THE CPA'S GUIDE TO ENTRY-LEVEL ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE 2017

61 Entry-Level Accounting Applications with 21 Detailed Product Profiles

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ABSTRACT

e2b teknologies developed this guide specifically for the CPA community to clarify changes in the entry-level accounting software market. As a trusted advisor, CPAs must be aware of shifts in accounting technology for their clients. This guide includes an overview of 21 entry-level accounting applications and a directory of more than 40 additional products that smaller businesses may consider. Have questions? Contact e2b teknologies and we will help you understand which product may be the right one for your client and we can help with any technology question you might have.

Introduction

The accounting software market is in the process of a major transition unseen and unheard of since the advent of the personal computer. The business application market has consolidated greatly with established software publishers shifting their product portfolios and rapidly moving products to the cloud. It seems like a new entry-level accounting application appears every week clouding the market making it difficult for businesses to understand what's available and which accounting software is the right choice for them.

e2b teknologies developed this guide specifically for the CPA community to clarify the changes in the entry-level accounting software market. As a trusted advisor, CPAs must be aware of shifts in accounting technology for their clients. This guide includes an overview of 21 entry-level accounting applications and a directory of more than 40 additional products that businesses may consider.

Have questions? Contact e2b teknologies and we will help you understand which product may be the right one for your client and we can help with any technology question you might have regarding year-end processes, integrations, custom development, or product support. We work hand-in-hand with the CPA community fostering long-standing relationships to help you add more value to your clients to resolve their business issues, challenges, and pains by harnessing technology to automate business processes with new insights into their finances and every facet of their business operations.

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Entry-Level Accounting Software Landscape

This guide focuses on the entry-level accounting market which we define as software designed primarily for companies with less than 50 employees and most often for companies with less than 20 employees. Entry-level software typically costs less than $100 per month with a few exceptions. The vast majority of products included in this guide are under $50 per month for a base accounting system excluding many of the optional modules such as payroll.

Intuit QuickBooks dominates the US market with an estimated 85% to 95% market share but that really depends on how you define the entry-level market. It's interesting that despite their stranglehold on the entry-level market that Intuit is not viewed as a leader in respect to cloud-based accounting. QuickBooks Online is among the fastest growing products in this space but it faces fierce competition from relative newcomers Xero, FreshBooks, Wave, and many others.

Sage once owned the US market with Sage 50 US (Peachtree) and they may be poised to reclaim their market dominance with two newer entry-level products – Sage One and Sage Live (on the Salesforce.com platform).

We're very interested to see what's happening – especially in global markets. For example, Sage once dominated the UK accounting software market but they are now threatened by Xero, a company that seemingly came out of nowhere (actually, they came out of New Zealand) and they're making quite a push here in the US market. We also see a few international players that have yet to make a major push into the US market but are slowly gaining market share and should be watched closely. Two of these are KashFlow out of the UK and Saasu out of Australia.

Cloud is the new desktop and it's allowing software developers to build truly innovative products that can be sold virtually anywhere and much like any industry – it's resulting in a strong ecosystem of business applications that integrate and extend the core accounting features. The days of best of breed are back.

Mass Exodus from the Desktop to the Cloud

You're probably not seeing it just yet but there is a mass exodus that is starting to occur in the market away from the Windows desktop. This isn't necessarily due to your clients' burning desires to be on the cloud but rather – the software industry pushing very hard to move clients there kicking and screaming if need be.

The problem is that it takes time to develop all of the features that existed in desktop applications that have decades of development behind them and most cloud-based applications are still relatively young. Case in point is QuickBooks. The desktop version have a lot more functionality – especially for specialized industry segments like construction, professional services, distribution, and manufacturing. QuickBooks Online has filled many of the accounting gaps but is still nowhere close to offering industry-specific features and customers are not going to move to the cloud without them.

Every major accounting and ERP software vendor now has a cloud-based application and most are investing heavily in them. This is not going to change anytime soon and we are seeing more and more companies accept the fact that the cloud is here to stay. This is a paradigm shift in a way as businesses will no longer own their software. Rather, they are subscribing to the software which reduces up-front costs and minimizes hardware and infrastructure licensing costs. The two fastest growing business applications in the US are NetSuite for ERP and Salesforce.com for CRM – both 100% cloud-based applications leading the charge.

Traditional ERP Software Alternatives

This guide focuses on the entry-level accounting. As such, it does not include many traditional accounting applications that are slightly up-market. Small businesses with aggressive growth plans, complex business requirements, or those who need industry-specific features may be better served by a higher-end accounting or enterprise resources planning (ERP) business application. Below are 24 of the leading products and locally-developed business applications that may be considered in these scenarios.

Sage 100 c	Sage 500	Sage 300	Sage X3
(MAS 90)	(MAS 500)	(Accpac)	(Adonix X3)
Microsoft Dynamics GP	Microsoft Dynamics NAV	Microsoft Dynamics SL	Microsoft Dynamics AX
(Great Plains)	(Navision)	(Solomon)	(Axapta)
NetSuite OneWorld	Intacct Financials	Acumatica Cloud ERP	FinancialForce.com
Kenandy	Syspro	Exact Macola	SAP Business One
E2 by Shoptech	WorkWise ERP	Foundation Software	Henning Software
Tribute Trulinx	MRI Software	TMW Systems	Deltek

Products Selected for this Guide

We realize that there are dozens (if not hundreds) of excellent accounting applications available that were not included in this guide. We tried to select products that have established themselves as leaders in the United States market or global products that are building a strong following here in the US market. We also tried to include a mix of products that includes traditional desktop applications, open source software, free accounting applications, and newer cloud applications.

Future guides will include updates on applications included in this 2017 Edition with new accounting software profiles. Please contact marketing@e2btek.com to suggest any new products for this guide or to offer clarifications or corrections as our intent is to provide the most accurate and relevant information possible.

A separate guide is being developed for the ERP market. We will also develop another guide highlighting specialized ERP accounting applications by industry segment including manufacturing, distribution, construction, professional services, non-profit, retail, and more. Make sure you check our website often for new guides and content to help you stay informed of all the changes in the market place.

MAS 90 for the Next Generation

You know Sage MAS 90 as a solid accounting product but if you haven't seen Sage 100 c then you have no idea how much better it is than previous versions.

Sage 100 c offers the same classic MAS 90 features with a whole lot more.

- Modernized User Interface
- Low-cost subscription pricing
- New manufacturing features
- Integrated CRM & Payments

Contact us to schedule a personalized demonstration for your team or your clients.

www.e2btek.com/sage-sage-100-c

Acclivity AccountEdge

Acclivity was formed in 2005 as a result of management buyout of the MYOB US Operations from the Australian entry-level accounting vendor. The company purchased the rights to MYOB US (Mac and Windows) outright in 2008 enabling them to take AccountEdge back into Canada and other parts of the world while focusing more attention on the Mac version of the software. As such, AccountEdge is the result of a divergence from the MYOB product line which was the dominant entry-level accounting application in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Rim for decades.

Unlike most of the new SaaS accounting applications, Acclivity's AccountEdge product is a traditional desktop application. The product is available in two editions – AccountEdge Basic for $99 or AccountEdge Pro for $399. Basic includes sales orders, invoices, banking, customer management, reporting, payroll, and credit card processing for sole proprietors (limited to 1 user). Pro is limited to 10 users and includes inventory, purchasing, and more. Payroll is available as an optional add-on. Integrations are provided for ecommerce, recurring billing, retail POS (for Macintosh), CRM, time clocks, and more. With that said, their third party integration options are very limited.

Acclivity AccountEdge is a solid accounting application and has a ton of great features for the price. It even includes some surprising distribution features such as serialized inventory, sales commissions, invoice email with link to pay online (additional fee), and a whole lot more. While it lacks manufacturing capabilities, it's an affordable and very functional option for smaller distributors and very light manufacturers – especially those who don't need to track labor to work orders and can get by with labor as a component in a kit. AcccountEdge is a good fit for professional service firms including legal professionals and contractors who need progress billing and retainers.

Acclivity is moving to the web with an optional add-on, AccountEdge Cloud. This allows for access to some (not all) of the AccountEdge features through a browser with data synchronization back to the application database installed within your network. We see great progress from Acclivity to move AccountEdge to the cloud. They also offer several mobile applications for accessing certain tasks through a phone or tablet device.

Acclivity

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Rockaway, NJ 07866

1 (800) 322-6962

www.accountedge.com

www.acclivitysoftware.com

www.e2btek.com

Free Agent

Free Agent is one of the relatively unknown entry-level accounting applications on the market but a fairly popular option and a product worth keeping an eye on in the future. They claim the application is used by over 50,000 businesses globally.

Free Agent supports both accounts payable and receivables with project management. There is no manufacturing functionality and limited inventory capabilities rendering it all but useless for a wholesale distributor. In their own words, "FreeAgent's stock system is perhaps best suited to service-based businesses that occasionally supply small quantities of goods." It's designed for freelancers and consultants and very small business owners with bank integration and basic financial reporting.

There are quite a few third party apps on their marketplace but none that really extend FreeAgent into a particular vertical industry with the exception of professional services automation with integrations available for BaseCamp and a few other project management applications.

Available as a web-based solution only, Free Agent is mobile friendly and priced at $24 per month.

FreeAgent

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Edinburgh, Scotland UK EH 9QG

0800 288 8691

www.freeagent.com

"e2b's consultants are very helpful and they are exactly what we were looking for in a technology partner – especially given their deep manufacturing knowledge and success working with larger, complex implementations like ours."

-American Electric Technologies, Inc.

