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Frequently Asked Questions

NoteSmith 2019

Updated September 23, 2018

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Updates to NoteSmith 2019 since Initial Release

If your problem or question is referenced below and a fix is indicated, you may update during the current support year using your browser or from Help, Technical Support, Update within NoteSmith. See the manual for details on updating, which vary depending on your version of Windows or read the How To Update page below.

No updates to NoteSmith 2019 since release.

How to 'Update' NoteSmith 2019

Follow the detailed directions below to update your NoteSmith program file. Updating performs the same function as getting updates from Windows, for your web browser, or for your tax software. There are three ways to update: from File, Online, from your web browser, and when your NoteSmith computer is not connected to the internet. Whichever method you choose, follow those directions exactly!

Method 1: Help, Technical Support, Update within NoteSmith
  1. From NoteSmith, go to Help, Technical Support. On the Update tab, choose Connect. The FAQ and Newsletter files will be downloaded automatically. The program file dates are refreshed.
  2. Compare the dates of the Program and IRS files on the web site and your local drive. If either file date is older than those on your local drive, choose the appropriate Update button.
  3. Exit NoteSmith.
  4. Right mouse click the NoteSmith icon, choose Run As Administrator, and the new files are installed.
  5. Exit NoteSmith and restart normally.

Method 2: Web browser
  1. Start your web browser and go to either www.NoteSmith.com or www.NoteSmith.net.
  2. From the links on the web page, choose Support, then choose Downloads on the next page.
  3. In the 2019 section, depending on your browser, either right mouse click NSApp.y19 and choose Save As or left mouse click and choose Save File. If your browser gives you a choice, you want the file saved to this location on your computer: C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith2019. If it is saved elsewhere, make a note of the folder and copy the file there when the download completes.
  4. Exit your browser.
  5. Right mouse click the NoteSmith icon, choose Run As Administrator, and the new files are installed.
  6. Exit NoteSmith and restart normally.

Method 3: NoteSmith Computer is not Connected to the Internet
  1. Start the web browser and go to either www.NoteSmith.com or www.NoteSmith.net.
  2. From the links on the web page, choose Support, then choose Downloads on the next page.
  3. In the 2019 section, depending on your browser, either right mouse click NSApp.y19 and choose Save As or left mouse click and choose Save File. Make a note of the folder the browser uses.
  4. Exit your browser.
  5. Put a FlashDrive into this computer.
  6. Go to Start, Computer, and find the folder where the download was saved. Right mouse click NSApp.y17 and choose Send To, then the FlashDrive.
  7. Take the FlashDrive to the NoteSmith computer, put it in, and find the file on the FlashDrive. Right mouse click it and choose Copy. Find this folder: C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith2019. Right mouse click some white space next to other file names and choose Paste.
  8. Right mouse click the NoteSmith icon, choose Run As Administrator, and the new files are installed.
  9. Exit NoteSmith and restart normally.

How to 'Download' a NoteSmith Installation FlashDrive

Follow the detailed directions below to create a NoteSmith Installation FlashDrive by downloading a single file from the internet. There are two ways to retrieve the file: 1. In the program, go to Help, Technical Support, Order; or 2. Open your web browser. Whichever method you choose, follow those directions exactly! Note: yy and yyyy below represent the 2 or 4 digit year of folder or file names.

Method 1: Help, Technical Support, Order from within NoteSmith

      1. Put a blank FlashDrive into your computer. Click Start, Computer and make a note of the drive letter of the FlashDrive.

      2. From NoteSmith, go to Help, Technical Support. On the Order tab, enter the drive letter of your FlashDrive, and choose the year you want to download. (The new annual file is available starting in the fourth quarter of the old year.) Click Download. The file is about 60mb and will be downloaded automatically.

      3. When it finishes, a message will direct you to continue if you have a blank FlashDrive in the computer. If you change your mind, cannot determine the drive letter, or the FlashDrive is not adequate, you can choose No and the downloaded file will be saved for later use. Just click the button again when you are ready and the program will start where you left off.

      4. The files will be extracted from the downloaded zip file onto your FlashDrive.

      5. When it is done, choose Eject from your Windows Taskbar which will give you an OK when the files all are closed. Remove the FlashDrive and label it.

      6. Refer to your Installation Guide, available after January 1, when you are ready to install the program.

Method 2: Web browser

      1. Start your web browser and go to www.NoteSmith.net. You can use the dot com site if dot net is unavailable. This does not need to be your NoteSmith computer.

      2. From the list of links on the Home page, choose Support, then on the next page choose Downloads.

      3. In the Installation Media Download section, depending on your browser, either right mouse click the desired NSyyFlashDrive.zip file and choose Save As or left mouse click and choose Save File. If your browser gives you a choice, use this location on your computer: C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy. If you do not have this folder, or if your browser saves it elsewhere, make a note of the folder name where you save the file. Typically, this might be C:\Temp or C:\Download or C:\Users\YourFirstName\Downloads.

      4. Exit your browser.

      5. Click the Windows Start button, open Computer, and work your way to the folder in Step 3.

      6. Make sure you have a blank FlashDrive in your computer and you know the drive letter Windows assigned to it. Right mouse click the NSyyFlashDrive.zip file, choose Extract, and pick the FlashDrive.

      7. When it is done, choose Eject from your Windows Taskbar which will give you an OK when the files all are closed. Remove the FlashDrive and label it.

      8. Refer to your Installation Guide, available after January 1, when you are ready to install the program.

Capture Screen Messages

There are a number of methods to capture on-screen messages using either NoteSmith or Windows. Please read each of the suggestions and use the one most appropriate for your situation. *Do not take a photograph or high resolution scanner image and email it*. That one message will be the equivalent size of 1000 standard email messages or 250 fax pages. The NoteSmith email server will reject your message as spam.

Use NoteSmith to create a message including the last Program Error using any of these options:

- Go to Help, Technical Support, Fax, type a message in the large box, and Print.
- Go to Help, Technical Support, Internet and compose an email. Tell NoteSmith your email program type in File, Setup, Office. Enter any settings necessary in File, Company Configuration, Email.

Use NoteSmith to capture the last Program Error message with these steps:

1. Go to Help, Technical Support, Data. The last error is in the bottom box.
2. Highlight the desired text with your mouse. Click and hold down the left mouse button at the start of the text and drag the mouse to the end of the text. Release the mouse button and the text should be highlighted.
3. Choose Edit, Copy from the menu or hold down the Ctrl key and press C.
4. Open your email program, create a new message in HTML or plain text format, type some information, press Enter a few times, then choose Edit, Paste or hold down the Ctrl key and press V.

Use Word to capture a message, window, or view of the screen with these steps:

1. Make sure NoteSmith is not full screen. Use the box just to the left of the red X if necessary, then use your mouse to adjust the margins of the program window so the NoteSmith Toolbar icons shrink without words. Click once in the program so its window has the focus.
2. Hold down the Alt key and press the PrtScn key, which also might be called Print Screen or similar. Using ALT captures just the NoteSmith screen and not your entire desktop.
3. Open Microsoft Word, type a message into a new document, press Enter a few times, then choose Edit, Paste or hold down the Ctrl key and press V.
4. Save the Word file as a PDF, choose Minimize Size, and attach it to an email.

Use Email to capture a message, window, or view of the screen with these steps:

1. Make sure NoteSmith is not full screen. Use the box just to the left of the red X if necessary, then use your mouse to adjust the margins of the program window so the NoteSmith Toolbar icons shrink without words. Click once in the program so its window has the focus.
2. Hold down the Alt key and press the PrtScn key, which also might be called Print Screen or similar. Using ALT captures just the NoteSmith screen and not your entire desktop.
3. Open your email program, create a new message in HTML format, type some information, press Enter a few times, then choose Edit, Paste or hold down the Ctrl key and press V. The message cannot be plain text format because it does not accept graphics. Send the email.

Use Email to capture just message text with these steps:

1. When the message appears, highlight the desired text in the message with your mouse. Click and hold the left mouse button at the start of the text and drag the mouse to highlight all the text. Release the mouse button.
2. Choose Edit, Copy from the menu or hold down the Ctrl key and press C.
3. Open your email program, create a new message in HTML or in plain text format, type some information, then choose Edit, Paste from the email menu or hold down the Ctrl key and press V.

Windows Vista, 7, 8 and 10

To complete the FlashDrive installation under Windows Vista, 7, 8, or 10, first double left click Setup.exe. After it finishes, single right mouse click SetupRegSvr.bat and choose Run As Administrator to avoid errors when starting the program and accessing various features. *Do not log into your computer as the Administrator* to install the program, otherwise a Windows User will not be able to print or otherwise fully use the program.

Be sure, as always with a new operating system, that you have plenty of horsepower in your computer if you upgrade it. The best bet is to buy a new computer with Windows already loaded, but don't cheap-out here either. Get some extra memory and a large hard drive. An upgraded video card lets you take advantage of some eye-popping graphics as Windows opens and closes its windows.

If you are planning a new computer purchase, this is the time to make the swap. Get NoteSmith running on the new computer, backup your data from the old computer (generally a FlashDrive works best), and restore the data to the new computer. Run some reports on the new computer. Be SURE to deactivate (see the NoteSmith manual!) the program on the old computer, be SURE your printer is working with NoteSmith, print the receipt when the program asks, and we can provide a free activation on the new computer when necessary. But you MUST have a printed deactivation receipt from your old, previously activated, NoteSmith computer.

