

adminsoft

Adminsoft Accounts User Guide

Installation

Written by Michael Towle

Last updated: 4th March 2024

Copyright © 2024 Adminsoft Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means including information storage and retrieval systems without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may quote brief passages in a review.

Published by Adminsoft Ltd. To contact the publisher please email sales@adminsoftware.biz

The authors and publishers have taken great care in the preparation of this publication, but make no express or implied warranty of any kind and assume no responsibility for errors or omissions. No liability is assumed for incidental or consequential damages in connection with or arising out of the use of the information contained herein.

Thank you for choosing Adminsoft Accounts. This accounting package is in use by thousands of small businesses and organizations all over the world.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

The software will run on just about any PC that runs Windows, including Windows 11. It will also run on Apple Mac, Linux and Solaris, using Windows emulation software. It is however PC based, the program and all data are stored on your PC hard drive. There is no cloud version of this software.

Downloading

As you're reading this, the chances are you have already downloaded the software, and so can skip the next couple of bits, go straight to **The installation program** section.

We always recommend you download Adminsoft Accounts from our web site: adminsoftware.biz That way, we know the file you have just downloaded is clean, and *only* contains Adminsoft Accounts. If you download it from other sites, it's unlikely to contain any viruses or malware, but it may contain some pop up advertising, and/or some other product/s that will get installed along with Adminsoft Accounts (browser add-ons are common).

The downloaded file will be named something like: AdminsoftAccounts4273.exe The number at the end, 4273 in this case, refers to the version number. Here it's v4.273 The file is digitally signed using the SHA-256 algorithm, as stipulated by Microsoft. However, sometimes Windows does not understand the digital signature (usually older versions of Windows, pre Windows 7), and may report the file as being corrupt, or not a valid exe file. If this happens, and your PC refuses to save or run the downloaded file, you can download a ZIP version of it (this is available from the same download page on our web site as the exe file download).

If you intend to run the software over a local area network, we suggest you skip to the networking section near the end of this guide, and have a read of that before installing the software.

If you are in a country in which English is not the first language, please make sure your Windows has the language set "English (US) for none Unicode applications" loaded. If this language set is not available, the software may not run.

Downloading and running the exe file

In the Download page on our web site, click the '**DOWNLOAD**' link to download the file. Your browser may ask what you want to do with it, select 'Save File'. It will be downloaded into your Windows 'Downloads' folder. To run the downloaded exe file, you can simply click on it in your browser, but the safest way is to go into your 'Downloads' folder and do a single right click on the file, then select '**Run as administrator**'.

The exe file is a compressed file that contains lots of other files. So its first job is to unpack and uncompress all those files into a temporary folder, that may take 5 to 10 seconds. When it's done that, it runs the installation program. Skip to '**The installation program**' below.

Downloading and installing the ZIP file

If you need to download the ZIP version, the link (cunningly called 'ZIP version' in the web page) is about half way down the download page on the web site. Clicking the link will immediately start the download (your browser may ask what you want to do with it, select 'Save File'). The file AdminsoftAccounts4273.zip (or similar) will be stored in your Windows downloads folder. After

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

downloading the ZIP file, create a temporary folder, and extract the contents of the ZIP file into it. In this temporary folder, you'll see a program called admnstup.exe. Single right click on that and select '**Run as administrator**'. This starts up the installation program.

The installation program

When the installation program starts up, if you have never installed Adminsoft Accounts on your PC before, it will look something like this:

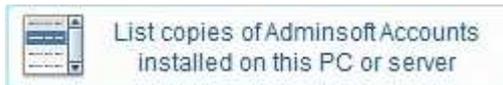


By default, it will install into a folder called 'Adminsoft Accounts' in the root folder of your hard drive (that is C:\). It's usually best to allow it to do this. Although Windows security on some PCs may not allow this. If you want to install into a different location, type in the new location, or click on the '**Browse**' button. You can install the software pretty much anywhere, **but we strongly recommend you do not install it into the 'Program Files' folder**. This folder is for programs *only*, whereas Adminsoft Accounts stores the program and data in the same folder (the data goes into sub-folders). The installation program will automatically create the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts', you just need to accept it in your root folder (which is C:\), or enter an alternative location.

PLEASE NOTE: if you decide to install the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder into a location other than the default location, **it cannot be a NAS drive, or a folder that's automatically backed up to the cloud**. Both of these are great for storing data, but not for holding the live data for applications like accounting systems, as they can sometimes corrupt the data due to the way these kind of applications work.

If you already have Adminsoft Accounts installed, the installer should detect your existing installation, and configure itself accordingly to do a software update. If it does not, but says it intends to install, click the button below:

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation



Click to see a list of all copies of Adminsoft Accounts installed on this PC (or file sever). There is no need to have more than one copy. But sometimes two more copies

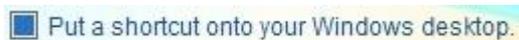
can be installed accidentally. It will only reveal any copies installed on a file server if the PC you are using IS the file server.

When Adminsoft Accounts runs, it records its existence (and version number) in a small database in C:\ProgramData\Adminsoft\adminsoft.dbf

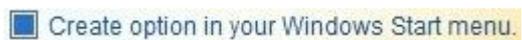


If '**Backup existing software and data before update**' (see below) is selected, a complete backup of the software and all data (basically, everything within the Adminsoft Accounts folder will be backed up to a

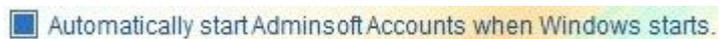
folder in C:\ProgramData\Adminsoft. This option allows you to see a list of those backups, and delete any no longer required. Each backup can consume a lot of disk space, and they are not automatically removed. So using this option every so often will be useful for removing old backups and releasing disk space. When installing the software, you will not see this button.



Allows the installation program to create a shortcut to Adminsoft Accounts on your Windows desktop. By default, this option will normally already be selected. If you have two or more copies of Adminsoft Accounts on your PC, it will be the last one installed/updated that will be pointed to by the Windows desktop icon.



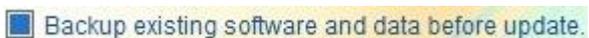
Allows the installation program to create a shortcut to Adminsoft Accounts on your Windows Start menu. By default, this option will normally already be selected. If you have two or more copies of Adminsoft Accounts on your PC, it will be the last one installed/updated that will be pointed to by the Windows Start menu option.



If selected, will update the Windows system registry so that Adminsoft Accounts will automatically start up when Windows starts up. This option is also available within the accounts system itself (which also allows you to disable the automatic start up).



Will run the accounts system as soon as you exit the installation program. If you do not want to run the accounts system at this time, then click on this option to unselect it.



