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## Newsletter #10 (Aug 11, 2005)

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### What's New

#### Friend Communications format change

If you're using Friend Communications for taking online reservations (or if you plan to), be aware that they have added a field to their E-mail notification that makes it easier to parse the add-ons.

Instead of requiring a separate parsing rule for each "adder" type to set the appropriate description for it, the new "adderdesc" fields contain the description which can be extracted directly. This results in a more foolproof result and doesn't require the parsing rules to be changed each time you change the add-ons used.

If you're already set up and it's working fine, then there's no immediate need to change anything. However if you need to change the adders that you use or if you're not set up yet, then you should take advantage of the new format. The change is fairly simple, outlined below.

1. Go to Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Parsing Sets
2. Select Reservation Friend for the Parsing Set Type
3. Select the Reservation Friend (default) parsing set and click Edit...
4. Locate the series of rules for the field "Tran[1]:Tran\_Item" that have a rule starting with "Set field value if 'Compare to' matches".
5. Select the first one and Edit it. Change the Parsing action to "Extract Field Value", and change the Text before field to "adderdesc1:", and Save it.
6. Delete all of the other "Set field value if 'Compare to' matches" rules for the "adderd1" field.
7. Repeat steps 4 thru 6 for the adders 2, 3, 4, and 5 (fields Tran[2] thru Tran[5]).
8. Save the changes when done.

## Q & A

### **Showing all transactions an operator made**

**Q: How do I view all the transactions a particular operator made overnight?**

A: In the Transactions tab view:

1. Click on More Filters.
2. Click "Reset All" to clear any previous filtering, then click on the operator name in the Operators list at the bottom.
3. Click "OK".

That will show all transactions by that operator for the date(s) selected. (If the "Summarize" checkbox is checked, you also need to uncheck that.)

### **Changing the colored weekend columns**

**Q: Is there a way I could change the weekend "blue" columns from Saturday & Sunday to Friday & Saturday?**

A: Go to View / Color key for reservations. You can change each day of the week to whatever color you want (right-click on the entry to select a different background color).

### **Showing the unpaid status on Map indicators**

**Q: The Rack shows a name in red if they haven't paid. Can I show that on the Map also?**

A: Yes, it will show the site number and border (if applicable) in red text if you select the option to "Use reservation color coding" (click the Options button on the Map view to change this). Of course that will also change the other status colors to all use the same coloring as the Rack uses also, which may or may not be desired.

### **Changing the default reservation type**

**Q: Most of our reservations are Monthly but I keep forgetting to change that when I make a reservation. Can I change the default type for new reservations?**

A: Yes, you can set the default type for new reservations in Maintenance / Program Options / Reservations. Of course for reservations already made you can also fix the type of each reservation in its Reservation Details (just select the new type, under the site name).

## Handling non-site rentals like storage

**Q: What is the best way to log storage? We don't have site #'s for it.**

A: If you want to treat them like reservations, with rates, receipts, reporting, etc., then they need to be on Sites. You can just put in a bunch of storage "sites", for instance numbered S1 to S100, and just use the next available storage site for each one you add.

You can add any number of sequentially numbered sites in a single step using the "Add/Insert Multiple Sites" function in Maintenance / Park Setup / Sites (or if you're not using version 3.5 yet, this function is in Maintenance / Raw Data Tables / Sites). We recommend that you add the first one in the normal way so you can set its Type, Class, Park, and other attributes, and then use the multiple-sites function to clone it as many times as needed with sequential numbers starting at # 2.

## Tips & Techniques

### Recovering from a corrupt or missing database

If you get a message when starting up that the database cannot be found, or that it's corrupt and cannot be read, or if the Rack is completely blank, the first reaction is to panic. This kind of error is usually caused by a power outage or computer glitch at just the wrong time, which causes the database to not be saved completely. But unless you're using a very old version (before 2.0), then you can probably recover easily without losing anything.

There are simply too many possible variations in circumstance to show a simple step-by-step recovery procedure, but the guidelines below should get you through it easily enough.

### Opening Campground Master

First you need to get Campground Master open and stable so you can use the Restore function if necessary.

If it says that no database has been defined, do NOT select the option to open the sample database. Just let it open a blank database. Then continue to the "No Database Defined" section below to try opening your database.

If it opens with a blank Rack, or if it shows one error message saying something like "database is corrupt" or "invalid database" and clicking OK brings you to a blank Rack or a login window, then continue to the next section. (If your normal login doesn't work, use "Administrator" and "Password".)

If it shows a continuous stream of data error message prompts that don't stop after several messages, then close down (Ctrl-Alt-Delete and use End Task to terminate the program) and start over, opening the Demo database instead. (If you've removed the demo icon from the desktop, go to Start / Programs / Campground Master and open the Sample database.) Once the demo is open, use the Maintenance / New Database function to clear everything out -- if it asks for a name, try to enter exactly the same database name you used before. If it says the database already exists, that's OK -- that's the corrupt one anyway so you might as well clear it out. Once you have a blank database open, skip to the "Do you have a removable backup..." section below.

