

## Newsletter #4 (June 9, 2005)

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### What's New

#### **Version 3.5 Released**

Just in case you didn't get the update notice -- version 3.5 has been officially released, with support for importing online reservations and a number of small changes. It can be downloaded from our web site now.

If you're a current customer and didn't receive the notice, please let us know (and check your spam filtering -- we know a lot of anti-spam software filters out our notices because they have links to files on the web site, for instance).

#### **Receipts by Category Special Note**

If you're using the Receipts by Category summary report in the Transactions tab, you need to be aware that the calculations will be different between versions 3.1 and 3.5. This affects reporting for previous dates as well as future dates, because this is an interpolated report based on previous transactions.

These changes were necessary to correct some problems with the distribution of payments into categories. If you use numbers from this report for accounting outside of Campground Master, you should run a report for all prior dates and compare it with the numbers you used before, making any adjustments as needed. Otherwise when the reports are created for future dates, it could result in duplicate entries or missed entries, and possibly a completely different total due to errors in the previous reporting.

#### **Open the cash drawer automatically without printing**

Due to popular demand, this new feature was added to the 3.5 release at the last minute. In the Cash Drawer Setup, there's a new option to automatically open the cash drawer as soon as a Payment is entered

in Transactions (or Point of Sale). Any change due for a cash payment will also be shown at that time, instead of waiting until the dialog is closed.

You can set this option whether or not you normally print a receipt, or automatically print a receipt.

## **Feedback**

### **Q & A**

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

#### **Q. I have an Epson TM-T88iii receipt printer and it runs slow on your program but fine on my other point of sale program. Any suggestions?**

It sounds like you're running it through a printer driver. If it's a parallel or serial interface (not USB), you can use the "Direct to Port" option so it's faster (see File / Printer Setup / Receipt Printer, Direct to Port). This was added in version 3.1, so if you don't see that option then you need to get the latest version. Once you've enabled that and selected the port for it ("lpt1" for parallel, probably "com1" for serial), then there will be new 3" receipt format listed -- use the "direct to port" one instead of the "fixed pitch" or "proportional" receipt formats.

#### **Q: When I set up the receipt printer to use the direct-to-port printing option, the last two lines of print won't scroll above the cutting bar (unless I press the feed button). How can I get it to automatically scroll up far enough?**

To get it to move up farther, go to Maintenance / Park Setup / 3" Receipt printer bottom text, and add some blank lines at the bottom of the text.

#### **Q. When trying to email a confirmation this is the message: "Couldn't send message! Response:553 sorry, that domain isn't allowed to be relayed thru this MTA (#5.7.1)". How do I fix that?**

(This relates to any similar error response.)

The error is coming from the SMTP server that you're sending mail through, so it's likely to be the Sender address you're using. If you're not a recognized sender for the SMTP server you're using, it may not allow relaying the message. This is to keep spammers from using it from the outside. Especially if it allows sending a test message to yourself (because you're recognized) but not to others, this is likely the problem.

For instance, if you're using an SMTP server from your web provider like "smtp.myparkaddress.com", your Sender E-mail address should be a valid address for your domain, like "info@myparkaddress.com". Likewise, to use an ISP's SMTP server like "mail.earthlink.net" you may have to use your earthlink.net E-mail address for the Sender address.

#### **Q. When and if I put in the wrong meter reading for a monthly space rental, I can't seem to change it back to the original readings to correct it. Is this an unreversible action or can I change that?**

You can correct it by going into the Site Details for the site -- right-click on the site, select Site Details, and enter the original ("last") reading. Also delete the incorrect charges from the reservation of course. Then you can enter the new reading/charges again.

If you don't know what the original reading was, look at the charges on the reservation before deleting them -- it will show the original reading (and the new one) in the description.

**Q: I have a question on how to handle miscellaneous sales such as golf cart rental, canoe rental, etc. Can it be handled at check in? If so what are the steps?**

Assuming the Point of Sale option is not present...

When you're at the Reservation Transactions screen at check-in, click Select Rates, and then at the top of that select the "Merchandise" item from the Rate Types (assuming you have the items set up in Park Setup / Rates as Merchandise rates). Select an item, enter the Qty if more than one, and click Add. Then click Done and they will be added to their reservation bill.

If you don't have them set up as merchandise rates, you can enter miscellaneous charges by clicking the Charge button, then select an appropriate category and enter the quantity and amount, also making sure the appropriate box is checked for sales tax, etc.

If you do have the Point of Sale option....

If the items to be added are POS inventory items, then click the P.O.S. button at the top of Reservation Transactions to add sales to their reservation bill.