If this is a new install of Adminsoft Accounts, you can ignore this option (it will not be available anyway). If you're just updating the software, this option will already be selected. If selected, it will copy the entire contents of the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts' and all sub-folders, which includes all your data. This copy goes into a folder created in: C:\ProgramData\Adminsoft The folder that's created will contain the current version number of your software along with the date and time of the backup. NOTE: if you have selected an alternative location for your data (i.e. it doesn't live in a folder in the Adminsoft Accounts folder) then it will not get backed up. No images or documents that are outside the Adminsoft Accounts folder will get backed up either. The backup is literally a copy of the Adminsoft Accounts folder and all sub-folders, nothing outside of that.

Note: you are unable to see the 'ProgramData' folder, you need to change the settings in your Windows Explorer to show 'Hidden files, folders, and drives'. The folder 'ProgramData' is created by Windows during installation, and is used by lots of applications.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation



This button will display another window containing some brief helpful information (mostly based on the first few pages of this guide). This window can stay open throughout the installation process. So, you can keep referencing it if you wish.



This will display a copy of this PDF guide. So, if you're reading this, you don't need to click this button!



This button will do exactly that. It will exit the installation program without installing or updating Adminsoft Accounts.



When you're ready to install or update, click this button, or if you are updating the software it will say '**Update**'. The name on the button changes depending on what it's going to do. Installation/update is pretty quick, and normally only takes between 5 and 15 seconds. You will see a dark new window open up very briefly, probably a couple of times. This is normal. When the install/update is complete, the installation program will tell you it's done. If there are any issues, it will tell you, check the "**Dealing with Issues**" section later on.

When installation/update is complete, the program will now look something like this:



Important: Before running Adminsoft Accounts for the first time, there are two things you may want to consider:

- 1) You could register the file accounts.exe (which is the actual accounts program itself) in your anti-virus software as a trusted, safe, or exempt file. The actual terminology differs between anti-virus products. This is usually a good idea, and as the file is digitally signed, it is safe to do it. Should a virus try to change anything within the file, or embed itself in the file, it

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

would invalidate the digital signature. Which would be detected by Windows as soon as it tried to run the file.

- 2) You could register the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts' as trusted, safe, or exempt. While this almost guarantees your anti-virus software will not interfere with Adminsoft Accounts, and means you don't need to re-register accounts.exe after each update, it does leave the folder open to infection – an infection that would go unchecked. It isn't recommended.

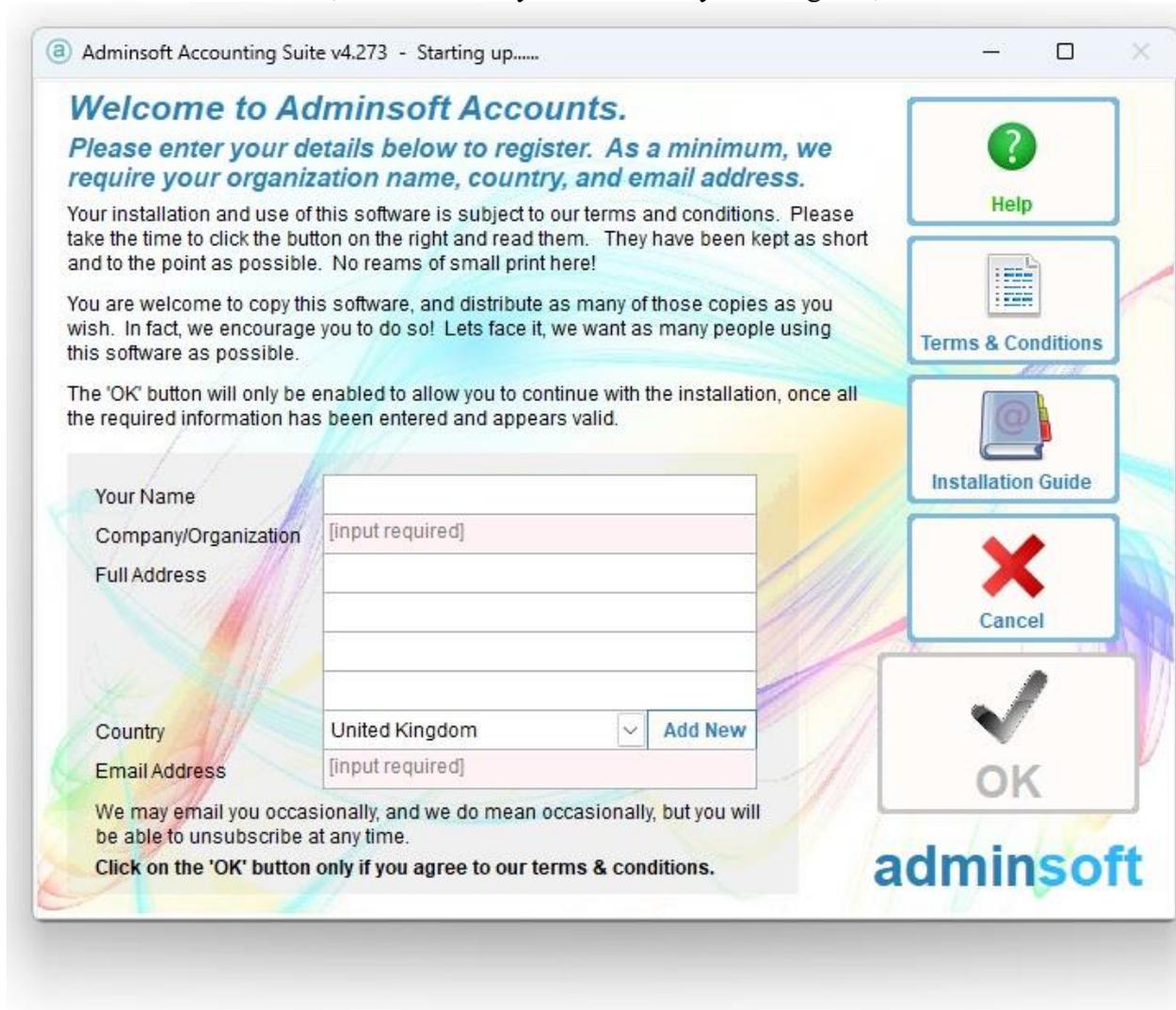


When you click this button in the installation software, if you have selected the '**Run Adminsoft Accounts after installation**' option, the installation program will close down and then start up Adminsoft Accounts. There may be a pause before you see the accounting system start up, this will be due to your anti-virus software checking it to make sure it's safe. Spoiler alert: if you downloaded it from our web site, adminsoftware.biz, we can guarantee it is! Should your anti-virus display a message to indicate there is something in the accounts.exe file, it will be a false positive. Please report it to your anti-virus software provider.

In the unlikely event you encounter any issue during installation or update, please see the section at the end of this guide – **Dealing with Issues**.

Running Adminsoft Accounts for the First Time

When run for the first time, the accounts system will ask you to register, it looks like this:



Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

The 'OK' button will remain greyed out until all the input fields with a light red background have been filled in. The software will try and obtain what country you're in from your Windows settings, and then display it in the 'Country' input field. If it's not correct, click the small down arrow head to the right to drop down a list of countries, and then select one. If your country is not in the list, click the 'Add New' button.