Freshbooks

FreshBooks was founded in 2010 and claims that more than 10 million people have used the cloud-based accounting software. The key word here is "people" and not customers meaning that there is likely a much smaller customer base actively using the application. Still, there is no doubt that FreshBooks is a popular option for many smaller businesses – especially for those who are self-employed or very small professional service firms that bill for time (contractors, agencies, consultants, etc.). FreshBooks is NOT a great product at all for inventory-centric businesses like distributors or manufacturers.
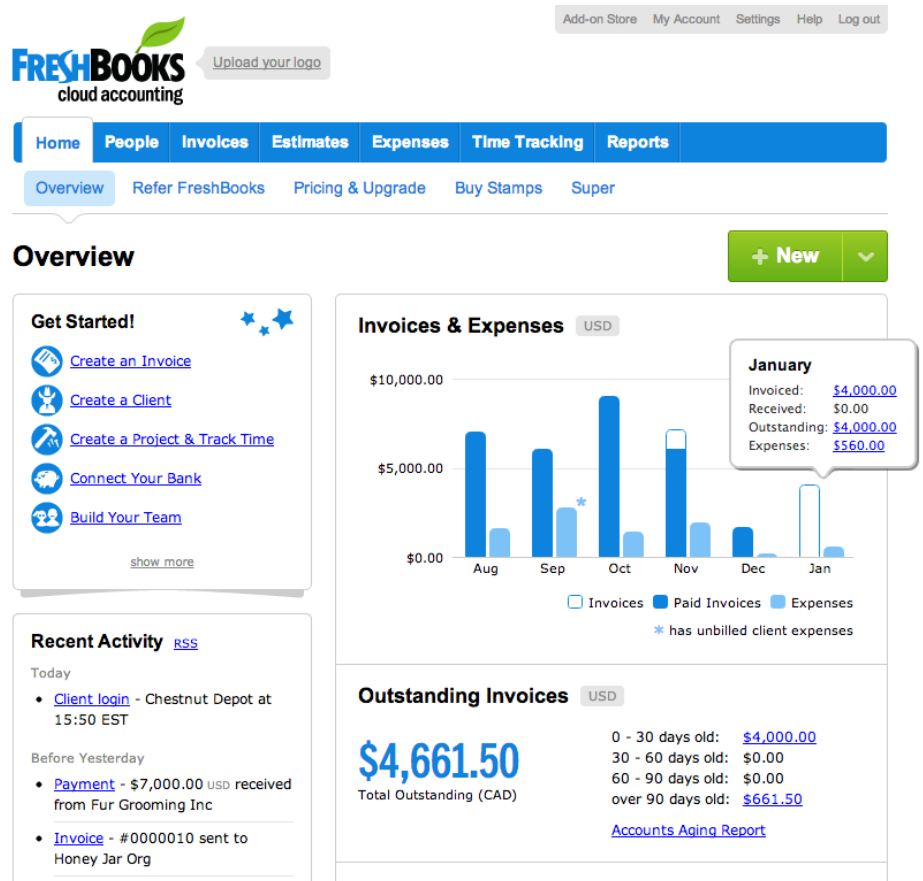
It is very clear that FreshBooks target is the start-up and very small business. A letter from the CEO states, "There are 60 million small businesses in the English speaking world and only about 17% of them use accounting software. The rest mostly use Word and Excel." That tells us exactly who they are targeting and why not – they have a great point. But don't be mistaken, FreshBooks is not a mature accounting application like Intuit QuickBooks or Sage 50 US.

A few of the great things about FreshBooks are the incredibly clean and modern user interface and the simplicity of the application itself. The heart of the software is invoicing which has some surprising features including recurring invoices, automatic late fees, and reminders. Time entry is fairly robust for an entry-level accounting application but there are limitations in the project system and larger firms will be better served with a true professional services automation (PSA) application or SMB ERP system with project accounting or job cost modules.

There is no true accounts payable module but small companies can manage basic expenses. Basic reporting and credit card processing is also available. The application can be accessed anywhere you have a secure browser connection including your mobile device. They provide web APIs for developers to integrate third

party applications and there are currently 15 apps available on their marketplace but nothing that would extend FreshBooks outside its core target market into any other industry segment.

FreshBooks pricing is based on the number of clients or customers actively managed in the software. Lite is $15 monthly for up to 5 clients; Plus is $25 monthly for up to 50 clients; and Premium is $50 monthly for up to 500 clients. There is no pricing beyond this point so we assume that companies with more than 500 active customers will most likely be using another product.

The company is based in Toronto and employs more than 200 people. FreshBooks has had great reviews and is likely the second largest online accounting application in North America (second to Intuit QuickBooks). Although they face significant competition from others like Xero.

The company was born out of the co-founders' previous business, Anicon, which provided internet marketing services. It launched as 2ndSite but was rebranded in 2006 as FreshBooks.

FreshBooks

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M6P 3T1 Canada

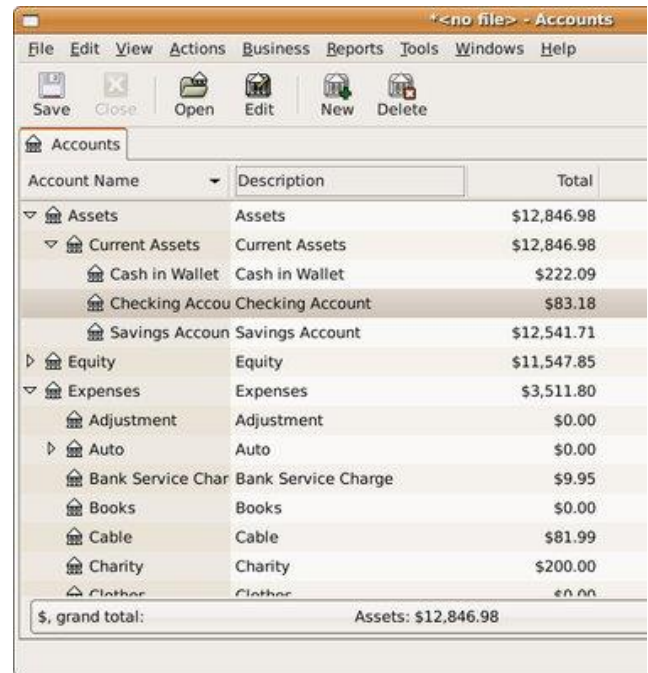1 (866) 303-6061

www.freshbooks.com

"e2b is very special...they are much more than a supplier to MFG – they are a strategic partner, and we know that our business can continue to grow and to adapt to the ever-changing needs of our customers, suppliers, and our business partners because we have them on our side."

-Molded Fiber Glass

www.e2btek.com

GNU Cash

GnuCash is personal and small-business financial-accounting software, freely licensed under the GNU GPL and available for GNU/Linux, BSD, Solaris, Mac OS X and Microsoft Windows. GNU is one of many free operating systems available in the open source software market. It is an open source application meaning that anyone can download and develop the software for free adding new features and integrations.

Designed for simplicity, GnuCash is a double-entry accounting application supporting customer invoicing, vendor expense management, bank reconciliation, and financial reporting.

GnuCash is not like most entry-level accounting applications. There is no official company behind it. Instead, it's developed and supported by a global network of programmers and consultants who've been working collaboratively on the product since its inception in 1997 and its first release in 1998 with the first release of accounting in 2001. GnuCash has been translated into more than 20 languages and supports multiple currencies. Donations may be made to support the GnuCash development and general GNU open source project to the organization based in Belgium but this is completely optional.

GnuCash is not for everyone. While it's free, so are a lot of other great cloud-based products that have launched over the past decade. GnuCash is well documented and support is available from developers for a fee. It is stable with constant updates and new features available. In our opinion, most small businesses will likely be best served with another product unless they have a specific business need where they can develop specific functionality within the GnuCash application that could not otherwise be managed with commercially-available software or third party applications. With that said, it's apparently a very attractive option for a lot of people as it's been downloaded approximately 3 million times.

There appears to be limited existing functionality for inventory management and manufacturing making GnuCash more of a platform to develop this functionality than a complete ready-to-go SMB ERP product. Installation, configuration, and maintenance of the application push it (in our opinion) outside the traditional entry-level accounting market but the free price tag make it an alternative to commercial accounting applications in this market space.

www.gnucash.org

GoDaddy Online Bookkeeping

Founded in 2008, Outright was an independent developer of cloud-based, entry-level accounting software. The company was acquired by website domain registrar and website hosting company GoDaddy in 2012. At the time of the acquisition Outright had 200,000 users compared to over 10 million companies working with GoDaddy providing them with an incredible reach into the small business market.

Now branded GoDaddy Bookkeeping, the application is embedded directly into the GoDaddy platform and targeted mainly at companies that use GoDaddy for hosting. The product itself is very basic and designed principally for only self-employed or very small firms. The product includes basic financial reporting, customer invoicing, expense management, very basic time entry (billed against the client), bank integration, and mobile access.

GoDaddy Bookkeeping is available in three editions starting with Get Paid for $3 per month, Essentials for $8 per month, and Premium for $12 per month with increased features available in each edition.

There are few (if any) add-on products available for GoDaddy Bookkeeping which severely limits users from extending the product to specific industries or business requirements. Further, the functionality is extremely limited with no inventory or manufacturing and no true project management capabilities making GoDaddy Bookkeeping a low-cost option only for the smallest of service-driven and professional service businesses – especially those who host on the GoDaddy platform or have a web-based business on WordPress hosted by GoDaddy. Otherwise, there are much better options available on the market.

[GoDaddy Bookkeeping](#)
(formerly Outright)
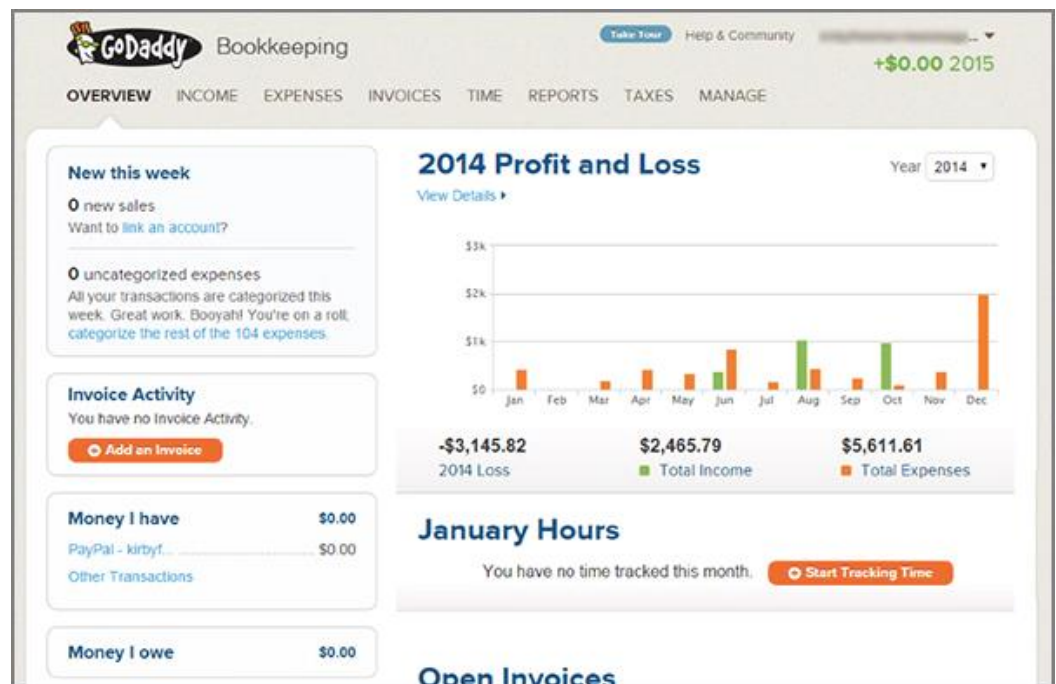
Intuit QuickBooks

It's estimated that there are more than 4 million QuickBooks accounts globally – that's by far the most of any accounting-based business software vendor in history making QuickBooks the clear leader in the entry-level accounting space – at least for businesses in the United States. Intuit QuickBooks is very easy to use and extremely cost-effective for very small businesses up to companies in the lower-end of the SMB space. There are many different product editions available as well as deployment choices for QuickBooks Online (QBO) versus QuickBooks Desktop (QBD). However, just because it's the most popular option doesn't mean it's the right choice for your business.

Intuit was founded in 1983 by Scott Cook and Tom Proulx in Mountain View, CA just two years after IBM introduced their first personal computer. Their first product was Quicken. QuickBooks launched in 1992 for both the IBM PC on Microsoft DOS and Apple's MacIntosh. QuickBooks became the most popular accounting software for smaller businesses despite the fact that it had poor security, no audit trail, and did not conform to accounting standards of the day.

