



# How to get the most out of your Premier network

## Support Notes

This support notes are suitable for:

- MYOB Premier
- MYOB Premier Plus

### Introduction

MYOB Premier is a powerful business management system that gives multiple staff concurrent access to your accounts over a network. To achieve maximum performance and stability, there are a number of factors you need to consider when setting up and using MYOB Premier. This guide gives you an overview of the main factors that can affect performance and how to prevent network issues.

### Choosing the right hardware for your network

Your choice of hardware can make the difference between a strong and robust system and a tired and troublesome one. And while using MYOB Premier on a "make-do" system may seem to be the cheapest way to go, in the long term the costs of future upgrades or slow performance will far outweigh the initial outlay.

So, when it comes to hardware, we recommend the following to achieve good, reliable network performance:

#### Pre-built systems

When purchasing a pre-built computer, we recommend that you purchase:

- **The fastest and best technology you can afford.** This will ensure that your hardware investment lasts longer. Purchase decisions based purely on price can result in the need to upgrade your system sooner. And spending a little more now, will improve processing speed, making your business more efficient, and indirectly offsetting the additional expense incurred in the initial purchase.
- **"Brand name" systems from authorised dealers.** These systems are usually covered by warranties and technical support services that help your business get back on its feet quickly should there be any issues. The hardware components are also more likely to be of higher quality resulting in maximum compatibility with your other hardware and software.
- **Systems that are designed for business use, rather than home use.** While home-use computers may be good for game playing, surfing the internet, or working with Microsoft® Office applications, they are not normally suited to a networked professional business environment, where processing requirements are much higher and reliability is much more critical.

## **Random Access Memory (RAM)**

RAM plays an important part in maintaining the speed and reliability of your MYOB Premier systems. RAM is where the current tasks you perform are processed, and is expressed in terms of megabytes (MB). If you have a number of applications running simultaneously, you could run out of RAM very quickly. As a result, tasks will slow down and back log, which results in network communication problems and many other errors.

Make sure that your current or future systems have the following RAM specifications as a minimum:

- **Host computer** (the computer on which your MYOB Premier company file is located): **512MB**. More RAM will be required if other applications are also hosted on the same computer, and you also need to take into account the number of concurrent users that access the computer.
- **Workstations** (the other computers on your network that access the MYOB Premier company file): **256MB**. If you run other applications at the same time as MYOB Premier, you may require additional RAM.

Remember that RAM is shared between all applications you are running, including your Windows operating system. Computers running newer operating systems, like Windows XP Professional, require much more RAM than systems using Windows 98. So if you're experiencing slow performance, and you're running on bare minimum RAM, consider upgrading your RAM.

## **Network Interface Cards (NIC)**

MYOB Premier processes data in real-time and communicates frequently with all workstations that have logged in. Therefore it relies heavily upon the NIC - a component installed on each computer that manages the incoming and outgoing network data.

NICs can sometimes have faults that are not evident when copying files across the network or performing everyday networking tasks, but may arise when using MYOB Premier, as it is much more reliant on the card for its real time network access requirements.

To minimise issues with the NIC, ensure that:

- All NICs operate at a minimum of 100 Mbps.
- Avoid mixing different brands to ensure consistency.
- Many "off the shelf" computers have NICs pre-installed, however some have "onboard" models or are of poor quality. Consider upgrading the NICs if this is the case for any of your systems.
- For maximum performance and stability, purchase the best quality NIC you can afford.

- Many NIC drivers include optional facilities that "power down" the NICs to help conserve energy. To avoid degraded network performance and to ensure MYOB Premier has unrestricted access to every active workstation, these energy saving facilities should be fully disabled on all systems.

## **Network cables**

We recommend that you purchase certified pre-made Cat 5 cables in lengths to meet your requirements.

## **Setting up your network to maximise MYOB Premier's performance**

### **Peer-to-peer networks**

Most businesses choose to use MYOB Premier in a peer-to-peer network environment. This simply means that the computer on which the company file is hosted or located is also used for data entry purposes.

If your network is set up in this way, make sure that MYOB Premier is installed on each workstation and that it's run locally from each workstation. You should also ensure that the company file resides on the most robust workstation, because this computer will handle most of the transaction load and processing.