It's important you enter a valid email address. After registration an introductory email will be sent to you. Sometimes this contains a special offer. We very rarely send out email shots, so you won't receive any spam from us.

The next screen image shows a completed registration form:

Welcome to Adminsoft Accounts.
Please enter your details below to register. As a minimum, we require your organization name, country, and email address.

Your installation and use of this software is subject to our terms and conditions. Please take the time to click the button on the right and read them. They have been kept as short and to the point as possible. No reams of small print here!

You are welcome to copy this software, and distribute as many of those copies as you wish. In fact, we encourage you to do so! Lets face it, we want as many people using this software as possible.

The 'OK' button will only be enabled to allow you to continue with the installation, once all the required information has been entered and appears valid.

Your Name	Mike Towle
Company/Organization	Adminsoft Ltd.
Full Address	19 Great Northern Way Netherfield Nottingham NG4 2HD
Country	United Kingdom <input type="button" value="Add New"/>
Email Address	mike@adminssoftware.biz

We may email you occasionally, and we do mean occasionally, but you will be able to unsubscribe at any time.
Click on the 'OK' button only if you agree to our terms & conditions.

adminsoft

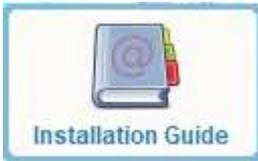


Displays some brief information to help you complete this form, if necessary. The information is displayed on top of the form though, it's not in a separate window, so needs to be closed before you can continue with the registration.



Click to read the contract between us. Basically, it says we're responsible for pretty much nothing, and the onus on the software working correctly is entirely on you! But we recommend you read it anyway, just so you know. We've kept it as short and simple as possible.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation



Displays this guide in PDF format. Perhaps you're reading this because you clicked that button? Regardless, now you are reading this, you can ignore this button.

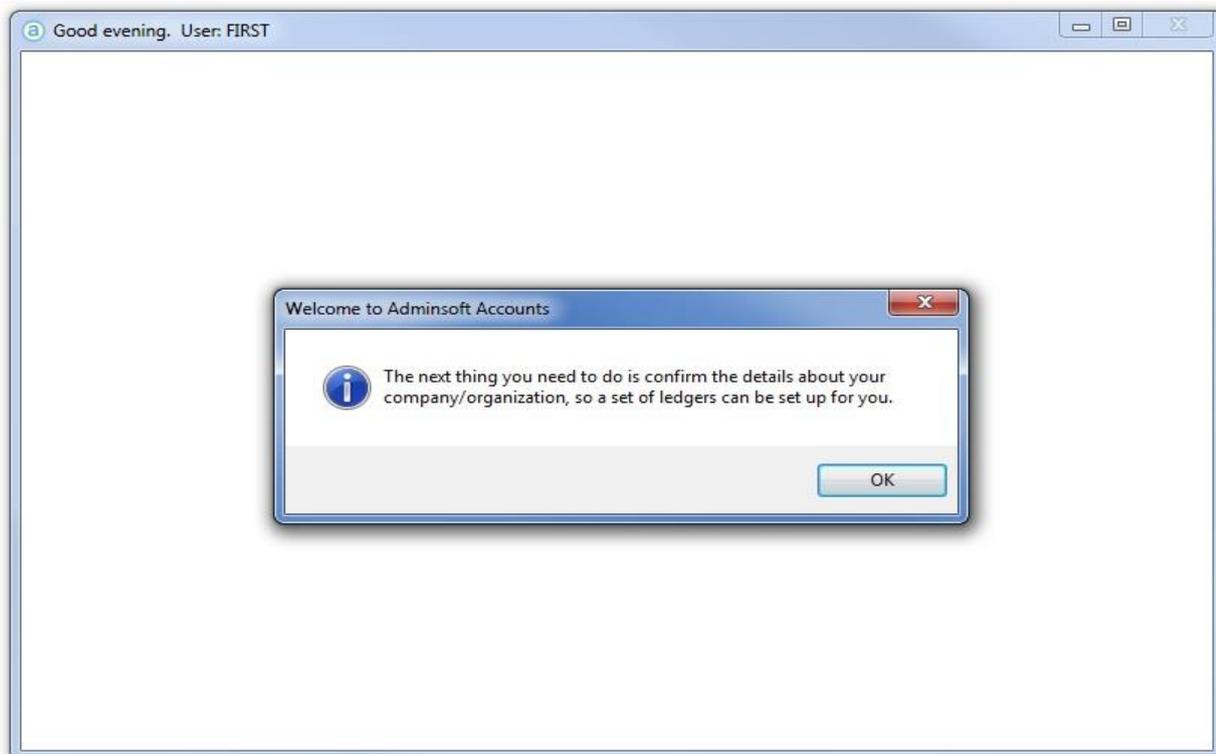


This will cancel the setup and exit Adminsoft Accounts. If you start up Adminsoft Accounts again, it will go straight back into this setup screen. You can't use the accounting system until this step has been completed.



When you click this button, Adminsoft Accounts will register your software over the internet. If your firewall displays a message asking you if you want to allow the application to send data over the internet, please allow it to do so. A web page thanking you for registering will appear in your default browser.

Next, the following message will appear, see next screen image:



The accounts system can handle the accounts for almost as many companies/organizations as you wish. Most users only require one, although it can be useful to setup two: one containing your live data, and the other to use for trying things out when you're unsure what to do. You'll need to enter some basic information such as name and address, email address, etc. Though most of this it will have copied from your registration form (during the installation stage, but any subsequent companies/organizations created will start off with a blank form).

The next page displays the window for creating a new company/organization. You must create at least one company/organization, as it will contain a complete set of ledgers. You can create as many as you wish, very useful if you do the bookkeeping for several company/organizations.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

The screenshot shows a window titled "Good morning. User: FIRST" with a standard Windows title bar. The window contains a form for entering company details. On the left, there are fields for Code (ADMINSO), Name (Adminsoft Ltd.), Address (19 Great Northern Way, Netherfield, Nottingham, NG4 2HD), Tel, Fax, Web, Country (United Kingdom), and Nation (England). Below these are fields for Sales Tax or VAT Registration No., Company/Organization Reg. No., and two email addresses (both mike@adminssoftware.biz). At the bottom, there are two "Browse" buttons for alternative locations for data and backups. On the right, there are checkboxes for "Additional program modules required": Payroll (United Kingdom) (checked), Payroll, AutoManager, Shop/Cafe Manager, and Sales Prospecting and Sales Order Processing. Below these is a note about changing details and a "Currency" field set to GBP (Pound). A "Registered for Sales Tax or VAT?" checkbox is also checked. A red warning box states: "If a new set of ledgers is being created for a company/organization, before entering any transactions it is important that you go through the options in the Setup menu to check that it is set up correctly." On the far right, there are buttons for Help, Install Guide, Notes, Delete, Cancel, and OK.