QuickBooks was always limited in scalability with most companies seeing significant problems when adding more users (10+) or with large data sets which is common in more complex industries such as manufacturing. Intuit launched QuickBooks Online in 2001 to off-set a drop in packaged software sales from brick and mortar retailers. QBO has more than 1 million users as of June 2015. QuickBooks Enterprise launched a year later in 2002 as a higher-end product which claims to scale to as many as 30 users.

QuickBooks Online (QBO) is growing fast and the future of the QuickBooks product portfolio.

www.e2btek.com

QuickBooks is used by companies across pretty much every industry imaginable. QuickBooks is a very generic application with minimal vertical functionality despite marketing on Intuit's part to position different editions for different industry segments. With that said, traditional QuickBooks desktop products have decent features for professional and business service firms. QuickBooks Online is gaining traction among smaller non-profits and independent contractors and professional service firms. QuickBooks Retail is extremely popular. QuickBooks Enterprise has editions for Contractors (construction), Manufacturing and Distribution, Non-Profit, Attorneys (legal), and Retail (including restaurants and online storefronts). An accountant version is also offered to help professional CPAs to help QuickBooks users with book keeping and general accounting, tax, and audit services. They even have a page on their site targeting churches although the content appears relatively thin on details on what exactly this version of the software does that's special.

Manufacturing is near and dear to our hearts here at e2b teknologies and we were excited to hear the news when Intuit acquired manufacturing software vendor Lettuce Apps in 2014 stating that Intuit would be working with Lettuce to add more manufacturing features into QuickBooks Online. It's now been over two years and if Intuit's working on manufacturing – they've done so as quietly as anyone. We have seen not a single improvement in QBO's manufacturing feature set and the old Lettuce Apps website is no longer active.

Intuit QuickBooks is designed for businesses with up to about 30 users with up to about 50 employees and typically under $20 million in revenue. QuickBooks Enterprise does tend to scale up to slightly larger businesses. It is important to understand the limitations and scalability of each unique edition of QuickBooks. As such, it is highly recommended that companies with larger user counts consult a [QuickBooks ProAdvisor](#) or [QuickBooks Premium (Enterprise) Reseller](#) to ensure that the software is able to support specific needs.

This is important – like many software publishers, Intuit is making a dramatic shift to the cloud and is NOT going out of their way to do much in respect to desktop improvements. As such, we strongly recommend that businesses utilize QuickBooks Online if at all possible and only use QuickBooks Desktop if the functionality you need is not available yet in the online version.

QuickBooks desktop versions of the software use a variant of the Sybase SQL database. The software is accessed either through a secure browser (QuickBooks Online), through a hosted provider such as Right Networks, or as an installed, desktop application. A Mac version is also available but only in the United States. Accessing the data is limited to the tools Intuit provides for different versions. QuickBooks Desktop can be accessed via ODBC and the QuickBooks SDK but there are limits on what can be accessed.

QuickBooks Enterprise can support up to 30 Users (but we don't recommend it for companies that large).

QuickBooks Online data can only be accessed from the Intuit Partner Platform or IPP which opens up connections to authorized development partners but again, this is limited and Intuit does not open up everything to customers or development partners. We've discovered this first hand and have struggled to manage even simple integrations with QuickBooks due to limitations in their development tools. Further, Intuit has discontinued their desktop Sync Manager which was used to move desktop data to the IPP cloud making it available for third parties to integrate with their applications. Companies with integration requirements should carefully review all options and may be better served with an SMB ERP application which will be much more open to integration.

QuickBooks dominates the entry-level accounting market in the United States but its market share is significantly lower in international markets despite having versions available for Canada, the United Kingdom (supporting South Africa as well), and Australia. It is worth noting that QuickBooks is growing in many English-speaking international markets gaining market share against many foreign competitors.

www.e2btek.com

QuickBooks is pretty much sold as an all-in-one application as opposed to separate modules like larger SMB ERP systems. For example, you can't purchase just the QuickBooks General Ledger. A few extras are available including QuickBooks Payments (Merchant Services), QuickBooks Payroll, and more. There are also hundreds of plug-and-play applications available for QuickBooks Online in Intuit's apps.com directory. Keep in mind though that these apps integrate through the IPP and most are not available for use with QuickBooks Desktop versions. However, there are still hundreds of add-ons available for QuickBooks Desktop – many of which are still listed on the Intuit Marketplace.

As mentioned previously, there are millions of businesses using QuickBooks – both desktop and online. Customers tend to work with one of the thousands of ProAdvisors and participate in localized user groups, online forums, and through live trade shows and conferences like QuickBooks Connect.

Intuit QuickBooks pricing starts at just $5 per month for QuickBooks Self-Employed up to $850 per month for QuickBooks Enterprise (10 users) and more for up to 30 users (but you have to call for pricing). Many people configure QuickBooks themselves. This is very possible – especially for anyone familiar with basic accounting if they've used business software before except for QuickBooks Enterprise which is much more complex. It's highly recommended that everyone work with a knowledgeable QuickBooks consultant – if even for a little while to ensure that the software is setup properly. Intuit has a directory of more than 60,000 QuickBooks ProAdvisors and a channel of QuickBooks Enterprise resellers who are there to help. We've heard stories of some ProAdvisors billing as low as $20 per hour up to $200 or more. The average price is about $80. QuickBooks Enterprise partners will tend to offer higher rates in the range of $100 to $175 per hour.

Intuit QuickBooks

2700 Coast Ave.

Mountain View, CA 94043

www.intuit.com

www.quickbooks.com

www.e2btek.com

Kashflow

KashFlow is not well known in North America but it is a very popular entry-level accounting application in the rest of the English-speaking world. The company is based in London, England and was founded in 1998 but didn't take off until 2005 with the launch of KashFlow (which was almost launched under the brand name Lollymate). KashFlow has won numerous awards and is used by tens of thousands of companies globally.

The software competes directly against Sage's entry-level products in the UK market – namely Sage 50 Accounts (multiple editions) in the UK. Note that Sage 50 Accounts is the replacement for Sage Instant Accounting and is completely different products than Sage 50 US (formerly Peachtree) and Sage 50 Canada (formerly Simply Accounting). Kashflow also competes directly against Intuit QuickBooks and Xero in the UK market and MYOB in the Pacific Rim as well as other products globally.

KashFlow was one of the earlier cloud-based applications available sold as a low-cost, monthly subscription which has become the norm in the entry-level accounting market. KashFlow was acquired by IRIS, a well-established accounting software vendor used by about half of all UK accountants.

KashFlow is pretty amazing for the price. It does a ton that competitors don't. It handles all of the core financials a small business needs including financial reporting, customer invoicing, vendor payments, bank feeds, quotes and estimates, light credit control (collections), custom fields, fairly extensive product and service pricing, purchasing, payroll, and light inventory stock management. It's a solid product for a smaller wholesale distribution business, retailer, or very light manufacturer and may be an option for professional service businesses.

Pricing is listed in Great British Pounds Sterling starting at about $9 per month US for the Starter Edition, $16 per month US for the Business Edition, and $22 per month US for Business + Payroll Edition.

There is a fairly extensive list of third party apps that integrate directly with KashFlow including billing and invoicing, CRM, payment processing, ecommerce storefronts, shipping and inventory management, time and project management, email marketing, financial planning, and more.

"Thank you for your time this morning and all of your help. I appreciate good customer service and your company certainly knows how to treat a customer. I mean it when I say we love working with e2b."

-Nanofilm

KashFlow Software Ltd

Ivybridge House

1 Adam Street

London, UK WC2N 6LE

Phone: 0330 111 1854

www.kashflow.com

Kashoo

Kashoo is yet another SaaS accounting application from Canada – Vancouver to be exact. The company was founded in 2008 as Clarity Accounting and rebranded as Kashoo in 2010. Kashoo is similar to many other entry-level accounting apps in that it does what it does and simply doesn't do much more. The software is hosted and accessed online providing very small businesses with basic accounting. With Kashoo you can invoice customers, track expenses (payables), reconcile bank accounts, and access financial reports.

Payroll is not natively provided by Kashoo but they offer integrations to several payroll providers including Paychex, SurePayroll, and more. Mobile apps provide access to Kashoo from the iPad or iPhone. An app is available for Android but does have a very low 2.5 of 5 rating.

Kashoo is lighter than some competitors in respect to project management and is not a product to be used by wholesale distributors or manufacturers who need inventory tracking and manufacturing features. It is, however, a product that very small start-ups and less complicated businesses should consider. We feel that Kashoo is ideal for companies with up to 20 employees (perhaps up to 100 if business requirements are relatively simple).

Kashoo is only available in one edition but there are two payment options. Pay up-front for the annual plan and you get a 30% discount and a few extras including a personal advisor. Or you can choose to pay $30 monthly without the incentives for up-front payment. The monthly plan allows you to truly go month to month with no annual contract commitment.

Kashoo

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www.kashoo.com

www.e2btek.com

Less Accounting

Less Accounting is the self-proclaimed "Accounting Software for Business Owners Who Dislike Bookkeeping." The application is basic providing general bookkeeping features including invoicing, expense tracking, and very basic financial reporting. It has limited project management features and no functionality for inventory or manufacturing.

They seem to target professional services firms including photographers, web and software designers and developers, general business consultants, marketing and advertising, and surprisingly have a page on their site with information about how to start a food truck business.

There is no integration to an ecommerce shopping cart but imports can be made from transactions posted to external ecommerce applications or any other software for that matter.
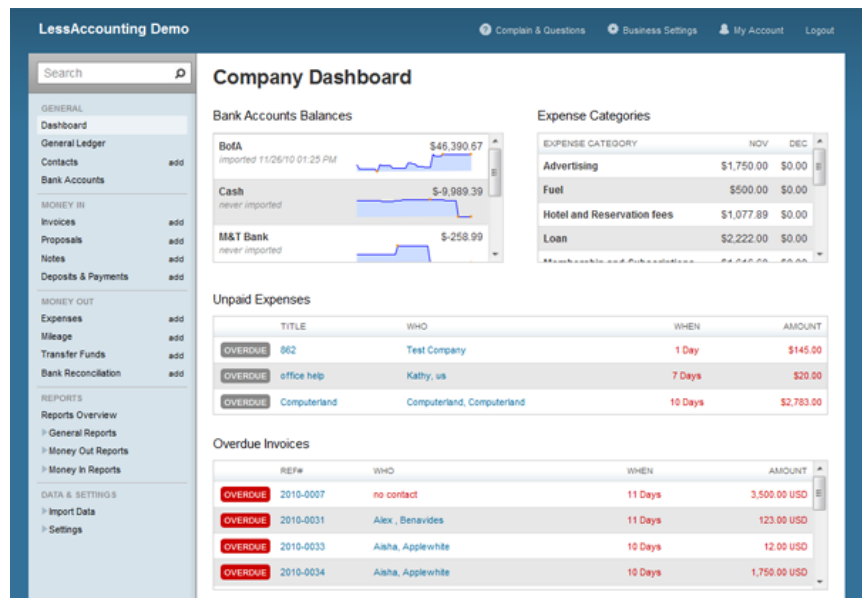
Integration is provided for thousands of financial institutions as well as several payment gateways, project management, time tracking, CRM, payroll, and more.

Pricing for Less Accounting is very different than competitors as it's based on limits in expenses rather than amounts invoiced or features available.

