

**MAKING
THE MOST OF
MYOB[®]
AccountRight**

9th Edition

Veechi Curtis

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Foreword

When Veechi Curtis first rang me many years ago to tell me of her plans to write a book about MYOB software, I was thrilled and excited for a number of reasons.

Firstly, we had received many requests over the years from businesses wanting more information on how they could maximise their investment, streamline their work or tweak MYOB software one way or the other.

Secondly, through reading Veechi's incisive software reviews, I'd developed an enormous respect for her knowledge and thoroughness, but more particularly for her ability to dig beneath the surface and make her readers aware of the true nature of the subject matter she covers, whatever it may be.

And thirdly, Veechi placed high importance on having the MYOB Technical Support team collaborate with her on the book. This seemed a very sensible way of guaranteeing that the book hit the mark.

MYOB software has changed the way small businesses do their accounts. What was once viewed as an unenviable, even despised task, is now sometimes even looked forward to. Why?

MYOB is more than just software. Although we understand that businesses need software to help do their accounts, produce Business Activity Statements and get ready for their tax returns, we want to do more than that. We want to help with everyday business processes, turning tasks that were formerly cumbersome and time-consuming into quick and easy activities. With the new electronic payment and banking features that are part of MYOB M-Powered services, we've not only revolutionised the way businesses pay their suppliers and employees, and how customers pay businesses, but we've found many practical ways to contribute to the efficiency and growth of small business.

Hand-in-hand with continuous software development, we're always striving to provide customers with a variety of tools to make the most of our software and business services, including a website crammed with resources and online help, an active online community forum, a network of Certified Consultants and premium telephone support. This book is a perfect complement to these resources.

It's now 16 years since the first edition of *Making the Most of MYOB* was released. It's been a staggering success, by any yardstick, establishing itself as an Australian bestseller, month after month, year after year. Over 80,000 copies have been sold and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Making the Most of MYOB is now in its ninth edition, bringing you right up to date with a myriad of changes. The latest AccountRight upgrade shifts to a new programming language, not only updating the whole look and feel of the product, but also improving the way you work with forms and reports. The new language enables a new level of interconnectivity, enabling you to work online 'in the cloud', access data via your mobile phone, or connect easily with other software products.

I am honoured to have been given the opportunity to write this Foreword. The ingenious question and answer approach makes this book easily accessible to everyone, creating an invaluable resource that, in my opinion, should reside on every user's bookshelf.

Veechi has, as usual, been thorough and single-minded in her quest to cover as much ground as possible and to leave no stone unturned. And she's done it with eloquence. The result is truly stunning. I'm confident that it will indeed help you make the most of MYOB.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Shofer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'B'.

Brad Shofer
Co-founder
MYOB Australia

Acknowledgments

This book was written with the assistance of many people at MYOB, in particular Andrew Stebbing, Alison Patchett, Duane Davison, Mario Galevski and Brad Shofer. Thanks also to the Certified Consultant network for their generous exchange of ideas, tips and workarounds, to my stupendously organised night-owl editor, Maryanne Phillips and to my beady-eyed proofreader, Kate Rowe. And of course, thanks to my family for their wonderful good humour and affection.

About the author

Veechi Curtis (BBus, ASA) is a qualified accountant and specialist consultant to small business on financial software. She has written professionally for many years and has been a regular columnist and contributor to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Australian PC World*, *Australian Personal Computer*, *CCH Australia* and other publications. She lives with her husband and three children in the Blue Mountains.

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Golden rules

- 1 Pick a cut-off date, the date you'll start entering all your financial information into MYOB software, and stick to it.
- 2 Customise your Accounts List to reflect the individual nature of your business. Your Accounts List forms the basis of all financial reports.
- 3 Abandon the printing of invoices. Instead, email invoices direct to your customers, saving yourself time, paper and postage.
- 4 Make sure you're paid on time! Combine regular statements with other debt collection features to keep customers on track.
- 5 Understand the difference between **Spend Money** and **Pay Bills**, and also the difference between **Receive Money** and **Receive Payments**.
- 6 In order to produce reliable financial reports, you need to reconcile all your bank accounts at least once a month.
- 7 If you account for GST on an accruals basis, you need to use the Purchases command centre to record supplier bills.
- 8 Value your time realistically. If you pay five or more suppliers per week, switch either to electronic payments or MYOB M-Powered Payments.
- 9 Read through your Inventory reports regularly and make sure that costs and quantities for every single item are reasonable.
- 10 If you're on the computer for more than one hour per day, then you need to be able to type at least 40 words per minute. If you can't already type this fast, then take the time out and learn how.
- 11 If your income comes from several individual contracts or projects, or from different cost centres or income streams, consider using jobs or category features to analyse profitability.
- 12 If you have three employees or more, purchase a version of MYOB software that includes integrated payroll.
- 13 Before emailing an invoice to a customer, always test what the electronic (PDF) version of your document looks like by emailing it to yourself first. Sometimes a PDF version of a form can look very different from the printed version of the same form.
- 14 For quick, intuitive reports, go first to your Business Insights menu.