If you simply upgrade your computer to a new version of Windows, you will lose some current personal settings which could include your NoteSmith activation. If in doubt, backup, deactivate, print the NoteSmith deactivation receipt, then do the Windows and NoteSmith installations.

Allocate some time to learn the latest Windows. It is much more security conscious than any other version of Windows but to take advantage of it, you need to set it up properly. Simply overriding the default settings or blindly accepting the pop up warnings undermine the security features designed to protect your data.

We recommend viewing the full file name in Windows. Go to Computer, choose the C: drive, then Organize, then Folder and Search Options, and the View tab. Uncheck (clear the box) that says "Hide extensions for known file types". Windows may know what they are but you won't. NoteSmith has 3 files called Payment, for instance, and they all look identical, which they are not, when the box is checked.

Later versions of Windows treat computer users a bit differently than in earlier versions. You now are treated primarily as a "User" under Windows, while most earlier operating systems before Vista allowed you to use the computer as an "Administrator." If you are the only user of the computer, Windows will allow you to be both a User and an Administrator, although it encourages you to create both an Administrator log in and a User log in. If there is only one log in created, Windows switches to a dim mode with a highlighted box anytime an Administrator function is required, allowing you to accept or cancel the action.

For the much needed and highly desirable security functionality, we recommend you run your computer on a daily basis as a User and reserve logging in as Administrator only for functions that require it, such as installing printers. Be sure to keep the Administrator or the password handy.

Adjusting NoteSmith Window Size in Windows 10

Upon installing NoteSmith, the NoteSmith window may be too small to display subsequent menus in their entirety. The NoteSmith window can be adjusted. You will see three small dots on the bottom right of the NoteSmith windows. Move your mouse to that area until it turns into an arrow. Now you can drag the corner to make the window bigger.

Run As Administrator

One of the failings of the long time, highly successful Windows XP was security. Starting with Vista and continuing on through Windows 10, Microsoft beefed up computer and internet security. One of the features they added was requiring a real human being to click a box to allow certain functions that could otherwise take down your computer.

Updating any program that is installed on your computer involves replacing executable files stored in protected Windows folders. It would be disastrous to place a malicious file in such a location where it would gain control of your computer or worse!

Updating program files, therefore, requires you to assume the role of a computer administrator temporarily and click buttons that appear on screen. NoteSmith is no different, so after downloading a freshly updated program file, you must run the program as an administrator, telling Windows it is OK to make the file substitution. If NoteSmith gives you such an instruction, simply exit the program, right mouse click the NoteSmith icon, and choose Run As Administrator from the pop up menu. After NoteSmith updates the files, it tells you to exit and restart the program normally as a user would, by left mouse clicking the its icon.

Windows XP does not have Run As Administrator and, therefore, NoteSmith assumes you are the administrator. After a 12 year run, Microsoft ceased support for XP in 2014. We strongly recommend replacing any XP computer with Windows 10.

Anti-virus software, internet security software, firewalls

Anti-virus software looks for viral activity on your computer and relies on the Windows Firewall for additional protection. Its beefier cousin, known as internet security software, contains virus protection and its own firewall that monitors your computer for unauthorized internet access, malicious sites you may try to visit, and spam protection, among other features.

Unfortunately, these consume system resources which slow down your computer and can render software unresponsive when the delays are too long. NoteSmith opens and closes up to 14 files when you record a single payment. An anti-virus program that scans each file as it is opened, then again as it is closed, will significantly slow down the computer to the point where NoteSmith or its files appear to be locked up by Windows. See "Error 1705: File Access Denied" elsewhere in this document. If NoteSmith sees an internet connection is available when checking for a program update, but then is blocked by your security software, it can appear unresponsive while seeing the internet but not being able to access it. It can take from 30 seconds to 3 minutes before it abandons the access attempts.

Known programs and file types that cannot usually store an executable virus can be excluded from scanning by your internet security. Realize that you need to strike a balance between safety and functionality. Each step in freeing up computer resources by reducing security features makes your computer more vulnerable, but if you lock it up too tight, the computer will have only slightly more functionality than a brick.

Connection failed: If NoteSmith cannot connect to the internet, open your browser and type the following address, then Enter:
        ftp.notesmith.com
A username/password window should open, indicating your computer can access the site and your firewall is blocking NoteSmith. If you do not see that window, then your firewall is blocking your computer or you do not have an internet connection. Follow the instructions below that reference firewall.

File access errors: If you are getting intermittent errors, especially File Access Denied, follow all of these steps:

1. Take your computer off the network and internet by unplugging the Ethernet cable or shutting of its wireless connection from Start, Control Panel, Network and Sharing Center, Adapter Settings, Disable.

2. Turn off your anti-virus, internet security, and firewall programs for a few minutes.

3. Start NoteSmith and see if the problem is resolved. If not, then your internet security or firewall may not be responsible for the behavior. If the problem vanishes, your security software is set to interfere with required functionality of your computer and you should continue below.

4. Restart your security software, then open it on screen, usually by clicking an icon in the System Tray at the lower right corner of Windows. Find the Settings or Options menu of your security software. There are numerous security programs on the market so be flexible in searching this terminology as every publisher may use slightly different words. Each item below will make your computer slightly more vulnerable but also more responsive:

- Under Anti-virus, exclude file type DBF and any settings related to scanning temporary files.
- Exclude the C:\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith2019\Data folder.
- Exclude scanning network drives. Instead, let the remote computer scan its own drives.
- Shut off Real Time Protection, which scans each file as it is used, but keep your scheduled scans set.
- Check your firewall settings to allow NoteSmith access to the internet:

Designating a program as trusted

NoteSmith installs its program files in a folder secured and monitored by Windows called Program Files or Program Files (x86).

If you use Windows 10 Firewall: Click Start, Settings, then type the word Firewall in the box labeled Find A Setting. From the list of choices, select Allow an App through Windows Firewall. On the next screen, first click the Change Settings box, then scroll down the list to find NoteSmith. Check the box to the left of its name which allows internet access, then check Private, Public, or both depending on your network. Most home and office networks are Private while networks in coffee shops and airports are Public. Click OK, close the open windows, and restart your computer.

If you use Windows 8 Firewall: Move the cursor to the lower left side of the screen and right click. Select "Control Panel" on the context menu. Select the "System and Security" option, then select "Windows Firewall." Click "Allow an app" to the left of the Windows Firewall window, then "Change Settings." Now click the previously greyed out "Allow another app" button, select an application from the list "Add." If NoteSmith is not available, use the "Browse" button and find
      C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy\NSWin.exe

If you use Windows 7 Firewall with a virus checker and not full featured internet security software: Go to Start, Control Panel, find either Windows Firewall or Security Center then Windows Firewall. Choose Allow a Program through Windows Firewall. Click Change Settings.

If you use a third party internet security firewall: All security programs are different, so a generic description is illustrated here. The most popular ones appear below. Open the security program and find Firewall in one of the main sections of the program, typically Web or Network. Next look for Programs, then either Configure or Add. Select NoteSmith if it is shown or choose a Browse button and work your way to the folder and file:
      C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy\NSWin.exe
Set Access to Allow or Automatic. Start NoteSmith and try again.

If you use third party anti-virus software: Below are steps to tell your anti-virus software that a program was installed deliberately by you and that it is trusted. Commonly used programs like Microsoft Word or Excel are recognized by most internet security programs while niche software like NoteSmith may not be. The steps below will vary based on the version of the software you use. Use your browser and favorite search engine as necessary or visit the web site of the publisher of your internet security software.

<u>Windows 10 Defender</u>

You *may* need to add NoteSmith as an Excluded process if modifying the Windows firewall was not enough.

1. Open Windows Defender from the Taskbar or the Windows Settings menu.
2. Click Settings.
3. Scroll down the page and click Add an Exclusion.
4. Click the plus (+) sign under Processes.
5. In the pop up window, type NSWin.exe, then click OK.

McAfee

1. Open the Trusted Lists pane:
      a. Under Common Tasks, click Home.
      b. On the SecurityCenter Home pane, click Computer & Files.
      c. In the Computer & Files information area, click Configure.
      d. On the Computer & Files Configuration pane, ensure that virus protection is enabled, and click Advanced.
      e. Click Trusted Lists in the Virus Protection pane.

2. Select Trusted Programs from the trusted list types.

3. Under I Want To, do one of the following:
      a. To allow the detected item to make changes to the Windows registry or critical system files on your computer without notifying you, click Trust.
      b. To block the detected item from making changes to the Windows registry or critical system files on your computer without notifying you, click Block.
      c. To remove the detected item from the trusted lists, click Remove.

Trend Micro

To add/remove programs or folders to the Exception Lists, follow the steps below:

1. Open the main console of you Trend Micro Security program. Do any of the following:
      a. Double-click the Trend Micro icon on your desktop.
      b. Double-click the Trend Micro icon on your system tray (near the clock).
2. Click Settings (gear icon). This will open the Protection Settings window.
3. Click the Exception Lists tab.
4. Click Programs and Folders, then click Add.
5. Click Browse.
6. Browse for the folder or program to add, click Open, then choose a program to open, for instance,
      C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy\NSWin.exe
7. Click OK to close the Add an Item window.
8. Click Apply, then click OK.