Less Accounting is $20 monthly for freelancers and small businesses who spend (expenses) less than $10,000 per month. The Small Business Edition is expanded to $25,000 in monthly expenses and a Big Business Edition for $54 monthly up to $40,000 in expenses.

One nice option available that many others don't provide is their optional Autopilot bookkeeping assistance starting at $70 per month with scalable plans available for larger companies.

Founded by Steven Bristol and Allan Branch in 2007. Less Accounting was acquired in June 2016 by American SMB Services and Big Half. It appears the product will continue to be developed and maintained going forward as a viable entry-level accounting application for many businesses. A statement by Less Accounting regarding the future of the product under new ownership is below:

www.e2btek.com

> *"The buyers, Phani Ilapa-kurty and Uday Koorella, look forward to using LessAccounting as the pillar for their current ecosystem of mobile and cloud-based tools. Their vision is to create a system of comprehensive, yet easy-to-use tools for accountants and small-business owners."*

With that said, we recommend that companies considering Less Accounting contact them to clearly understand the future of the product under new management as there is little information available online.

LessAccounting.com

13111 North Central Express Way, Ste 8010

Dallas, TX 75243

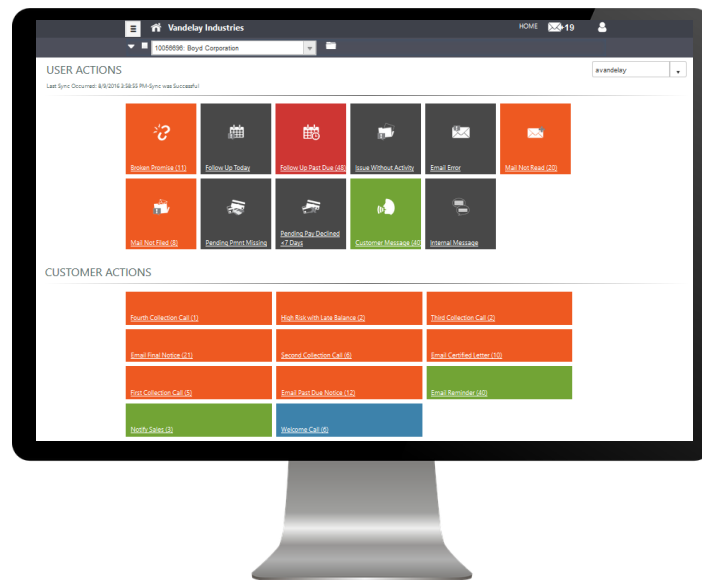www.lessaccounting.com

MYOB

MYOB as an accounting application traces its roots to TeleWare Corporation founded by Christopher Lee in the United States in 1982. The initial product was called MYOB for Apple's Macintosh personal computer. And yes – it stood for Mind Your Own Business.

The company MYOB started with Craig Winkler and Brad Shofer in Melbourne Australia in 1987 but not under the MYOB name. The marquee moment for MYOB occurred in 1991 when Winkler and Shofer purchased the rights to MYOB from Teleware to adapt MYOB for the Australian and New Zealand markets. They incorporated initially in 1991 as Data-Tech Software which became MYOB Australia in 1995.

Interestingly, TeleWare rebranded as BestWare when it was acquired by Best Software in Reston, VA in 1993. Best was acquired by the Sage Group in 2000 and merged Best's Abra human resources and payroll and FAS fixed assets accounting software into its extensive ERP and business applications portfolio. BestWare didn't make it to the Sage acquisition, however, as Best sold it to MYOB Australia in 1995 and BestWare became MYOB's go-to product for the US market under the MYOB brand.

The company changed its name to MYOB Limited and went public on the Australian Stock Exchange in 1999. MYOB acquired Solution 6 Holdings in 2004. Solution 6 Holdings offered professional services and ERP software for larger businesses and accounting firms throughout the region and into other global markets. Major product brands included CMS.Net, Novient, and CABS.

It's been a long strange trip for MYOB as the US operations were sold off in 2008 to former MYOB management forming [Acclivity AccountEdge](#) – a product that derives from the MYOB code base but is now a separate product unto itself. MYOB was acquired by private equity company Archer Capital in 2011 and delisted as a public company only to be sold to Bain Capital in 2011 and relisted on the Australian Stock Exchange in 2015 as MYO.

Last piece of history here – MYOB founders Winkler and Shofer are serious investors in rival [Xero](#) which was founded in 2006 in New Zealand and is gaining significant market share against MYOB in Australia, Sage in the UK, and Intuit in the US market place. That shouldn't detract anything from MYOB as a viable entry-level accounting option for smaller companies as it has always been a tremendous value for the price and a steady and stable option for companies across a variety of industries – especially in the Asia Pacific region.

MYOB continued to grow including expansion into Asia with the 2000 acquisition of SeaSoft Computer Services pushing into Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Singapore, and Hong Kong paving the way for a later entry into China and Malaysia.

MYOB sold MYOB Canada to Intuit Canada (QuickBooks) in 2001. Then Intuit Canada President and CEO Bruce Johnson stated at the time that, "MYOB differs from Intuit's products in several ways…MYOB is available on www.e2btek.com

the Macintosh and also has an entry-level package called Startup Accounting, and MYOB is stronger in inventory-keeping." An article by Jack Kapica of the Globe and Mail in 2001 noted that, "The deal is expected to push Intuit to the top of the financial-services software business in Canada. Until now, Intuit has led other financial-services software in revenue, but trailed its main competitor, Simply Accounting from Computer Associates, in the number of units sold."

In 2007 MYOB acquired the remaining 25% of Exonet which it did not own at the time. Exonet's Exo product is today marketed as MYOB Exo for larger businesses that have typically outgrown MYOB or other entry-level accounting applications. In 2008, Winkler stepped down and CEO Tim Reed was appointed to guide MYOB into the future and he has truly transformed the company and the product which is to this day a very viable accounting option for smaller businesses – especially for companies in other parts of the world outside the USA and Canada (those companies are better served with the Acclivity AccountEdge products).

MYOB offers several accounting and ERP products serving more than 1 million customers and accounting practices with more than 40,000 accounting firm partners. Its leading entry-level accounting products are MYOB Essentials starting at $35 monthly and MYOB AccountRight starting at $85 monthly. MYOB Essentials is available exclusively as an online application with relatively limited functionality but much stronger than many of the newer entry-level applications available today from less established competitors. MYOB AccountRight can optionally work offline on a PC with job management functionality and expanded inventory management capabilities. MYOB AccountEdge is the Macintosh version of the popular accounting software sold as a traditional desktop application license in one of three editions ranging from $450 for AccountEdge Basic, to $1,400 for AccountEdge Pro, or $3,000 for AccountEdge Network.
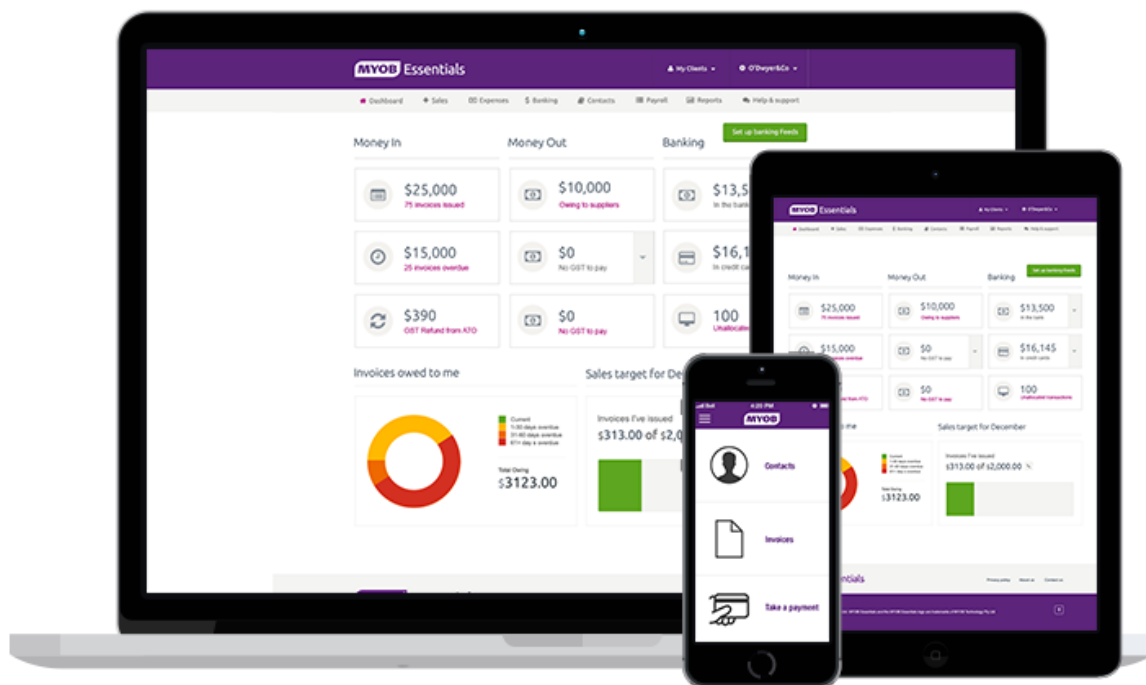
MYOB Essentials entry-level cloud accounting software

An invoicing mobile app called MYOB OnTheGo is available for mobile access to invoices for users of MYOB Essentials and MYOB AccountRight.

MYOB Exo is not an entry-level accounting application as it has more complex financials and inter-company reporting as well as more operational features and modules for job management and job costing, service management, retail point of sale, fixed assets, and CRM. MYOB Exo is an SMB small and midsized business ERP application due to its price and increased complexity. It offers a basic bill of material and work order system but is relatively weak in respect to material planning, engineering, quality, and other areas typically required for more complex and larger manufacturing businesses. It is, however, a potential option for light distributors who require kitting and small job-based manufacturers who may also be able to use the manufacturing or job costing and job management features within the product. There is a very small list of third party add-ons available for MYOB Exo to extend its core functionality.

The company also offers MYOB Advanced Cloud ERP which is a hosted ERP system available in three editions. Pricing is not publicly listed. This product appears to be their strategic platform for traditional distributors and manufacturers in the SMB market segment to compliment MYOB Essentials as their hosted, cloud offering in the entry-level market.