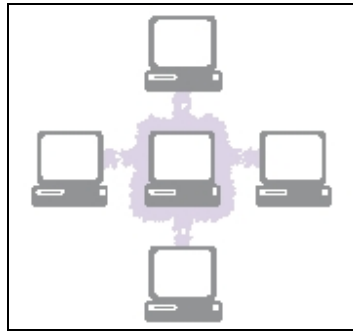
To help you set up your peer-to-peer network to access MYOB Premier, we've also prepared the following Support Notes, which you can access by clicking the underlined links below.

**Windows 2000/Me networks:**      [Setting up Premier on Win 2000/ME networks](#)

**Windows XP networks:**      [Setting up Premier on Windows XP networks](#)

**Windows Vista networks:**      [Setting up Premier on a Windows Vista Network](#)

### ***Peer to Peer Network***

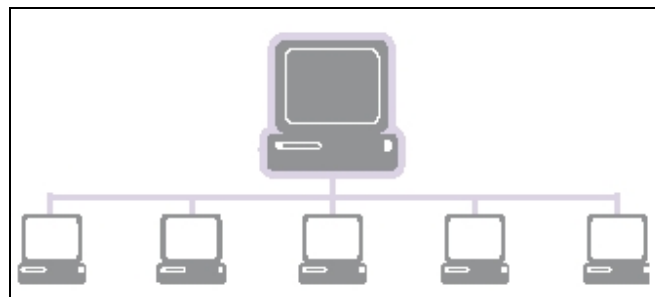


### **Client-server networks**

If five or more users need to access MYOB Premier simultaneously, you may experience better performance by locating your company file on a dedicated server. This means that the computer on which the MYOB Premier Company file resides will not be used for data entry purposes.

If Windows Server 2003 is installed on the server, you can experience improved performance and stability if you access MYOB Premier using Terminal Services. See page 8 for more information about the benefits of a Terminal Services network.

### ***Client Server Network***



### **Factors that affect MYOB Premier's network performance**

MYOB Premier doesn't draw heavily upon computer resources, so if you have modest systems and host the company file on the fastest computer on your network you shouldn't experience performance issues.

However, there are a range of factors that could affect MYOB Premier's performance. Some of the main factors that can cause a reduction in your network performance and stability include:

#### **Company file size**

MYOB Premier stores a lot of information in the company file database. As the file size increases you can expect an incremental reduction in performance, especially when displaying and searching long lists or creating detailed reports. If you have a large number of customers, items or other records, consider completing the following procedures to maintain the company file at its peak:

- Verify your company file - This process checks the company file for internal issues that could potentially result in unexpected errors or system crashes. You should choose to verify your file when backing up the company file, and you can also access the function from MYOB Premier's File menu.
- Optimise your company file - You should optimise the company file at least on a monthly basis to keep the company file running efficiently. You should also optimise the file after completing the Start a New Financial Year process or purging data. To optimise your file, access the function from MYOB Premier's File menu.
- Start a new financial year - Completing the Start a New Financial Year process will purge prior-year transaction detail that is no longer required, and will most likely reduce the company file's size. This process is accessed from MYOB Premier's File menu, but you should only complete the process when asked to do so by your accountant.

### **Computer hardware**

As explained on page 1, your hardware, including the CPUs, RAM, and NICs will directly affect the speed at which MYOB Premier performs and its stability.

So if you're experiencing issues, consider:

- CPU speed - Do all workstations have CPUs that are capable of handling your current and future processing requirements?
- RAM - Do all workstations, especially the computer hosting the company file, have enough RAM available to run MYOB Premier efficiently?
- Network hardware - Could stability issues and network timeout errors be caused by a cheap Network Interface Card or a faulty cable?
- Hard disk - Do you have enough free space on your hard disks? If you are running low on hard disk space, remove unnecessary files.

### **Company file location**

Remember that your company file should be hosted on the fastest machine on your network, and consider moving the company file to a dedicated server for better performance.

You should also maintain your hard disks by periodically using the Disk Defragmenter and Error-checking tools (such as Scan Disk) that are available in your Windows operating system.

