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From the April/May 2010 Review of [Small Business Accounting Systems \(Locally Installed\)](#).

Who hasn't heard of or used QuickBooks? Let's factor in the millions who are using QuickBooks at this very minute. All told, QuickBooks is by far the single most popular financial accounting product designed specifically for the small business owner. But Intuit, makers of QuickBooks, has not been content to rest on its laurels. Instead, more features and functionality are found with each new release. 2010 is certainly no exception.

BASIC SYSTEM FUNCTIONS:

QuickBooks installation has always been simple, and the new Express Install offers users even quicker setup by eliminating or consolidating some of the previous steps. QuickBooks is easily navigated, utilizing centers as a means of system navigation. Users can also access specific functions from the drop-down menu bar at the top of the screen. The QuickBooks user interface is very full, and new users may initially find it cluttered. If so, users can easily customize the user interface to suit their needs. All QuickBooks data-entry screens are similar in design so users will quickly become comfortable with navigation.

QuickBooks provides industry-specific chart of accounts options along with form templates to design custom forms. As well, QuickBooks Premier allows users to choose an industry-specific edition of the software during installation, with editions for accountants, contractors, manufacturers, wholesalers, nonprofits, professional service firms and retailers.

CORE ACCOUNTING CAPABILITIES:

All QuickBooks activity is processed through centers. Though not named specifically

as modules, QuickBooks provides the core set of GL, AP, AR and Payroll functionality.

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detail about every transaction that is entered into QuickBooks. QuickBooks currently contains multi-currency capability, although only one currency type can be assigned per customer.

While QuickBooks Premier can be networked inside a central location, it does not have true multi-location capability, but the remote access feature can be utilized to access data from the main office.

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS:

QuickBooks easily handles regular sales orders, and the POS edition will suit small retailers well. QuickBooks Premier also offers links to both UPS and FED EX, with an option to set up an account for either or both in the shipping manager.

Centers allow for tracking of detailed information about customers, vendors and employees. Customer information can be stored, and users can attach files, check balances and view customers based on the selected criteria. Vendor management

is similar, with balance totals listed, as well. Quick reports of check balances can also be run directly from this screen. The employee center tracks check total per pay period, with summary reports run from the center.

Inventory is entered under the vendor center. One of the new features in QuickBooks 2010 is the ability to enter or edit multiple list entries, cutting and pasting directly from Excel into QuickBooks. Users can also enter sub-item groups, the manufacturer's part number, and purchase and sale information, but pricing is limited to one per item.

Invoices, statements and other correspondence can be emailed directly to recipients from within the program. As previously noted, QuickBooks offers optional remote access capability. Also available is an optional check deposit feature that

allows users to deposit checks into their checking account via a scanner for

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with samples available in the Report Manager. And all reports can be printer, emailed or exported to Excel. Users can also create custom financial statements using the new Statement Writer.

A wizard is available for setting up all new users, providing each with unlimited program access, selected access or the option to be set up as an external accountant. Managers can then choose and set the appropriate level of access for each user.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT:

Data can be imported into QuickBooks using a text file format. Data files such as customers, vendors and transactions can also be exported to Excel or a CSV file. Users can also import data using Excel or .CSV files, though the data will need to be modified prior to importing.

QuickBooks offers a variety of add-on products designed to integrate with QuickBooks

financial data. A solid payroll module is also offered in QuickBooks as are other online business tools such as a starter website, email marketing, and the Intuit Sync Manager, which allows users to keep desktop data and online files accurate. The program also integrates with numerous third-party add-ons in a variety of verticals and categories to help meet the wide-ranging needs of small businesses.

The accountant copy feature allows businesses to complete their data entry and send it directly to their accountant for review and corrections, and the new Client Data Review reduces an accountant's time dramatically by identifying errors and offering corrections. The new document management function allows users to attach PDFs to customer, vendor and employee files.

HELP/SUPPORT:

Users have access to several Help functions inside QuickBooks, including entering

search terms, searching for a topic, interactive tutorials, and step-by-step

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Our support team is available 24/7, emphasizing the option to use local support centers.

Intuit does utilize international support centers, but the higher level of support carries a higher likelihood that U.S. support personnel will be utilized.

SUMMARY & PRICING

QuickBooks Premier 2010 is available for \$399.95 for a single-user system and \$1,099.95 for a three-user system, and it includes the modules outlined in our core set of GL, AR, AP and Payroll. QuickBooks continues to provide small businesses an affordable financial solution. It offers easy install and setup and can be running in a very short period of time without a significant amount of training required, which is an important attribute to the very busy small business owner. Though QuickBooks may not be ideally suited for companies in a rapid growth pattern or those who desire more customization and integration options, it does a great job of doing what it is designed to do. And the vendor does offer several industry-specific versions as well as different levels of the product to meet a variety of business needs.

2010 OVERALL RATING:

Small Business

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