Additional products are available from MYOB including MYOB PayGlobal payroll and human resource management software, payment solutions, and more.
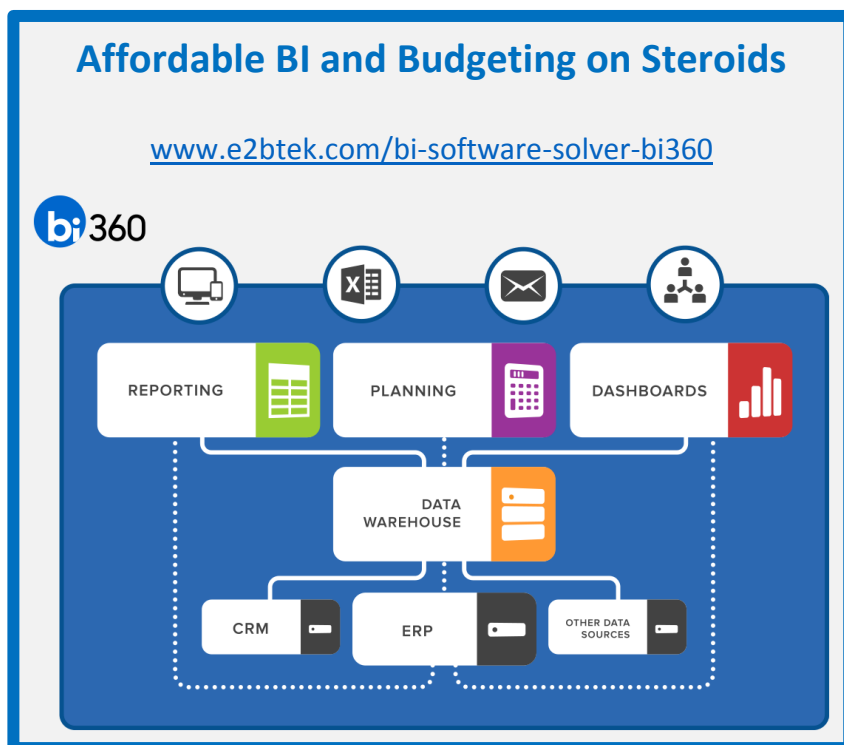
MYOB Australia Pty Ltd

Level 3, 235 Springvale Rd

Glen Waverley VIC 3150 Australia

Phone: 1300 793 130

www.myob.com

Affordable BI and Budgeting on Steroids

www.e2btek.com/bi-software-solver-bi360

Patriot Software

Founded in 2002 and based in Canton, OH, Patriot Software (www.patriotsoftware.com) may not be the best known entry-level accounting software vendor but they have a fantastic product and are an absolutely wonderful company and should be a product that smaller businesses consider. What makes Patriot so great? Personal touch. Their average user rating is 4.9 out of 5 and they have a perfect 5 out of 5 rating on Capterra. That's unheard of.

Patriot touts accounting software for the NON-accountant. Their product offers simple, cash-basis accounting with invoicing, accounts payable, and financial reporting. Support is included at no charge. The product is incredibly affordable at just $12.50 per month.

Patriot's software does not offer inventory or manufacturing so it isn't a fit for these industries. But what it does, it does brilliantly. The software is designed for start-ups and small or home office (SOHO) businesses with one to up to about 100 employees (or so).

They also offer 1099 software for just $7.50 per month and software for payroll and human resources and time and attendance. The cool part of their payroll offering is that they have one edition where you run payroll for a lower cost (starting at $10 per month) and a full-service edition where they do all the work (starting at just $25 per month).

The software is used by thousands of businesses supported by a team of approximately 400 employees.

Patriot Software also owns Top Echelon, a recruiting software and contract staffing services business.

Patriot Software

4883 Dressler Rd NW #301

Canton, OH 44718

Phone: 877-968-7147

www.patriotsoftware.com

www.e2btek.com

Sage 50 Canada

Sage 50 Canadian Edition is an entry-level accounting application available from Sage for customers primarily in the Canadian market. Called Sage 50 Canadian Edition (or Sage 50 Canada), this is the former Simply Accounting product developed initially by Bedford Software in 1985. Computer Associates acquired Simply Accounting in 1996 merging it into its Accpac International division in 1998. Sage then acquired the Computer Associates ERP and accounting products in 2004.

As dominant as Intuit QuickBooks is in the US, that's how dominant Sage 50 Canadian Edition is in Canada. Sage 50 Canadian Edition is a great but basic entry-level accounting application. The user interface is very clean and modern with built-in workflows and dashboards.

Sage 50 Canadian Edition goes a step beyond some of the newer SaaS accounting applications with a bit more functionality in the inventory, sales order, and project/job management areas but still falls short of a true SMB ERP application. There are many third party products available including several for point of sale and ecommerce. Misys Manufacturing is a long-time Sage 300 (Accpac) manufacturing software developer with a special integration for Sage 50 Canadian Edition.

This is one of the few entry-level products available in multiple languages (English, French or Spanish). The product is available in two editions – Sage 50 Pro Accounting at $162 to buy or $15.75 monthly or Sage 50 Premium Accounting for $275 or $26.83 monthly. Sage 50 Quantum is marketed in Canada to companies that need more than 4 users. Note: Sage 50 Quantum is not the same code-base as Sage 50 Canadian Edition. It is based on the Sage 50 US (formerly Peachtree) product but is a fantastic option for companies not yet ready to jump into an SMB ERP application with pricing at $3,200 for 5 users or $5,300 for 10 users.

Sage 50 Canada

North American Headquarters

271 17th St NW

Atlanta, Georgia 30363

Phone: 1-800-808-7000

www.sage.com/ca/sage-50-accounting

www.e2btek.com

Sage 50 US

Sage 50 US Edition (formerly Peachtree) is probably the second most popular entry-level accounting options for smaller businesses in the US and often the most recommended choice by professional accountants due to its strict adherence to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) which prevent non-accounting users from doing things that they shouldn't in respect to accounting for their business.

Sage 50 c US is the new brand (c meaning cloud) representing the next generation of entry-level accounting software sold as a monthly subscription. The product is available in three editions: Pro (1 user) starting at $21/month; Premium (1-5 users) starting at $24/month; and Quantum (up to 40 users) starting at $99/month. Note that Sage 50 US Quantum 2017 is also available for purchase from authorized resellers starting at $800 (1-5 users) up to $5,400 (15-40 users). Quantum is squarely aimed at companies outgrowing lower-end systems that are not quite ready for an SMB ERP system and as an alternative to Intuit's QuickBooks Enterprise product.

Sage 50 US has always had relatively strong inventory management and sales order features making it one of the more popular options for smaller wholesale distributors and manufacturers. It also has a nice project/job management system used by small contractors, construction companies, and professional service firms.

Misys Manufacturing offers a complete suite of Sage-endorsed manufacturing applications that integrate with Sage 50 Quantum. In our opinion – this is probably the most affordable and best value for an ERP system based on an entry-level accounting application anywhere in the market.
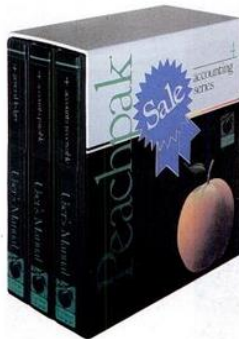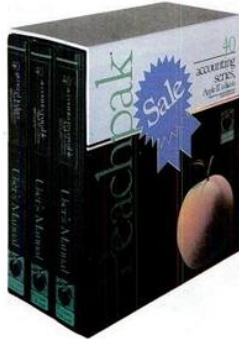
As a leading product in the market, there are dozens of third party products available to integrate and extend Sage 50 US to do a lot more than what it was designed to do out of the box.

Peachtree Software is most likely the earliest entry-level accounting systems in the world tracing its roots to 1976 as part of The Computer SystemCenter, an early Altair 8800 microcomputer dealer.

The company acquired Layered in 1990. Layered provided accounting programs for Apple's Macintosh computers which was later marketed as Peachtree Accounting for Macintosh. The Layered products included Insight Expert Accounting and atOnce!. Peachtree was included in the initial launch of the first

Peachtree Software advertisement in InfoWorld (11/29/1982). Source: Wikipedia

IBM PCs in 1981. By 1984, Peachtree was the seventh largest microcomputer (PC) software company generating nearly $22 million in revenue.

Peachtree was acquired and sold many times in its history including the 1981 acquisition by Management Science America (MSA) and Automatic Data Processing (ADP) in 1994. Interestingly, ADP also owned OneWrite Plus, another early accounting application for DOS and later for Windows. An aside – OneWrite appears to be the product everyone wanted (or nobody wanted). Great American Software (owned by Live Free or Die Software Ltd.) was founded sometime around 1984 and was the original developer of OneWrite Plus. The company and product were acquired in 1991 by Meca Software and sold again to New England Business Systems, Inc. (NEBS) in 1993. Peachtree Software (owned by ADP at the time) acquired OneWrite Plus from NEBS in 1996. OneWrite Plus ended up with Sage in 1999 when Sage acquired Peachtree from ADP. OneWrite Plus was officially discontinued in 2006.

But back to Peachtree – Sage Group acquired Peachtree in 1999 (other online sources incorrectly state this was in 1998) and changed the product name to Sage 50 US in 2012. The product line was adding 100,000 new customers annually during that time period according to news reports.

Sage offered industry-specific versions of Sage 50 for a few years but these are no longer available and much of the industry-specific functionality has been moved into the Quantum product offering.
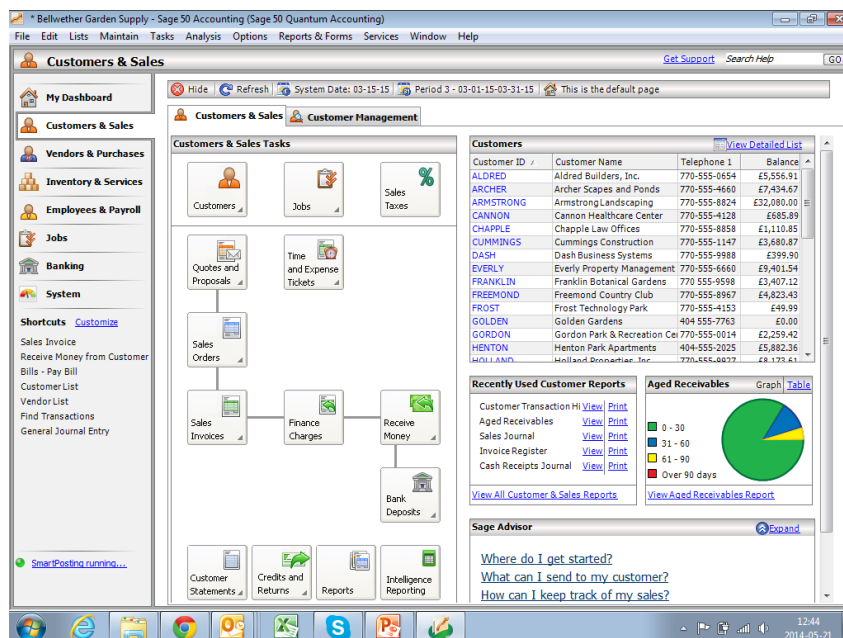
Sage 50, while historically a desktop application, is moving toward the cloud. Sage announced Sage Drive in 2016 allowing Sage 50 US customers to access Sage 50 online albeit limited to one user at a time. They are working toward expanding online access and we fully expect Sage to have a multi-user version of Sage 50 US available soon.

Sage US

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www.sage.com/us/sage-50-accounting

Sage Live

Sage introduced Sage Live in 2015. Sage Live represents a joint development effort between Sage and Salesforce.com. The product sits on the Force.com platform. By design, Sage states they have no plans to expand Sage Live outside of accounting. This decision is purposeful allowing third parties to develop and integrate best of breed applications on top of Sage Live for various industry segments and specialized business requirements. The accounting itself features tight integration to Salesforce.com's CRM.

One of the most unique points to Sage Live is that it is the only Sage product that can run entirely on a mobile device or any device via a web browser.

