

# Making The Move

What To Do When You've Outgrown QuickBooks

SAGE ACCPAC

Sage 300 ERP formerly called ACCPAC



## Straight Talk About Selecting the Right Solution to Support Your Company's Growth Requirements

QuickBooks provided the basic bookkeeping capabilities you needed to start your company. But things have changed. You have more customers. More employees. More complexity. In short, your small business isn't so small anymore.

So how do you make the move to a more powerful accounting solution? First things first: It's critical to gather all the facts before you make a decision. The new system can impact nearly everyone in your company, so each decision is critical. It pays to be meticulous.

At Sage Software, we've been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for more than 25 years. Our experience gives us firsthand knowledge of the issues and pressure you face every day. This insight, along with the conversations we've had with many of our 2.3 million customers, has helped us assemble this guide. ***Making The Move: What To Do When You've Outgrown QuickBooks*** is designed to give you smart, unbiased tips as you prepare to make the move to a more powerful accounting solution.

Please note that the 37 ideas we highlight in this guide make no mention of our software. We believe that after performing all the due diligence suggested in this booklet, you'll agree that Sage Software provides an ideal, cost-effective next step for your company. To illustrate that point, we've also enclosed a helpful reference chart that points out the differences between Sage Accpac ERP and QuickBooks. Plus, we've included two case studies that show how our customers have successfully moved from QuickBooks.

We hope this material helps you continue on your path to success and we look forward to helping you grow your business.

# 37 Essential Tips for Evaluating and Purchasing New Accounting Software

## Getting Started

The first step to implementing a new accounting system is evaluating your company's readiness for change. Before you begin looking at new features and setting fast-track time lines, take time to set realistic goals and build momentum. Pre-production planning is the key to success.

- 1 Change before you have to.*

By the time you are certain that your current systems are inadequate, you're probably already losing money to reduced productivity, lost opportunities, and inferior data. Don't wait until that happens. If you're receiving warning signs that your system can't keep up (data frustration, slow turn-around, time-consuming or manual processes), begin your needs analysis now. Many professional systems analysts use the steps below. Keep them in mind as you evaluate your system needs.
- 2 Accept the fact that improvements cost money.*

Implementing new accounting software will require an investment of time and money. But the hidden costs of antiquated systems are sapping your productivity and softening your competitive edge. Remember that the right system will pay for itself with process improvements and better data for decision-making. Many businesses are choosing more modern, automated systems for faster processing of accounting transactions, easier retrieval of accounting information, and better formatting of accounting reports. Keep these benefits in mind when considering return on your investment.
- 3 Don't ignore hard-to-quantify benefits.*

A new system will deliver broad improvements whose overall impact may be difficult to calculate with precision. Consider all the benefits of more reliable and faster access to data. Think about how much it is worth to your company to improve strategic planning. How much will it cost you if your next audit doesn't stand up to scrutiny? How will your company's reputation improve if your new system gives your customers better, faster, and more professional service?
- 4 Compromise is a good thing.*

Your final choice of software probably won't satisfy everyone, but through clear communication and patient education, most people will recognize that the decisions being made are fair and reasonable. Plan to spend more time than you'd like handling objections, especially in the early phases of the project. Plus, have a strategy for fine-tuning the system once it's installed. Count on a new system to satisfy about 90 percent of your needs and wants, and figure out how you are going to deal with the remaining 10 percent. You may need to consider some staffing changes or revising your policies and procedures.

## How to Create an Accounting System Needs Analysis

- Clarify all the accounting modules your department currently uses and requires. Identify all the information that flows through the accounting system.
- Determine the information-sharing requirements between the accounting system and other departments.
- Define all categories of accounting transactions.
- Calculate the total number of transactions of each type for a typical accounting period.
- Distinguish all the different types of accounting reports used by your department.
- Define your specific data retrieval and reporting requirements.
- Specify your custom reporting requirements.
- Determine how many users will have administrative access to the system.
- Ascertain the level of accounting and computer experience of potential system users.

## Setting Objectives

People who buy accounting software usually spend most of their time evaluating features. The fact is, however, you should spend most of your time evaluating your own business. The more you know about the problems you expect the new system to solve, the better informed your final choice will be. Know where in your accounting cycle you experience the biggest productivity losses and highest error rates. Determine how inaccuracies are affecting your business. Understand which tasks require automation. Begin by identifying the problems you experienced this year because your existing system wasn't adequate.

### 5 *Create a task force.*

Financial software affects many departments within your organization. One of the easiest ways to ensure cooperation is to involve representatives from other departments right from the beginning—including not-so-obvious groups like Sales and Human Resources. It may slow down your process and frustrate you, especially if your old system is failing and you need to hurry the new project along. But in the long run, a task force saves time and hassles, and guarantees that other departments will cooperate during the implementation phase.

### 6 *Aim high.*

Many people don't aim high enough when they implement a new system. Just about any product can deliver financial statements. You should be looking for much more. Think back to last year's planning sessions with your peers. What information could have boosted productivity and profitability? This might include current gross profit by product, customer, or salesperson, or trends on how customers and products are growing or declining. You may want to use financial ratios to measure your company's performance against your competitors.

### 7 *Know what's special or unusual about your company.*

Your company probably has some unique requirements that can't be changed. Perhaps you need to track products by lot or serial number. Do you need to price product by warehouse location? Does your industry have special reporting techniques? Make a list of requirements unique to your industry and organization.

### 8 *Know which features you can't live without.*

When you survey your task force, you'll uncover a few system capabilities that are critical to your company such as particular reports or tracking methodologies. Once you discover that they are absolutes, put them on your must-have feature list.

## What Accounting Modules Will Help You Meet Your Goals?

	Plan & Control Growth	Reduce Labor Costs	Shorten Billing Cycle	Reduce Inventory	Increase Sales	Control Costs	Manage Cash
General Ledger	X	X				X	
Accounts Receivable	X	X	X	X	X		X
Accounts Payable	X	X				X	X
Purchase Orders	X	X	X	X	X		X
Sales Orders	X	X	X	X	X		X
Inventory	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Job Cost	X	X	X	X		X	
Payroll		X				X	
Contact Management / CRM			X		X		

### 9 *Look for systems that can easily adapt to your business needs.*

In order for a system to meet your business needs, it should mesh with your existing business practices and adapt to technological innovations. Again, ideally you want software that's simple, intuitive, and closely matched to how you already do business. Be sure the system can:

- Embrace industry-standard technology quickly and easily.
- Customize easily to fit the special needs of your business.
- Scale to the changing size of your business.

### 10 *Make integration a high priority.*

Tightly integrating your financial accounting software with your other business management applications can significantly improve your bottom line. Linking all functions internally, and linking to customers, suppliers, and other business partners externally can dramatically reduce lead times and waste throughout the supply chain. You'll streamline operations and gain a competitive edge by integrating your Web store, retail management, business intelligence, customer relationship management, supply chain, and human resource management applications. When evaluating accounting systems, check to see how seamlessly they integrate with other systems. Tight integration will save you time, promote greater efficiencies, and add value to your business.

### 11 *Manufacturers/Distributors:*

#### *Evaluate automated shipping and distribution systems.*

Inventory that sits in your warehouse is cash your business could otherwise be using. When considering accounting software, study what options are available to link the system with your warehouse management system. The proper use of integration will pay your organization huge dividends in the form of reduced inventory cycles, more efficient warehouse operations, less paperwork (including the corresponding reduction in input and other errors) and better order accuracy.