

Paint One

Two sets of books, one company

Merging two QuickBooks Enterprise files into one QuickBooks Online Advanced company



QuickBooks Enterprise → QuickBooks Online Advanced | Comprehensive case study

2 → 1

desktop files combined into one QBO company

224,751

transaction lines from January 2025 in the two source files

120

geographic classes in the two source files

Aug 6

final delivery, ahead of the August 10 commitment

Paint One merged legally in 2022 but kept two sets of books in QuickBooks Enterprise. We combined them into one QuickBooks Online Advanced company, rebuilt jobs as projects and restored job profitability reporting.

CLIENT





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A 2022 merger, finally reflected in the books

Paint One, a drywall and painting subcontractor for homebuilders, merged its two companies in 2022 but kept two QuickBooks Enterprise files. In 2026 it moved to QuickBooks Online Advanced and wanted one company, not two.

The hard parts were structural: two charts of accounts with conflicting numbers and names, jobs that have no direct equivalent in QuickBooks Online, 120 geographic classes, and one source file with suspected corruption. We merged both files into one company, rebuilt jobs as projects and moved transactions from January 2025 in two loads. The company went live on August 10.

We made mistakes and this document names them. The job profitability report was blank before go-live, and we missed journal entry memos and bill descriptions. Both were fixed within days.

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STARTING POSITION

FROM

QuickBooks Enterprise

- Two desktop files, one per former company
- Jobs under customers for job tracking
- Separate charts of accounts
- Geographic classes in each file
- A file with suspected corruption



TO

QuickBooks Online Advanced

- One company for the merged business
- Jobs rebuilt as QBO Projects
- One chart of accounts, conflicts resolved
- Geographic classes from both files
- Live daily from August 10, 2026

The client and starting position

Paint One is a drywall and painting subcontractor in Matthews, North Carolina, with divisions in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. Its customers are homebuilders, and it tracks work by job and by geographic class.

Paint One, Inc. and Paint One Coastal merged legally in 2022 but continued to keep separate books in two QuickBooks Enterprise desktop files, on a calendar year and in US dollars. The client suspected one file was corrupt, and the team relied on job profitability reporting to run the business.

QUICKBOOKS ENTERPRISE FILE PROFILE

ITEM	AT ASSESSMENT
Source files	Two QuickBooks Enterprise desktop files
Transaction lines	224,751 across both files, from 2025
Customers	21,829 with activity, before cleanup
Vendors	3,353
Classes	120 geographic (75 and 45)
Open estimates	10,742

Counts cover activity from January 1, 2025, from the pre-project complexity assessment. The client deactivated about 10,000 customers before extraction.

WHAT THE CLIENT NEEDED

One set of books

A single company in QuickBooks Online Advanced for the merged business.

Jobs and profitability

Work tracked by job, with job profitability reporting working.

Numbers that tie

Balances that agree to both source files, legacy issues resolved.



The core problem

Two QuickBooks Enterprise files had grown apart for years. Their charts of accounts used some of the same numbers for different accounts, and different numbers for the same account. Merging them required a rule for every conflict, agreed before any data moved.

Jobs were the second problem. In our assessment: QuickBooks Enterprise treats jobs as a first-class entity under each customer, while QuickBooks Online has no jobs concept. Jobs had to become QBO Projects linked to their customers, or job profitability reporting would not work.

Any business that merged companies but kept separate QuickBooks Enterprise files will meet the same two issues: conflicting charts of accounts and a jobs structure QuickBooks Online does not have. In our experience, both belong in the design, before extraction.

IS THIS YOUR SITUATION?

- ✓ Your companies merged but your books did not
- ✓ You run jobs under customers in QuickBooks Enterprise
- ✓ Your job profitability report drives decisions
- ✓ Your desktop file has shown signs of corruption

If two or more apply, chart of accounts rules and the jobs design are the critical path of your migration, not the data load.



SECTION 03

Designing the migration

Seven alternatives were considered and set aside.

OPTION CONSIDERED	WHY IT WAS SET ASIDE
A consolidated QuickBooks Enterprise file as the end state	The client was moving to QuickBooks Online Advanced; merging on the desktop would have kept the old platform.
Importing data themselves from spreadsheets	Not practical at this volume with jobs, classes and two charts of accounts.
A job-costing add-on	The team uses job profitability, not job costing, so QBO Projects covered the need.
A QBO location for each former company	Left out after the client confirmed it would not report by former company.
Our proposed correcting entry for a legacy difference	The client, on its CPA's advice, chose to offset through a credit card account instead.
Bringing 2024 history into QBO	The client's CPA recommended starting from 2025; earlier years stay in the two desktop files.
Converting estimates to linked invoices	The source files had no links between estimates and invoices to carry over.

Chosen: one company, jobs as projects, two loads

Both files merged into one QuickBooks Online Advanced company from January 1, 2025. Chart of accounts conflicts went to the Paint One name: same number with a different name, and different number with the same name, both resolved to Paint One. Jobs became QBO Projects, geographic classes from both files carried over, and a final load caught up activity to July 31, 2026.