If you were using Adminsoft Accounts before, and you're now installing it on a different PC, you still need to create a new company/organization, in order to create a set of ledgers you can then restore your data into. You don't need to enter any data, as the files created will be overwritten when you restore your backup.

Anyway, back to the regular installation process. The first bit of information it asks for is the '**Code**'. When it creates the set of ledgers, it will use this code to name the folder that will contain all your data. So, it's important it's unique. As you're not likely to set up many companies/organizations, this shouldn't be an issue.

The first time you create a company/organization, a code will be created for you, although you can edit it. If your company was called Adminsoft, for example, you could enter 'ADMINSO' as the code. The code can be anything you like, up to eight characters (letters and/or numbers can be used). Also, you don't need to remember it. It's simply to give each company/organization (i.e. each set of ledgers) a unique reference (the folder containing the data will be named using this code).

Most of the information in this screen can be changed at a later date. But the input fields '**Code**' and '**Country**' cannot. Entering the right country is important, because the currency used in the accounts system is dependent on the country, as is the bookkeeping terminology. For example, 'A/c. Receivable' in the USA is usually called 'Sales Ledger' in the UK.

If you are registered for Sales Tax or VAT, make sure the '**Registered for Sales Tax or VAT?**' box is ticked (it's near the center of the window, and is ticked by default). Although the software will set up Sales Tax/VAT tables for some countries, it may not do so for your country, and if it does set up a table, it may not be up to date, so you will need to check the Sales Tax/VAT codes and rates setup before entering any invoices. This is discussed in more detail in the 'Setup' guide.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

The accounts software comes with five additional modules. The first in the list is '**Payroll (United Kingdom)**'. This was designed specifically for use in the United Kingdom (even then, it's about as basic as a payroll can get. But unlike HMRCs on-line facility, it has no limit on the number of employees). It may work in other countries, but the payroll handles employee data in a way that is specific to the United Kingdom tax rules, which complicates things a little (well, a lot). The next module is '**Payroll**', this is designed to operate in other countries. Depending on how sophisticated the requirements are. So there are no guarantees it will be useable in your country. If you want to use payroll, and are not based in the United Kingdom, select this one. There is a user guide specifically for setting up and running payroll. The other module is '**AutoManager**', this is designed specifically for those business operating auto parts retail, and/or workshop. It can handle point of sale, including bar code scanners, cash drawers, and receipt printers. It also allows the booking in of vehicles (or other types of equipment), booking out parts to jobs, allocation of labour, etc. It may be it's useful in other similar environments. Such as plant equipment, caravans, RVs, motorcycles, snow mobiles, etc. The fourth module is '**Shop/Cafe Manager**'. This is designed for general retail (again it allows the use of bar code scanners, cash drawers, and receipt printers), it also handles cafe/restaurants by allowing tabs to be monitored for each table, orders to be sent to the kitchen (via a separate printer), and so on. The fifth is '**Sales Prospecting and Sales Order Processing**'. This is actually two modules kind of rolled into one. The first section allows you to record the details of sales prospects, add reminders, diary entries, create and print out estimates, and send email shots. The second section allows you to create sales orders, and from those generate purchase orders, delivery notes, proforma invoices and sales invoices. It also has options which allow you to easily monitor orders/job in progress. The '**Sales Prospecting and Sales Order Processing**' is not visible in the last screen image, and is not available when the software is running as Freeware. User guides are available for all of these modules. If you don't select any at this time, you can always come back into this company/organization set up option and select them.

When creating a new company/organization, and it's not the first one created, you'll see a '**Copy From**' button. This allows you to copy ALL data from another company/organization. You can also copy data from one company/organization to another by simply backing up the data in one, and then restoring it into the other, using the 'Backup Data' and 'Restore Data' options in the Adminsoft Accounts start up window.

'**Alternative location for data**' allows you to store your data somewhere other than the default location. In our example above, if the '**Code**' you entered for your company/organization was 'ADMINSOF', then the data would be stored in:

Adminsoft Accounts\ledgers\ADMINSOF

But this input field allows you to store it somewhere else, either on your hard disk, a network disk, or even on a memory stick. But, if you start up the accounts system, and try to access your accounts and the data location is not available, you will get error messages! So, beware if using this facility on a network.

Most users can ignore this option, and use their data in its default location.

WARNING: Do not store your data on a shared backup device such as a NAS drive, or into a folder that is automatically backed up to the cloud. Both these, for different reasons, can corrupt your data. Many suppliers sell backup drives for networks saying they are suitable for file sharing, which they kind of are, provided only one user accesses the file at a time. They do not usually support record locking or proper buffering. The problem with folders that are backed up to the cloud, is that when a file is being backed up, it cannot be opened by the accounts system. So, if the accounts system needs to use a file and it's not available, it will fail to record or update data and/or

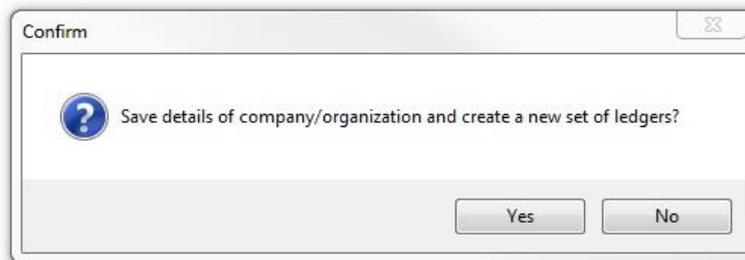
Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

index records.