While it's relatively early in its lifecycle, Sage Live is garnering a lot of positive reviews and developers are indeed building integrations to expand on its core features. There are currently about 20 apps available on the Sage Marketplace and Salesforce's AppExchange that integrate with Sage Live including two manufacturing applications – KeyedIn and Rootstock. Kimble PSA is available for project accounting and professional services automation and Epos Now integrates for cloud-based retail point of sale management.

Sage Live is available in three editions – Essentials starting at $120 per month with 2 full users and 5 business users (limited to 1 company); Standard starting at $170 per month (same as Essentials but supports up to 10 companies), and Premium starting at $275 per month (with up to 100 companies). Additional full and business user licenses may be purchased for any of the aforementioned editions. While this is significantly more than the true entry-level accounting applications on the market (like Intuit QuickBooks, Xero, Sage One, etc.), Sage Live is still a very cost-effective option for companies – especially those who need a strong integration to Salesforce.com CRM with just under $1,500 annually for a basic configuration.

Sage announced a non-profit solution for Sage Live at Dreamforce 2016 with fund accounting features including fund management, donations, and grant management. Sage also announced plans to expand Sage Live outside the US and UK markets to France, Germany, and Spain reinforcing their commitment to the product and the platform.

Another interesting announcement on Sage Live relates to an announcement stating that Sage is working on a new version of Sage Live that will run exclusively on Apple's IOS devices (iPad, iPhone, and yes – even Apple Watch)!

The technology world is ever changing and it's fun to watch Sage partner with other technology giants to leverage all the great advancements in technology to improve business and operations.

Our opinion – Sage Live is pretty darn cool and has a lot more to offer than Sage One and other entry-level accounting applications. We believe that any small business that needs more than a basic accounting system

may want to consider Sage Live as a potential platform for their business if they can find the necessary add-ons available to round out their industry needs.

Sage Live is interesting because it wasn't the first accounting application available on Force.com and it's still not the most popular. FinancialForce.com is likely the most functional light ERP product available on Force.com with a very long history with the CRM vendor dating back about a decade to 2007 when long-time accounting ERP vendor Unit4 announced CODA 2go, the precursor to FinancialForce which was founded in 2009 as an independent business unit. FinancialForce.com goes further than Sage Live (for now) offering financials with a full professional services automation suite and a wholly-owned human resources suite. They also offer light inventory, something that few cloud-based accounting vendors can claim.

Sage Live

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http://www.sage.com/us/sage-live

www.e2btek.com

Sage One

Sage had a spell when they weren't developing a lot of new products but that all changed a few years ago and they invested quite a bit into a relatively unknown product that came through their Softline acquisition in 2004. Originally called Sage Pastel My Business Online, Sage continued to work on the product and relaunched it in 2014 as Sage One. Developed in South Africa specifically for South African businesses, it was expanded to the UK market and then to the US and Canada and has grown to more than 100,000 subscriptions in 2015 becoming a leading option for businesses considering entry-level accounting software.

The product is an excellent option for smaller businesses with less than 100 employees who need a solid entry-level accounting application to manage their core financials. It's available in many different countries including the UK, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, the USA, Canada, France, South Africa, Malaysia, Brazil, Australia, and other regions of the world including much of the African continent.

It's available in multiple editions including a free mobile app for basic income and expense management, Start for $16 per month which expands on income and expenses with bank reconciliation, and Accounting which features a full accounting suite with estimates and invoicing for just $33 per month. Sage One Accounting includes unlimited users. It integrates with Sage Payment Solutions for credit card and ACH transaction processing. Unlike a few of the lower end products, Sage One Accounting supports multiple currencies. A huge benefit for users is access to the Sage Accountants Network where small business owners can get advice and assistance with their accounting.

Sage One does not include inventory or any manufacturing capabilities but Sage opened up Sage One to the development community a few years ago paving the way for software developers to integrate their products with Sage One. There are currently a few dozen apps available on the Sage One Marketplace but this list is growing fast.
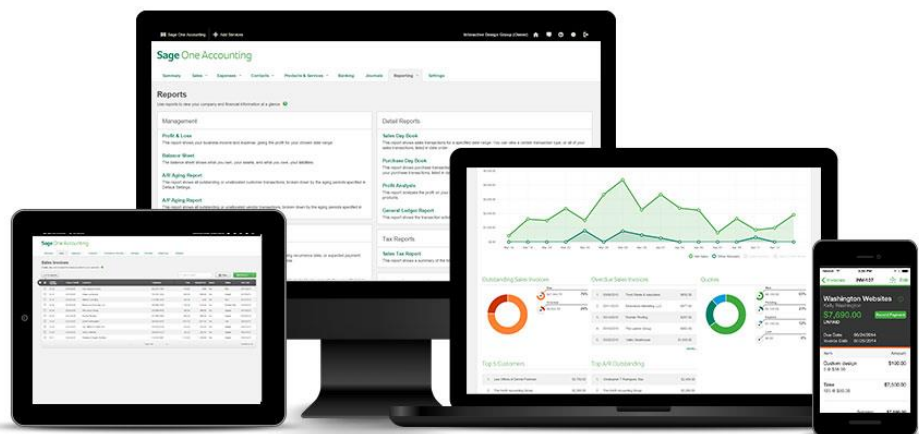
Sage One

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1 (888) 212-1743

www.sage.com/us/sage-one

www.e2btek.com

Sage One is an attractive web-based accounting application for smaller businesses globally.

Saasu

Saasu is a cloud-based accounting application founded in 2000 by Mar Lehmann and Grant Young in Australia. The product was launched in 2007 and has grown steadily through the years to become a nice option for smaller businesses. Saasu has a lot of functionality not available in many of the other cloud-based accounting applications – especially those in the lower-end of the market. For example, inventory features appear to be much stronger allowing the product to work well in a small distribution or more complex ecommerce environment. Still, there is minimal out-of-the-box manufacturing capabilities limiting the product in a pure manufacturing environment unless integrated to a third party application using their web APIs.

The product has a clean design that is easy to navigate with a nice dashboard, invoicing, expense management bank feeds, cash flow forecasting, inventory, payroll, (Australia only), multi-currency, light CRM, and financial and general business reporting. They also have a growing third party application marketplace with more than 50 add-ons available to extend the software. Some of these include multiple payment gateways, ecommerce sites, more advanced CRM, quotes, point of sale, project management and time tracking, email marketing, EDI, shipping, warehouse management, payroll (for other global geographies), and more. Integration partners represent many major global vendors including Magento, Shopify, Salesforce.com, Paypal, Stripe, WooCommerce, Zoho CRM, Eventbrite, Shoeboxed, MailChimp, and more.

We are very impressed with what Saasu can do and even more impressed with the third party extensions making it perhaps the most functional option for distributors at the lower end of the market. Saasu pricing is based on the number of transactions expected within the accounting system in a given year. This can be extremely hard to estimate as transactions are considered to be customer invoices, expenses (payables), payments (customers or vendors), transfers, and journal entries. As such, businesses may need to consult with Saasu directly to understand which edition is right for them but pricing is very affordable starting out at just $9 per month (1,000 annual transactions), $20 per month (up to 20,000 annual transactions), or $40 per month (up to 40,000 annual transactions). Each edition has some additional features. Notable differences are the number of bank feeds provided and access to the inventory and multicurrency features which are only available in the two larger editions. Advanced features such as inventory attributes, serial numbers, inventory locations, batches, color, sizes, weights, and consolidated multi-file profit and loss (P&L) reporting are only available in the higher-end edition.
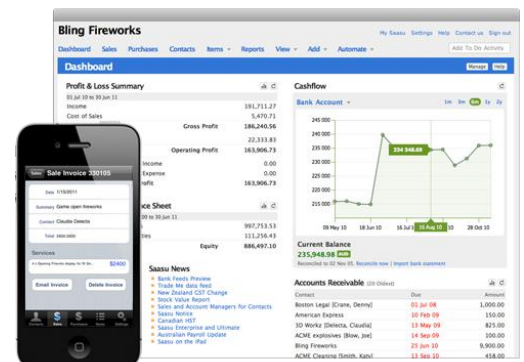
Saasu Pty Ltd

107-111 Elizabeth St

Sydney 2000 Australia

www.saasu.com

www.e2btek.com

Wave

Wave Accounting is one of the newer entry-level accounting applications to launch in the past few years. Introduced in 2010, the product didn't take off until just the past few years but it has a strong following among very small companies. In fact, Wave is very clear about their target market stating their audience is "freelancers, contractors, entrepreneurs, and owners of companies with 9 employees or less that we keep in mind. (Happily, bigger companies love Wave, too.)"

The company claims to have 1.7 million customers in over 200 countries. Not bad for a business that's only been around for about 5-6 years. Not bad at all.

Wave is relatively basic – it provides for simple accounts receivable and accounts payable with basic financial reporting. They also offer small business payroll.

Wave accounting and invoicing is 100% free. They also offer a receipts tracking application for free. They do this by generating revenue from advertisers whose offers are displayed in the application. These are ads from companies like AMEX, Staples, Dell, and others. It's actually a pretty ingenious idea (we had that idea years ago so kudos to Wave for making it happen). Their credit card processing rates are competitive at 2.9% plus 30 cents per transaction. You could get lower rates elsewhere but not many small business owners care because hey – free software. Payroll is also very affordable at $15 per month plus $4 per employee.

Wave is catching on and they have an accountants and bookkeepers network if you need assistance with your financials.

Wave is consistently voted and rated as the best free accounting software on the market but keep in mind that you get what you pay for. While the application is good for a small business, the lack of features limit it for growing companies that need inventory, manufacturing, project management, and retail point of sale capabilities.

Unlike competitors, Wave does not have an app marketplace so there are no third party products available to extend the software's functionality – at least none that are endorsed and listed on their website.

Wave Accounting

235 Carlaw Ave, Suite 501 | Toronto, ON M4M 2S1 Canada | www.waveapps.com

Xero

Founded in 2006, Xero is the fastest growing accounting software in the entry-level market space for small companies with (typically) less than 50 employees and less than $10 million in revenue. Headquartered in New Zealand, Xero has expanded rapidly to become a truly global solution – at least in the English-speaking world. The company has 700,000 subscribers (customers) supported by 1,400 employees. Xero claims to have 400+ add-on products in their app directory and 16,000 accounting and bookkeeper partnerships globally.

What separates Xero from others in the entry-level market is their global reach and focus on working through the accountancy (CPA) community with very strong, embedded tools to help the bookkeeper working on their clients who are also on Xero. This strategy is very reminiscent of the old days of accounting applications here in the USA where most publishers were offering some form of client write-up application to accompany their accounting software.

Xero launched in 2007 as a bare-bones SaaS accounting application in New Zealand with core financials, accounts receivable, and accounts payable with bank transactions. Reports were added shortly after the launch as were budgets, recurring invoices, and expenses. The UK version launched later that same year. Expansion to Australia occurred in 2008 and by the end of 2008 there was a Xero Global edition for other parts of the world. In 2009, fixed assets, multicurrency, and Paypal integration were added. Interestingly, Xero integrated with FreshBooks in 2009. Inventory was added in 2010 and expanded to the US in 2011. Xero went public in 2007 on the New Zealand Exchange and listed on the Australian Securities Exchange in 2012. Additional funding has been raised through the years including $23 million in 2009 from the founder of MYOB, another entry-level accounting application that once dominated the Australian and Pacific Rim market. Additional features including Payroll, mobile apps, checks, time sheets, and tax improvements and expansions were introduced (and continue to be added) for global geographies. Much of the new functionality came through acquisitions. Australian payroll provider Paycycle, Spotlight Workpapers, and WorkflowMax are among the larger acquisitions.

