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**SMALL BUSINESS**

# 2013 Review of Sage 50 Complete Accounting 2013

Brian Tankersley • Feb. 27, 2013

**Sage 50 Complete Accounting 2013**

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[na.sage.com](http://na.sage.com)

Sage 50 Accounting 2013—U.S. Edition is the new name for Sage Peachtree. During 2012, Sage renamed most of its products with a new naming scheme aimed at increasing awareness of the Sage brand. The Company is also rolling out connected services like credit card processing and e-Marketing tools which can enhance and integrate with more than one Sage business management application.

Sage has also implemented a hosting program to make most of its products available through company offerings or through third party hosting plans so that its desktop-based applications can be accessed over the internet from anywhere.

Sage 50 is available in a number of different versions, including:

- **Sage 50 Pro Accounting** – from \$269
- **Sage 50 Complete Accounting** – from \$369
- **Sage 50 Premium Accounting** – from \$569
- **Sage 50 Quantum Accounting** – from \$2,999 (five users)
- **Sage 50 Accounting by Industry** – from \$569
- **Sage 50 Accountant Edition** – Only available to members of the Sage

Details on the various versions of the product and pricing are available on the company's website at [na.sage.com](http://na.sage.com). All versions of Sage 50 can also be hosted by a number of third-party hosting companies, including Cloud9 Real Time, Qutera, MyOwnASP, and Right Networks.

This product review will focus on the entry level product, which is called Sage 50 Complete Accounting, and retails for \$369 for a single user version. Multi-user packs for three users (\$669) and five users (\$899) are also available. The Company rolled out an initiative called "business care" which includes technical support, payroll tax tables, product updates, and other benefits as a bundled offering to customers in 2012.

Even though we reviewed this version of the product in our last round of small business accounting reviews (July 2012), most of the other products in the review have issued a major upgrade in the intervening eight months. Accordingly, it makes sense for us to revisit our review from last year in light of the new product enhancements from competitors.

### **Basic System Function**

Sage 50 Complete Accounting—U.S. Edition is one of the most well developed accounting products included in this review. The application is more debit and credit oriented than some competitors, but retains forms for simple, quick data entry. Templated charts of accounts are available for more than 50 different industries, users can create their own chart of accounts, or settings can be copied from an existing Sage 50 company.

Sage 50 is only available on the Microsoft Windows operating system, and all Microsoft-supported desktop versions of Windows, including Windows 8, are compatible and supported by Sage. Users who would like to access Sage 50 from MacOS, Linux, or other operating systems should consider having Sage 50 hosted in the cloud by one of Sage's hosting partners.

Third-party solutions are available which allow mobile users to access data stored in Sage 50 on smartphones and tablets. Sage Payment Solutions also has a mobile payment application which allows users to receive payments on their mobile device (BlackBerry, iOS or Android) and import the transactions directly into Sage 50. An optional plug-in credit card reader can be used with many smartphones so that account numbers do not have to be keyed into a mobile device.

## **Core Accounting Capabilities**

The product is a traditional, period-driven accounting system. Users can have only two years (26 periods) open at a time, although account balances can be archived for many additional years for comparative reporting. The product has excellent capabilities for tracking different profit centers, job costing, accounts receivable (including form letters for collections), accounts payable, and payroll. Sales tax for the U.S. is supported, and users must maintain their own tax tables. The 2013 version of the product requires users to have a Sage Business Care support plan in order to process payroll within the product, although most third party payroll services offer integration or journal entries which can be used to record each payroll run.

An audit trail report is available which tracks modifications made to data files by user. Sage 50 also has a report called the Internal Accounting Review which looks for fifteen different common mistakes, and can be helpful when looking for unusual or erroneous transactions in the application.

The reviewed version of the product does not support multiple currencies, multiple languages, or consolidations. (Multi-company consolidations are available in Sage 50 Premium Accounting and Sage 50 Quantum Accounting)

Sage 50 Complete Accounting supports simultaneous access by up to five named users, and Sage 50 Quantum supports up to 40 simultaneous named users. Hosted versions of these applications have the same user limitations as the on-premises versions.

## **Day to Day Operations**

The product offers integrations with UPS, FedEx, shopping carts, point of sale applications, CRM applications, and many other third party add-ins. Users can e-mail invoices to customers and handle complex sales tax through either the built-in sales tax management tools or through add-ins like Avalara's AvaTax application.

Inventory is one of the major strengths of Sage 50 Complete, and the application supports valuation using FIFO, LIFO, weighted average cost, and specific identification methods. The application supports most features needed for light manufacturing, including assemblies, purchase orders, price levels, backorders, multiple shopping methods, and reorder quantity tracking. One feature which seems to be missing is support for multiple warehouse locations, but no products in this review (including QuickBooks Premier) support this feature natively. Users who need

more sophisticated manufacturing capabilities can upgrade to the Sage 50 Quantum Manufacturing Edition, which is bundled with the MISYS manufacturing management application.

Sage 50 Complete boasts a number of add-on connected services and integrations which can be used to help business owners be more productive, including integrations to Sage's e-Marketing service, and many merchant services (including Sage's own Sage Payments solutions). eBay integration is not currently supported. The Company offers a rebranded version of GoToMyPC as Sage 50 Remote Access, and Sage 50 users receive a free 30 day trial of this service.

### **Management Features**

Sage 50 Complete does not include support for external report writers in the application, although it offers extensive customization for the included reports, including export to Microsoft Excel and CSV (comma-delimited text) formats. ODBC and OLEDB can be configured on Sage 50 Complete at no additional charge.

A special version of Crystal Reports 2008 for Sage 50 is included with Sage 50 Premium Accounting/Industry solutions and Sage 50 Quantum Accounting. This industry-standard report writer makes it possible for users to create custom reports to meet their individual needs from the Sage 50 database. A trial of Sage 50 Business Intelligence is also included with Sage 50 Complete Accounting. This product allows users to create interactive reports in Microsoft Excel which pull data from the Sage 50 database.

### **Integration and Import/Export**

Users can easily import and export standing data and transactions from the File menu (File, Select Import/Export), including sales, cash receipts, contacts, journal entries, and many other types of records. All reports can be exported to Microsoft Excel or PDF, and a feature for sending reports via e-mail directly from the product is also included.

Sage maintains a directory of connected web services, as well as a listing of third-party add-ins which are available for all Sage products (including Sage 50 Complete) at [www.sagepss.com](http://www.sagepss.com). Integrations are listed in this marketplace for most common business needs.

Although there is not a secure file transfer tool built into Sage 50, the Company offers a privately labeled version of the LeapFile secure file transfer application called Sage

AssuredSend. This product is designed for members of the Sage Accountants Network as well as Sage Certified Consultants who need to securely transmit files to outsiders.  
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## **Help & Support**

The company maintains a support knowledgebase with technical articles, FAQ's, and documentation, as well as discussion boards where users can ask and have other users (or Sage Employees) answer their questions in a forum. Sage refers to its integrated support plans as "Sage Business Care" plans, and offers different benefits to users in three levels: silver, gold, and platinum. All business care plans include Sage 50 product updates and upgrades, Sage 50 Business Intelligence, telephone support, and online training. Gold plans include payroll and discounts on real-time learning, and platinum plans also include a preferred, dedicated support team for. Live telephone support is available from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM, Monday through Friday. All support for Sage 50 US is based in the USA.

## **Summary & Pricing**

Sage Accountants Network ([www.sageaccountantsnetwork.com](http://www.sageaccountantsnetwork.com)) is available for all Sage products. Plans for each application include software, updates, training, support, and discounts. Pricing varies by application; please see the SAN website for more information.

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