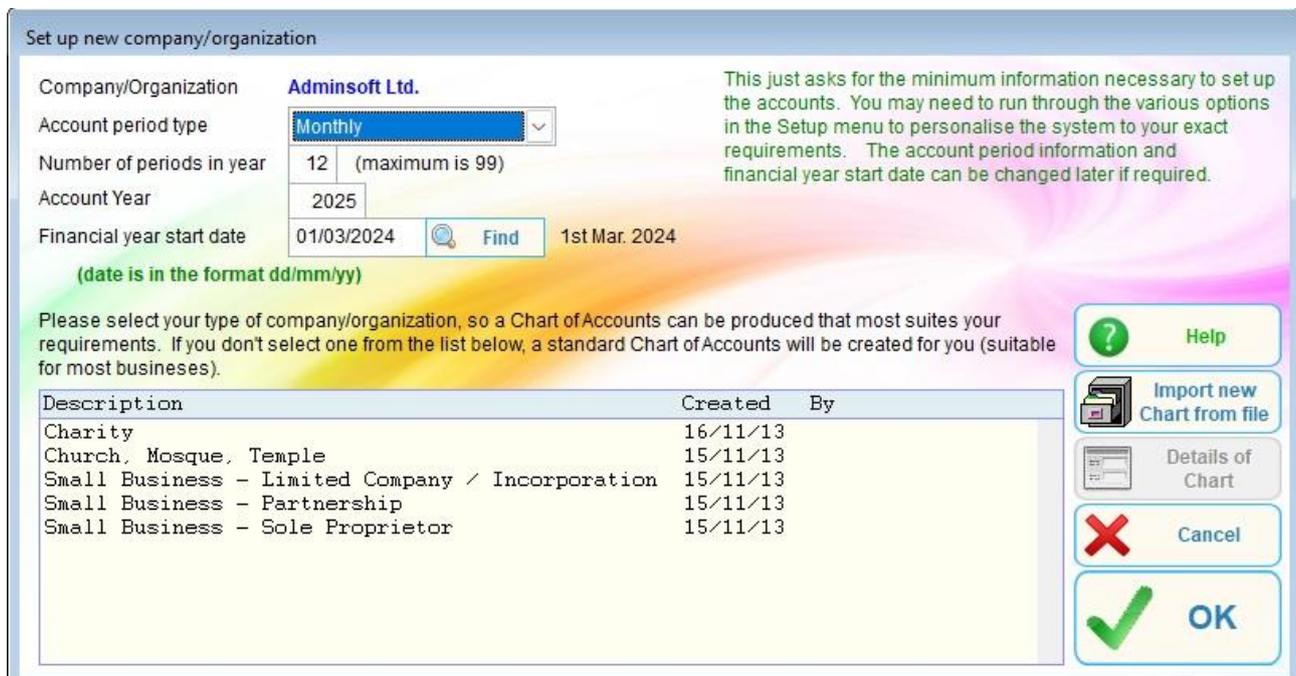
If you need to share data over a network, the data *must* be sat on a hard drive in a Windows PC, or better still on the hard drive in a Windows file server.

'**Alternative location for backups**'. When backing up, there is an option for a quick backup to hard disk. Not ideal, because if your hard disk fails, or is stolen, you still lose your data. But if you're in a hurry, it's better than nothing (we always recommend backing up to a memory stick, preferably several used in rotation). If you have a folder that is automatically backed up to the cloud or a NAS drive, you can't store the accounts data directly into it (see warning above), but you can backup your data to it (cloud backups are very useful for that). Hence this option.

Once you've filled in this form, click on the '**OK**' button. The following question will appear:



If you click '**No**', the form will vanish and dump you into the accounts system opening screen. Not a big deal, it just means you would then have to click the '**New Comp./Org.**' button and enter the details again. So please click '**Yes**'. You'll then be presented with the window below:



Set up new company/organization

Company/Organization: **Adminsoft Ltd.**

Account period type: **Monthly**

Number of periods in year: **12** (maximum is 99)

Account Year: **2025**

Financial year start date: **01/03/2024** Find 1st Mar. 2024

(date is in the format dd/mm/yy)

This just asks for the minimum information necessary to set up the accounts. You may need to run through the various options in the Setup menu to personalise the system to your exact requirements. The account period information and financial year start date can be changed later if required.

Please select your type of company/organization, so a Chart of Accounts can be produced that most suites your requirements. If you don't select one from the list below, a standard Chart of Accounts will be created for you (suitable for most businesses).

Description	Created	By
Charity	16/11/13	
Church, Mosque, Temple	15/11/13	
Small Business - Limited Company / Incorporation	15/11/13	
Small Business - Partnership	15/11/13	
Small Business - Sole Proprietor	15/11/13	

Buttons: Help, Import new Chart from file, Details of Chart, Cancel, OK

This is the last window before all the data files are created for your company/organization. The first bit, obviously, is dealing with your financial periods and year. It makes a best guess, but of course your actual requirements may be a very different, so edit as necessary. Most account periods are monthly (as in calendar month), but some are weekly, you even have the choice of 445 (which is the system where two periods are made up of four weeks each, then the third is five weeks, then it goes back to four weeks, and so on). The system is quite flexible. This is not set in stone. Once your

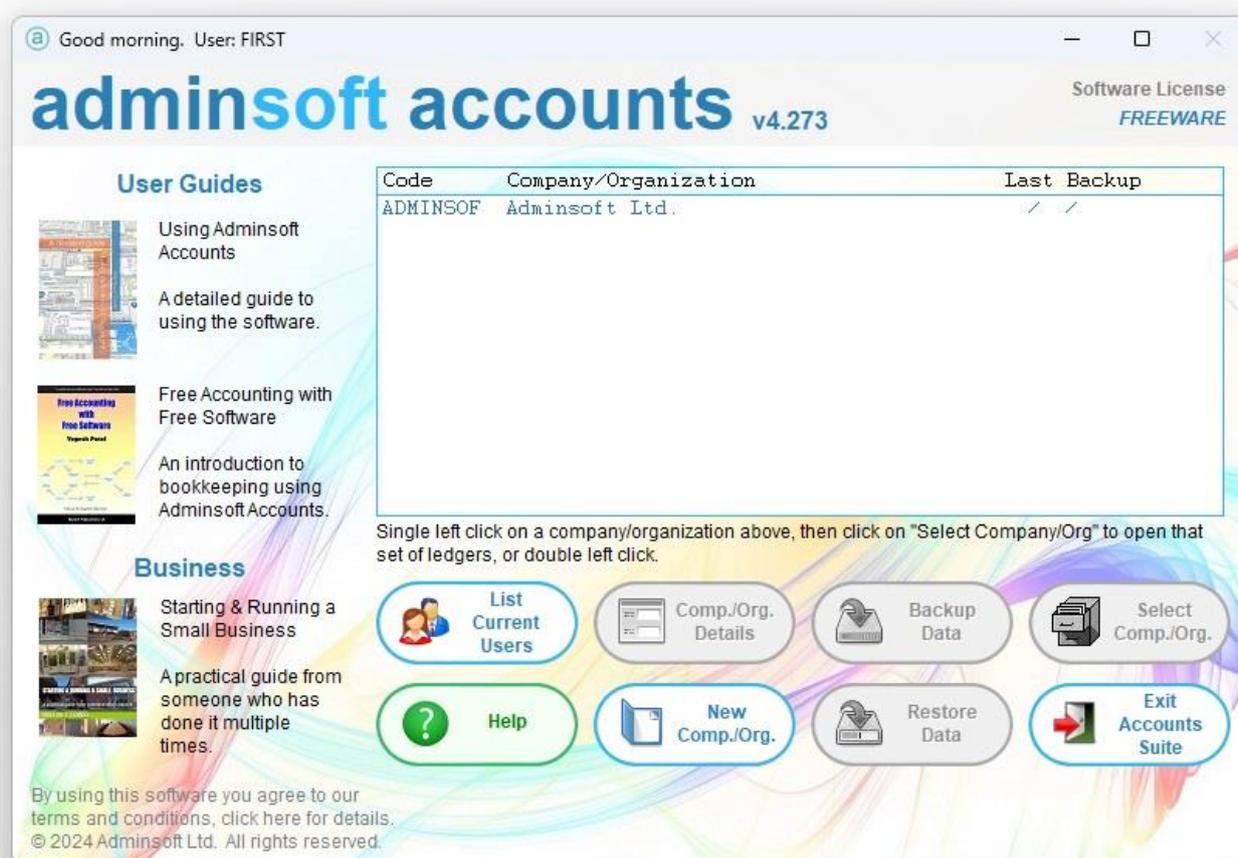
Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

company/organization has been created, you can edit the account periods and/or financial year at any time. Note: the '**Account Year**' is the year in which your account year ends.