Xero is a decent product for small companies if you need basic accounting and maybe some light project features. It is not even close to the right product for a distributor of any consequence and there is no reason why any manufacturer should ever consider this product. With that said, Xero is
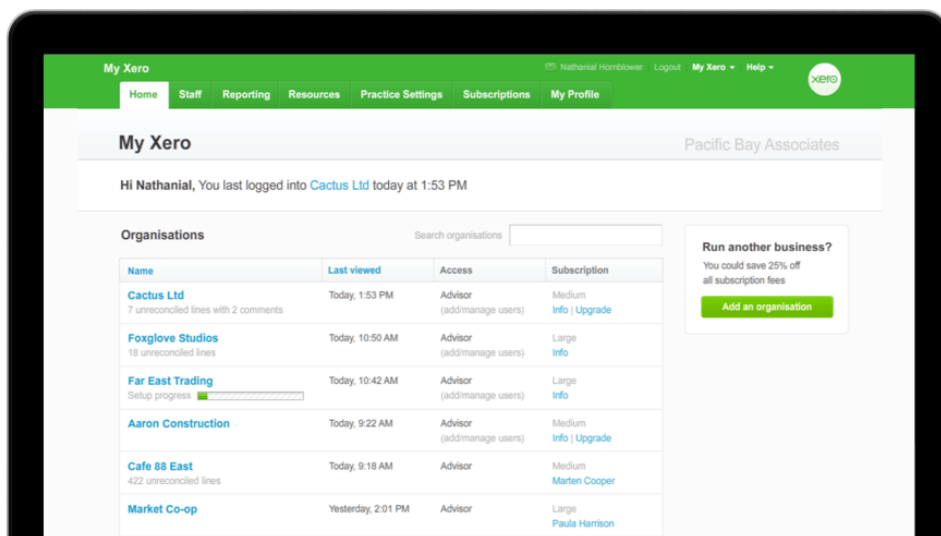
simple and a great entry-level product for start-up companies with few employees and a simple business model. There are many apps in the Xero app marketplace to extend it. It's interesting to see that Fishbowl Inventory has an interface for Xero. Fishbowl has a very nice light manufacturing and distribution application with a strong QuickBooks base here in the USA.

We see Xero as clearly an entry-level product for companies with up to at most $10 million in revenue and under 50 employees. Our opinion is that Xero is really targeted to much smaller companies than that. While we are sure that there are larger companies using the product, the core functionality is severely limited – especially for a distributor or manufacturer.

In the early days Xero was deployed as a single database but has since been moved to Amazon Web Services as a true multi-tenant SaaS application with cells capable of supporting 100,000 subscriptions (individual accounts). The database is Microsoft SQL and much of the application is developed in Microsoft .NET. Xero has a peak under the hood at the underlying platform on their blog.

Xero is available predominantly in four markets: New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. However, their website claims that they have subscribers in 180 countries. There are only 196 countries in the world. We have serious reservations that Xero actually supports all 180 countries for tax and reporting purposes. As such, we strongly recommend that companies outside the four targeted markets evaluate Xero closely to determine if it fully supports your country's legislative requirements. Xero does support a Canadian website so we are comfortable stating that it is available there as well as South Africa and most English-speaking countries.

Xero is available in three editions (see cost below). There are few add-on products available from Xero directly such as Payroll and business forms (checks). There is also 400+ third party application developers listed on their app marketplace. More than 700,000 subscribers access Xero across the globe. This is an increase of approximately 40% in about a year's time from June 2015 to October 2016.

Xero is available in three editions. Starter Edition is just $9 per month and designed for the smallest of small or home office (SOHO) and sole proprietorships (limited to 5 invoices/month and 5 bills paid/month. Standard Edition is $30 per month and not limited by invoices or bills per month and is more comparable to entry-level versions of Intuit QuickBooks and Sage 50 US. Standard Edition but is restricted to payroll for 5 employees. Premium Edition expands Payroll to 10 employees and includes multicurrency support. Upgrades are available for payroll to as many as 100 employees and then $2 per employee up to a max of 200.

Xero

101 Green St., 5th Floor | San Francisco, CA 94111 | www.xero.com/us

Yendo

Yendo is an entry-level cloud-based accounting application relatively unknown in the US market. The company was formed in 2006 and offers accounting and customer relationship management (CRM) products.

Yendo accounting includes sales invoices, purchasing and expense management, bank reconciliation, customer and vendor management, and basic financial reporting that is actually much stronger than many entry-level accounting software competitors but not as sophisticated as reports available in SMB ERP applications. They also offer mobile applications.
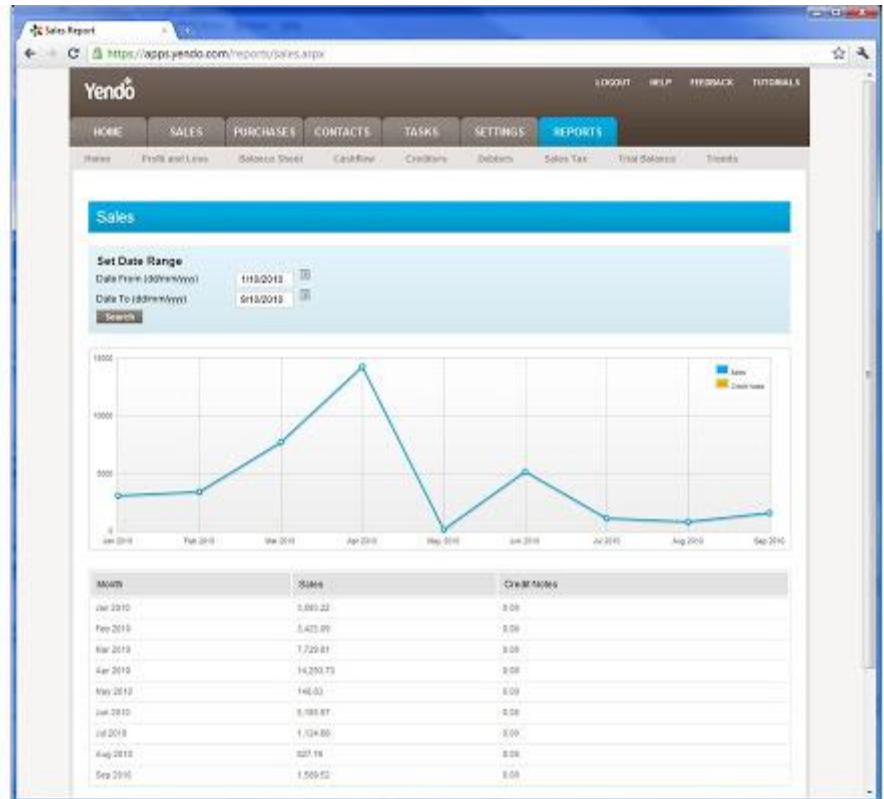
Yendo's CRM product includes sales opportunity management with social media integration and reporting.

Yendo is an option for many smaller businesses but is not recommended for distributors or manufacturers as it simply lacks the required features to adequately track and plan for activities and costs throughout the supply chain. The company claims that Yendo is used by more than 30,000 businesses.

Yendo is sold in four editions starting at $49 monthly for Standard which is limited to 5 users, 5 companies, and 1,000 emails sent monthly. Premium Edition is $99 monthly with unlimited users, 10 companies, and 5,000 monthly emails. Enterprise and Enterprise Plus editions are $299 and $599 per month and offer unlimited users and companies with 10,000 and 20,000 email limits respectively.

Yendo

The Digital Depot

Thomas Street

Dublin 8, Ireland

www.yendo.com

ZipBooks

ZipBooks is a relatively new player in the entry-level cloud accounting market. What makes them interesting is that they offer their software for free. Below is a message directly from their website explaining how they are able to do this and still make money?

> *We make money when you choose to let us and our partners facilitate payments for you. For example, if you choose to use our Invoice Instant Payments feature, we'll give you an advance on an invoice the moment you send it to your customer — and you pay us back later plus a small, transparent fee.*
>
> *Because we can operate profitably with that revenue, we offer you our service for free — a service that other software companies, like QuickBooks Online, typically charge for.*
>
> *No tricks, watermarks, or ads.*
>
> *Even if you choose not to use any of our payment options, ZipBooks is 100% free.*

We like this – they're very honest and transparent up-front and apparently it's working because there are a lot of companies using ZipBooks. However, small business owners should carefully evaluate the cost of using the built-in features where ZipBooks makes their money. For example, you can optionally get an advance on an invoice sent to a customer but that means you're giving up a portion of the total invoice amount to ZipBooks. This might be very convenient and not as important for a very small company but could add up to a considerable amount for companies with larger invoices or higher invoice transaction volumes that take advantage of this built-in and optional feature.

www.e2btek.com
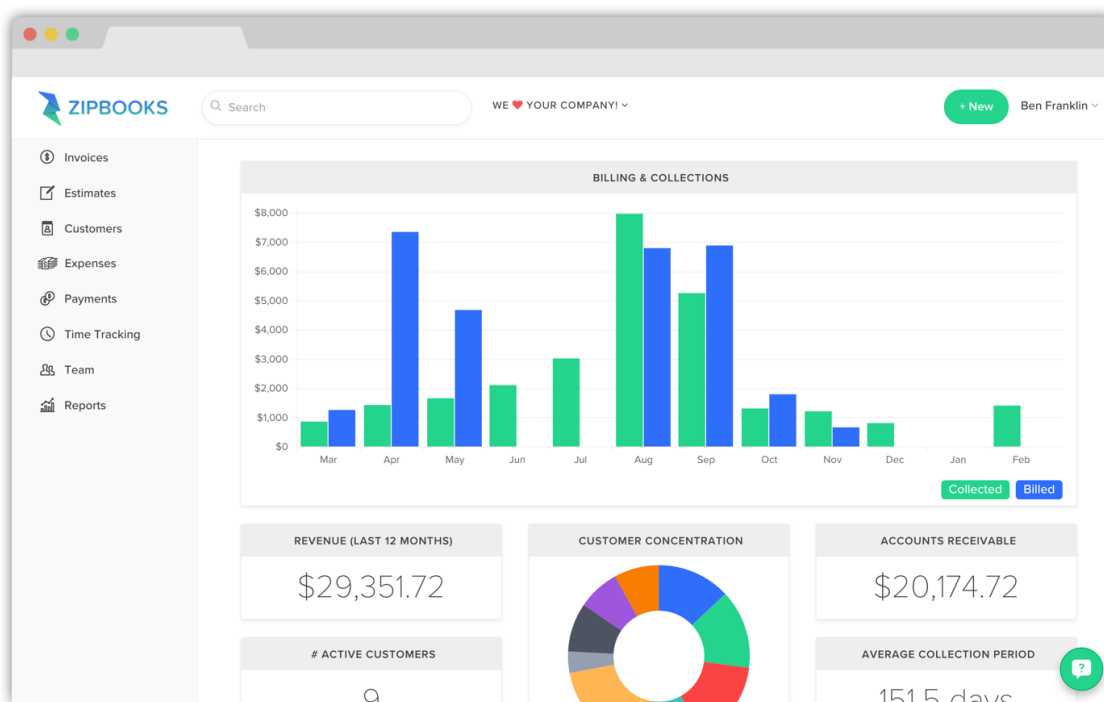
ZipBooks was founded by in 2015 by Tim Chaves with initial funding from Peak Ventures but wasn't publicly available until March of 2016.