Avast

1. Open the Avast user interface from the Taskbar or Start Menu.
2. Choose Settings (may be just an icon) then General, and Exclusions.
4. Choose either Add or File Paths or a tab depending on your version of Avast.
5. Choose Browse and work your way to this file:
      C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy\NSWin.exe
6. Click Add or check the box next to NoteSmith, then OK.
7. Find the URL tab and add both NoteSmith.com and NoteSmith.net.

Norton 360

Adding a Program Exception to the Firewall

1. Open Norton Internet Security, then click the Settings tab to open the Settings window.
2. Click the Network tab, select Smart Firewall, then select Program Rules.
3. Click the Add button and navigate to the program that you want to add as an exception, for instance,
      C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy\NSWin.exe
4. Select the program to open the Security Alert window. Click the Options drop-down box, select Allow Always (Recommended), then click OK.
5. Click the Apply button, then click OK to allow the exception through the firewall.

NoteSmith PDF Converter 5

The current PDF printer driver is called "NoteSmith PDF Converter 5" released in 2014. Verify this by clicking the Windows Start button, choose Settings, then Devices. If it does not show "5" then you installed an old PDF Converter into a newer NoteSmith program or the old converter was correctly installed using an older version of NoteSmith that has since been updated. The current converter is on the installation FlashDrive in folder PDF5.

Installing NoteSmith PDF Converter 5

1. Start NoteSmith by single right mouse clicking the NoteSmith program icon in your Windows Start Menu and choose Run As Administrator from the pop up menu.
2. Go to File, Setup, the PDF tab, and click Install. Find the installation file called Install-NS-to-PDF5.exe on the current FlashDrive in the PDF5 folder.
3. Exit and restart NoteSmith normally by double left mouse clicking its icon.

Installing NoteSmith PDF Converter 5 onto a Workstation that cannot access the server as administrator

1. Start NoteSmith by single right mouse clicking the NoteSmith icon in your Windows Start Menu and choose Run As Administrator from the pop up menu.
2. Your mapped server folders may not be available when you are running as an administrator. The program will want you to find the server or exit the program. From the Select Directory screen, choose Cancel, read any pop up messages, and a window titled Mapping Is Not Correct will appear. Choose the Map button.
3. On the File, Setup window that appears, choose the PDF tab, and click Install. Find the installation file called Install-NS-to-PDF5.exe on the 2019 FlashDrive in its PDF5 folder.
4. Exit the window and restart NoteSmith normally by double left mouse clicking its icon.

Message "Printer is not activated"

After upgrading an older Windows version to Windows 10, or receiving a forced update of an existing Windows 10, the NoteSmith PDF Converter 5 may give a message that the printer is not activated. This is because newer versions of Windows do not know that earlier Windows versions performed a secure printer installation, which now only can be done as an Administrator. This is a Windows issue, not a NoteSmith issue. If this happens, PDF Converter 5 needs to be reinstalled as follows:
1. Start your NoteSmith program by right clicking its icon and choose Run As Administrator from the various choices on the pop up menu.
2. Go to File, Setup, PDF and uninstall the PDF Converter. Exit NoteSmith as it suggests.
3. Restart again using Run As Administrator, go to File, Setup, PDF and install.
4. Finally, exit NoteSmith and restart normally.

IRS Forms

The printed and PDF manual answers tax form questions and has other tips. NoteSmith has printed IRS forms for 3 decades. Your question likely is answered in the manual or consult a local, licensed tax professional.

IRS 1098 and late fees

The IRS 1098 references late fees in its instructions for Box 1. Late fees charged repetitively by the day and late fees based on a percentage of the balance use calculations similar to charging interest. Such late fees can be considered by the IRS as interest disguised as a late fee, designed to increase the yield on a note, and so must be reported on a 1098 making them tax deductible to the payor.

The Box 1 directions specifically exclude the common, state sanctioned, flat, one time late fee that is a "specific mortgage service." This generally is reimbursement for making collection calls or sending late notices if that is your purpose for charging a late fee.

You may have noticed that when a grace period expires without recording a full payment, NoteSmith slightly changes behavior. It will not accept merely the PITI as full payment but expects PITIL. The account now appears on both Aging and Collections reports. A late letter will be printed which the program would have otherwise prevented. NoteSmith, therefore, does not report late fees on a 1098 because it supports only the one per payment, flat fee style of late fee as compensation for specific mortgage collection services excluded by the Box 1 directions.

Notice, too, that the IRS directions do not ask you to justify the charge for your specific service. IRS 1098 is not a tax return, it is an information return, designed to keep borrowers from deducting more than they paid.

The news carried an interesting story years ago about an elementary school which charged a 1c late fee per day when students forgot their 25c milk money. A concerned citizen informed the school that this was not a "late fee" but interest (a charge per day for the rent of someone's money) and, at a penny on 25c, this was 4% a day or roughly 1500% per annum! Calculation of late fees by the day sounds like interest. It does not sound like a late fee for sending a late letter or making a collections call. Any good attorney will be able to explain in court that calculating "late fees" daily is really an interest add-on. If the late fee is substantial and either the term within which it was charged is short enough or the face rate of the note high enough, the fee as interest could make the note usurious. Usury, the charging of excessive interest, carries forfeiture of principal and treble damages, then opens you up to a class action lawsuit for the benefit of your other payors. Whether you charge late fees by the day or just charge one substantial late fee and call it interest, you then would have documented usury right on your IRS 1098s!

Congress approved the Mortgage Interest Deduction as a way to encourage home ownership. It is doubtful it or the IRS intended to approve an additional deduction for encouraging late mortgage payments.

Modify your notes to show a flat late fee and make a single charge per payment period, such as 4% of the payment amount which is typical of most state statutes. Remember that if someone cannot pay you, they cannot pay whether your late fee is $10 a day or a one-time $25.

If your legal or tax advisor disagrees, ask them for a written opinion letter on their letterhead describing the type of late fee you are charging: reimbursement for service or interest disguised as a fee. The opinion should quote federal tax law, IRS Revenue Procedures, or IRS safe harbor letters. Then adjust your business accordingly. We would be interested in seeing that written opinion as it might impact how we treat late fees in the future. To date, we have seen nothing dependable or authoritative in writing that contradicts the information here.

Printing

The "Account number" box at the bottom of the third form on each page cannot be reached by a modern computer printer. It is outside of the margin of all printers we have tested. The box needs to be filled in with an account number only if you have more than one loan with that taxpayer. This becomes an issue only if that taxpayer's information appears on the bottom box. We repeatedly asked the IRS to reduce the size of the 1098 so all boxes can be completed by machine but they do not express any willingness to cooperate. We suspect they do not want to receive, handle, scan, and file paper forms. Here is the last reply we received: "Regardless of the number of forms you file, the IRS encourages you to file electronically through the Filing Information Returns Electronically (FIRE) system. Filing electronically would eliminate the printing problem you are encountering with the paper products." Filers with customers having multiple accounts paying more than $600 should file electronically. It will save time, is free to sign up, and NoteSmith supports electronic filing. NoteSmith will print IRS 4419, Application for a Transmitter Control Code, for you.

The starting and ending date for printing these forms is fixed for the calendar year prior to the year for which NoteSmith was released. The IRS modifies these forms annually and we cannot know what they will look like more than a few months in advance of their due date. NoteSmith is released at the turn of each year, as are all other tax related programs, to print the forms due by that January 31.

TIN, SSN, and EIN

The IRS designates any tax related filing number as the generic Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), which applies both to individuals and to all organizations responsible for filing a tax return. The Social Security Number (SSN, two hyphens) is used by individuals and, in some cases, sole proprietors who do not have a business tax number. Some sole proprietors and all corporations use an Employer Identification Number (EIN, one hyphen). Partnerships and trusts may file using their SSN if income is passed through to an individual, otherwise they likely have an EIN. So a TIN is either an SSN or an EIN, and could be another lesser used type of number.

Forms supported by NoteSmith

Form	TIN	Reports
1098	SSN only	Mortgage interest exceeding $600 collected by you secured with a primary or secondary residence and an individual as payor
1099-INT	SSN or EIN but not corporations	Interest paid by you, generally exceeding $600
1099-A	SSN or EIN	Abandonment, value of security abandoned by borrower
1099-C	SSN or EIN	Cancellation of debt, sometimes filed with 1099-A but it is more common to file C by itself
6252	SSN or EIN	Income from casual sales of real or personal property when receiving payments over multiple years
4419	EIN only	Request to IRS for Transmitter Control Code (TCC) number for filing electronically
W-9	SSN or EIN	Request for taxpayer identification number
B-10 and B-10A	SSN or EIN	Notify the bankruptcy court of your status as a secured or unsecured creditor; this is not an IRS form

1098 two up form and changes for 2019

The IRS 1098 Copy B form is now a 2 up form, meaning it takes up half a page instead of the third it used for decades. It is impossible to fold that half page form in a one third page business window envelope so both return and inside addresses are visible. We had to reduce Form B so it prints addresses in #9 double window envelope format and yet maintains the proportion of the original IRS form. Separator lines within the address were removed to facilitate accurate USPS scanning. Small hash marks as folding aids appear on both side margins, 3.5 inches from the page top and bottom. 1/10/17

The revised IRS Form 1098 to be sent in January 2019 requires the following data points:
1. Origination Date: This item was not necessary for NoteSmith in years prior to the 2017 tax year. The 2019 program will "guess" that your Accounts, Edit, Investment, Date Bought is the actual mortgage Origination Date,

which typically is correct for mortgage loans that you originate. For mortgage loans that you bought on the open market, the Date Bought is the same as always but the Origination Date of the document as recorded at the appropriate courthouse must be changed. In NoteSmith 2019, go to Accounts, Edit, the Credit Bureau button on the first tab, then the Original Note tab. It would be prudent to create a list of loan numbers and their origination dates as soon as possible so you can type them quickly into NoteSmith 2019. IRS 1098 forms, reports, and electronic files reflect the Origination Date. 1/9/17

2. Number of Properties: This item was not necessary for NoteSmith in years prior to the 2017 tax year. IRS 1098 now includes a field for reporting the number of properties (in excess of one) that secure a single mortgage. This number of properties is entered in the Credit Bureau window.

