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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Feb. 13, 2015



Last year, Intuit launched a newly-redesigned online collaborative accounting system designed for accounting professionals who serve small businesses that use QuickBooks. The company has, of course, offered online versions of its traditional QuickBooks and QuickBooks Accountant versions for many years, but the redesigned version of QuickBooks Online Accountant is directly focused on the business-accounting firm relationship. The system includes several new collaboration features, reporting tools and mobile accessibility functions for both the small

business and accounting firm users, as well as features designed specifically for

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its apps.intuit.com website, providing extensive specialization options for virtually any business type.

- The program has direct integration to download live business data from their financial institutions, easing reconciliation and transaction verification processes. Additionally, it has direct integration with client versions of QuickBooks Online, as well as the ability to import from desktop versions of QuickBooks and traditional spreadsheets.
- Strong dashboard views and multi-client capabilities, including a benchmarking tool that compares financial metrics.
- New management reporting and customization options for sharing reports with firm branding, while an online document sharing center that acts as a portal to allow clients to send the firm requested documents.
- Multi-currency options allow setting defaults for customers, vendors and other options, but fixed asset and financial statements remain in U.S. dollar mode.

Potential Limitations

- Some advanced features can be challenging for infrequent users, including job costing and inventory management. Other features are only available in the more advanced Essentials and Plus versions, such as benchmarking, purchase orders and inventory.

Pricing

QuickBooks Online Accountant is free for ProAdvisor members, and is also at no cost while an accountant has at least one user of the QuickBooks Online business system on his client roster. The small business, traditional version of QuickBooks Online is available in three versions based on the features the business needs and the number of staff. QuickBooks Online Simple Start costs \$12.95 per month; QuickBooks Online Essentials costs \$26.95 per month; and QuickBooks Online Plus costs \$39.95 per month. Separately, the QuickBooks ProAdvisor program is free for accounting firms

who wish to support only online accounting clients. A paid model is available if

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