

Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

adminsoft

Adminsoft Accounts User Guide

Installation

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Adminsoft Accounts Basic User Guide - Installation

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

The software will run on just about any PC that runs Windows, including Windows 10. 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 the PC hard drive. There is no cloud version of this software.

Downloading

We always recommend you download Adminsoft Accounts from our web site: www.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 products (browser add-on's are common) that will get installed along with Adminsoft Accounts.

The downloaded file will be named something like: AdminsoftAccounts4220.exe The number at the end, 4220 in this case, refers to the version number. Here it's v4.220 The file is digitally signed using the SHA-256 algorithm, as stipulated by Microsoft. However, sometimes Windows does not understand the digital signature, 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 as the exe file). If are using Windows XP SP1, or an earlier version of Windows, you may not be able to download the exe file, so will have to download the ZIP file. Windows XP SP2 onwards should be fine.

If you intend to run the software over a network, we suggest you skip to the networking section at the end, 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

Click the '**DOWNLOAD**' link to download the file. Your browser may ask what you want to do with it, select 'Save File'. Sometimes, a Google advert may appear before the download. It will be downloaded into your Windows 'downloads' folder. It's advisable at this point to *temporarily* turn off or disable your anti-virus software. As most anti-virus software products have a habit of stopping files from being written, or deleting files that have been created/copied, without asking the user, or even displaying a message to warn the user. To run the downloaded exe file, you can 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 when run it's first job is to unpack and uncompress all those files into a temporary folder That may take 5 to 10 seconds.

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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'). Sometimes, a Google advert may appear before the download. The file AdminsoftAccounts4220.zip will be stored in your Windows downloads folder. After downloading the ZIP file, create a temporary folder, and extract the contents of the ZIP file into it. It's advisable at this point to *temporarily* turn off or disable your anti-virus software. As most anti-virus software products have a habit of stopping files from being written, or deleting files that have been created/copied, without asking the user, or even displaying a message to warn the user. In the 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 similar to this:



By default, it will install into a folder called 'Adminsoft Accounts' in the root folder of your hard drive. It's usually best to allow it to do this. Although Windows security on some PC's may not allow this. If you want to install into a different location, type in the new location, or click on the

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'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*, where as Adminsoft Accounts stores the program and data into the same folder (the data goes into sub-folders). In older versions of Windows this wasn't an issue, but later versions (from about Windows Vista onwards) are stricter, and depending on your Windows setup may prevent Adminsoft Accounts from running. In the example screen above, you can see it's detected it's running in Windows 7, and so has already displayed a warning about installing in the 'Program Files' folder. The installation program will automatically create the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts', you just need to accept it being created off 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 can not 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. NAS drives and folders backed up to the cloud are fine locations for backing up your data to.

'Put a shortcut onto your desktop' allows the installation program to create a shortcut to Adminsoft Accounts on your Windows desktop. By default, this option will normally already be selected.

'Create option in your Windows Start menu' is fairly self explanatory. Again, normally this option is already selected.

'Run Adminsoft Accounts after installation' means it 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.

'Backup existing software and data before update', if this is a new install of Adminsoft Accounts, you can ignore this option. 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 in 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 (ie. it doesn't live in a folder in the Adminsoft Accounts folder) then it will not get backed up.

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.

The '**Help**' button will display another window containing some brief helpful information. This window can stay open through out the installation process. So you can keep referencing it if you wish. This help window also contains a '**Copy to Clipboard**' button that will paste a copy of the help text onto your Windows clipboard, that can be pasted into another application, such as Notepad, Microsoft Word, etc.

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

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The '**Cancel**' button will do exactly that. It will exit the installation program without installing Adminsoft Accounts.

When you're ready to install, click the '**Install**' button. Installation is pretty quick, and normally only takes between 5 and 15 seconds. You will see a new window open up very briefly, probably a couple of times. This is normal. When the install is complete, the installation program will tell you it's done. If there are any issues, it will tell you. If there are issues, you may need to email technical support: support@adminsoftware.biz

So, when installation is complete, the program will now look like this:



Before going any further, now is a good time to remember to **enable your anti-virus** software again!