### No Database Defined, or a blank Rack?

If it says that no database has been defined, or if it opens with a blank Rack, then it could simply be that it lost track of which database it was supposed to open. Use File / Open to see if you can find your database file. The folder "C:\Program Files\Campground Master" is the most likely location. If all else fails, use the Find Files function in Windows (from the Start button), and look for files named \*.prk (include the asterisk and the period). If it finds one (other than "demo.prk") and it looks like your database (check the modified date -- is it recent?), make a note of its location and then use File / Open again to open it. Otherwise, continue with the steps below.

**Important:** Do NOT open a database named "database.prk" that's inside a .zip file (that's a compressed backup, and will show a zipped folder instead of a normal folder icon). If this is the only database you can locate, then you should use the Restore function covered below.

If you can't find your database or it's still blank, then keep reading...

### Do you have a removable backup, e.g. on floppy or CD?

Ideally you're making daily backups to a removable disk (if not, YOU SHOULD), in which case it's a simple matter of using the Maintenance / Restore from backup function to restore the database. Just follow the prompts, locate the backup file on the removable disk when you get to the Open dialog, and open that file.

**Important:** After restoring the database backup, if it didn't prompt you to use the same last database file, then be sure to use File / Save As to save it to the correct location on your hard drive, with the correct name. When you get to the Save As dialog, double-check the "Save In" location -- usually it will show "Campground Master", and if you drop down the list then it should indicate that it's under C:\Program Files. If it shows something else, see if a database file is shown with the name you normally use. If so, then that might be the correct location -- just select it to replace the file there (presumably it's corrupted). If you can't figure out where the database used to be saved, then we recommend that you put it in C:\Program Files\Campground Master.

If you're using a version older than 3.1, you should immediately close Campground Master and re-open it after doing the Save As step. This will force it to check for changes in the log files that didn't get in the backup, and those can be restored also. If you're using 3.1 or later, it should prompt you to "Apply changes" after you do the Save As step (click 'Yes' when it does).

Note: In order to recover changes made since the backup, the database must be saved in the same location that was used before, and must use the same filename. If you don't remember where it was saved and it's not in the path mentioned above, you could check Maintenance / Program Options / Database to see if it shows the auto-open path.

### What if you don't have a backup handy?

There's still hope, if you're using a recent version. The program makes daily auto-backups which should still be there. These are placed in the same folder as your database (usually C:\Program Files\Campground Master). So try using the Maintenance / Restore function, and when it gets to the Open dialog then navigate the Look In drop-down list to that location (select the disk under My Computer that shows "(C:)", then double-click the Program Files folder, then double-click the Campground Master folder).

Now you should see a whole bunch of files that start with your database name and then have "\_Auto\_Backup\_" and a date in the name (make sure the Files of Type shows "Compressed backup (\*.zip)"). Locate the one with the latest date in the filename, select it and click Open.

If you didn't see these auto-backup files in that location, then you may have been saving your database somewhere else. If you don't remember where it was saved, you could check Maintenance / Program

Options / Database and see if it shows the auto-open path. If all else fails, use the Find Files function in Windows (from the Start button), and look for files named \*\_Auto\_Backup\_\* (include the asterisks, those are wildcard characters).

### **What if it's on a networked computer?**

If the problem is on only one computer in a networked setup, then you can also just make a fresh backup from one of the other computers and restore it to the corrupted one. Be sure to save it using the same database name as the other workstations use, or else it won't be able to connect to the server.

### **Making sure it continues to open the correct database**

Once you have your data restored and you've verified that it's as good as can be expected, then there may be a couple more steps to make sure it opens this database automatically. This is especially true for version 3.5 or later, but in any case you should follow this procedure:

1. Use File / Save As to save the database. It should default to the correct location, but if not then verify that the "Save In" drop-down shows "Campground Master" (unless you're using a different location on purpose). It should also show the database file already in the file list and the File Name field. If not, enter the database name you want to use (e.g. your park's name). Click Save to save the data to that file. If it warns you that the file already exists, that's OK. If it asks you if you want to use this as the new default database, click Yes.
2. Use File / Open to open the database, verifying that it's correct. (You should be able to just click Open -- the file name and location should already be selected. If not, you'll need to navigate the Look In to the proper location and select the database file.)
3. Log in (using an administrator-level login), and go to Maintenance / Program Options / Database. If there's a large button "Change the auto-open database..." underneath the auto-open database file and path, then click that button. (This will only be there for version 3.5 and later.)

Hopefully the procedures above will get your data restored. If you have any problems, please contact us.