### **Number of programs running at the same time**

If you have other applications running while you're using MYOB Premier (even if they're just running in the background), your RAM and processor time will be shared across these applications, and the result could be slower all-round performance. So we recommend that you close other

applications, including internet browsers, email, games, and word processors if they are not currently being used.

### **Network Traffic**

The number of concurrent users logged into a company file can affect network performance. To avoid unnecessary performance deterioration, users who do not need continuous access to the MYOB Premier Company file should only log into the file when necessary and then log out when finished. Messages don't need to be sent to or received from users who aren't in the system. Staying out of the data file when you're not using it will improve performance for the other users.

You should also be aware that intensive tasks, such as lengthy reports or large print jobs, can affect MYOB Premier's performance. If possible, you should complete these jobs outside of peak periods or in single-user mode.

### **Other Performance Tweaks**

**Do NOT check (activate) the following Preferences:**

- "Warn for duplicate cheque numbers"
- "Warn for duplicate invoice numbers on recorded invoices"
- "Warn for duplicate PO numbers on recorded bills"
- "Automatically refresh lists when information changes"

Checking these preferences makes transaction processing longer. These are found under the various tabs in the **Preferences** window located under the **Setup** menu.

### **Use Easy Fill (type the closest match)**

Avoid displaying the list to retrieve records faster.

### **DON'T leave Journal or Inquiry Register windows open with long lists of data displayed.**

Most lists in Premier are automatically updated with the latest information. It will take longer to perform functions if you need to redisplay more than one window.

### **Add accounts, add or change cards when you are the only one using the data file.**

Making changes to these records affects everyone entering transactions.

### **Run large reports when you are the only one using the data file.**

If the information is not changing while you are generating a report, you can retrieve the information more quickly.

### **Report by month instead of date range.**

Some reports allow you to select a month or range of months to print. These reports will run faster by selecting the month than by entering a date range. This is because it will use the totals we store for the month instead of adding each transaction in the date range.

### **Use fewer linked accounts for inventory items.**

While more detailed account information is nice, you can get detailed item information using other methods. It will save time if the program does not need to create as many entries for each allocation on a transaction.

### **Combine line item quantities.**

Calculations for cost, account allocations and inventory count can be performed more quickly if one quantity is entered for each item.

### **Reduce edits to transactions.**

Changes to transactions take longer to record than the initial transaction. Transactions that are edited affect the order and search speed within the data file.

## **Understanding and preventing errors**

### **Network errors**

When running MYOB Premier in Multi User mode, data is transferred regularly between all machines that have logged into the company file. Whenever you record a transaction or update the company file, a message is sent to all other users to flag that you have made an update. Each user's machine then sends a message back to your system to confirm that the message was successfully received.

If the message is not sent successfully to a machine, for example due to a machine not responding, a message similar to the following may appear:

"A network error (XX.XXX.XXXX.X) has occurred. Unable to send message to ZZZZ, This user may have signed out improperly, there may be a problem with his network connection, or there may be a problem with your network connection. No more messages will be sent to this user for the remainder of the session."

## Power Down and 3D Screen Savers

Computers can be configured to 'power down' and enter into a 'stand-by' mode. If one of the computers connected to the Company File over the network powers down, it may not be able to send and receive network messages resulting in an a network error.

To turn off any Power Down features:

- Right-click anywhere on your Windows Desktop and choose **Properties**.
- Click the **Screen Saver** tab and click the **Power . . .** button.
- Set the various 'turn off' options to **Never**.

In addition to this 'power down', 3D screen savers have also been known to cause a similar problem where by the computer stops responding to network traffic.

In the **Screen Saver** tab mention above, select either **None** or a non-3D screen saver.

Once you have made the above changes click **OK**.

## File corruption errors

If when working in your MYOB Premier company file, you receive a message such as:

- MYOB must terminate... Termination Code 12XX...
- Error -3000... Important Details (XXXX:XX:XX:XX)\*
- Index 39 error
- An error exists in your data file

it may indicate that your company file has an error or corruption.

There are many causes of file corruption, the most common being:

- A computer crash.
- Slow and under-resourced machines.
- Network drop outs.
- Hard disk failure.
- A power spike or surge.
- Interference from electrical devices.