As one of the newest entry-level products on the market (and with somewhat limited funding for development), ZipBooks doesn't do much but what it does is good for self-employed businesses or companies with few employees who need a simple and easy to use accounting system. And customers seem to like it as it's one of the highest rated apps in the Google Chrome Web Store and on Capterra's extensive business software directory.

ZipBooks includes invoicing, expense management (payables), project management, team management, time tracking, credit card integration, and a very basic level of personalization (they call it customization) for things like email templates and basic system settings.

This is not an application you will want to use to manage distribution or manufacturing operations but it seems to be a nice app for the small professional services organization and you simply cannot beat the price. It is also not recommended for retail businesses or service-driven organizations as there appears to be a major gap in functionality unless you have separate systems to manage your business operations and intend to use ZipBooks only for accounting.

Note: This is not the same company or product as zipbooks.in which has completely different accounting software available from headquarters in India.

ZipBooks

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Zoho Books

Zoho was founded in 1996 as AdventNet. The company rebranded to Zoho in 2009. Headquartered in India with US headquarters in Pleasanton, CA, Zoho is better known for their CRM application having launched Zoho Books in 2011.

Zoho Books is classic double-entry accounting deployed as a hosted cloud application. The product is much more functional than most of the newer SaaS entry-level accounting applications on the market with a true chart of accounts structure and stronger overall accounting and financial reporting. Zoho Books more closely resembles an entry-level ERP application with inventory management and formalized purchase order and sales order processes. Like most of the entry-level accounting systems, it is also very strong in project accounting with excellent time tracking and expense reporting.

Inventory costing supports the FIFO or first-in-first-out costing method. The system does not support standard, actual (lot), average, or LIFO last-in-first-out costing but neither do any of their direct competitors. It's worth mentioning that Zoho Books offers custom user-defined fields (UDFs) in several areas including inventory which make it much more adaptable than most other entry-level accounting systems.

Known as a CRM vendor, the integration to Zoho CRM makes Zoho Books a fantastic option for sales-driven businesses including some smaller distributors but there is no real manufacturing capabilities within the product limiting the product for even light manufacturers or more complex distribution kits.

Some of the features that really make Zoho nice are the online customer portal where clients can pay bills online, multi-company management, and estimates that can be quickly converted to sales orders or invoices.

www.e2btek.com
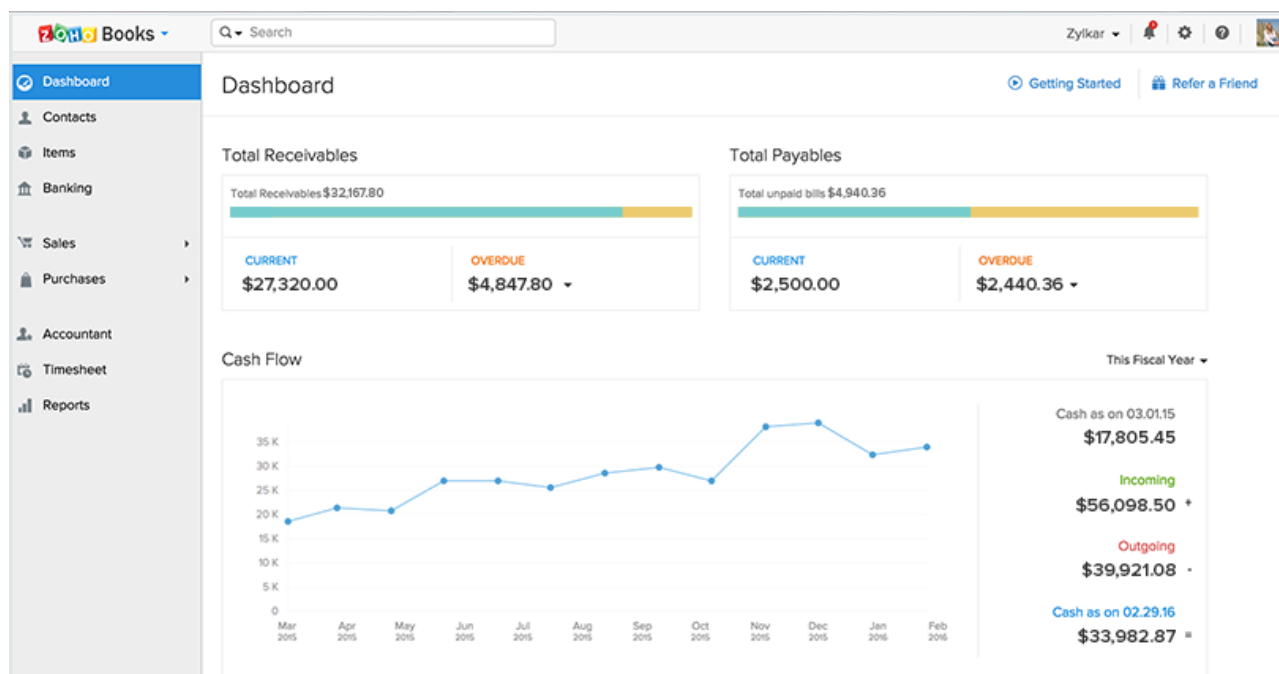
Zoho Books also has a stronger and more flexible security system than similarly-priced competitors with role-based access to many common tasks. Mobile apps are available for IOS, Android, and Windows.

Zoho Books is available in multiple editions starting with Basic for $9 per company per month limited to 50 contacts, 2 users (1 user and 1 accountant) and 5 automated workflows. Standard Edition is just $19 per company per month for up to 500 contacts, 3 users (2 users and 1 accountant), and 10 automated workflows plus a few extra bells and whistles. Professional is $29 per company per month with unlimited contacts, unlimited users, 10 automated workflows, and access to purchase orders, sales orders, and inventory.

Zoho offers much more than just accounting software. The company is known for CRM, their email application, and custom application development platform. Zoho CRM includes reports, surveys, marketing campaigns, websites, social media, contacts, forms, and more. They even have apps for employee recruitment and staff management. Zoho also recently introduced an app marketplace with about 50 apps currently listed.

With all of the features available, we see Zoho competing for larger businesses with 100 (or potentially more) employees so long as their business requirements do not exceed the core features of the application. Zoho as an organization offers not just accounting and CRM software, but a platform to build a small business.

Many reviews online point to the lack of payroll as a major gap. We disagree. While it may be nice to have payroll within the same platform as the accounting – it's not critical and there are many great payroll applications available on the market including outsourced payroll services.

Zoho Corporation

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Other Accounting Applications Directory

Below are additional products that you may consider for clients that offer basic accounting functionality for a very affordable price. Many of these will be reviewed in future revisions of this guide or on our website.

1. Accounting Seed
2. Accurants
3. BillBooks
4. Billy
5. Bkper
6. Bookkeeper App
7. Brightbook
8. BS1 Accounting
9. CashBook Complete
10. Cheqbook
11. ClearBooks
12. Comtech Solutions
13. DBA Manufacturing
14. Dolibarr
15. FreeDebks
16. Gem Accounts
17. Grisbi
18. Hiveage (fka CurdBee)
19. InvoicEra
20. InvoiceOcean
21. Manager.io
22. Monchilla
23. Move2Clouds
24. NCH Express Accounting
25. NolaPro
26. NutCache
27. Odoo
28. OfficeWise
29. One Accounting Software
30. OneUp
31. Pandle
32. PostBooks by xTuple
33. QuickFile
34. Responsive Software
35. Sage BusinessWorks
36. Simple Accounting
37. SlickPie
38. TurboCash
39. UA Business Cloud
40. WorkingPoint

sage X3

The perfect accounting and supply chain application for larger wholesale distributors and manufacturers of anything – food, electronics, plastics, metals, chemicals, equipment, and more.

www.e2btek.com/sage-sage-x3/

Finance
● Financial accounting
● Receivables and creditor accounting
● Payment transactions (or payment management)
● Cost accounting
● Investment accounting
● Controlling
● Consolidation

Purchasing
● Material requirements
● Budget monitoring
● Supplier enquiries
● Purchase orders
● Outsourcing
● Multistage signature control
● Contracts

Sales
● Open pricing
● Offers and contracts
● Order entry
● Product configuration
● Inventory commitments
● Delivery planning and shipping
● Invoicing
● Returns
● Sales commissions

Warehouse Management
● Dynamic management of locations
● Planning and execution of reception
● Workload analysis and resources planning
● Preparation Orders optimisation
● Post-preparation tracking operations
● RF invoice communication

CRM
● Contact management
● Sales force automation
● Customer support
● Call centers
● Guarantee management
● Service orders
● Knowledge base
● Marketing campaigns

Inventory
● Multistage warehousing and site management
● Movements and transactions
● RF data acquisition
● Quality control
● Cost calculation
● Acquisition price tracing
● Inventory control
● Procurement

Manufacturing
● Discrete/process manufacturing
● Parts lists/composition/formula management
● Work schedule management
● MPS/MRP
● Technical data configuration
● Link to weighing scales
● Cost calculation
● Quality assurance
● Capacity planning

Conclusion

The cloud is doing for accounting software what the personal computer did for the industry in the 1980s and 1990s. Technology never stops advancing. Stalwart industry leaders continue to invest and evolve their products to meet the changing needs of small businesses across industry segments and for the first time in over a decade the market is witnessing a new breed of products being introduced by well-funded start-ups and global software publishers expanding outside their local geographies.

CPAs have and will continue to be at the forefront of technology. As trusted advisors, it's the CPA that is the first to notice when a business is outgrowing their software and the first to help them select their first-ever accounting system. Like it or not, accounting software will always be a cornerstone of the CPA world and firms who embrace technology and continually strive to stay on top of industry changes will have a distinct advantage over their competition.

About e2b teknologies

Founded in 2001, e2b teknologies specializes in helping businesses implement business technologies including enterprise resources planning (ERP) accounting software, customer relationship management (CRM), business intelligence (BI), warehouse management systems (WMS), human resources (HRMS), and other applications when they've outgrown entry-level accounting systems or when they are ready to move to a modern accounting or ERP platform.

We are experts in wholesale distribution and manufacturing industries offering custom software development and integration services representing Sage 500, Sage 100 (MAS 90), Sage X3, and Epicor ERP business applications and Solver BI360 business intelligence and budgeting software.

We partner with Great Lakes CPA firms to help our mutual clients to leverage technology in their businesses and to assist CPA firms with technology needs related to year-end processing or financial reporting. CPA referral partners enjoy one-on-one educational technology workshops, access to free resources, and referral rewards among many other benefits. Contact us today to learn more about our CPA Partner Program and how we can work together to ensure the success of your firm and your clients' businesses.

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