3. Property Address: The property address securing the mortgage is now required. Generally, this would be the payor's mailing address but if different, enter the information on Accounts, Edit, Collateral. Some primary residences may not have an address, so the county parcel number will be used if its associated box is checked. 10/3/16

4. Balance as of January 1 of the reporting tax year: For loans you originated or bought prior to the start of the tax year, NoteSmith selects the balance as of the last payment prior to January 1 from the payment history. A problem arises, however, when you buy a note during the reporting tax year. You cannot be sure of the balance on January 1 since you were not servicing the mortgage so NoteSmith will enter $0.00. Similarly, for a Line of Credit you issued in a previous year, but which was not funded on January 1, the balance reported will be $0.00. 10/3/16

5. Mortgage Insurance Premiums: Premiums can be reported by entering MIP into the Reference field when recording an insurance payment received. Refer to the Del2Clip topic in the index of the printed or PDF manual if you need to re-record certain insurance payments as MIPs. 10/3/16

6. SSNs on Copy A of IRS Form 1098 should not be truncated with X's. 1/3/17

The IRS accepted an electronic test file we submitted in early November 2018 that contained the items above.

Reports, Accounts, Tax and other forms

IRS 1099-A and 1099-C may display "Error: File Temp1 too large" while data is being selected for printing or multiple copies could print. We reduced the file structure to help limit the overall size. 1/31/17

Tracking down unusual computer problems

Note: Intermittent errors and general page faults are difficult to track down. Generally, they will be the result of incompatible hardware, partially scrambled Windows files, a Windows file that is out of date or much newer than similar files, or network issues. Use the scientific method (change just one thing and look for an improvement) to eliminate as many factors as possible.

In our office, we use strictly Intel and Microsoft components to eliminate as many compatibility issues as possible. Other hardware or software we must use always is manufactured or published by large, national companies. Avoid the temptation to purchase cheaper components to save money, because it won't save you anything. It will be costly. Here are some tips.

Both standalone users and network users should try these items in order.

1. From within NoteSmith, run File, Utilities, Maintenance.
2. Search for 'Error 1705' elsewhere in this document.
3. From Windows, run Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, ScanDisk.
4. Similarly, run Defrag. Font files and Windows DLL files can get scrambled and will give error messages. ScanDisk or Defrag should fix them.
5. Empty your internet browser's disk cache.
6. Try running the program from another computer. This should eliminate the computer as the source of the errors. Try using a computer that is as different as possible from yours: different make, CPU, amount of memory, etc.
7. Make sure you have a current program file. Search on 'Update' elsewhere in this document.
8. Have your computer checked for viruses, failing RAM chips, or a failing hard disk.
9. Back up your data, uninstall the program, rename the C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith\Data folder, and reinstall it. Windows does not remove user data so the Data folder needs to be renamed to get a clean reinstallation. Record payments and run reports using the sample data. If the errors disappear, restore your data from the backups.
10. Reboot, press F8 before Windows starts, and choose Safe Mode. Load no programs, icons, or utilities.

Network users: Networks can create their own sources of incompatibility. Network cards that do not talk to each other, an underpowered server, or cabling that is too thin or subject to voltage fluctuations can cause untimely and spurious error messages.

1. Try running the program standalone. Go to the server and enter your data while sitting there.
2. Go to a different workstation and see if the error persists.
3. Excess network loads will slow data transfer and could upset the timing of your computer or software. Most programs expect virtually instant access to files, even if it takes a few seconds to transport it across the network once the file is located.
4. Be sure the folder C:\Users\Public\Princeton on the server is mapped to drive letter P (P for Princeton) on each workstation.

Frequently Asked Questions of All NoteSmith Versions

The information below covers a multitude of miscellaneous NoteSmith situations and often is used by support technicians to help track down rarely occurring issues. Browse the items below or use the search function in your PDF viewer.

Accounts, Add, Loan numbers

Loan numbers should use all 9 prefix characters including numbers, hyphens, or upper case letters with no embedded spaces. Some outside agencies require upper case letters, confusing loan number aaaaaaa-RC and AAAAAAA-RC (although NoteSmith correctly distinguishes these as different accounts). This change will prevent issues with IRS electronic filing and credit bureau exporting. It is easier for customers to correspond using their loan number and for them to enter a loan number accurately if you are using our online web site to display payment histories. Subject to change, you still can format loan numbers as you wish by tabbing out of the loan number prefix to the suffix field but we strongly suggest formatting loan numbers properly.

Add/Edit Accounts

You cannot close a newly added account without recording at least one payment. Added to reduce the chance of confusing the date closed from servicing with the date the note sale was closed. 8/12/11

Autorun

The Autorun.inf file within NSyyFlashDrive.zip is useful when making a CD but needs to be deleted from the zip file before attempting to create a FlashDrive. 10/23/15

Backup

NoteSmith only backs up the current folder, so if you have more than one, go to File, Folder to make your second folder current, then run backup again.

When backing up to a CD, use third party CD writing software if you want to back up NoteSmith directly to the CD drive in your computer. Windows will not treat a CD-RW as a writeable hard drive by itself. It expects all CDs to be read-only. If Windows will not write to a CD, then NoteSmith cannot write to it either. Adaptec DirectCD is a third party program that might work because it fools Windows into thinking the CD is another hard drive. Further, copying files manually to a CD labels them as read-only and NoteSmith cannot use them if you copy them back to a hard disk. 10/23/02.

We recommend USB FlashDrives for backing up, since they are very portable, reusable, reasonably priced, long lived, and have no moving parts. 9/15/05

Anti-virus and internet security software interferes with NoteSmith generating temporary files. See error 1705 elsewhere in this document. 10/21/06

Bankruptcy

The 'Loan' box and the 'Secured' box must be checked in order for a market value of the collateral to be printed on the B-10 form.

Calendar

The pop up calendar will not display the Saturday column if you modify your screen settings from Windows to make everything larger. You will notice that the text on the calendar is larger but the border does not expand, so a column is dropped off. This is a limitation of the Microsoft Calendar control that is used and is not related to NoteSmith. Changing your screen settings back or making them less extreme will eliminate the issue.

Colorado Supervised Lenders

From a user: If a lender has more than 5 loans with APR's (not nominal rates) in excess of 12%, they are probably subject to the same ridiculous laws we are subject to. Failure to get licensed could result in forfeiture of ALL interest collected, and possibly penalty fines as well. This program is run by the Attorney General, who is getting heat about "predatory lending practices".

For supervised lenders, we recommend setting late fee order to Ask and be sure to get your late letter1 out during the grace period and late2 out as soon as the grace period expires. Print from the NoteSmith Print Options window so each payor's Notepad will get marked. The law (UCCC Section 5-2-203(3)) is protecting against late fee compounding, so consider accepting payments as full (R) if they are PITI with or without the late fee. NoteSmith will accrue any deficiencies.

Credit bureau

Loan numbers are unique in NoteSmith, but credit reporting requires all upper case with spaces and punctuation removed. This could create a non-unique loan number when exported in Metro2 format. For instance, Abc-1-234-RC, ABC123-4-RC, and ABC 1 234-RC will become ABC1234RC. If credit reporting, apply caps, punctuation, and layout of loan numbers consistently. Avoid punctuation other than a hyphen. Any spaces should appear at the end of the number and not be embedded. It is safest to use only capital letters in the loan number and fill the entire field. This also benefits payors who look up their history at our web site, for users posting with our File, Online module.

Payable notes should not be reported. If they are, you need to uncheck the 'Report to bureau' box on the Accounts, Edit, Payor, Credit Bureau window. Its button is not visible for payable notes (-PY, -U1), therefore you must change the loan number to a receivable number (-RC) first from Accounts, Adjustments. Return to Accounts, Edit, CBureau and uncheck the box, Save and Exit, then return to Accounts, Adjustments and set the loan number back to the original. New notes added are always unchecked. A checked payable is from importing older data and altering some note setup information afterwards. 4/9/03

Some information reported follows Metro2 guidelines and is not necessarily what NoteSmith would report normally on, say, its Reports, Portfolio, Due Dates. For instance:

Field 13, 102-104: Term is stored in NoteSmith in months but mortgages should be reported in years, so an additional field appears on the Credit Bureau, Original tab for your use.