- "Host" machine being restarted and/or turned off while others are accessing the company file.
- System freezes.
- A very large company file size.

\* If you receive an "Error -3000" message, your company file may have been corrupted by the unexpected closure of MYOB Premier while writing to the file. If optimising and then verifying your company file does not resolve the issue, you may need to restore a backup file.

For information on how to prevent company file corruption, please refer to "Errors in your MYOB data file" Support Note, which is available by visiting [Errors in MYOB datafile](#)

### **Lock Files**

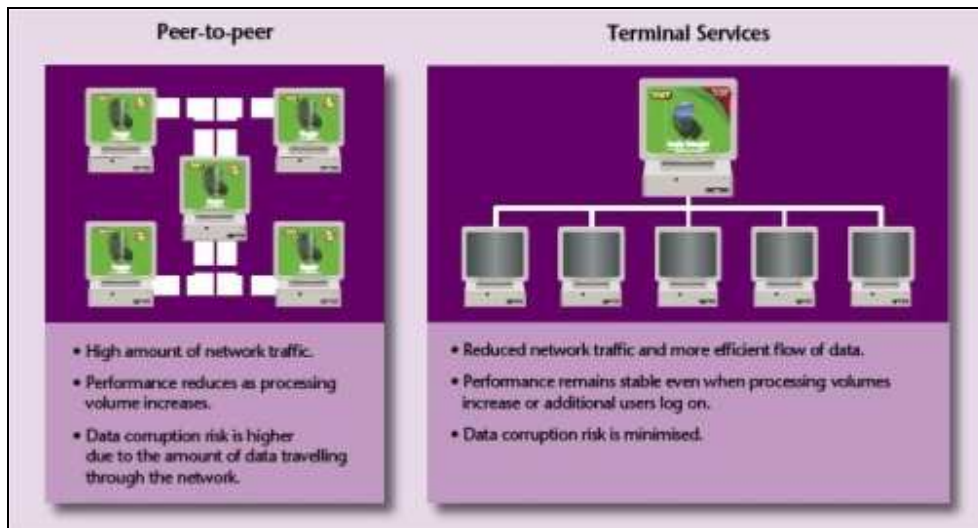
Sometimes you may receive a message indicating that the maximum number of users is logged into the company file, or that the user name you are trying to log in as has already logged on. For information on the cause and the solution for this situation please refer to support note [Lock files](#)

### **Terminal Services networks**

While most businesses run MYOB Premier on a peer-to-peer network, if you have five or more users accessing an MYOB Premier Company file simultaneously, you should consider upgrading to MYOB Premier Enterprise™ and a Terminal Services network.

In a Terminal Services environment MYOB Premier is only installed on the server. Each user accesses MYOB Premier and the company file, which is also located on the server, via a "virtual" Windows desktop session. Only the user interface, keystrokes, and mouse movements are transferred between the server and each machine through the network.

This should result in reduced network traffic volume and improved network performance from each machine. Properly implemented, accessing MYOB Premier from a terminal could approach the same speed and performance as that experienced by a single user working on the server.



## Benefits of using Terminal Services

- The minimum workstation hardware requirements to run Terminal Services are significantly less than would be required to run current office applications.
- Workstation hardware may not need to be updated as regularly, as older specification machines can still connect to the Terminal Server and use MYOB Premier successfully.
- All software installations and updates only need to be performed on the server and are instantly available to all workstations.
- Processing is centralised on the server so there are no heavy processing loads on the network and more network resources are freed up.
- You can securely manage internet connectivity, email applications and shared faxing capabilities.

## Terminal Services hardware requirements

The minimum hardware recommendations listed on page 1 are for MYOB Premier running on a standard peer-to-peer network. In a Terminal Services environment the "workstation" hardware requirements are significantly less than for a peer-to-peer environment due to the fact that all processing is done on the server and only the user interface, keystrokes, and mouse movements are transferred between the server and the client.

The most vital part of a Terminal Services network environment is the server itself. Because all applications are installed and run from the server, the network performance is largely dictated by the specifications of the machine. Aim for a high specification server; a system with a dual processor and a minimum of 512MB RAM would make an optimum choice. Also ensure that the server has a high-speed hard disk with plenty of available space.