Reference Guide

Optimizing ShipWorks Performance

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Background

While ShipWorks is designed to run well on systems that meet our recommended system requirements, there may room for improvement.... faster is better, right? This article will outline a few things that you may wish to investigate in order to optimize ShipWorks' performance on your computer infrastructure. The following list is not in any particular order of importance. It simply lists items that you may wish to look into in order to increase the performance of or to optimize your system for ShipWorks.

The Suggestions

Let's start with something easy. (Hey, it's free)

What version of ShipWorks are you running? Did you know that we often release new versions of ShipWorks that include speed and performance enhancements? We recommend that you check your version of ShipWorks and upgrade to the latest version if you are not already on it.

Checking your version of ShipWorks

What is the latest version, anyway?

OK, I need to upgrade. How do I do it?

All that old data. (Also free)

ShipWorks never deletes any old data for you. So, if you have been using ShipWorks for a while you may have old data hanging out in the ShipWorks database that is no longer needed and is just getting in the way of speed.

The good news is that you can easily clean up data from the ShipWorks database.

Before moving forward: We are not recommending that you delete orders or other data from ShipWorks. What we are recommending is that you double-check to be sure that the ShipWorks **Delete Old Data** action is configured properly in ShipWorks. What this action does is run on a scheduled time to remove unused data from the database that is older than 180 days (it does not delete orders unless you specifically tell it to). This keeps the database size to a minimum and helps to improve overall per-formance.

Great, how do I check to see that the action is set up?

Recommended requirements? What are they? - free to ($$$)

All software has a set of minimum system requirements. Basically these are the requirements suggested to run just the application and really don't tell us much about what is needed for our unique environment. So, we have a list of ShipWorks' recommended system requirements available for you. It should help you to identify if there are any areas that can be upgraded or improved on your ShipWorks system to help increase performance.

What are the recommended system requirements?

Laser printers are slow. Inkjet, even slower.($$)

For smaller businesses that may not be printing large quantities of labels in a day, laser printers (or even inkjet printers) may be OK. However, they are slow and the toner (or ink) can get costly. Many ShipWorks customers find that by simply changing to a thermal label printer, such as the Zebra ZP450, the speed at which the labels print is greatly increased. There is also no cost for ink or toner, and that's a good thing, right?

Let's get a bit more technical.

The spin on hard drives ($)

For a long time mechanical hard drives were the only option available. Sure they work fine, but the newer generation of Solid State Drives (SSD) blow the older, mechanical, spinning hard drive right out of the PC when it comes to speed. Switching from an older mechanical drive to a Solid State Drive will improve the speed of your system many times over and that's not all. They are smaller, they have no moving parts (more reliable) and don't cost all that much. It is also pretty easy to transfer your current computer's hard drive over to a new SSD.
You may wish to think about talking to your IT person about switching to a Solid State Drive on your ShipWorks system.

Operating Systems. Newer is better. - ($$)

It seems like every time you turn around these days there is a new Operating System (OS) being promoted on TV. Windows XP, Windows 7, Windows 8, Windows 10... and they will keep coming. But what is the real difference?
With new operating systems comes new technology that you may not even be aware of, but it does make a difference. There are improvements to the way applications like ShipWorks operate on your computer. Many of these improvements can lead to applications like ShipWorks running faster and becoming more stable.

If you are running an older OS, think about upgrading. We recommend at least Windows 7. Windows 10 is best.

Randomly Access Your Data Faster - ($)

When it comes to RAM (Random Access Memory) more is definitely better. Check with your IT person to see if your ShipWorks computer can take more RAM. If so, we recommend upgrading to the maximum amount of RAM your computer supports.

Bandwidth? Who's stealing it? - free to ($$)

If you are running more than one ShipWorks computer, you are sending ShipWorks data across your computer network. There are a couple of things to consider:

» If you have an older network you may be able to speed up performance across your network by upgrading to a newer network router. Talk to your IT person to see if there are routers with faster data transfer speeds.

» Wired networks tend to be faster and more reliable than wireless networks.

» Is anyone in the office streaming video or music while others are trying to ship? Both require a lot of data usage and may be slowing down how fast ShipWorks can share data across your network.

SQL - Server performance - ($$$$)

When you install ShipWorks you get Microsoft's SQL Express for free. We like free. SQL Express is the database that runs in the background, behind ShipWorks, and stores all of your ShipWorks data. In most cases SQL Express meets the requirements of ShipWorks users. There are a few things to note though:

» SQL Express only allows for a maximum database size of 10GB

» SQL Express cannot access or utilize all of the RAM your computer has to offer. Here is an example: Let's say that you just decided to upgrade to 64GB of RAM on your ShipWorks server (the max your server holds) but you are running SQL Express. SQL Express can only access and utilize 1GB of RAM. Yikes, that's a lot of wasted RAM and performance!

What can you do? Great Question!

You may wish to upgrade to SQL Server Standard edition. There are a couple of reasons why:

» SQL Server Standard has no database size limit which is great for large volume shippers.

» SQL Server Standard can access all 64GB of RAM. This will translate into big performance improvements.

Talk with your IT person to see if the benefit of upgrading SQL outweighs the cost.

Still Need Help?

Please feel free to [reach out to one of our awesome Customer Care representatives in St. Louis](#). We are happy to assist you.