KEPT IN DESKTOP FILES

2024 and earlier
Prior years
Stay in both desktop files

MIGRATED INTO QUICKBOOKS ONLINE ADVANCED

Jan 1, 2025 to Mar 31, 2026
First load
Both files merged into one company

Apr 1 to Jul 31, 2026
Final load
Catch-up before go-live

How the engagement ran

1

Discovery and assessment

Discovery on April 14 and a complexity assessment of both files on April 21.

2

Fixed-fee scope

Agreement sent and deposit paid on May 14, covering the merge, jobs to projects and two loads.

3

Extraction package and review

Delivered June 12, reviewed with the client on June 16 and revised on June 23.

4

Chart of accounts roll-up

Conflict rules agreed with the client on July 7.

5

Two loads and go-live

First load delivered July 23, final load August 6, live daily from August 10.

COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE

Paid complexity assessment of both files, then a fixed-fee scope covering the merge, jobs to projects, and two loads with a final catch-up. After go-live we added a PO field, outside the original scope, and re-loaded missed memo detail.



Obstacles and how we resolved them

Seven things went wrong or needed a decision. How a vendor handles those is a better guide than a clean story, so here are the main ones.

Job profitability came up blank

During the final freeze, before go-live, the job profitability report showed no data. It is the report the team runs the business on.

Resolution. Found and fixed the next day, August 5.

Details we missed in extraction

Journal entry memos and vendor bill line descriptions did not come across.

Resolution. Re-loaded on August 13, when we also added a PO custom field outside the original scope.

Flags that did not carry over

Inactive flags on some customers and vendors did not carry over after the first load, and some sub-customers were missing the bill-with-parent setting.

Resolution. Customers corrected July 28, vendors July 29, bill-with-parent August 5, all before go-live.

A reset at the start

After the assessment, the client deactivated about 10,000 customers, so extraction restarted from new files received May 27.

Resolution. Extraction package delivered June 12.



A crash-damaged entry

A \$180,000 entry in the source had been damaged by a QuickBooks Enterprise crash, according to the client.

Resolution. Resolved on the client's instructions, with its CPA's input, before the final load.

Differences in the source books

A \$4,213.46 payment was posted only to the AR aging, and there was a \$583.44 opening difference.

Resolution. The payment moved to a miscellaneous customer on the client's instruction; the balance sheet was brought into balance before go-live.

A late start in QBO

Access to the QuickBooks Online company came on July 9, after vacation and a platform outage.

Resolution. The timeline moved two weeks; the first load was delivered July 23, ahead of the revised July 27 date.

Validation

Checks at each load

- ✓ AR and AP tied after the first load
- ✓ Trial balance at December 31, 2024
- ✓ Balance sheet and income statement at each fiscal year-end
- ✓ AR and AP agings at December 31, 2024 and March 31, 2026 (first load)
- ✓ AR and AP agings at July 31, 2026 (final load)

A \$314,805.22 income amount posted to the wrong account was reclassified, and a \$97.42 difference was traced to two accounts merged in the chart of accounts roll-up.

The client's project lead confirmed on August 11 that data validation of the numbers was complete.

MIGRATED

One company for both former files: transactions from January 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026; one merged chart of accounts; customers, vendors and items; jobs as QBO Projects; geographic classes from both files; open estimates.

KEPT IN THE DESKTOP FILES

Kept: 2024 and earlier years in the two QuickBooks Enterprise desktop files. Left out at the client's request: a QBO location for each former company. Estimates were not linked to invoices, as the source had no links.



Timeline and outcome

○ Apr 14	Discovery
○ Apr 21	Complexity assessment
○ May 14	Agreement sent; deposit paid
○ May 27	Customer cleanup; extraction restarts
○ Jun 12	Extraction package delivered
○ Jun 23	Revised package after review
○ Jul 7	Chart of accounts roll-up agreed
○ Jul 23	First load delivered
○ Jul 31	Final backup
○ Aug 6	Final load delivered
○ Aug 10	Live daily in QBO Advanced
○ Aug 13	Memos re-loaded; PO field added
○ Sep 3	Closure check-in

Outcome

Paint One runs as one company in QuickBooks Online Advanced, live daily since August 10, 2026, four years after its legal merger. Jobs are QBO Projects, the client confirmed job profitability reporting works, and the client completed validation of the numbers.



What made this work

● Rules before data

Agreeing chart of accounts conflict rules up front made the merge predictable.

● Designing for how they work

Projects and job profitability, not job costing, matched how the team runs jobs.

● The client and its CPA in the loop

Legacy differences were resolved on the instructions of the people who own the books.

● Two loads

A first load for testing meant the final load only had to add April to July activity.

● Fixing our misses fast

The blank report was fixed the next day; missed detail was re-loaded.

Still running two sets of books after a merger?

Talk to us about combining your QuickBooks Enterprise files into one QuickBooks Online Advanced company, with your jobs and classes intact.

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