Field 21, 155-163: Current balance, but for mortgages add interest due

Field 22, 164-172: Amount past due, with payments remaining: normal late amount as of the ending date of the export; with no payments remaining, it is balance plus any accrued fees

Email: Web based

NoteSmith cannot send email if your mail server is web browser based, such as AOL or Yahoo. You may see Error 2071 if File, Setup, Office is set to Outlook and you are using AOL or Yahoo.

Only Google Gmail allows direct emails sent through their mail server from software on your computer. To send emails through Gmail, use Stunnel, available on the NoteSmith installation media. Open the Stunnel folder and find the directions in its ReadMe text file. 9/23/13

Escrow adjustments

Managing escrow is like trying to hit a moving target. Outgoing payments can occur during any time of the year while escrow typically is adjusted only at year end. The best way to handle your escrow in NoteSmith is exactly as you are handling it in real life.

It is tempting near year end to modify the escrow analysis report using the escrow amounts you are about to pay in just a few weeks. Ideally, you distribute your escrow payments first and then a few weeks later print a new analysis report with coupons. It rarely happens this way or this cleanly. Adjusting escrow is a moving target depending on how far away the next significant disbursement is to be paid. It would be simpler if taxes were not due until March because December tax disbursements are so close to when escrow analyses are printed, but that should be immaterial. Generate your reports and run your business based on what is due today.

There is an overview of the escrow process and a series of steps for adjusting escrow called "Escrow Overview" and "Escrow Adjusting" which can be found in the manual's Table of Contents so are not duplicated here. Read the paper version or the PDF version under Help, Manual.

The NoteSmith system of calculating escrow is based on examples listed at HUD.gov. You should read their explanation, too. The best advice is to follow the steps in the manual. Do this exactly, and do it at exactly the same time each year, and escrowing will be as accurate as possible. Overpayments and underpayments will get smaller over time as long as the payor makes all their payments and the tax and insurance bills are stable.

Excel and CSV Reports

A Comma Separated Value file such as that exported by NoteSmith is just plain, simple text. If you open the file in Excel, each word between commas goes into a cell and the commas are removed, but the data in each cell still is nothing but typed text.

In Excel, you can format the text as a date to perform date arithmetic. Excel has to guess which century to tack on during conversion. Recent versions of Excel display an error tag next to the cell. When you choose it, the pop up menu gives a variety of choices, one is to convert to 19xx and one to 20xx.

The two-digit year interpretation for how programs choose the century is set in Windows. Go to Start, Control Panel, Regional and Language Options, then Customize, and choose Date. This location may be different depending on what version of Windows is being used. It is a function of the Microsoft Windows operating system settings, not Excel, and not NoteSmith.

A NoteSmith user would know by looking at their NoteSmith report if a two digit maturity date if, for instance, 2039 or 1939. The century is left off of NoteSmith reports when it is obvious and generally is done only to save space when there are many columns of data. Excel cannot know the century so it makes its assumption

based on the settings of Windows. Contact Microsoft technical support for more details on Windows or Excel.

<u>File, Online, Backup/Restore</u>

This optional function has only ever backed up one (1) folder, typically the Data folder. Customers with multiple data folders, which we do not recommend, need multiple online backups, one for each data folder. NoteSmith easily can separate multiple taxable entities using just the File, Company Configuration function. Contact Technical Support if you would like to have your multiple data folders condensed into one folder.

NoteSmith programs for a few years prior to 2017 would use AxCrypt, if installed, for a third level of encryption for your online data. It is no longer necessary because NoteSmith will do so automatically. The AxCrypt program still is useful for protecting sensitive files on your computer that are not part of NoteSmith. Visit Axantum.com.

<u>Filters</u>

Do not type the word "Investor" or "loan_num" into any data field and then try to filter on that field. These are protected words used by the program to generate reports and will yield unpredictable results. 10/31/03

<u>Help</u>

Due to keyboard timing on certain computers, the correct search page may not be located. Click your mouse in the Adobe Reader Find box and press Enter to retry. 10/26/06

<u>Help, Renewal invoice</u>

The NoteSmith publisher name is now Princeton Investments, not Princeton Investments, Inc. Invoices printed after November 1, 2017, will reflect an incorrect name if the program file was not updated. Be SURE to change the name in your check writing software program.

<u>Importing data from an older version</u>

Importing is done from File, Setup. If data from old versions is copied to the new Data folder, or backed up from an old version and restored to a new version, errors will result. Both the old program and the new program need to be on the same computer or accessible on the same network in order to import.

If your old computer is no longer available, install the old program and the new program onto the new computer. Use File, Utilities, Restore to put the data back into the old program and exit the old program. Start the new program and go to File, Setup to import.

For other unusual circumstances, data can be converted quickly by Technical Support from old to new versions for a small charge using either FedEx or email. Contact Technical Support for details.

There is no facility within any version of NoteSmith for importing only part of a database. If you perform the import and some of your data is missing, either you filtered it out somehow in the new installation or you imported a second copy of your data that was not your current data. Start up your old program, click on Help, Tech Support, Data and scroll down the top box. The location of the data will appear. Write down the path that is indicated, exit NoteSmith, start up the new program, and import from that location. 2/2/03

Having multiple Zip files, or one Zip file other than NSnnPayor.Zip, in the Data folder will cause a Dynazip error. Zip files other than NSnnPayor.zip are not created by NoteSmith and should be moved to another location from Windows. File, Setup, Import will proceed normally once this is done. 1/19/15

See the Vista section elsewhere in this document for special items regarding it and Windows7. 6/21/09

<u>In Use Warning or File access is denied</u>

NoteSmith senses double log ons to avoid corrupting your data. This is from either starting the program twice on the same computer or accessing it from a network. If data is put at risk, NoteSmith will require you to restore from a backup. This safeguard is for NoteSmith and NoteSmith Pro versions 2005 and later. NoteSmith Net is set up automatically for multiple users, but only one user per computer or this error appears. To clear the error when using NoteSmith Net Server, exit and try to restart the program, which you might have to do after waiting a few minutes for the files to be released. Consider upgrading to Net if you want to access your data on a network. 8/16/04

<u>Invoices</u>

Printing an invoice.txt file creates a special header of payment information. The invoice will calculate all payments to bring the account up to date, but it does stop at either the maturity date, the number of remaining payments, or the total balance. It is better to print an invoice from Reports, Accounts, which was modified 4/22/03 to display the arrearage figure that appears elsewhere in the program and eliminate a confusing partial payment entry.

<u>Late fees</u>

Many states specifically prevent "laddering" of late fees. Once a late fee is charged for the payment, a second fee cannot be charged to that payment. Charging late fees by the day could result in more than 30 late charges per periodic payment. If you insist on doing late fees this creative way, go see a good attorney that works in your industry before committing this type of late fee to correspondence you give to one of your payors. Also, get

a copy of your state statute that relates to the loans you are making and see what you are allowed to do. Due to the usury issue and 1098 reporting, NoteSmith will not support this type of late fee.

We recommend against using the 0:Ask late fee setting which leads to an inconsistent application of late fees from payor to payor, for the same payor at different dates, and from input person to input person. Also, this opens you up to a defense of why you could indiscriminately decide on late fees but require all the other terms of the note to be honored as written. You could accept a deficient payment as a Partial (r), then cancel the late fee when asked, and end up with an overage on a partial payment. Assume a $100 payment with a $10 fee. The payor sends $105 late. You select Partial, then Cancel the late fee, and you have a $5 overage on a Partial (r) payment. The program will debit the account back with a negative principal payment on the next line which you need to explain to the payor. Late fees do not carry interest so you might as well take them when you earn them. If you don't want to charge them, set the late fee to zero to be consistent.

Refer to the IRS page elsewhere in this document for more information on late fees and IRS 1098.

Leases

Adding a lease with the company configuration Late Order set to 1 or 2 defaults to 3: After Rent. Late fees can be applied properly only after rent. Use 4: Accrue and NoteSmith will flag you when late fees are owing—the subsequent payment can be put to a late fee manually before recording the regular payment. 3/1/01 If the Exceptions report shows that the order is 1 or 2, go to Accounts, Edit, Lease and change the drop down to 4, Save, change it back to 3, then Save and Exit.

Mac computers

Although NoteSmith for Windows has a significant user base, it still is niche software. The Mac user base is roughly 10 percent of that and would double our support and our hardware investment. Further, it would take years to duplicate the features that we are easily able to add in the Windows environment. The best solutions are to run NoteSmith under one of the Windows emulators written for the Mac or buy a used Windows computer solely for NoteSmith use.

Networking

NoteSmith Net must be installed onto each workstation that needs to run the program. NoteSmith is a desktop program that allows sharing of data. You cannot share the program files or use its Data folder for shared temporary files. To use NoteSmith at a particular keyboard, you must run Setup from that keyboard.

The message "Error 1705: File access denied" or "Error 111: Cannot update cursor" means the folder on the server you are trying to access has not granted the workstation full read/write sharing rights. See your network administrator. You need full read and write access to the NoteSmith folders on the server. It is not enough to have just shared access.

Be sure that you did not install the program twice on the same desktop with different users logged on from Windows. NoteSmith is a desktop application designed for installation and use only once per computer. To make it available to everyone, uninstall it and reinstall it, choosing 'For Anyone Who Uses This Computer' from InstallShield, but remember only one person at a time can use it from any one computer.

