Accounting Plus data file. (These instructions apply to all versions of Windows.)

1. From the Start menu, choose Programs, then choose Windows Explorer (or Windows NT Explorer, if you're using Windows NT). When the Explorer window appears, choose Map Network Drive from the Tools menu. The Map Network Drive window appears.
2. From the Drive list, choose the drive letter you want to assign to the folder on the computer that's storing your Accounting Plus data file. The drive letter that appears automatically in the list is the first available letter.
3. In the Path field (or the Folder field, if you're using Windows 2000 Professional), enter the pathname for the computer and the Accounting Plus folder to which you want to map. To do this, enter two backward slashes (\\) followed by the computer name, another backward slash, and the name of the folder. For example, if the Accounting Plus data file is stored in a folder called PLUS10 on a computer named COMPUTER, you'd enter \\COMPUTER\PLUS10 in the Path field.
4. Mark the box labeled Reconnect at Logon to ensure that this computer is always mapped to the Accounting Plus folder.
5. Click OK or Finish to close the Map Network Drive window. If you've set up a password for the folder, a message will appear, asking you to enter the password. Make your entry and click OK.

That's it! This computer is now mapped to the folder containing your Accounting Plus data file. Look at the left pane of the Windows Explorer window; you'll notice that the new drive letter has been mapped to the Accounting Plus folder. Remember to perform these steps for each of the computers that need to access the data file.

In the next procedure, we'll make it easy for each computer on your network to access your data file. Continue on to *Creating shortcuts to your Accounting Plus data file* to begin.

Setting up file sharing, mapping network drives and creating shortcuts

Putting it all together

Creating shortcuts to your Accounting Plus data file

Each time you start Accounting Plus on a computer that isn't storing your Accounting Plus data file, you'll click a button labeled Open an Existing Accounting Plus Data File so you can work with your company's data. Once you click this button, the Open dialog box appears, requesting that you locate your Accounting Plus data file on the network. The process of using this dialog box to locate the data file on the network can be a bit tedious, especially if the data file is nested several folders deep into the host computer.

Fortunately, all versions of Windows allow you to set up a shortcut to your data file, which makes the process of navigating to the data file a little simpler. When you use a shortcut to the data file, the data file

will open automatically, and Accounting Plus' Sign-on window will appear-allowing you to avoid the process of locating the file.

The process of setting up a shortcut is the same for all versions of Windows. Here's how you do it:

1. Close or minimize enough windows so the desktop is visible on your computer screen.
2. Point the mouse pointer on an empty area of the desktop and click the right mouse button once. A "floating" menu appears; choose New>Shortcut from the menu. The first window of the Create Shortcut wizard appears.
3. In the Command line field (or the Type the location of the item field in Windows 2000 Professional), enter the location of the Accounting Plus program (*not* the data file) on the computer you're currently using. You may want to use the Browse button to quickly and accurately enter this location. When you're finished with this step, click the Next button.
4. In the next window of the Create Shortcut wizard, enter a descriptive name for the shortcut in the Select a name for the shortcut field. When you're finished with this step, click the Finish button. After a couple moments, the new shortcut will appear on your desktop; it should look like the Accounting Plus icon.
5. Click the right mouse button once on the new shortcut. Another "floating" menu appears; choose Properties from the bottom of the menu. The Properties window for the shortcut appears.
6. Click the Shortcut tab in the Properties window. In the Target field, notice that the location of the Accounting Plus program on the computer you're currently using is displayed. To use this shortcut to open your specific data file, position the cursor to the right of the text that appears in the Target field-but don't remove the text that appears in the Target field. Next, use the SPACEBAR to enter a space after the existing text in the Target field; after that, enter the name of your company's data file (don't forget to type the data file's .PLS extension). For example, if your Accounting Plus program is stored in C:\PLUS10 and your company's data file is named COMPANY.PLS, the entire contents of the Target field should be:

C:\PLUS10 COMPANY.PLS

(Don't worry if the data file is stored on another computer. Your entry in the Target field should be the same.)

7. In the Start in field, enter the drive letter, computer name and folder name of the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is stored. For example, if the data file is stored in a folder named PLUS10 on a computer named HOST that's been mapped as the "E:" drive, enter E:\\HOST\PLUS10 in the Start in field. Keep in mind that you must enter two backslashes (\\) after the drive name and only one backslash after the computer's name.

Very important! Remember that each computer on the network might be using a different drive letter to map to the computer that's storing your Accounting Plus data file. When you perform this procedure on each of your computers, remember to use the proper mapped drive letter for the computer whose shortcut you're setting up.

When you're finished with this step, click OK to close the Properties window.

