

Technical Note
Changing OS X Firewall for 'AB for Web'

<http://www.turingart.com/>

Kiel, 04th December 2005

turingart

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Problem

You installed AB for Web on an OS X system. AB for Web provides a browser-based interface to an OS X address book.

While verifying your setup, you tried to connect to AB for Web from another system in your local network. Your favorite browser shows an error message, that the requested resource could not be loaded.

Description

Browsers and web-server communication by a network protocol known as TCP/IP and so called Uniform Resource Locators [URLs]. A URL describes, which server provides data and how to connect to the server.

A typical URL like

`http://192.168.1.20:8080/wab?op=welcome`

is composed of these parts:

- `http://`
... indicates a technique to retrieve web pages or download files. More technically, `http:` is called the **schema**.
- `192.168.1.20`
... indicates the **address** of the server. Think of the address as the based phone number of the party to connect to
- `8080`
... indicates the **port** to connect with. Think of the port as the extension of a the party to connect to
- `wab?op=welcome`
... indicates the name of the **resource** to download.

The above sample URL requires the port 8080 to be enabled on the server named 192.168.1.20.

Most operating systems use a firewall to enable or disable ports. Apple Computer's OS X system isn't an exception.

In case you can't connect to your application running on your server system, you need to enable one or more ports.

The next section explains, how to enable a port to access turingart's AB for Web.

Enabling AB for Web

Task summary

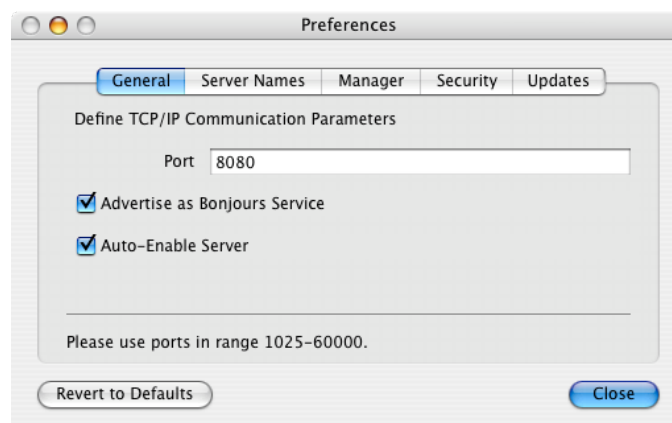
To complete this TechNote, you need to perform these steps:

- Identify or change AB for Web's TCP/IP port setting
- Change OS X's firewall settings and add a new port
- Verify correct setting using another computer

Time required: 10 minutes.

Verifying AB for Web's port

Open AB for Web's 'Preferences...' menu and select the 'General' tab:



Inspect the field named 'Port' and keep it for further use.

In this sample, we use port '8080'.

Note: On most modern operating systems, ports smaller than 1025 are so called privileged ports.

Although you may assign any free port to AB for Web, you need additional administrative access rights to use port smaller than 1025.

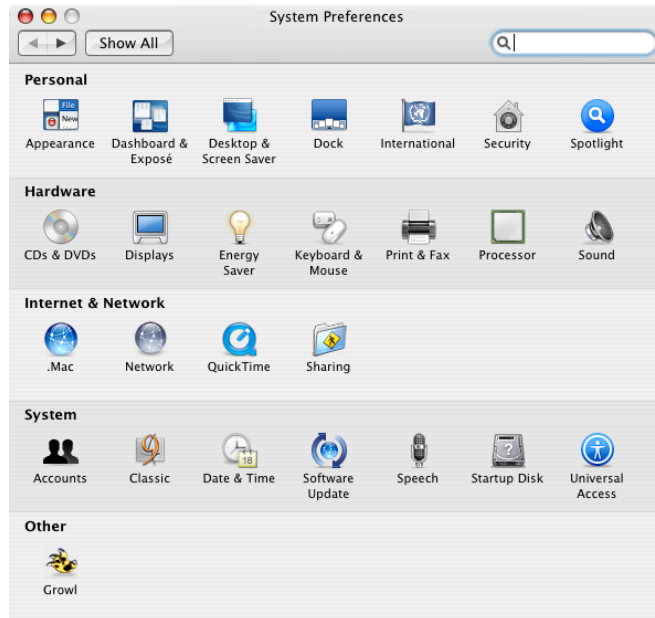
We propose to use a 'high' port number like 8080 or 9090.

On the server to run AB for Web, you need to add a special firewall rule to accept Web-Browser request from other systems.

