

# Topshare Newsletter

No 5: December, 2007



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## **Topshare version 1.13 released!**

It's been a long time since Newsletter no 4, but we're a small company, and for the last year our resources have been fully engaged in producing this major update for Topshare. Now that's finally done, we can tell you all about it.

As was the case for version 1.12, this is a major update that belies the impression you might get from the incremental change in version number.

There are many improvements, and they're listed below in more detail. But the three big ones are:

- Introduction of a new **Subscription Data service**. This will supplement (*not replace!*) the free service, sourced from Yahoo, that's been available since version 1.9. If you're a subscriber, your Prices database will now be maintained completely automatically. This will include historical data - so if you go away for a month's holiday, when you start Topshare on your return, all the outstanding prices will automatically be retrieved.

All current subscribers will automatically receive a 1-month free trial of this service. You shouldn't need to do anything to enable this trial (but if in doubt, use *Subscription Data|Check Status* and enable auto downloads).

**If you're quick to sign up for a subscription, you'll get 15 months of data for the normal price of 12.** See the "Buy now" link on the Topshare website for more details.

- A **new-look main form**. The main form now includes a summary of portfolio holdings, into which you can quickly drill-down to see increasing levels of detail. This information is always visible - you don't need to run a report. There's also an **Actions** panel, that displays a 1-line summary of each transaction entered or edited. Not sure

whether you entered those dividends? Here's the first place to look!

- A new function, **Merge /Demerge/ Takeover**. This simplifies recording transactions such as the recent ones involving Coles/ Wesfarmers, the AGL/AGK/AAN/BBW events, and many others. You can easily define exactly the number of shares, parcels, and cost base of each new holding. This will be easier and more accurate than the previously-available alternatives.

If you're a regular user, chances are you've already installed v1.13 through the Auto Update system - but if not, you should click *File|Check for Update* now, to install the latest.

## **New features in more detail**

Here are the main enhancements in the latest release:

- New-look main form, with 3 tabs: "Portfolios" tab (see above) "Actions" tab (see above) "Alerts" tab. This contains information about database alerts. This includes any problems detected by "Check Database", and also information about stocks that have triggered Trendline Alerts
- "Check database" now runs in the background - you don't have to wait for it on startup. If there are no problems, you don't see anything. Any problems are displayed in the Alerts tab (see above).
- Customisable tool buttons. By default, Topshare still has the five buttons for frequently-used actions: Prices database, Buy, Sell, Dividend and Transactions. But now you can add new buttons to give instant access to any action in the menu system. You can also delete existing buttons. Access this through *Tools | Customise Toolbuttons*.
- Merger/Demerger/Takeover (see above)
- New subscription data facility (see above). The new system will offer the following advantages over the Yahoo system:

- historical data available (at least 5 years)
- seamless operation - just start Topshare, it will automatically get any data that's available since last time you started up. You won't "lose" data if you forget to download.
- includes stocks that aren't available from Yahoo - eg Options, warrants, etc.

- Completely revised charts
- New report layout. All reports now use the same system. This includes user-selectable columns for printing; user-selectable column width; ability to print on portrait or landscape; all reports can copy to clipboard. Associated with this, many reports now can include new data.
- New "Maintain portfolios" option. Delete/Archive portfolios; Restore from archive; combine multiple owners. This will allow greatly improved performance for those who've imported decades-long transaction histories from other portfolio management systems.

Because of the large number of changes introduced in this version, it's possible that we didn't get everything exactly right. So you can expect a few maintenance releases over coming months, where minor glitches are patched up (maintenance releases will be labeled 1.13a, 1.13b, etc). If you're interested in what's changed in a maintenance release, check the User Forum (look under Support on the Topshare website).

### **For the beta-testers**

As always, a big thank-you for your help, suggestions and patience during the last 6 months.

### **Current specials**

To celebrate our release of the latest Topshare, in the middle of the Christmas season, we are currently offering two very good deals:

**Topshare for \$149 - last few days.** The price of Topshare will be increasing to \$189 very soon. *If you're still evaluating, act now!* This price won't last for long.

**Introductory offer on data subscriptions.** Our price of \$79 for a year's data is already very attractive. But right now, for that cost we'll give

you 15 months data! Act now, this won't be available for long.

### **End of an era**

As you'll be aware, since Topshare's original introduction in August 2002, we've had a policy of free program updates. There are plenty of users out there who purchased version 1.0 or 1.1, for the price at the time of \$89, and who will shortly be running the latest version without ever having being asked to pay again.

This policy was set up in recognition that in the early days, Topshare was undergoing very frequent revision, and we didn't want people to be fearful of frequent upgrade costs.

However, since around version 1.11 or 1.12, the frequency of major upgrades has slowed. It's not that there won't be any more changes - far from it, Topshare will continue to be developed to meet the evolving needs of you, our users and customers. But we anticipate that, from now on, the major upgrades will be coming out every 1 to 2 years.

While the old no-charge-for-upgrades policy might have immediate appeal, it doesn't make for a reliable income for *us*. And remember - it's in *your* best interests that Topshare remains a profitable business, because that's your assurance of ongoing support and development.

So, to assure the ongoing best interests of both us as a company, and you as our customers, we have decided to ditch the old policy: from now on, we will be charging for major upgrades. *But*: the charge won't apply if you first purchased less than a year before the update is released; and of course, maintenance releases will still be free of charge. It's unlikely the first charged upgrade will be released before the end of 2008.

We've had some hesitation about introducing this policy, but have been heartened by the number of comments and recommendations from users that support the change.

Best wishes to all our customers for the festive season, and we hope that the markets treat you kindly in 2008.

*Chris Jackson*