Make sure the data files are not "read only." Windows may mark files "read only" when they are copied from CDs, so watch for that if you tried copying files directly from a CD.

A 'file access denied' error shortly after start up means the workstation does not have read/write access to the server. Follow the instructions exactly in the Network Installation section of the manual.

You must share the C:\Users\Public\Princeton folder so you do not have to change this when installing in future years. NoteSmith will continue to install to this Princeton folder. Map the workstation drive letter P to the Princeton folder on the server. Failure to do this will allow you to access the data the first time, but after restarting the program, the workstation will report that the data was not found and ask about installing a Locked Closet Server (LCS). Follow the instructions exactly in the Network Installation section of the manual.

When recording payments or saving edits, the message "Waiting for lock..." appears. This means someone else on the network is saving at the same time. If the message disappears within 10 seconds, your changes were recorded, otherwise access to the file was denied and your changes are lost. If the message always appears and your changes are not being saved, Windows is reporting that a required data file is permanently locked. Reboot each computer that has access to NoteSmith so your network releases the files.

Online

If you post your data, we recommend using loan numbers with no spaces and ALL CAPS to make it easier for your payors. This is also good advice if you transmit your data to the credit bureau. 4/15/02

Clicking Help, Technical Support, Update, Connect starts the download, but then it may appear to hang. Anti-virus, internet security, firewall, or backup programs may be preventing NoteSmith from accessing the internet. See 'Anti-virus' and 'Error 1705' elsewhere in this document. 3/7/14

Partial and BSchedule Partials

When these pay off, you typically do not zero them out of your books. You are only servicing the front end

and should show only the part of the payoff that is yours to keep. The holder of the back end should zero out the payor's balance on their books. If you are servicing both the front and back ends, you need to set up two NoteSmith accounts, one for each cash flow. 1/13/99

Payment History

Positive balances are owed to you and negative balances such as escrow are in the payor's favor. Negative principal balances mean the account has been overpaid, which will mean a taxable capital gain to you or a refund check to the payor. If the first payment has a large negative interest amount, it may mean you set the first payment due long after the origination date.

Arrearage calculations are displayed on the payment history. A payor who has had a series of $0 R payments recorded to accrue interest and fees will not have an arrearage since they are up to date. You must decide if you want the payor to appear delinquent or to display current accrued interest.

Run File, Utilities, Maintenance if histories take more than 10 seconds to display or the program seems to be running slow in other places. This permanently removes deleted data.

Payoff Report

Once the payoff report is run, any payments that later are recorded for that account will likely prevent the account from paying off to zero. Simply record a payoff payment in the Record window. If you record other payments first, print a new payoff report. Also watch for new late fees that accrue when the account is not paid off on time.

Non-daily interest accounts (M, opposed to m) should not have interest prorated beyond the next due date, which is why the payoff report stops there. M accounts accrue interest as 1/12 of a year per month while m accounts accrue 1/365 per day, with months having any of 4 different total days. A month of periodic interest rarely equals a month of daily interest.

Payoff reports showing no proration are due to the maturity date having past or the remaining payments are less than zero. Once the account has reached maturity, late and service fees are arguable as is the method of interest calculation since regular payments are no longer owed.

Un-paying-off a note can be accomplished from Accounts, Edit, Investment. Zero out the Price Closed and backspace over Date Closed, then delete the Payoff (Y) payment from Accounts, Record.

Passwords

When installing a new version of NoteSmith and importing your data, the program asks for a user name on the first startup. You must supply it so the program knows who has access to the data. NoteSmith remembers the user name on future startups during the year. A log on name is not a password. 1/21/01

PDF Converter

The PDF Converter can be installed ONLY from File, Setup, PDF because it is licensed for the benefit of NoteSmith users only. The PDF Converter cannot be set as the default printer and used by other programs.

There are multiple versions of the converter: for 32 bit computers running Windows 7 or older, and for 64 bit Vista or 7 computers and all Windows 8 computers whether 32 or 64 bit. The newer version writes pages to the hard disk as they are converted so the report page count can be quite large. The older, 32 bit version will be limited to about three dozen pages on computers with 2 GB or less RAM.

The NoteSmith PDF Converter uses the same PDF printer driver that QuickBooks 2013 uses. QuickBooks, however, relies also on the Microsoft XPS printer driver which, under Windows 8, is not compatible with the PDF printer driver. If you have errors creating a PDF, the solution is to remove the Windows 8 XPS driver and replace it with the one from Windows 7. Directions can be found using your favorite search engine. This is not a NoteSmith error but a problem with QuickBooks using Windows 8. 8/3/13

Installing the PDF Converter from the Pro version, then downgrading to non-Pro, gives both an OLE then a PDF error message on start up. The errors can be ignored. Uninstall the PDF Converter from Windows since it cannot be used from other programs. 9/18/15

The PDF Converter released with NoteSmith 2016 may not install on Windows XP. 10/22/15

Phone number formatting

The forced phone number formatting of (nnn) nnn-nnnn was removed in 2002 for accommodating international users. We recommend nnn-nnn-nnnn for US users. You can add extensions (x 101) or labels (cell) to the fields. Make sure File, Company Configuration shows your correct phone number for IRS reporting.

Printing

Print outs that mark the database, such as late letters, must be printed from the Print Options box that pops up immediately before the preview mode. From preview mode the database will not be marked when selecting the printer icon because the preview is handled, as with all printing, from Windows, not NoteSmith. This cannot be altered.

If the printer doesn't print, put paper into the manual feed tray and make sure all available trays have paper. Some printers are set up to take paper from the manual feed tray by default and NoteSmith will not

override that. HP printers have menus which allow you to select a default tray.

Printing that appears correct but is too large to fit on a page can be caused by Control Panel, Display, Large Icons, which can be set to affect the text print image as well as the display.

Error 1: File does not exist, Do (_ReportOutput) with 0,_Return is caused by a Windows Administrator installing NoteSmith so the ReportOutput printer driver file is not accessible by a Windows User. Have the Administrator log into Windows and uninstall NoteSmith, then log back into Windows as a User and reinstall. This error may rarely appear when a data file is missing, such as the NoteSmith letterhead bitmap file nslthd.bmp. Windows will give an indication of the file type it needs when its File, Open box appears.

High resolution (1920x1080 or more) screens, such as those with Surface Pro and other tablets, cause the page preview image to overflow the borders, which then is also too large to fit on paper. Try these steps in order, test each carefully, and go on only if an earlier step does not resolve it. Click OK or Apply before leaving any screen and record the original settings so you can put them back as necessary. Wording, labels, and buttons may be slightly different from below due to changes among various versions of Windows. We expect to have NoteSmith sense high resolution displays and adjust automatically in the next annual release.

1. Right mouse click your NoteSmith icon (not a tile in Windows8, but the actual icon from the Windows Start key), left click Properties, left click Compatibility, and check "Disable display scaling on high DPI settings."

2. Go back to the same place as step 1, leave "Disable" checked, but also check "Run this program in compatibility mode", drop down the list, and try either Windows7 or XP.

3. Leave steps 1 and 2 checked. Press the Windows Start key, choose Control Panel, then either Display or Appearances. If necessary, choose the link worded similarly to "Make text and other items larger or smaller." Choose either Small (100%) or Medium (125%). If you have a link about "Custom text size (DPI)", click it, be sure the Percentage matches your choice, then check "Use XP style DPI scaling" if available.

4. Press the Windows Start key, choose Control Panel, then either Display or Appearances, choose "Change Display Settings", and drop the resolution down one notch. If that doesn't solve it, drop it down one more. The setting of 1680x1050 should be a good compromise. Windows contains a variety of resolution settings, some of which appear to conflict with others. Try to find the best combination for your display.

5. Attach a standard monitor that uses a lower resolution.

Quicken/QuickBooks

Accounts that do not exist in QuickBooks at the time of export are categorized as Bank Accounts. This can be changed in QB by selecting List, Chart of Accounts, highlighting the account, select Account and edit. Use the suggestions for assets, liabilities, income, and expense in the Q/QB chapter of the NoteSmith manual.

Non-USRule accounts do not balance when they amortize negatively. The note balance increases due to a deficient payment that does not cover all the interest. There is no corresponding entry of a decreasing asset or increasing liability or expense. Do not use non-USRule or negative amortizing loans with double entry accounting systems if you are a cash basis investor or if you have to give IRS 1098 to a cash basis homeowner. This is not a limitation of NoteSmith but a requirement of double entry accounting.

Intuit limited importing for Quicken in 2004 so NoteSmith data can be imported into earlier versions only.