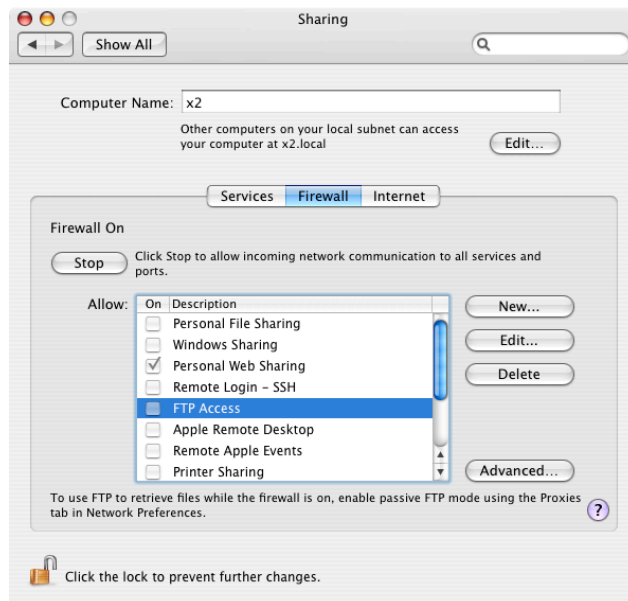
The next step explains how to change OS X's firewall.

Changing OS X's firewall

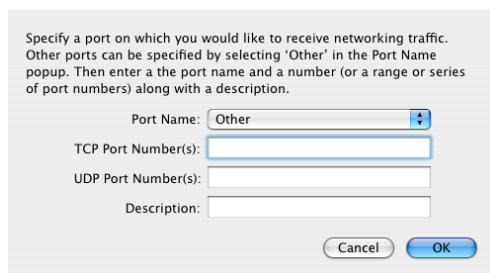
Open OS X's system preferences:



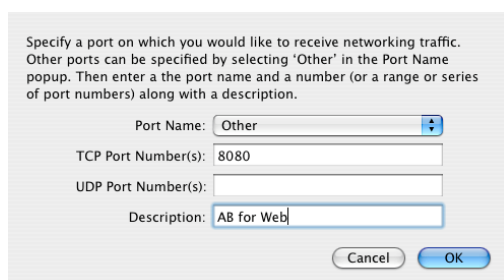
Click on 'Sharing' and select 'Firewall':



Click on 'New...' to add a new rule and select 'Other' in this dialog:



Set 'TCP Port Number(s)' to 8080 [or any other port number, you defined earlier] and set its description to 'AB for Web':

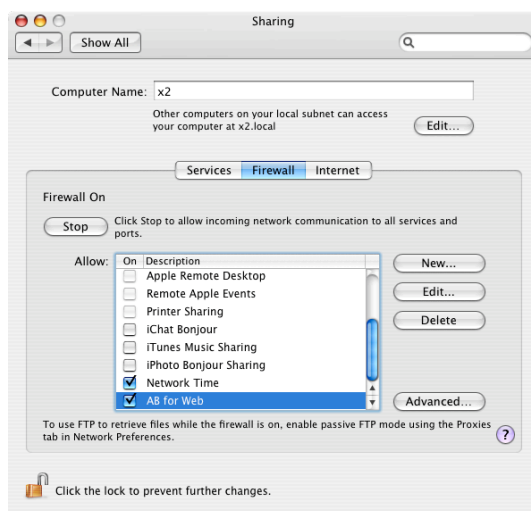


The 'TCP Port' field needs to correspond to AB for Web's settings. The description can be any text, since it is meant for humans, not for OS X itself.

Note: As mentioned earlier, you need special administrative privileges to set 'TCP port' to values less than 1025.

In case you don't know of administrative login details, ask your system manager for assistance.

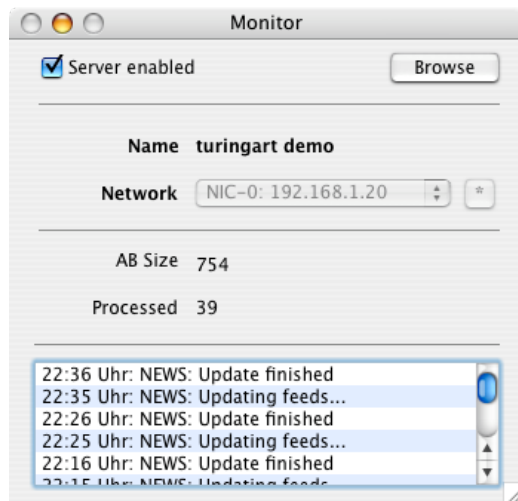
Finally, click on 'OK'. Your new entry will appear in 'Sharing's' 'Firewall' settings:



The next step explains how to verify your settings.

Verifying your settings

Activate AB for Web's main window and click on 'Browser':



Your browser should open an URL like this one:

`http://192.168.1.20:8080/wab?op=welcome`

In case you don't see AB for Web's 'Welcome Page', AB for Web isn't enabled. Activate AB for Web's main window and check 'Server enabled'.

Check the above URL again. Once AB for Web's 'Welcome Page' appears, proceed.

Copy this URL to a browser running on another system and load the URL. Since the server system's allows to connect to AB for Web, you should see a page similar to this one:

