maestroauction

Networking MaestroAuction

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Does Maestro help me network my computers?

No. Networking often involves making changes to your computer's network and security settings, meaning the network setup will need to be performed by a volunteer or IT person within your organization. This document is provided to assist your volunteers.

How can I get help networking computers?

The number one challenge event teams face is when they wait too long to start planning for their technical needs. Be sure to ask around *before* the week of the event, because every organization can find a tech enthusiast patron that can lend a hand. You'll find them - just ask around early enough!

Can I use a wireless network to share database files?

Wireless networks are great for internet connections and downloading Text2Bid winning bids. However, we do not recommend them for sharing MaestroAuction event files. The chances of interference and disconnections are too great, and can lead to corrupt databases. Only use wired networks for sharing databases.

MaestroAuction (MAS) System Requirements

To run MAS most effectively, the following computer components are required:

- One of the following operating systems: Windows 7, Windows 8, Windows 10
- 1 GB free hard disk space
- 1 GB of RAM or more is recommended for optimal performance
- Mouse and Keyboard

> The basic MAS license includes two users that can be connected to the same .EVENT file at the same time. MAS may be installed on any number of computers.
>
> Contact Maestro to purchase an Unlimited User License. This will allow any number of users to connect to the same .EVENT file at the same time.

Minimum Network Installation Requirement
- 2 PCs or Laptops (Netbooks and Ultrabooks are not recommended.)
- 1 GB of RAM

Additional Recommendations
- 2 printers (use one as a backup printer) installed locally, but shared on the network
- Battery: 400va UPS, Uninterruptible Power Supplies (Recommended)
- Bring backups of all auction data and all equipment on the night of the auction
- Pick a screen size and resolution for maximum usability; 17" screens at 1024x768 is recommended. This optimizes your auction previews and data entry.
- An External Keyboard and External Mouse for each Laptop (if applicable)

After verifying that a system meets these requirements, install MAS onto each workstation.

Event Setup Tip
If you will be using 5 of fewer computers at your event, put the .EVENT file into a shared folder on one of your MAS computers. We recommend you place the file into the Public directory of that computer. This is now the "Host". Then have the other computers connect to the .EVENT file on the Host. These are now your "Workstations".

The Host computer should be your fastest computer. MAS will run fastest on the Host computer. As such, throughout the evening, you will be doing most of the work on the Host. Use this computer to run reports, look up information, or setup/import qCheck.

The Workstations should be set to a specific task until it is time to set them to the next task. For example, at the beginning of the night you would use them to enter Walk-up registrations. Then, once sections begin to close, you will use them to enter winning bids. Finally, at the end of the evening, you would use them to print statements or to check people out.

Network Setup Advice

Ensure there are no Special Characters in the Database Path (All Operating Systems)

There are several special characters that can prevent certain aspects of the software from working correctly. These special characters are:

- Apostrophe   (')
- Period   (.)
- Asterisks   (*)
- Dollar Sign   ($)
- Quotes   (")

If any of the characters appear in any portion of the path or file name, please remove them or move the file to a different location.

i.e. \\MyServer\Saint Bridget's\MyAuctionDatabase.EVENT is an invalid location for the .EVENT file and may cause network instability or prevent some aspects of the software from working correctly.

Use Drive Mapping instead of UNC (All Operating Systems)

When connecting to the server, it is recommended that you create a drive map to the network folder, rather than connecting to via the UNC.

This is better: N:\MyAuctionDatabase.EVENT
Than this: \\Network Server\Auction Files\MyAuctionDatabase.EVENT

Regarding Wireless Networks

MAS should not be used on a wireless network on the night of your event. While it is possible to MAS on a wireless network, these networks are inherently less stable than a traditional wired network. As a result, this guide will only explain how to setup a traditional wired network.

Experience has shown that while wireless networks work well in an office environment they can be unreliable "in the field". For example, when the wireless network is setup at the event, before the guests arrive, the network works great. Once the guests start to arrive, the wireless signal strength and network's stability begins to degrade. The reason for this is that people "soak up" signal. As you add more people, more and more of the wireless signal is "soaked up." This can be counteracted through the use of wireless repeaters, but that topic will not be covered in this guide. If you wish to run MAS over a wireless network, you do so at your risk.

Ensure Mapped Network Drives Reconnect at Logon (All Operating Systems)

When a mapped network drive is created, there is an option called, Reconnect at Logon. This option tells the computer to re-establish its connection to the network folder when the computer boots up.

Reason: If the databases are stored on a mapped network drive and the machine does not have connection to that drive, then the software will fail to find those databases.

Close MAS before putting your computer into Sleep Mode (All Networked Computers)

When a computer wakes up from Sleep mode it may not automatically reconnect its mapped network drives.

Always Exit MAS Properly (All Machines)

The proper way to exit from MAS is to click the Exit button on the Main Screen. Exiting in this way ensures that there are no records open and prevents accidental data corruption. While exiting the software in other ways will not usually cause any harm, it is possible to partially corrupt a database or to cause the software to loose connection to the databases.

Ensure Each Machine is Upgraded to an Unlimited User License (If Applicable)

After registering MAS, ensure that the machine is upgraded to an Unlimited User License (if one was purchased) before you select your .EVENT database. If a machine has not been upgraded with the code and it is the 3rd or subsequent machine to select the same .EVENT file then MAS will produce and error and close.
 Note: If you re-install MAS or perform a Quick Restore via the MAS Repair Utility, then it will be necessary to re-upgrade the machine to an Unlimited User License.

Network Troubleshooting

Symptom: MAS produces the error message: "Must Use an Updateable Query"
Problem: The user does not have full read/write/modify permissions to the database files.

Cause 1: The .EVENT file is marked as Read Only
Solution:
1. Close the Software.
2. Find the .EVENT file. Right click the file and then choose Properties.
3. Check the Read Only Attribute.
4. If clicked, unclick it.

Potential Cause 1: When a file is burned to a CD, if that CD is set to Finalize, then the files will be set to read only. When those files are copied back to the hard drive, they are still read only. **Potential Cause 2:** The user is attempting to select files on a CD. Files stored on a CD must first be transferred to the hard drive and then selected in their new locations.

Cause 2: The user does not have full read/write/modify permissions to the folder where the .EVENT file is stored.
Solution: Ensure that the user has full permissions to the folder where the database is stored. **Solution 2:** Move the file to the Public folder of your local computer.

Symptom: MAS produces an error message that says, "Cannot update. Database <X> is locked by Machine <Y>" In many cases machine <Y> is the user's machine.
Problem: The .EVENT may be partially corrupted. This problem is usually fixable.
Cause: The files have become corrupted and need to be repaired.
Solution: Repair and Compact the .EVENT file using the MAS Repair utility. If the software gives the same error again then please contact MaestroSoft technical support at 800.438.6498.

Symptom: MAS produces an error message that says, "Unrecognizable Database Format."
Problem: The .EVENT file may be corrupted. This problem is often fixable.
Cause: The files have become corrupted and need to be repaired.
Solution: Repair and Compact the .EVENT file using the MAS Repair Utility. If the software gives the same error again then please contact MaestroSoft technical support at 800.438.6498.

Symptom: The first machine to connect to a database opens normally, but the 2nd and subsequent machines can take a long time to open (sometimes up to 5 minutes.)
Problem: This is not a problem, per se. The .EVENT file is currently in use by the first machine and the 2nd machine is waiting for the 1st machine to "finish,"
Solution: Have each machine with MAS already open click the File Tab > Sleep Database. This will remove the "lock" placed on the .EVENT file and will then allow the 2nd and subsequent machines to open normally. Once all machines are open, click the Wake Up button.

Setting Up a Network Installation at your Office

MAS comes with a 2 user license standard. This allows 2 computers to be networked together in a simple peer-to-peer network for the night of the Auction. With the purchase of a Network License, an unlimited number of workstations may be networked together. This network is still limited to the maximum speed and size of the hardware and software the network is running.

Setting up a Network Installation

To install a multi-user LAN (of three of more machines) requires network enabled PCs and the purchase of the Network License from MaestroSoft. MAS tracks the number of concurrent users logged into the database and if the count is exceeded, an error is displayed indicating that the permitted number of users has been exceeded.

Each workstation on a network must receive the normal installation of MAS, using the default directory (preferred) for the installation (C:\ProgramData\Maestro\). After installing MAS on each workstation, do the following:

1. Create a network directory for common data files and give all the networked PCs read, write, and modify permission
   a. In this example, the network directory is N:\AUCTION
2. Open MAS on each of the workstations
3. Check each machine to ensure that they have been upgraded to an Unlimited User License (if networking 3 or more machines.) If it does not say **Unlimited License** in the bottom right hand corner then that machine needs to be updated.
4. Click the File Tab > Select Database > Select Event Database.
5. Select the appropriate .EVENT file as stored in N:\Auction
6. When done, all of the workstations should be connected to same .EVENT file via the network.