Important: Before running Adminsoft Accounts for the first time, In your anti-virus software, register accounts.exe (in the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts') as a known trusted/safe/exempt program. The actual terminology differs from program to program. Also, if possible, register 'Adminsoft Accounts' as a trusted/safe/exempt folder (not all anti-virus products have an option for folders). When ever you update Adminsoft Accounts, by the way, I'm afraid you will need to re-register accounts.exe, as the contents of the file will have changed. Your anti-virus software will detect the change, and may not allow the updated software to run, or may prevent it from running properly. But if you are able to register the folder, this may not be necessary.

When you click the '**Done**' button, if you left the option '**Run Adminsoft Accounts after installation**' selected, the accounts system will start up, and the installation program will close

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down. It may take a few seconds before you see the accounting system start up.

If Adminsoft Accounts doesn't start up, or starts up and displays error messages, you may need to remove it and try to install it again. To remove it, delete the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts', and also delete the folder 'Adminsoft' in your 'C:\ProgramData' folder. Before trying to install again, please read through this installation guide again, and make sure you follow all advice given. Usually if an install fails, the most likely cause is anti-virus software messing things up. Next likely cause is Windows user access rights, it may be necessary to login as Administrator, or at least right click on the downloaded program and select the '**Run as administrator**' option. Other possible issues can be the language (English (US) none Unicode character set is required), or a Windows compatibility issue (if this is suspected, set compatibility mode to Windows Vista).

Running Adminsoft Accounts for the First Time

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

Welcome to Adminsoft Accounts. Please enter your organization details here to register.

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!

This software is free to use, with no time out.

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 program, once all the required information has been entered and appears valid.

Your Name	[input required]
Company/Organization	[input required]
Full Address	[input required] [input required]
Country	United Kingdom <input type="button" value="Add New"/>
Email Address	[input required]

You will be emailed a special offer as soon as you register! We may then email you occasionally, and we do mean occasionally, usually no more than once a month, but you will be able to unsubscribe at any time.

Click on the 'OK' button only if you agree to our terms & conditions.

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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 Windows, 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

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'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.

Below is a completed registration form:

Your Name	Mike Towle
Company/Organization	Adminsoft Ltd.
Full Address	123 Small Street Little Town Big City BC1 2CB
Country	United Kingdom <input type="button" value="Add New"/>
Email Address	mike@mikesemail.com

Click on the '**Terms & Conditions**' button 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.

The '**Help**' button 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.

The '**Installation Guide**' displays this guide in PDF format. As you're already reading this, you won't be requiring this option.

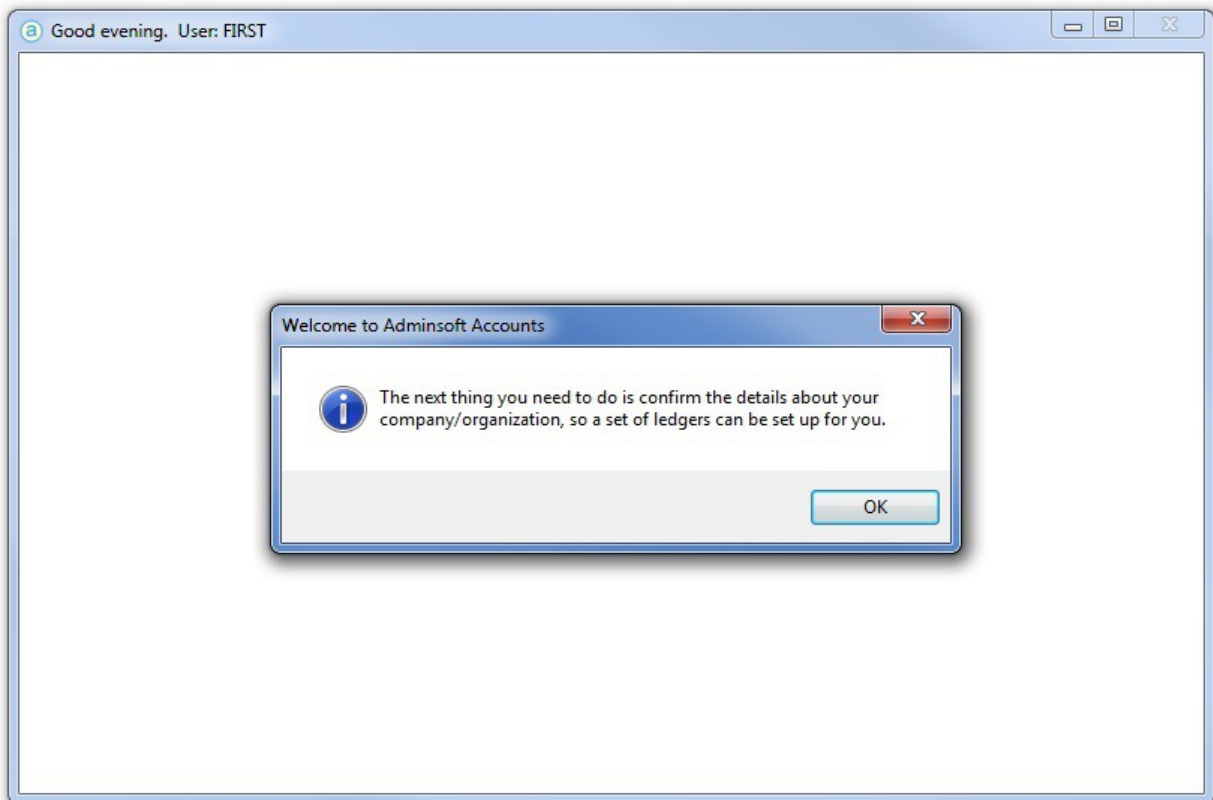
The '**Cancel**' button will cancel the setup and exit Adminsoft Accounts. If you start up Adminsoft

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Accounts again, it will go straight into this setup screen. You can't use the accounting system until this information has been provided.

When you click the '**OK**' 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:



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).

Below is the form for creating a new company/organization that appeared in our example during installation:

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Code ADMINSOF (alphanumeric, to identify this set of ledgers)

Name Adminsoft Ltd.

Address 123 Small Street
Little Town
Big City
BC1 2CB

Tel
Fax
Web

Country United Kingdom Add new country to the list

Country England Please select the country

Sales Tax or VAT Registration No.
Company/Organization Reg. No.
Email Addr. for Account Queries mike@mikesemail.com
Email Addr. for Sales Enquiries mike@mikesemail.com
Alternative location for data Browse
Alternative location for backups Browse

Please enter the name of the new company/organization.

Additional program modules required:
 Payroll (United Kingdom)
 Payroll
 AutoManager
 Shop/Cafe Manager

If a new set of ledgers is being created for your company / organization, before entering any transactions it is VITAL that you thoroughly check that it is set up correctly.

Most of these company/organization details can be changed at any time. So if you are unsure of anything, you can leave it and come back to it later. In any case all input fields (except Code, Name, and County) are optional.

The ledger base currency is automatically selected based on the country (as setup on the left). The country CAN NOT be changed once setup. Click on 'Help' to see how to change the currency if required.

Registered for Sales Tax or VAT?

Help
Install Guide
Notes
Delete
Cancel
OK

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, this code will be created for you, although you can edit it. If your company was called Adminsoft, for example, you could enter 'ADMINSOF' 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 (ie. a set of ledgers) a unique reference.

Most of the information in this screen can be changed at a later date. But the input fields 'Code' and 'Country' can not. Entering the right country is important, because the currency used in the accounts system is dependant on the country, as is the 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 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 tax codes and rates setup before entering any invoices. This is discussed in more detail in the 'Setup' guide.

The accounts software comes with four 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 HMRC's on-line facility, it has no limit on the number of

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employees). It may work in other countries, but the payroll handles the data in a way that is specific to the United Kingdom tax rules, which complicates things a little. 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, 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. User guides are available for both these modules.

When creating a new company/organization, and it's not the first, 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.

'**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 it's 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 can not be opened by the accounts system. So if the accounts system needs to use the file, and it's not available, it will fail to record or update data and/or index records.

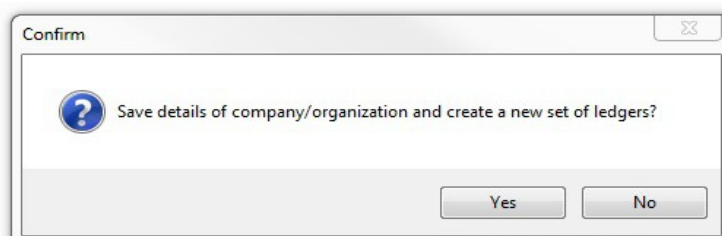
If you need to share data over a network, the data *must* be sat on a hard drive in a Windows PC, or better still on the hard drive in a Windows file server.

'**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

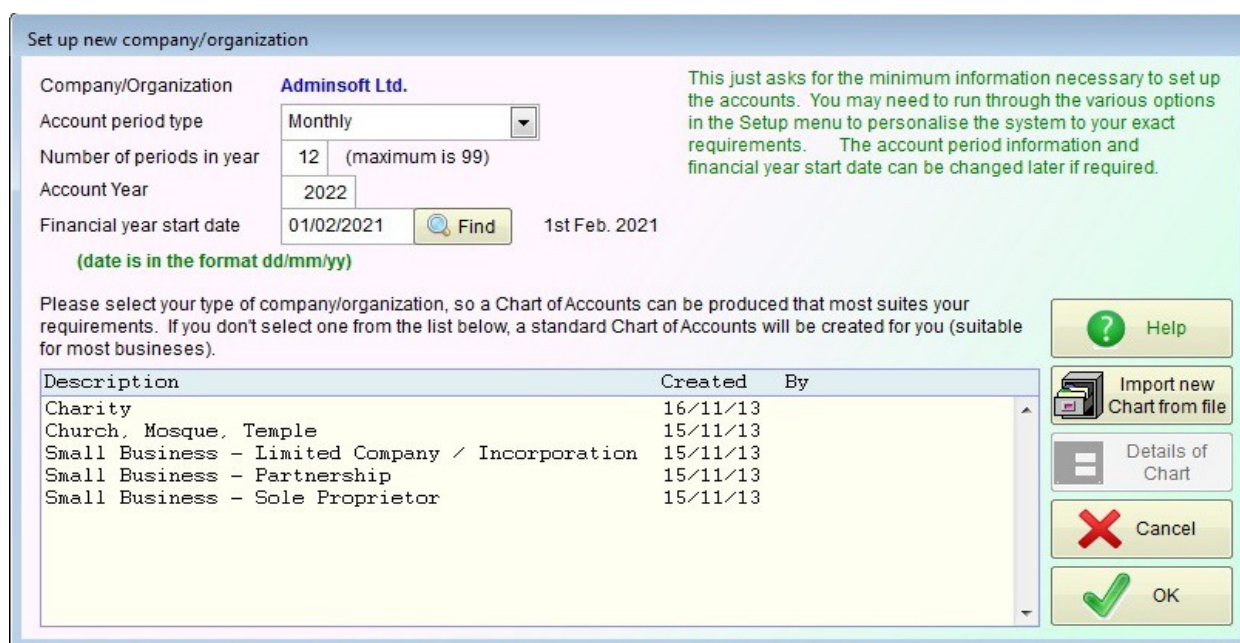
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several used in rotation). If you have a folder that is automatically backed up to the cloud or a nSA drive, you can't store the accounts data directly into it (see warning above), but you can backup your data to it (cloud backups are very useful for 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 form 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: 2022

Financial year start date: 01/02/2021 **Find** 1st Feb. 2021
(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 form before all the data files are created for your company/organisation. 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, 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 company/organization has been created, you can edit the account periods and/or financial year at any time. The 'Account Year' is the year in which your account year ends.