8. To test the shortcut, double-click it. The Accounting Plus program on the computer you're using should start, open the data file located on the host computer and display Accounting Plus's Sign-on window.

That's it! Remember to use the shortcut from now on to open your data file quickly.

Now that you've reached this point, your network is set up and ready to go.

Note: Every computer doesn't need to be assigned the same network drive letter If each computer on your network uses a different drive letter to map to the computer on which your Accounting Plus data file is stored, that's OK. The drive letter is used only for identification purposes on each computer.

Optimizing Accounting Plus to ensure it's running as fast as it can

Since it relies on the network to get the job done, Accounting Plus needs network hardware and software components to be working as seamlessly as possible. Earlier, we discussed some options you can choose to ensure your network hardware's performance is at a premium quality. In this section, we'll explain a few of the things you can do when you're using Accounting Plus so you can get the most out of your accounting system in the least amount of time.

Use Single-User Access whenever possible. If nobody else is using your data file, be sure to choose Single-User Access in the Sign-On Window when you open the data file. This prevents other users from accessing the file, which can slow down performance. It also prevents excess data from being sent across the network.

Exit Accounting Plus when you're not using the program. Staying out of the data file when you don't need to use it will improve performance for the other users.

Optimize your data file frequently. Tasks such as starting a new fiscal or payroll year and changing, deleting and purging records leave "holes" in your data file which slow down your normal day-to-day activities. Use the Accounting Plus Data Optimization Wizard to remove these holes and streamline your data file. (Remember to verify your data file after optimizing it.)

Do NOT mark the *Automatically Refresh Lists When Information Changes* option in the Preferences window. If you don't need the very latest information all the time, you can work faster if you're not forced to update the information on your computer screen whenever someone makes a change.

Do NOT check for duplicate document numbers. In the Preferences window, be sure the boxes next to **Warn for Duplicate Check Numbers**, **Warn for Duplicate Invoice Numbers** and **Warn for Duplicate Purchase Order Numbers** are unmarked. When Accounting Plus is forced to check your data file for duplicate document numbers, the system must work harder - and take more time to record your transactions.

Use Easy-FillTM when entering card names and account and item numbers. When you're entering a name or number in a transaction entry window, use Accounting Plus's Easy-Fill technology to select the name or number quickly. To use Easy-Fill, simply begin typing the name or number of the card, account or item you want; Accounting Plus will fill in the rest of the text for you. If you use the other method for making a selection - using the search icon to display a list of available cards, accounts or items - it will take you much longer to make the choice you want.

Enter accurate transactions. It takes longer for Accounting Plus to record changes to transactions than to record new transactions. When you're entering a new transaction, be sure to double-check it for accuracy before you record it so you can avoid making changes later.

Avoid leaving list windows open on your computer screen. The Transaction Journal window and Inquiry Register window are affected by the transactions that others make. If these windows are open while you're working, you may be forced to wait while the information in these windows is updated.

Make additions and changes to "master records" when you're the only person using the data file. "Master records," such as cards, accounts and items, affect the entire data file. If you add, change or delete any of these records while others are using the data file, the performance that others will experience will be much slower than usual. Try to make these changes when you're the only person using the data file.

Use only a few linked accounts for inventory items. The more accounts you use to link to your inventory items, the longer it takes to record transactions that include items. If it's possible, try to limit the number of accounts you assign to your items to a few specific accounts.

Combine line item quantities on sales and purchases. If you're including the same inventory item on more than one line item of a transaction, try to combine the line items instead. Accounting Plus can calculate costs and inventory counts much more quickly when an inventory item appears on only one line item in a transaction.

Mark the *Prevent Data Changes During Report Generation* selection in the Preferences window. When others are using the data file, they could be making changes to the information you're trying to print.

When this happens, Accounting Plus must recalculate and reorganize the information you're attempting to print while the report is being generated; this can cause the report-printing process to slow down considerably. When you enable this option, other users won't be allowed to make changes to the data you're trying to print until the report is generated.

Generate large reports when you're the only person using the data file. Even when the Prevent Data Changes During Report Generation option in the Preferences window is selected, large reports may take more time to be created when other users are using the data file. For best results, wait until other users are not using the data file to print large reports.

Print reports by a specific month instead of by a date range. Some reports allow you to select a month or range of months to print. These reports can be generated more quickly if you select a month to print instead of a specific range of dates.

If you're unable to start Accounting Plus

If you've attempted to start Accounting Plus but weren't successful, please try again. Oftentimes, a coworker will have displayed a window within Accounting Plus that's used to perform a sensitive task; a number of these windows require that no one else be using Accounting Plus while the window's being used. (This is done to protect your accounting information from possible damage while tasks like backing up or importing information are being performed.) If you try to start Accounting Plus again, you'll often find that your coworker has finished his or her task and you'll be able to access the program again.