The lower half of this form deals with the chart of accounts. By default, it will use a chart of accounts suitable for small Ltd. or Inc. companies (these are companies with limited liability and made up of shares). But you can select another from the list. Once your company/organization has been created, you can edit the chart of accounts, changing account codes, deleting accounts, or creating new ones. So, you're not stuck with whatever accounts are created.

'**Import new Chart from file**' allows you to load up a different chart of accounts. On our web site, there is a section where other users have uploaded a chart of accounts they have created. You may wish to peruse this section, and download to your PC a chart of accounts that you think may be more relevant to your company/organization. You can then import that chart using this option. This is perhaps an option for the more experienced user.

When you click the '**OK**' button, the system will start creating your data files. When it's finished, it will leave you in the accounts system start up window. As in the next image:



As you can see, there is one company/organization in there called Adminsoft Ltd. From here you can single left click on your company/organization and then click the '**Select Comp./Org.**' button. This will take you into the accounts for that company/organization. Alternatively, you can simply double click on the company/organization. The next step is to setup your data ready for you to enter accounts and transactions, please see the user guide on Setting Up. There is one specifically for the United Kingdom, and one for the United States (which is probably the best one to use if you are anywhere outside of the United Kingdom).

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

The buttons on the startup window above:



Will display some help text describing how to use this start up form. You'll see 'Help' buttons on most forms throughout the accounts system. One really useful feature they have, is they provide a section for you to make notes that relate to the option in use.



Allows you to create a new company/organization. This works in the same way as we created the first company/organization above. Although you will have to create your own 'Code'. It creates an entirely new set of files, so the data held for the new company/organization does not have any affect or interfere in any way with any other existing company/organizations. You can set up as many as you wish. Very useful if you look after the accounts of several companies/organizations.



If you left click on a company/organization, you will be able to click this button. It will display a window, much the same as the button above, but displaying the details of the selected company/organization. You can change the name, address details, which modules are required, etc.



Will display a list of all users currently accessing the accounts system, regardless of which company/organization they may be working in. This of course, is only of use when running the software over a network. It also contains an option that allows you to set up users and edit profiles, including security profiles. When installed, a user account is automatically set up for you, the user name is **FIRST** and there's no password. When creating new users, we recommend you keep this user name for a little while, until you are happy you can login using a different user name. **Always keep a note of any new passwords you create.**



Is very important! **We strongly recommend you use this option regularly!** You will need to click on a company/organization in order for the 'Backup Data' button to become enabled. It will then allow you to back up the data for the selected company/organization. Backing up is one of those things busy users who are pressed for time often skip. But, if something happens to your accounting data, such as a hard disk failure, lock out due to ransomware, etc. there's nothing SO valuable as a good backup! If you're in a hurry, in the Backup data option you can select '**Quick Backup to Hard Disk**' which will copy your data into a backup folder (within the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder, unless you have specified an alternative location within the company/organization details). It's quick and easy to do, and does at least give you a backup. But of course, the backup is on your hard disk drive. So, if anything happens to your hard disk drive or your PC, you may lose that backup. It's much safer to back up onto a USB memory stick, or some other external device (even your phone, they usually have plenty of memory capacity). If you don't have the time to do this once a day, please make a point of doing it at least once a week, perhaps at the end of the week.

One really good way of securing your data is to install some software that automatically backups up a folder to the cloud. Set it to backup the folder:

C:\Adminsoft Accounts\backups

The above is assuming you installed Adminsoft Accounts into the default location. Alternatively, you can tell Adminsoft Accounts to backup into a different folder. In the Company/Organization window (discussed a few pages back), there is an input field '**Alternative location for backups**'.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

This allows you to set a different folder for backups for a particular company/organization. If you have several company/organizations they can share the same folder. NOTE: NEVER be tempted to use software that automatically backups up to the cloud to backup your live data, as it can corrupt the data files.



This allows you to select a backup and copy it back into the live system. As with the backup option, you will need to click on a company/organization so that it knows which set of files you need to copy the backed up data to.



Launches the accounting system, for the selected company/organization. All the ledgers, and any selected modules are in here.



Will exit Adminsoft Accounts. After working on the accounts for a company/organization, you should always exit the system properly. If you end the program using Windows Task manager, or if you close down your PC with Adminsoft Accounts still running, you may corrupt your accounting

data files. If you are running the software as 'Freeware' (i.e. you have not purchased a Software Registration Key), then after the software closes down it will launch a web page off our web site. This page often provides information about what's happening with the software, and is worth a quick look through.

User Guides



Using Adminsoft Accounts

A detailed guide to using the software.



Free Accounting with Free Software

An introduction to bookkeeping using Adminsoft Accounts.

Business



Starting & Running a Small Business

A practical guide from someone who has done it multiple times.

On the lefthand side of this start up window you'll see some information regarding some books available through Amazon, and sometimes guides that you can down load from our web site. Click on anything that looks of interest to see further information.

Below this section is the following:

By using this software you agree to our terms and conditions, click here for details. © 2024 Adminsoft Ltd. All rights reserved.

This is also a clickable section, it displays the details of the software

license. Please read this carefully. It basically says the accuracy of any and all information output and contained within the accounts system is entirely **your responsibility**, and that Adminsoft Ltd. or any of its agents cannot be held responsible for any loss whatsoever, howsoever it occurred, whether notified of the potential for a loss or not. You are deemed to have accepted these terms by your continued use of the software. It might all sound a bit draconian! But the thing is, we have no idea at all what data you're going to put in the accounts system, or how you're going to use it, or what Windows you're going to run it in, or the condition of the PC that you'll be using, etc. Once our

software is out there, we've really no idea what people are going to do with it. So, you can understand we can't offer any kind of guarantees at all.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

Anti-virus Software

Straight after installation and the creation of the ledgers for your company/organization, if you haven't done so already, we recommend you go into the setup of your anti-virus software and tell it the file accounts.exe in the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts' is a safe/trusted/exempt file (the terminology differs between different anti-virus products). You will have to do this each time Adminsoft Accounts is updated, because your anti-virus software will detect the file has changed, and may not be too happy about it! The file accounts.exe is digitally signed, which makes it pretty safe. A virus or some other malware cannot change the contents of accounts.exe without invalidating the digital signature. Windows and/or your anti-virus software would still check the digital signature, even if the file accounts.exe has been registered as safe, rusted or exempt.

This has already been mentioned several pages back. But anti-virus software can create some nasty problems, and so it's worth mentioning it again.

Some anti-virus products have a separate setting to allow a program to communicate with the internet (might be in the firewall section). Please make sure Adminsoft Accounts is allowed access to the internet, otherwise certain functions that display web pages or send email will not work. If you're in the United Kingdom, internet access is vital, otherwise the software will not be able to submit your VAT return, or any other information (such as payroll) you may require to be sent to HMRC.

Updating Adminsoft Accounts

A new version of the software is released every month to two months. It's strongly advised you keep your software up to date. If you're in the United Kingdom, you will have to keep the software up to date, otherwise it may fail to submit your payroll or VAT data to HMRC.

To update the software, simply download the latest version from our web site, then run it. Just as if you were installing it for the first time. Except it will recognise that you already have Adminsoft Accounts installed on your PC, and will update your existing copy. It will not disturb any of your data. But it's always good practice to backup your data before updating your software. Once every couple of weeks the software will check to see if there is a new version available, and if there is, it will give you the option of downloading it for you.

After installation:

There are a couple of guides you may wish to look at that provide the basics you need to get going with Adminsoft Accounts. The first one is 'Setting Up', look at this one first, and the second is 'Getting Started', look at that one next. They are both supplied as PDF files as part of the download, and can be accessed from the 'Getting Started' window that appears when you go into the accounts systems for the first time. They are also available from the 'Help' menu (on the top menu bar), they can also be downloaded from the 'User Guide' section of our web site.

We you find Adminsoft Accounts really useful, and enjoy using it.

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

INSTALLING ON A NETWORK

Adminsoft Accounts is multi-user, and will happily run over a LAN (Local Area Network). The server and workstations may be connected together by cable or over a Wi-Fi. Cable is preferable, as it's a more reliable connection. Unlike your internet browser, accounting systems generally do not cope well with brief interruptions in network access.

If you intend to use the software mainly on one PC, but have a couple of workstations accessing the software occasionally, then one of the workstations can act as the server by simply sharing part of its hard drive on the network. For anything larger, a proper server running Windows Server software is recommended. Note: you cannot use a NAS drive, as pointed out previously, most are not designed for software like accounting applications and can corrupt the data.

There are two main options when it comes to installing the software on a network:

- 1) You can install the software on each workstation. Then designate one workstation (or of course the server) as the 'master'. That workstation will contain the live data. In the company/organization details of each workstation, you would have to set the input field '**Alternative location for data**' to point to the location of the data on the file server.
- 2) You can install the software on the server or a PC acting as the server, and then simply link each workstation to it. Adminsoft Accounts does not require any actual installation, in that it does not need to update the Windows registry (although it may do sometimes, but this will usually be automatic) or copy files into the Windows 'system' folder, or anything like that. The workstation simply needs to run the file accounts.exe in the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder. A Windows menu option or desktop icon will need to be set up on each workstation to do this. This is actually the simpler option. Especially when the software needs updating, as there's only one copy of the software to worry about. The vast majority of users implement networking using this option.

See the instructions in the previous pages for installing the software. One thing to be particularly wary of, is to make the location of the accounts systems and its data the same for all users. The drive and folder names must be the same. While Adminsoft Accounts will run from anywhere, provided it has full read/write/create/delete access, as users add images and documents, some of these can use full path names. If different users have different paths to get to the application, some of this data may not be available to them.

There is an issue when networking, due to a suspected bug in Windows software. In order to achieve greater performance, when a PC opens a file on a shared drive, the file is locked, even though the application may have opened it in 'shared' mode. This allows for faster file access. When another PC or application attempts to open the file, the PC sharing the file releases the lock it has on the file, and allows it to be shared between two or more applications. However, sometimes this 'release' fails, the file remains locked, and other applications are denied access to it. This is the job of the network sharing protocol in Windows called SMB (Server Message Block).

It helps if the PC sharing out the files is running either the same version of Windows as the workstations, or if it's running Windows Server, then the closest possible version. It's vital the server and workstations are ALL using Windows Vista and later (up to Windows 7), or Windows 2000 and earlier. This is because all early versions of Windows use SMB1 (server message block) up to version XP. After XP up to Windows 7 (and Server 2008) they all use SMB2. From Windows 8 (and Server 2012/2016) they use SMB3. Different versions of the SMB appear not work together

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

very well. So, if your network has a mishmash of PCs running different versions of Windows, that could spell trouble. See the table below, that hopefully makes it a little clearer as to what versions of Windows will work together:

SMB1

Windows 98
Windows 2000
Windows XP (with opportunistic locking disabled)
Windows NT

SMB2

Windows Vista
Windows 7
Windows Server 2008 and 2008 R2

SMB3

Windows 8
Windows 10
Windows 11
Windows Server 2012
Windows Server 2016

Try not to mix PCs/servers on a network with different versions of SMB. Also, don't run Windows 2000 or earlier as a file server (though that's pretty unlikely these days). You should also be aware there are security concerns with SMB1, and so no version of Windows that uses this should be connected to the internet.

To make matters worse, a network running Windows Server 2016 with workstations all running Windows 10 seems to be very prone to data corruption, even though they're all using SMB3. Microsoft are phasing out SMB1 due to security concerns. The problem is that many applications rely on SMB1, this includes Adminsoft Accounts (developed using Microsoft Visual FoxPro). The only solution seems to be to disable OpLocks, which also seems to mean disabling SMB2 and SMB3. **Which is not a good solution.** As from Autumn 2017, Windows isn't even shipped with SMB1 at all.

Another possible solution is to not use Windows Server at all, but use a Linux based server, such as Open Enterprise Server. But testing has shown this does not always resolve the issue. It would appear the problem is workstations not working well together, rather than a server issue.

One solution that appears to work, without compromising any other software, as far as I know, is to set the following Windows registry values in each workstation and the server:

```
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\services\LanmanWorkstation\Parameters]
"FileInfoCacheLifetime"=dword:00000000
"FileNotFoundCacheLifetime"=dword:00000000
"DirectoryCacheLifetime"=dword:00000000
```

Unfortunately, due to the very tight security in Windows these days, Adminsoft Accounts cannot do this for you. It has to be done manually.

In tests, the above has proved to be very reliable. Although nothing will be 100% reliable.

Due to the above Microsoft software issues, we recommend you re-index Adminsoft Accounts on a

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

very regular basis, perhaps overnight. The software allows this to be done from the command prompt from within the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder, as follows:

```
accounts reindex
```

This will re-index every file in the system (provided no one is logged in at the time). No login is required, and it exits as soon as it's finished. The results of the re-index are written into a text file called index.txt. The results of a re-index to each company/organization are also written into the Ledger Events diary. If you wish, you can just re-index the system files, or a particular company/organization, to find out how, enter the following into the command line:

```
accounts help
```

A great many users do successfully operate the software over a network, we do at our offices. However, do bear in mind it was developed for small businesses and organizations, and not for networks with 10 users, each user hammering in a couple of hundred transactions a day! For that kind of throughput, you would need to look at an SQL driven system, or a top end cloud based system, of course both are likely to be very expensive.

