

## Newsletter #6 (June 30, 2005)

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### What's New

#### **Newsletter Correction**

In the reader's comments of the previous newsletter we mentioned that we use the free versions of "ZoneAlarm" and "Avast!" anti-virus software. It was brought to our attention that the free versions are for home or personal use only, not for business use. This has situation has been rectified in our office (we purchased the Pro versions for all business computers), and we encourage you to also "get legal" and purchase any software you may be using.

### Feedback

#### **Q & A**

Here are some interesting support questions we've encountered this week. Have a question? Let us know!

#### **Q: Why don't all available sites show up when I try to change sites?**

A: When you make a reservation, any preferences such as the site type, 50A, etc. are saved with the reservation so that if you need to move them it will remember what kind of site they wanted. In most cases this isn't a problem, but if you do want to move them to a site that's slightly different then it can keep that site from appearing in the list. To correct this, simply uncheck the "Use Preferences" (or "Use Prefs") checkbox on the Assign or Change Site dialog so all available sites show up.

**Q: When we print our receipts it doesn't have the year (which our customers need for tax purposes). Can this be added?**

A: Any dates shown on the receipt are formatted according to the Date Format in Maintenance / Program Options / Formats, so you can show the year in the date by changing that format to one of the selections that include the year.

**Q: Why under Transactions does the total appear with a negative figure?**

If you're talking about the Reservation Transactions dialog, that means a credit balance or credited amount, such as a payment. If you mean the details in the Transactions tab view, this is actually inverted because the totals are calculated as a "system balance" -- Charges will be treated as a negative because they're a "debit" to the system, while payments will show as a positive "credit". So when a subtotal is shown for any given group it can show a balance for that group. For instance if you sort by Site so that it groups and subtotals for each site, you can see whether the charges and payments for that site's reservation are balanced.

**Q: Is it possible to disable the software from accepting reservations or bookings being done in a past date?**

Yes, there is an access level setting you can set to prevent this for operators with non-administrator access. See Maintenance / Park Setup / Access levels, and look for "Create new reservations starting on a prior date".

**Q: We are having difficulty finding the steps to changing a synchronized reservation to non synchronized for separate billing....the help content says it is possible; however, we haven't found the steps to accomplish this without canceling the synchronized reservation and re-entering it.**

This can be done from the Rack -- locate the linked reservation to be changed to non-sync, right-click on it and go to "Linked Reservations", and you'll see the option there to change it to non-synced.

## Tips & Techniques

### **Canceling a reservation that's already checked in**

Once you check in a reservation, the normal "Cancel" function on the right-click menu and in Reservation Details is disabled, mainly to prevent accidental cancellation. However there may be times when you need to do this anyway -- perhaps the customer decided they can't stay the night, or perhaps you accidentally checked in a reservation that was a no-show.

This is simple to accomplish, it just takes an extra step:

1. Locate the reservation and get to Reservation Details.
2. Click on the "Checked In" checkbox in the upper right (the only one that's checked and enabled). Confirm the prompt, and they will become Pending again.
3. Now click on the "Cancelled" checkbox to cancel the reservation.

At this point you can negate charges and/or enter a refund as needed, just like any other cancellation where they've already been charged and paid.

## Using a 'Fill' indicator on the map

If you've set up a map you probably know there are 3 types of Site Indicators -- Circle, Rectangle, and Fill. You might have tried the Fill indicator and couldn't get it to work. While the fill type can sometimes be the most attractive, it requires the background image to be very precise. We don't normally provide support on the image editing portion of map setup since it's outside Campground Master, but here are a couple tips that may help if you want to try getting Fill to work.

This idea behind a fill indicator is to fill up the site with the status color no matter what its shape, so you're not restricted to rectangular sites on a map -- think of it as pouring a bucket of paint on the site -- it will flow outward until it reaches a border of some kind, so it becomes the exact shape of the site.

The concept is simple enough, but in practice it can be a little tricky since it requires the image to be "perfectly flat" color-wise for the area you want to fill. Any slight variation in the color value will act like a border for the fill. Even though you can't visually see any difference in the color, a "white" background can actually contain many different almost-white colors as far as the computer is concerned. So you might end up with an oddly shaped fill, or maybe even just a single dot.

Another type of problem occurs if the image is flat enough but the site has a "leak" -- any gap in the border will allow the fill to get outside the site, possibly filling the whole map.

These problems can be corrected using an image editing program like Paint Shop Pro to edit the image. It has simple tools you can use to "flatten out" the color and close any leaks in the sites.

If your map image is basically black and white, then the easiest way to flatten it out is to convert it to a 2-color image (using the "Decrease color depth" function in Paint Shop Pro) which will flatten it to absolute black and white, then increase the color depth back to 256 colors for saving the BMP file (using "Increase color depth").

If instead of a black and white map you have various coloring you want to keep, then you can use Paint Shop Pro's "Color replacer" tool with a suitable Tolerance value, perhaps 10 or so. For instance this can replace everything "close" to white with a solid white so that the Fill indicator works. Once the tool tolerance option, size, and color is set, just move it around on top of the sites to flatten out the color.

Finally, inspect each site's border for leaks -- close any gaps using a small paint brush tool.

The specific functions mentioned above are for the Paint Shop Pro software which we recommend, however any good image editing software should have equivalent tools. And by the way, Paint Shop Pro does a much better job of resizing images than the Windows Paint program (which often results in a very rough image).

## Miscellaneous

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