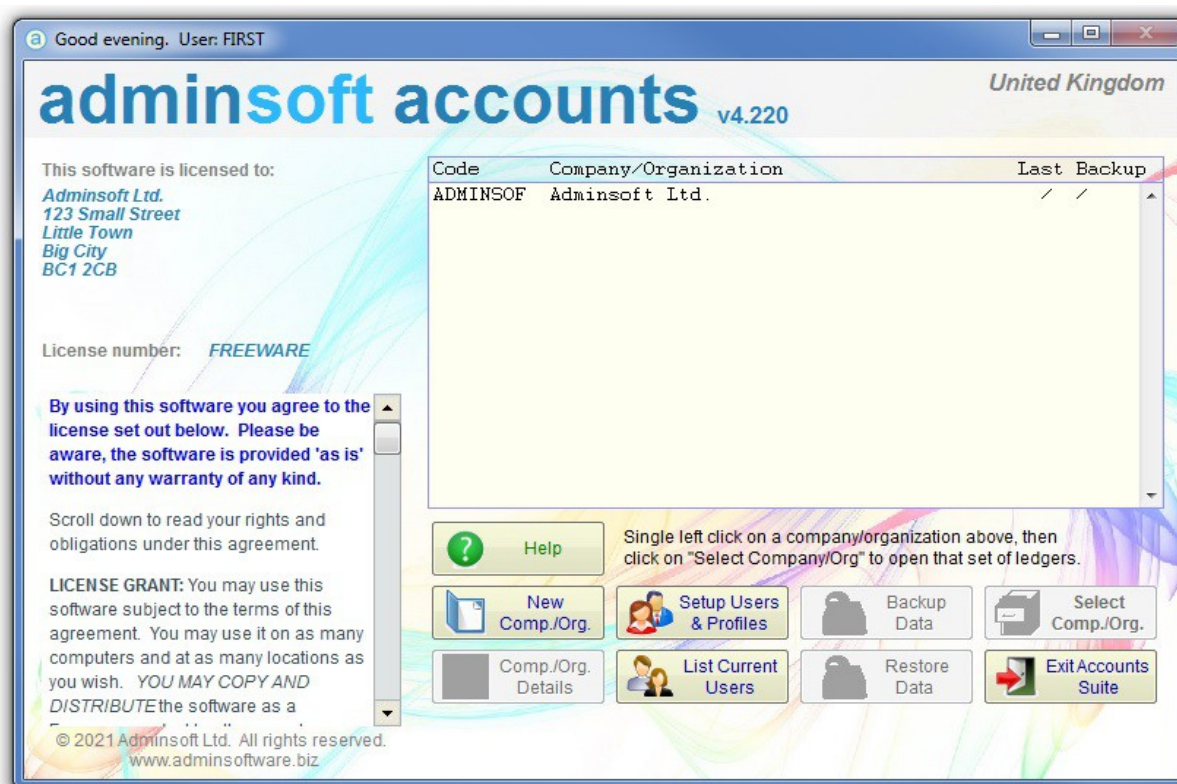
The lower half of this form deals with the chart of accounts. By default, it will use a chart of accounts suitable for small Ltd. or Inc. companies (these are companies limited by share capital).

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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 what ever account 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 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 form. As below:



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 next section of the User Guide – Setting Up.

The buttons on the start up form above:

'**Help**' will display some help text describing how to use this start up form. You'll see '**Help**' buttons on most forms through out 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.

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'**New Comp./Org.**' 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.

'**Setup Users & Profiles**' allows you to create new users of Adminsoft Accounts, and create passwords for them if necessary. 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.**

'**List Current Users**' 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.

'**Backup Data**' 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 backup 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). It's quick and easy to do, and does at least give you a back up. 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 backup onto a USB memory stick, or some other external device (ever 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. 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**'. 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.

'**Restore Data**' 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.

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'**Select Comp./Org.**' launches the accounting system, using the data from the selected company/organization.

'**Exit Accounts Suite**' 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' (ie. 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.

On the left hand side of this start up form you'll see a scrollable section that contains 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 it's agents can not 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. 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.

Anti-virus Software

Straight after installation and the creation of the ledgers for your company/organization, you need to go into the setup of your anti-virus software and tell it the folder 'Adminsoft Accounts' is a safe/trusted/exempt folder (the terminology differs between different anti-virus products). Then re-enable your anti-virus software. If you can not select a folder, then select the file accounts.exe within the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder. This is just as effective, but by only selecting the file, 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! So, it's much better to set the folder to safe/trusted/exempt if possible.

Some anti-virus products have a separate setting to allow a program to communicate with the internet. 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 you may require to be sent to HMRC.

Updating Adminsoft Accounts

A new version of the software is released every month or so. 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.

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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.

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 can not use a NAS drive, as pointed out previously, most are not designed for 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

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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 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 Server 2012
Windows Server 2016

Try not to mix PC's/servers on a network with different versions of SMB. Also, don't run Windows 2000 or earlier as a file server (though it'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 new versions of Windows 10 won't even be shipped with SMB1 at all.

Another possible solution is to not use Windows Server at all, but use a Linux based server, such as

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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 can not 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 very regular basis, perhaps overnight. The software allow this to be done from the command prompt form within the 'Adminsoft Accounts' folder:

```
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 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 expensive.

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 on 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.