Before you call for help

As you may have discovered by now, there's plenty of help available in Accounting Plus -- the Learning Center and the Getting Started manual. You can also get face-to-face help tailored specifically to your needs by partnering with an MYOB Certified Consultant. To learn more about all these avenues of support, see http://myob.com/us.

If you've exhausted all the resources available to you, you may need to call MYOB Technical Support. To get your questions answered quickly, be sure you're ready for the call in the following ways:

- Be sure your copy of Accounting Plus is registered, and that you have your customer number ready. (If you can't find your customer number, start Accounting Plus and open the Company Information window by choosing Company Information from the Setup menu. Your customer number appears at the top of the window.)
- If you aren't already subscribed to one of our support plans, choose MYOB on the Web from the Accounting Plus Help menu to learn more about MYOB's available support options.
- Turn your computer on and start Accounting Plus, if possible. Your Technical Support Representative will want to walk through the problem with you on the phone to see how the problem occurred.
- Be prepared to take notes.
- Know which version of Accounting Plus you're using. To learn this, choose About MYOB Accounting Plus from the Help menu.
- Be prepared to discuss the exact sequence of events that occurred prior to your problem.
- If any alert messages appeared on your computer screen, write down the exact wording of those messages; they may play an important role in determining the solution to your problem.
- Know the exact details about your computer and the other computers on your company's peer-to-peer network. Click here for a Detailed list of hardware and software items you might want to track for your company especially if the problem appears to be with your computer or your network. (As a general rule, it makes sense for you to track all these details regardless of whether you're having a problem or not. That way, if a problem does occur, you may be able to track down the source of the problem more quickly.)
- To save time on the telephone, answer the following questions yourself before you call Technical Support so you can supply your Support Representative with as much information as possible.

Note: For some problems, you may need to employ help from somewhere else

1. If you're having problems related to a specific computer, does the computer start at all? Does the computer's operating system load properly? Do all devices (CD-ROM drivers, extensions, and so on) load properly?

2. If you're having problems connecting to the network, restart your computer. Do the network software and drivers load properly? When you try to access the network, are you able to see a list of available network resources (such as shared computers, printers, and so on)?
3. Are the shared computers you're attempting to access turned on?
4. Can you connect to the network resources you want? Do you have an account (in other words, a user name and password) for the network resources you're trying to access?
5. Can you load and run network-based applications? Can you access folders and files on shared computers?

Detailed list of hardware and software items you might want to track for your company

We suggest that you keep a current list of the following items. You might want to consider printing this list and storing it in a safe place that's easy to remember.

List these items for each computer on your network:

- Make and model
- Names of the vendors of system parts
- Type of processor, coprocessor or overdrive processor, and its speed
- Read-only memory (ROM) manufacturer and date
- Random access memory (RAM) capacity, speed and percent of resources available
- Type and size of hard disks - note partitioned disks, if any, and space available
- For any external and peripheral devices, list their type, and, if applicable, the slot or port in which they're installed, the interrupts used and the I/O addresses used
- Operating system: type, version, options and configuration, Control Panel settings
- Memory-resident programs: terminate-and-stay-resident (TSR) programs, device drivers and other disk utilities
- Files in Startup folder
- Contents of the following files: AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG.SYS, SYSTEM.INI and WIN.INI

List these items for your network hardware and software:

- Network interface cards: type, build version, interrupts, I/O addresses, jumpers/switches used
- Network cabling: type of cabling, length, how connected
- Hubs: manufacturer, number of ports, how cables are connected, which ports are used
- Network topology used
- Network software: list contents of Network Control Panel (types and versions of installed software)
- Memory available before and after network software is loaded

For some problems, you may need to employ help from somewhere else

Keep in mind that many of the problems that occur with computers and networks may go beyond the realm of Accounting Plus support. Although Accounting Plus is a network software product, the scope of the network hardware and software problems that may occur can be extensive. We strongly recommend that you keep detailed documentation about your computers, your network and your software. It may become necessary for you to contact the manufacturer of these items to resolve any problems you may have.

Don't forget: A number of specially trained MYOB Certified Consultants are available to assist you. All Certified Consultants are knowledgeable about MYOB products, and many have specific expertise in computer hardware and network issues. If you feel like there's nowhere else to turn, call a Certified Consultant! To find an MYOB Certified Consultant in your area, visit MYOB's Web site: http://www.myob.com/us/service/consultants/index.htm.

Optimizing Accounting Plus to ensure it's running as fast as it can