**Q: How do we change the additional notes on the large reservation receipt (Ticket Form)?**

Go to Maintenance / Park Setup / Parks. It's the Notes 1, 2, and 3 fields there. Press F1 for details on formatting (adding blank lines, etc.). The reason it's in the Park record is so that you could set up different notes for different "Parks" or sections, e.g. one for RV's and another for Cabins.

## Reader Comments

One of our customers writes with this request:

**As a suggestion, a "yellow sticky" or "things to do/check/resolve/be aware of" pop up would be great.**

Our response:

There are plans to add notices like this for reservations (e.g. reminders at check-in), but not necessarily general purpose ones because it wouldn't necessarily know when or where to show them. There are a number of separate sticky-note programs you might look into, usually under \$20, and probably some free ones. Try a search on Google for "sticky-notes software".

Another issue that seems to be coming up quite a bit:

**One issue we are having with the software is people not filling out the reservation forms completely when they take the reservation. In addition, it's hard to tell who made the mistake because multiple people use the computer and it's not convenient to have people log out and back in every time they step up to it. Would it be possible to put a field in the reservation detail where the operator has to enter their code by hand (or else the reservation won't allow "done/save" ) ?**

Our response:

There isn't a way to do this yet, but it should be no problem in version 4.0. We plan to add customizable "validation" functionality so that you can prevent it from saving the reservation unless certain fields are filled in. You could also add a field for the operator's code, but with the validation functionality available the operator code may not be necessary.

## Tips & Techniques

### **Creating a list of customer's E-mails**

While Campground Master doesn't directly support mass E-mailing, you can easily get a list of all customer's E-mail addresses for exporting to another program. We use a program called Group Mail Plus for our mailings.

To get a list of E-mail addresses:

1. Go to Customers / Find Customer.
2. Select "E-mail" from the Filter-by list, and make sure the Filter-by box is checked.
3. Enter the single character "@" in the Containing field, and press Enter.

Now you should have a list of all customers that have an E-mail address entered. You can use Export List to export the results to a CSV file, which most programs can read or import (ignoring the Notes and Reservations columns of course).

### **Copying Campground Master to another computer**

There are a few reasons you may need to copy your entire Campground Master software and data to another computer. Perhaps you bought a new computer, or want a backup on a home computer, or you're adding another computer to the network. In any of these cases, just follow the steps below.

These are given in general terms because specifics may vary, but only basic computer knowledge is required. If you're not sure how to do a particular step, consult your computer support person (or resident teenage computer expert!).

1. Make a backup of the current database using the Maintenance / Back Up Database function, and save or copy it to a floppy disk, CD, or other location where you can get to it from the new computer (check the "Save in" at the top to see where it's saving it).
2. Use Maintenance / Restore from Backup to verify that the backup copy is readable. (Don't worry, if it's not readable then your current data won't be altered.)
3. Also make a copy of any map image files (.bmp files) that are located in the same folder as your database. If you're not sure what folder that is, go to Maintenance / Program Options / Database. The map images are not part of the normal backup so these need to be copied separately, using normal file copy functions in Windows Explorer or My Computer.
4. Likewise if you're using the Export to Web function, copy any template files (.htt files) that you're using. These might be in a different location -- see File / Export / Export to web vacancy grid(s) to check the template file location.
5. Check Help / About Campground Master to see what version you're running.
6. Locate an installation disk or download file for the same version you're currently running. All major versions can be downloaded from our web site if necessary. If you can't locate the exact version then use the next higher version, assuming you're authorized to upgrade to it -- but be sure to also update any other computers that will still be using Campground Master.
7. Install the version of Campground Master from above on the new computer.
8. Run Campground Master. It doesn't matter whether you load the sample (demo) database or not.

9. Go to Maintenance / New Database (clear all). If it asks you for a database name (version 3.5 or later), enter the same name as your database used before. Otherwise, go to File / Save As, make sure the folder shown for "Save in" is Campground Master, and enter the database file name used before.
10. Go to Maintenance / Program Options / Database to verify the database location, and copy the map image (.bmp) files from your backup disk to that folder (using Windows Explorer or My Computer to copy the files). Likewise copy any template (.htt) files to the corresponding location.
11. Go to Maintenance / Restore from Backup to restore from the backup -- you'll probably need to select the location in the Open dialog ("Look in").
12. If all looks OK, go to File / Save to make sure it's saved to the hard disk.

That's the basics of setting up on a new computer. If you're setting up for networking, you'll also need to set the appropriate network settings.

Also keep in mind that the printer selection and options in File / Printer Setup are computer-specific, so you may need to do some tweaking there also if you don't use the default printer settings for everything.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Contacting Us**

To respond to this newsletter, just send us an E-mail. If you're reading this in your E-mail program, just reply to this E-mail.

Otherwise, see our web site for complete contact information and an E-mail link:  
<http://www.Campground-Master.com/contact.html>

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