



Reducing the Size of the Amicus Attorney Database

With the release of Version 5 of Amicus Attorney, many of our users and consultants noticed that the size of the database has started to grow considerably over previous versions. The procedure that many of Amicus Attorney users and Consultants have been performing has been to Scan the database, do a Backup, and then Restore it. This was a lengthy process.

As of the release of Version 5.1.1, there is now an alternative for reducing the size of the Amicus Attorney database. This white paper explains the difference between the two and the advantages of using the new utility.

What makes the Team Database grow?

There are two Amicus Attorney databases that contain all of the data for all of the users. One is the Administrator's Local Database, which is used for making backups, and the other is the Team Database. The Team Database (Team50\database\amicus.db) is accessed by all users and contains not only all of the data, but also all of the various "transactions" that have taken place.

Whenever a record is created, modified, or deleted, that action needs to be performed in the Local Database of each Team Member who is assigned to that record. (The Local Database is on the Team Member's workstation and contains only their individual records.) To track these actions, a Transaction record is created and stored in the Team Database. These Transactions are then automatically processed in a Team Member's Local Database while the Team Member is logged in. Otherwise, they are processed the next time the Team Member connects to the Team.

Although the Transaction records are individually quite small, they can add up over a long period of time, and you will find that the Team Database, which contains both Transactions and data, grows to be considerably larger than the Administrator's Local Database, which contains only the data.

Streamline Database utility

The new Streamline Database function is available in Version 5.1.1 of Amicus Attorney. It is a utility that looks at the Team Database, attempts to purge any Transaction records that are no longer required, and then compacts the database. Any Transactions that have already been fully processed are removed from the Team Database. In an Amicus Attorney installation with many users, this can result in a considerable reduction in the size of the Team Database.

Transactions are processed when Team Members are logged in and online. If Team Members have not logged in for quite some time (or have never logged in), many unprocessed Transactions will remain in the database. Therefore the utility will not reduce the Team Database as much as it could otherwise.

Before when running the Streamline Database utility you should:

- Have all Team Members log in and then log back out. This is imperative if you upgraded or updated to Version 5.1.1.
- Have all Team Members perform all synchronizations with Outlook (Contacts/Calendar) and Palm OS. This is optional but will provide better results.
- Have all Team Members unpack Secondary Office Briefcases, if any. This is optional but will provide better results.
- Backup the Team Database.

The Streamline Database utility can be run from Amicus Administrator Database > Utilities > Streamline Database .

Scan/Backup/Restore procedure

Until the release of Version 5.1.1 of Amicus Attorney, a Scan/Backup/Restore procedure has been the only method for shrinking the database. The reason it works is as follows:

- 1) Scan Database – this re-indexes and cleans up the database, and rebuilds the Administrator's Local Database to ensure that it is as compact as possible.
- 2) Backup – when you perform a Backup, you are making a copy of the Administrator's Local Database (which does not contain Transaction records and is therefore much smaller than the Team Database).
- 3) Restore – when you restore the backup above, you overwrite both the Administrator's Local Database and the Team Database with the backup copy of the data. You are therefore replacing a large Team Database with a much smaller copy.

What is the difference between the two?

Using the Scan/Backup/Restore procedure results in the following:

- a) Amicus Attorney has no way of knowing whether any of the Team Member's Local Databases are up to date. A flag is automatically set to rebuild all Local Databases to put them back in synch. This can take a considerable amount of time.
- b) Transaction records are lost. Because Transaction records are used by many third-party Links, such as Outlook and Palm OS, each Team Member must reset these Links and resynchronize. This is also a lengthy process. Please note that if you have performed the procedure with the Backup and Restore being done immediately following one another, then it may not be necessary for the Administrator to reset the firm's accounting link because the Backup contains current data.

Using the Streamline Database utility, however, only removes Transactions that have already been processed. The result is that Local Databases do not require a rebuild, and Links do not require resynchronization.

The Streamline Database utility provides a simple and effective method of reducing the size of the Team Database, freeing up disk space and improving Amicus Attorney performance.

For further information, contact



Gavel & Gown Software Inc.
184 Pearl Street, Suite 304
Toronto, Ontario M5H 1L5
Telephone: 1 (800) 472-2289
 1 (416) 977-6633
Fax: 1 (416) 977-2563
www.amicusattorney.com
info@amicusattorney.com