Recording payments

Interest is typically charged on a principal (P) payment because interest on the old balance must be calculated before reducing that balance. Although statistically it is incorrect, no interest is charged on a principal payment made the same day as a regular (R) payment in order to match archaic bank calculations. However, if a regular payment is recorded, then some other type of payment such as a late fee, and then a principal payment, NoteSmith considers the principal payment to be made at a separate time from the regular payment and interest may be calculated. 4/23/04

Remote Access

NoteSmith is desktop software and was not written for Terminal Server, Citrix, virtual private networks (VPN), or other wide area network (WAN) connections. Attempts to use NoteSmith on a WAN will yield "file access denied" or similar errors due to the delay in shuttling large data sets across the WAN, which in turn can lead to data corruption on the server. There are no plans to modify NoteSmith for WAN use and it is a violation of the NoteSmith End User License Agreement (NEULA). 2/2/01

The NEULA allows access to a NoteSmith computer from a remote computer using GoToMyPC, Windows Remote Desktop, PocketCloud (Android and iPad), or similar. Remote software allows the device to be used as a "dumb terminal" meaning its keyboard, mouse, and screen manipulate the office computer remotely. You have full access to NoteSmith functions. No other user can be logged into that office computer at the same time. The office computer can be left on, set to Wake On Lan (WOL), or set to wake up periodically for log in attempts. Refer to your Windows documentation. NoteSmith Net is recommended but not necessary unless more than one person needs simultaneous access and multiple Net Workstations are available. 10/11/12

NoteSmith cannot run with data stored in online backup sites like Carbonite or Dropbox. 1/27/16

Report Previews

High DPI monitors may not display report previews properly if the font size in Windows 7 through 8.1 was increased above 125% or Windows 10 is used. Go to File, Setup and check Shrink Reports. 11/8/15

Service fees charged to investors

NoteSmith will track any two entities on any one note. Generally, that would be the payor and you. Sometimes that might be the payor and an investor. The problem with servicing for someone else is that you may want to service three people: the payor, the investor, and you.

To do all three people in NoteSmith, you need to set up two accounts. One is a receivable coming to you and the next is the payable to the investor. The numeric difference between the two accounts is the service fee, which appears on the payable but not on the receivable. Then you can export everything to QB and your books are square. You can set up the receivable to "autopay" the payable so when you get a payment, the investor is paid automatically.

In many cases, this is just a pain because all you are doing is tracking payments for someone else and you don't really need to show the receivable and the payable. This is when we recommend just the two party setup. Enter just the receivable and code it so it's not part of your taxable entity or on your books. Just track the receivable. Then at the end of the month, pull up a Reports, Portfolio, Register for the investor's notes and cut them a check for the total less, say, $8 per line. In this scenario, all you really need to show on your books is $8 per line. The rest can be entered in QB as "cash", either in or out.

So the choice is really up to you. To completely automate, you need to do the first way. To keep your books simple and not clutter them with notes that aren't yours, do the second. 3/1/03

Starting NoteSmith

Error: "This is not a valid 32 bit installation." Delete the NoteSmith program folder from MyComputer and try running Setup again. The copy from installation media to hard disk was bad.

First time startup lets you enter the Media Key but then the program never starts. Xfinity Comcast software called Constant Guard should be completely uninstalled and not disabled. Also see Error 1705 elsewhere in this document.1/31/13

First time startup seems to hang, program never appears, subsequent attempts give message that program is running twice. This is caused by the zip files not be registered properly with Windows. Access the installation media, cancel Setup if it starts, then right mouse click SetupRegSvr.bat and choose Run As Administrator. 2/11/13.

An error log may be in one of these locations:
C:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\VFP\vfp9rerr.log or
C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\VFP\vfp9rerr.log

Program does not appear or is partially off screen: If the program icon appears in the Windows Taskbar at the bottom of the screen, but you cannot access it by clicking or double clicking it, do the following. Start up NoteSmith fresh using Start, All Programs, then immediately use ALT+Spacebar (hold down the ALT key and press the Spacebar once). This simulates you mouse clicking the icon in the upper left corner of the NoteSmith window. A menu will pop up. Type R for Restore and the program will appear. You also can use the ALT+Spacebar trick and type M for Move, then use the cursor keys (not the mouse) to move the program back to the center of the screen. This is caused most often by backing up and restoring between computers with different monitor resolutions. Regardless, this is both a Windows issue and a Windows keyboard shortcut.

Reports, Portfolio, Aging and Collections

Partial notes and Total notes each displayed different numbers under Remaining Balance for many years. After adding various features to the Aging and Collections reports, the subtotals were confusing so they now all display the remaining balance owed to the investor. 4/8/16

Screen elements

To allow for high DPI monitors under Windows 7 through 8.1 which require the screen font size and resolution to be increased manually, additional code was added to align screen items properly after any user adjustments. This affects all NoteSmith screens and other visible features, especially Accounts, Record. 1/7/16

Fonts can be enlarged under Windows 7 through 10 from File, Setup, Program by adjusting the Font Size spinner. Fonts in the title bars, menus, and icons are managed by Windows and can be adjusted by right mouse clicking the desktop, then choose Display Settings in the pop up menu. Look for Advanced Settings and then Advanced Sizing of Text. 12/28/16

The Toolbar height was double the button height on high definition monitors. 2/11/17

Technical Support Letter

To save the text of your letter, click Print, then choose File from the Print Options window. Assign a file name and click OK. The letter will be saved as a PDF or optionally as a plain text document that can be opened with the NoteSmith text editor or your word processor.

Telephone technical support

Telephone support is not offered. Almost all times a call is requested, the issue could have been answered faster and for free by faxing a NoteSmith report or emailing a question. 7/26/06

Texas Delinquent Notes

As far as we know, Texas is unique in requiring the late interest and principal to be reported on foreclosure warnings. There are two ways to do this. If the last payment was a full payment, possibly missing only a late fee, and interest is not calculated daily, click on Tools, Financial Calculator, lookup the payor, and print a short am schedule. For instance, if they are 3 months behind, just print a 3 month schedule which will show the total interest and principal.

Alternately, print a payoff report and a history, both as of the same date, generally today. The difference between the 'arrears' on the history less monthly escrow and the sum of interest, late fees, and service fees on the payoff letter would be the principal owing.

Tutorial

The tutorial is installed by default. It is a PDF file which can be viewed with the free Adobe Reader.

TValue

TValue is used during NoteSmith programming to verify NoteSmith calculations. Information exists in the manual concerning typical errors when trying to set up TValue to match NoteSmith. The technical support staff only can help you set up NoteSmith to match your original note. It cannot help you match TValue or some other software program. You need to know how your note and your state law allows interest to be calculated and then support can help you with the initial setup. If you need help matching TValue to your existing note, contact TValue technical support. Please do not contact TValue support and ask them to help you match NoteSmith. The important issue is for you to set up your software to reflect the terms of your original note and your state law.

Word form letters

To create a new Word mail merge letter, open one of the samples, then File, Save As... You may add additional fields anywhere in the new letter from within Word. These were created in Word2010 using the 1997-2003 Compatibility Mode.

If your letter prints with {Mergefield} instead of the data, uncheck the Print Field Codes box in Word's Print Options or click on the <<ABC>> merge button in the Word toolbar so the data appears, then save the file.

OLE errors come from Word, not NoteSmith. Start up Word and open the letter you want to merge. The letter must work under Word before it will work under NoteSmith. Make sure that you choose a printer from NoteSmith before merging the first time—do NOT simply rely on the Default button—actually click Default and choose a printer.

Errors that the DOC is already opened for editing means the document is really open, but Word is hidden. Press Ctrl+Alt+Del, highlight Word, and choose End Task.

If Word letters print the wrong accounts, start up Word, open your letter, and click Tools, Letters, Mail Merge Wizard, then Step 3 Recipients. Make sure your letter is pointing to the data source called WordData.csv in local folder C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NS2Word or, for Net users, in this folder on the server. 4/25/15

A bug in Microsoft Word 2000 and WordXP (aka Word2002) causes certain numbers, such as 187.50, to appear incorrectly as either 187 5 or 192. Use a newer version of Word. If you merge numbers into your Word documents, right click on the merge field and select Toggle Merge Fields, then add the formatting switch \# 0.00 after the field name to hide the excess decimal places. You can view this formatting switch in the sample DOC files. See Microsoft Word help for numerous other formatting switches. 2/1/01

Error messages

Certain rarely seen error message appear below for reference. A list of more common errors appears in the NoteSmith manual.

Error: Numeric overflow
        A numeric overflow error is generated when a number is too large for its field. Most likely it is from not entering a correct number of remaining payments when adding a new note, typically leaving it set to zero. Then after 99 payments are recorded, NoteSmith cannot store the number "-100" because that takes 4 digits. Look up Del2Clip in the manual, delete the payments, edit the account entering a correct number of remaining payments, save, then paste the payments back in. The program highlights data issues to you in at least 3 places:
        1. When File, Utilities, Maintenance is run, a message similar to the following appears, with the payment record and account number reflecting your data:
                Numeric overflow protection!
                Unusual numbers converted to 0
                On payment record 8
                Of account BSchedule11-RC.
        This message was designed as a warning to you that there is a problem with the account that should be fixed *immediately*, not at the end of the year or when the payor requests a payoff.
        2. When attempting to record a payment, this message appears:
                There are no payments remaining!
                Check the number of payments at
                The Accounts, Edit window.
                Record this payment anyway?
        Answering OK simply records the payment using the existing incorrect data.
        3. Running Reports, Miscellaneous, Exceptions will flag this account.
        When encountering issues like this, realize that the program is warning you of incorrect data. You must recognize that you do not see this type of message for other accounts, therefore, the problem needs to be resolved by correcting the data entry mistakes instead of continuing to record payments month after month on that account.
Error 5: Record is out of range
        The program attempted to access a record number that is outside the range of possibilities. This always is caused by there being no eligible records, such as having deleted all sample accounts before adding any live accounts, using a company configuration with an investor code that matches no accounts such as The Sample Company (SMPL), picking a start and end date that matches no payments, setting a filter that excludes all accounts, unmarking all accounts, or a combination of these. It also can mean the index files have become corrupt and can be fixed from File, Utilities, Maintenance.
Error: Cannot access data files at this time
        This is a data file error. Contact technical support for a resolution.
Error: Cannot print form letters, Word letters, or other miscellaneous errors
        NoteSmith generates new files as it works and programs running in the background, such as anti-virus or automatic backup software, stop the computer to check them, causing mistiming errors. See error 1705 elsewhere in this document.
        If you are experiencing these errors running across a network, try running the program locally from the server. This will test whether a faulty network is causing the problem.
        Microsoft Word Starter Edition will not allow designating trusted folders so mail merging from the NS2Word folder is impossible. If this is a required feature of your installation, upgrade your version of Word to a fully functional version. 9/15/11
        Error: Title does not accept null values. This is caused by the name of the letter starting with INS or TAX and NoteSmith cannot find escrow information that it can use for this account. Try creating the name of the letter with something other than these first three letters, such as LTRINS or LTRTAX.

Error: Resource files are missing or Error: Invalid or resource file version mismatch

Resource files are installed into designated Windows folders. If you had an older Visual FoxPro (VFP) program installed, it put the same named resource files into a non-standard folder and registered that location with Windows. Those files are not removed even if you uninstalled VFP and NoteSmith is now incorrectly being directed to these older files by Windows. When you try to start NoteSmith, you get an error and the program does not start. Put your NoteSmith FlashDrive in the computer, double left click MyComputer, then double left click the FlashDrive. Look for the file SetupRegSvr.bat, right mouse click it, then choose Run As Administrator from the pop up menu. The old files are renamed and NoteSmith can be started normally. 6/24/11

Another set of resource files keep track of things like window positions and colors. The easiest solution to this error is to delete the offending files and NoteSmith will recreate them when it restarts, or answer Yes if the program asks if you want to recreate them.

Go to MyComputer and delete the files NS_user.dbf and NS_user.fpt in this folder:
C:\Program Files\Princeton\NoteSmith2019
If NoteSmith ever started up from a partial installation and failed, you may see a Fox_user.dbf and Fox_user.fpt. They also should be deleted. Finally, have a look in this folder:
C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith2019
Delete the same two (or four) files. 2/20/03

NoteSmith is a desktop application. When you install it to a multi-user capable operating system like XP, you can install for all users or just one user. If you install for just one user, you cannot install a second time on the same computer for a second user. Deactivate, uninstall, and reinstall for all users if necessary. 4/22/04

In the case of a mismatch error, it is possible that you are out of memory or out of hard disk space. Possibly you have an incompatibility in your Windows installation. We have seen to this error solved by formatting the hard drive and reinstalling Windows. Then the NoteSmith installation ran perfectly. This is no guarantee, however, that this will solve your situation and should not be done without backups and significant planning. 10/26/06

Error: Too many names used

This error is caused by a failed download while updating the program files. The file is incomplete due to a dropped connection. Be sure your internet security or firewall is not blocking access to the web site and that you have a strong internet connection. Then follow these steps using Program Files if you have no (x86). 3/11/10
1. Go to MyComputer, then this folder: C:\Program Files (x86)\Princeton\NoteSmith2019.
2. Delete the file NSApp.app, which may be NSApp if you have chosen to hide the 3 letter extensions.
3. Reinstall from the installation media and choose Repair.
4. Start the program normally. Do NOT use Run As Administrator or the corrupt file will be reinstalled.
5. See the manual for the two ways to Update and try again.

Error: Mod_CB

During program startup, this error is caused by your internet security software giving a false alarm as NoteSmith is checking the credit bureau file is up to date. Update your program file. If a file named CBureau.bak can be found in your NoteSmith Data folder, it should be deleted.

Error: CB_OrigDate, Alias not found

This may occur at the end of importing and can be ignored.

Error 1957: Problem accessing printer spooler or Resetting printer for the default printer or Error loading printer driver

Retry your report, but at the Print Options window click the button to the right of the Printer choice, which will either say 'Default' or have your printer's name in it. Be sure to select your printer for each report you run the first time--after that NoteSmith will remember it. If you would rather have NoteSmith print to your default printer, click the same button, but select Cancel from the next window that pops up. NoteSmith will replace the name of your printer with the word 'Default' on the button in Print Options. You must click OK in Print Options and actually print the report for your changes to be memorized. Be sure when you exit the program that you do so from File, Exit so NoteSmith can write your changes to disk.

Error 114: Index does not match the table. Delete the index file and re-create the index.

Run File, Utilities, Maintenance. 5/15/01

Error 1102: Cannot create file 'filename'

The drive letter or folder name specified does not exist. Select a different drive or folder.

Error 1705: File access denied or Error: File not found

The error appears intermittently, but most likely when recording payments, especially overage payments with remainders. Recording a payment opens and closes up to 14 files, some of which are temporary and have a short life.

One cause of this error is having Windows Explorer open to a NoteSmith folder. Since this is an operating system function, files are often locked by Windows and NoteSmith cannot use them. Just close Explorer, restart NoteSmith just to be safe, and try the function again.

Most often this is caused by your anti-virus or internet security software locking or temporarily renaming a NoteSmith data file so it can be scanned. The file is then not available for NoteSmith to use and many times is not changed back to its original name. Realize that this is a NoteSmith error message but not a NoteSmith error, it is caused by third party software you installed on your computer.

The simplest solution is to restore your data from a backup. NoteSmith keeps multiple backup copies of your data and can restore it if you can restart the program. Do the following steps to attempt to recover your data in the least amount of time and with the least potential for data loss, then permanently resolve the issue. Read all the steps even if you only have to do some of them:

1. Start NoteSmith and go to File, Utilities, and choose Maintenance which resolves most errors.
2. If the error persists, choose Restore and enter C as the drive, then OK. This restores your last automatic backup, generally no more than 5 days ago.
3. If the error persists, go to File, Utilities, Restore, enter C, check the Zips box, then OK. A file window opens where you can select a recent backup archive. Files are named by creation date in year, month, day order. Try the most recent. If the error persists, repeat this step with successively older archived files until the problem is resolved. You may need to re-enter recent data.
4. If the error persists, restore from successively older backups that you made to removable media.

The steps above will restore your data back to a point before you lost the file. The problem may not be resolved, however, and can happen again. Continue below.

5. In the Settings menu of your internet security or anti-virus software, find the Programs option, choose NoteSmith, and set it preferably to Allow, or Exclude, or lastly Automatic. NoteSmith uses too many files too quickly for your computer to keep up with scanning all of them. Also, your security software will not know at the time you installed it if NoteSmith is a trusted program.
6. If necessary, try these in order, each of which will make your computer slightly more vulnerable but also more able to respond: Exclude file type DBF, exclude the NoteSmith Data folder, or change real time scanning to periodic.
7. Similarly, NoteSmith needs to be excluded from real time backup procedures. You can allow your backup software to make a copy once or twice a day but certainly not each time NoteSmith modifies a data file, creates a temporary file, or has files open for use.10/16/2014

If you are unable to start NoteSmith due to this error (where yyyy is the year):

1. Open Windows Explorer and find this folder: C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy
2. Right mouse click it, choose Rename from the pop up menu, and rename it NoteSmithyyyy-old.
3. Run Setup from your original installation media, choose Repair, then restart the program.
4. Go to File, Utilities, choose Restore, enter C for the drive, check the Zips box, then find the most recent archive in this Windows folder:
    C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmithyyyy-old\Data\Backup\Zips
5. If the problem persists, redo the above step selecting an older archive zip file.

Solicit the services of a local computer expert if you do not have the experience to perform these steps.

Error 1806: SQL: Column 'FIELDNAME' is not found. Program PROGNAME

       If the Column, also called a field name, is a new field, this error is most likely caused by copying data from one NoteSmith annual version into another version instead of using the File, Setup, Import routine. It also can be caused by typing field names into the Reports, Miscellaneous, Custom Report generator.

Error 1309: File NSApp.app is not an object file (up to 2014) or File seems corrupt (2015 and later)

       If you try updating from the internet using Help, Technical Support, Update and the connection aborts or errors out, the first downloaded file will be incomplete and NoteSmith will try to use it as a new program file. Double click MyComputer or open Windows Explorer. Go to C:\Program Files\Princeton\NoteSmith and delete NSApp.app. Then go to C:\Users\Public\Princeton\NoteSmith and delete any file named NSApp. Try updating again by downloading from NoteSmith.com using your web browser and not from within the program, where your anti-virus program may be interfering.

       If the error references file ReportOutput.app, either the original installation did not proceed correctly or the file was corrupt on the FlashDrive. Back up your data to removable media, uninstall, then reinstall the program. If the error persists, uninstall again, then download the installation from NoteSmith.com, Technical Support, Downloads and reinstall from that.

Error 13: Foxcode table not found

       Editing the config.fpw file on a network causes this error. Copy the config.fpw file from the installation media back to its installed location, which is C:\Program Files\Princeton\NoteSmith2019.