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clients, it is a great solution. Who doesn't love that live bank feed for clients who run ...

Sep. 12, 2018

We all have clients using QuickBooks Online. It seems that more and more clients are moving to QuickBooks Online each day, and for many of these small business clients, it is a great solution. Who doesn't love that live bank feed for clients who run their businesses from their checking account?

QuickBooks Online is streamlined and omni-accessible (provided the internet is working), allowing all of us to work from anywhere, anytime. And then there are the

apps. More of these appear every day too, solving an ever-expanding set of problems

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out on all of that 24/7 access to their never-ending list of accounting transactions? Shouldn't they be forced to answer accounting questions from their vacation like the rest of us?

In the wine industry, where my firm is focused, we have found that larger wineries are remaining on QuickBooks Enterprise due to the following features:

- Inventory costing method differences (FIFO on the desktop; Average on the cloud. Automatically converted if you switch to the online product).
- Multi-location inventory tracking.
- Advanced reporting including a comparative balance sheet (there are more reporting options on the desktop including community sources).
- Multi-level pricing (which was recently added as an option in QuickBooks Online as well).
- Multi-user capacity (up to 30 users on the desktop versus five users max for QuickBooks Online).
- Batch entry capabilities (which are sorely missed in the online product).
- One-time pricing (you own the desktop product and pay only for optional upgrades each year, compared to a subscription fee for QuickBooks Online).
- Backup and restore features (once you have saved your changes in QuickBooks Online, you have changed your data—there is no going back).

Others have a general aversion to the cloud. They rightly feel that their processes, customer lists, suppliers and the way they do business are unique and proprietary, and they don't want anyone else accessing their data.

And then there are clients who have been on QuickBooks Online and cease operating for one reason or another. Must your clients keep paying the monthly subscription for life (or at least the next seven years) to maintain access to their books in the event of an audit, or for some other future purpose?

Thankfully, Intuit offers a conversion back to the desktop version so you can retain

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When your client decides to host their QuickBooks Desktop on the cloud, they need to consider the following when choosing a hosting provider:

1. **Security and uptime:** What does the hosting provider offer? What are their virus prevention and recovery procedures? What intrusion detection and recovery systems do they deploy? How are administrative rights managed?
2. **Licenses:** Can they provide Microsoft Office product licenses? Users will need to be able to email and export data to Excel while on the cloud, so those applications will need to be purchased from the hosting provider.
3. **Application management:** Will they be able to keep applications updated and current?
4. **Support access:** What are their support hours? If I am going to be working around the clock, I want support people to be working too.
5. **Data locations:** Look for multiple US data locations and redundant backups.
6. **Certifications:** What Microsoft certifications do they hold? Do they have other certifications on their team? Are they certified by top solution providers? Intuit has an Authorized Commercial Hosting Program for companies hosting their products.
7. **Awards:** What awards have they received? Both Serchen.com and FinancesOnline.com recognize companies that provide a great user experience.
8. **Ease of setup:** Are their conversion processes easy to follow and supported by their teams, or will you be left to your own devices, submitting tickets and being redirected to their knowledge base when problems arise?

Once you have found a hosted QuickBooks solution provider that you trust, make sure you evaluate their pricing model. Vendors price their services very differently, and you may find yourself subjected to unexpected and frequent increases in your subscription price.

By choosing the right hosting solution provider, you will have both the features you

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and CPA firm partner, Geni Whitehouse has made it her mission to eliminate boring from the world of presentations. Geni was also named as one of 2010's Most Influential People by *Accounting Today* magazine.

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