- 15 Analyse every process that you do in your business on a regular basis, from invoicing customers to paying bills, and see how you can make these processes more efficient.
- 16 To truly make the most of MYOB, take time to understand your Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet reports.
- 17 The most important thing of all is to allocate the right tax code when recording transactions. That done, everything else should fall into place.
- 18 Run your Company Data Auditor at the end of every month and fix up any problems before they get out of hand.
- 19 If you decide to wait for your accountant's adjustments before closing a financial year and you're not working in the cloud, then lock your company file so you can't inadvertently make changes to the data you've already sent to your accountant.
- 20 Always, always back up. Forget about eating, forget about sleeping; just remember to back up.
- 21 There should never be a need to enter data twice. If you find yourself entering data once in MYOB, and then a second time in another software application, then you need to review your business systems.
- 22 If your business grows to the point where you think you've outgrown MYOB AccountRight, ask an MYOB Certified Consultant to examine your concerns and consider your alternatives.
- 23 If you use a third-party add-on that connects with your MYOB company file (for example, ecommerce software or Point of Sale software), then don't upgrade without first checking that this add-on has been upgraded to interface with the new generation of AccountRight.

Introduction

It's a long time since I wrote the very first edition of this book, and the MYOB software of today is almost unrecognisable from the clunky (and rather ugly) software that I was writing about then. Every couple of years I settle down to write a new edition, not just updating the book for changes in the software but for changes in the Australian business environment too, such as the implementation of GST, the switch towards electronic banking, or the increase in online commerce.

The updates involved for this ninth edition have been more complex than usual, not only because our business environment continues to change so quickly, but also because of the 2011/12 release of the new generation of MYOB AccountRight.

The latest version of AccountRight is built using an entirely different programming language to previous versions of MYOB. At first glance, this latest version of AccountRight may look similar to previous versions, but scratch beneath the surface and a great deal has changed. There are new tools for customising forms, new commands for creating reports, different ways to manipulate lists and lots of changes in the way you store and manage company files.

You'll find new information about the latest version of AccountRight scattered throughout this book, with handy tips highlighted with special upgrade icons. The last chapter in this book is a new chapter which explains how to manage the actual upgrade process, including migrating forms, copying templates and updating backup routines.

About this book

When writing, I continually draw upon my consulting experience of the last fourteen years, setting up hundreds of businesses with MYOB software. For each topic, I try not only to explain the nuts and bolts of everyday activities, but also how these activities fit into the bigger picture of managing your business. For example, I explain not only how to print your Profit & Loss report, but how to understand it as well. Or I explain not only the mechanics of backing up, but why it's so important that you do it.

This book is specifically written for the 2011/12 release of AccountRight, including AccountRight Basics, AccountRight Standard, AccountRight Plus and AccountRight Premier.

With the 2011/12 release of AccountRight, the PC and Macintosh versions of MYOB have finally gone their different ways. For the first time, the AccountRight (PC) versions of MYOB are slightly different to the AccountEdge (Macintosh) versions. Although this book is written specifically for PC users, if you have a Macintosh and you use FirstEdge or AccountEdge, you will find that at least 90 per cent of the content still applies to you.

How this book is structured

The first twelve chapters of this book explore the fundamentals of MYOB software, focusing on getting up and running and how to record everyday transactions. The remaining chapters move on to more advanced topics, helping you understand financial statements, produce GST reports, start a new financial year or work with AccountRight on a network. The last chapter in this book explains how to manage the upgrade to the 2011/12 release of AccountRight.

Finally, the appendix at the back of this book talks about working with MYOB in the cloud. At the time of writing, not all MYOB products were available in the cloud, but it's likely that they will be by the time you're reading this.

Icons in this book

Throughout this book, you'll find AccountRight upgrade tips, Advanced tips, Classic mistakes, Golden rules, GST tips, Tips and Warnings.



AccountRight upgrade tips flag features that are new to the 2011/12 releases of AccountRight software



Advanced tips explain workarounds and solutions for tricky situations



Classic mistakes flag the kind of mistakes that beginners often make, and why you should avoid making them



Golden rules identify concepts fundamental to bookkeeping or working with MYOB — follow these rules, even if you forget everything else



GST tips provide tips specific to working with GST



Tips provide neat tricks, shortcuts or ways to make everyday tasks easier and quicker



Warnings alert you to pitfalls for the unwary

About you

I've written this book with all types of business in mind. You might be a bookkeeping novice with your fledgling enterprise in the back room, or you might be a seasoned executive managing 20 employees, a computer network and a complex invoicing system.

The only thing that I assume is that you have a basic familiarity with your computer and that you already have AccountRight installed. Wherever possible, I've endeavoured to explain all procedures and techniques in ordinary, accessible language regardless of the complexity of the task described. I've tried to make the answers for each question stand alone so that you can open this book at any question, read the answer and start work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki Curtis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.