Using Adminsoft Accounts over the internet

Adminsoft Accounts is a Windows/PC based application, and so was never designed to operate over the internet. However, there are ways of doing it. Whichever method you use, will require at least one PC to be running whenever you need to access Adminsoft Accounts. There are two possible options as follows:

1 Use some software that will access your Windows PC desktop over the internet. This kind of software aims to reproduce your Windows desktop. It does this by streaming the image that would be on your monitor across the internet. No actual accounts data is sent over the internet, just images, and your keyboard activity and mouse activity. This option is commonly used to not just access Adminsoft Accounts, but lots of other Windows/PC based software. It's probably faster than using the next option, but the downside is you would need one PC for every person who is likely to want to connect over the internet, and each of those PCs would probably need to be running 24/7. The advantage is that probably just about any device that can access the internet could access Adminsoft Accounts. Provided it has a reasonable size screen (Adminsoft Accounts can be run on a minimum screen size of 800 x 600 pixels).

2 Use some software that will share your hard drive over the internet. While actual accounts data will be sent over the internet, it will be encrypted. This method can be slow, as it has to keep accessing accounts.exe to run various bits of the program, and accounts.exe is 70mb. If you have a lot of data, the situation is even worse. What you can do, is put a copy of accounts.exe onto the hard drive of the client PC (the one that's requesting the data), along with its support files. You can simply copy the contents of the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder, but with none of the subfolders. When it starts up, it will then ask you to locate the folders and data. This option can run at a useable speed, provided your network access at both ends is at least 100mbs, upload and download. The advantage of this method, is that only one PC is required to host Adminsoft Accounts, and share its hard disk. That one PC can be accessed by multiple users. The disadvantage, is that to get it to run at a reasonable speed, it will need to have a copy of accounts.exe on its own hard drive, which will also need updating, whenever the main Adminsoft Accounts installation is updated. It also means access can be by another Windows PC only. It doesn't have the flexibility of option 1. There is another disadvantage, by sharing the hard disk that has Adminsoft Accounts installed on it,

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

security may be an issue. It could become infected with a virus on the client computer. This is extremely unlikely with option 1.

DEALING WITH ISSUES

During the installation or update, as far as possible, the software checks to make sure everything is as it should be. That all required folders and files exist, and in the right places. If it comes across a problem, it will report there have been one or more issues. During the installation/update, it builds up a log file saying what it's done, and any issues are likely to be described in the log file. So, if there are issues, three additional buttons will appear:

Copy Log to Clipboard, when clicked will do just that. Putting the contents of the log onto your Windows clipboard, which can then be pasted into just about any app that can handle text. You could paste it (Ctrl-V) into an email, and send it to support@adminsoftware.biz

Write Log to Text File allows you to create a text file containing the contents of the log. This file can be emailed to support@adminsoftware.biz as an attachment.

When seeking support for an installation/update that appears not to have gone smoothly, it is highly advisable to send a copy of the log using either of the two methods described above.

The third button is another **Help** button, that covers some of the information given in this guide.

You can run the installation/update as often as you wish. So, if at first you don't succeed ...

There are a number of things you might want to try before seeking software support:

- 1) Right click on the downloaded program and select the '**Run as administrator**' option. This can be useful if the problem is due to not having sufficient access rights. However, and this particularly applies if you work in a larger organization, you may find your Windows user does not have the necessary rights to install software. The '**Run as administrator**' option may not be available, or may not be sufficient. In which case you may need to seek the advice of the person who set up your Windows. Next thing to try:
- 2) If it's not a Windows user access rights issue, it is most likely to be an anti-virus software issue. The major anti-virus products have improved a lot over the years. But they can still have a wobble when dealing with software from small software businesses such as Adminsoft Ltd. They can report false positives (where they see a virus that isn't actually there), and/or they can interfere with the operation of the software. Preventing it from creating files, deleting files, or changing them. You could go into the setup/settings section of your anti-virus software, and set the software download file (which will be something like AdminsoftAccounts4273.exe or similar) to safe, excluded or exempt (the terminology varies between different software products). Your anti-virus software may then allow it to run properly. The problem though, is that once AdminsoftAccounts4273.exe (or whatever the file is called) has run, and uncompressed various files held within it and written them into a temporary folder, it then runs another file called admnstup.exe. Your anti-virus software could consider this to be a completely different file, and start causing problems. So, the next thing to try:
- 3) Locate the temporary folder the downloaded file has created, and in your anti-virus software, select admnstup.exe as a safe, excluded or exempt file. If you cannot locate the

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

folder, you could download the ZIP version of Adminsoft Accounts. A link to the ZIP file is in the download page on our web site. Once downloaded, create a folder, and extract the contents of the ZIP file into it. You can then tell your anti-virus software that admnstup.exe is a safe, excluded or exempt file.

Another possible cause of issues, which is rare, though I guess is more likely to happen in a country beyond Europe/USA is the character set available to Windows. The English (US) none Unicode character set is required. If it is not present, the software may not install or update correctly. And Adminsoft Accounts itself may not start up at all.

Adminsoft Accounts requires a minimum of 120MB of hard disk space in which to install. Really, to run comfortably, it needs a minimum of 200MB. These days, where 1TB disks are becoming the norm (that's 1,000,000MB), space shouldn't be an issue! I only mention it as something that shouldn't need to be considered as a cause of any problems. Though if you are updating the software, and allowing it to backup prior to each update, those backups can start to accumulate, and take up a lot of space. If the available free space on your hard disk appears to be getting smaller at a faster rate than you would expect, check out these automatic backups. You'll find them in the folder: C:\ProgramFiles\Adminsoft Each backup will have its own folder. To remove a backup you can simply delete the folder.

Issues are rare, but when they do occur, 20% of the time they're due to insufficient Windows user access rights, and 75% due to anti-virus software. The other 5%? Well it could be a hard disk drive issue (if you view the properties of the drive, you'll see an option for error checking), it could be a Windows issue (download a product to check out the Windows registry and other items, such as CCleaner – the basic version can be used for free). There some folders that contain temporary files. Despite the files being “temporary”, the software that created them often doesn't bother deleting them. As a result, sometimes different software products can basically trip over each others temporary files. You'll find some of these folders here:

C:\tmp	This may or not be on your drive
C:\Windows\Temp	This gets used a lot
C:\Users\username\AppData\Local\Temp	Also gets used a lot

Above the 'username' folder will be whatever your Windows user name is. You can delete all the files and folders in the above locations. Not all of them may delete, as they could be currently open by some application running in the background. Products that clean up Windows, such as CCleaner (a number of anti-virus products also now come with options to clean up Windows), will clear these temporary folders for you.

If you can't get Adminsoft Accounts to install or update properly, and are not sure what to do, please do email support@adminsoftware.biz We'll be very happy to help.