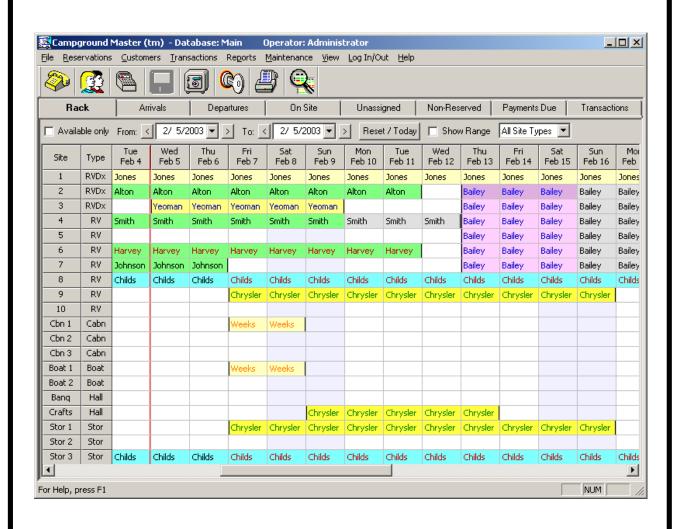# Campground Master

Software Manual

Campground Master™

User Manual and Reference

by Cottonwood Software

Version 3.5

Campground Master v3.5

Copyright © Cottonwood Software 2005

Table of Contents

Chapter 5 Working with Reservations   61

Chapter 6 Working with Customers   92

Chapter 11 Maintenance Functions   **207**

1   Introduction

Overview - Software Purpose

The Campground Master software was designed to simplify the task of reservation management for any campground or RV resort. It can be extended to include rental cabins, park models and other facilities as needed. In fact it can be used to keep track of anything for which you need to make reservations or track occupancy. It was designed to be fast and easy to use for both large and small campgrounds, while supporting all of the features expected in a reservation management system. It makes the transition from paper-based reservations to a computerized system as quick and painless as possible.

In addition to keeping track of reservations (including the current and past status of all rental sites), the software keeps a detailed customer database and a complete log of all financial transactions for each customer and rental site. The information can be used to generate helpful financial reports and occupancy reports, show marketing results (where your customers come from), and more.

Setup and Customization

Many aspects of the software are user-definable, and everything can be set up by the end user through the program's simple menu interface. No knowledge of programming is necessary, although a familiarity with the Windows operating system and basic software use is recommended. This manual covers every function of the software, including the maintenance functions used for setting up the database for your particular campground. Most of our customers have found that they can set everything up themselves with a minimal of support required. If necessary, you can have Cottonwood Software or one of our representatives set up the initial database for you, so you can get started using the software in a short time with minimal training.

For more information, see the section *Setting Up Your Campground Database*.

If You Need Assistance

When you purchase Campground Master, you are entitled to free support via E-mail or phone for at least 1 year. If you are just trying out the software, feel free to contact is with any questions and for licensing details. You can contact Cottonwood Software at:

E-mail: support@campground-master.com
Web: http://www.campground-master.com

Phone:
1 (877) 414-8384   (Voice-mail, we will call you back as soon as possible)
1 (913) 522-0717   (Direct line, for urgent support or if an immediate answer is preferred)

Post:
Cottonwood Software
231 Rainbow Dr., #13166
Livingston, TX 77399-2031

2   Getting Started

Overview - Using This Manual

The information in this manual varies from the very basic to the highly complex. If you are not comfortable with using Windows software, you should start by going through the Quick Start guide with the software, and then read the *Terminology* and *Helpful Hints* sections thoroughly before proceeding. You may also want to skip the *Setting Up…* and *Program Options…* sections and start at *The Dynamic Interactive Report Screens* section for more basic program information.

If you are a seasoned Windows user, you can probably skim these sections and dig right in to the *Setting Up Your Campground Database* section. The Quick Start guide is still recommended as a quick introduction to how the software works, however.

The sections of this manual have been generally organized in order from the most basic to the most complex, so that you can get started quickly by learning the most common functions of the software and gradually explore in more depth as needed. Likewise, topics within a section are arranged this way to provide a natural progression into the details of the customer database, for instance. Hopefully every step will be an easy one, and you will soon be an expert.

The exceptions to this easy-to-complex order are the *Setting Up Your Campground Database* and the *Program Options and Settings* sections, which come first. These have been placed before the other sections simply because setup must be done before you can use the software to make reservations. Even so, those section are more of an overview of what is needed to do the setup, since in many cases *you* won't be doing the setup anyway (assuming you have someone else to do the setup). Whoever actually does the setup will need to refer to the *Maintenance* sections which appear later, so you might want to read the setup sections anyway to gain a better understanding of how things are put together. This will help you understand why things look the way they do, and why the software might look or operate slightly different on your computer than the examples given here.

It is highly recommended that you have the software running on your computer and actually use it as you read this manual. You can then experiment with the functions as they are described. This is the fastest way to learn the software. Once you actually do it yourself, you will remember it much better than just having read about it.

WARNING - You will probably *not* want to use the real database for experimenting -- either use the sample database that comes with the software, or make sure you have a *backup* before making any changes, and know how to do a *restore* from the backup once you are finished experimenting.

Terminology

This manual assumes that you are familiar with general computer and Windows terminology, such as keyboard, mouse, window, button, menu, and so forth. Here are a few terms specific to the Campground Master software that are used extensively in the manual.

<u>Tabs</u> -- Besides the Tab key on the keyboard, "Tabs" refers to the row of buttons on the main Campground Master screen that simulate section tabs in a notebook or day-planner. They bear the words "Rack", "Arrivals", "Departures", etc., and are used to change to different views, or dynamic interactive reports (for example, click on the "Payments Due" tab to see the Payments Due view).

Views or **Tab Views**-- Officially known as *Dynamic Interactive Reports* in Campground Master, the different sets of data that appear on the main screen corresponding to the Tabs (see above) are called Views throughout the manual, for simplicity. For example, the *Rack View* is the primary screen with the reservation "rack" dynamic interactive report.

Grids and **Cells** -- Each of the Views consist primarily of a Grid with data Cells. In other words, a grid consists of rows and columns of information, and a cell is any one of the row/column positions. While some data cells may be different sizes to accommodate the data, any structure with rows and columns is considered a grid. These will also appear on some dialogs and report screens. A grid is usually easy to identify since the grid lines are visible, but the lines can be turned off on some views if preferred.

Dialog -- This is a general Windows term, but not commonly used except by programmers. A dialog is any of the pop-up windows that appear to alert the user or ask for input, such as an "Are You Sure" prompt or a customer entry form.

Prompt -- This is a more specific term for a simple dialog that has a message or a question to be answered, and usually a few buttons such as <u>OK</u>, <u>Cancel</u>, <u>Yes</u>, or <u>No</u>. These are usually warnings that the user should read carefully before continuing.

Right-click -- This is a term for clicking the right mouse button (instead of the left button which is more commonly used).

Double-click -- This means click the left mouse button twice in quick succession. It's important to not move the mouse at all between the clicks, or else it will be seen as two separate clicks instead of one double-click action, and the results will be different. (This is a common problem among beginning computer users that takes quite a bit of practice to correct).

Default -- The terms "by default" or "default setting" don't have anything to do with a "fault". It means that the selection has a pre-set, or normal, condition unless the user selects a different one. For instance, the Rack view is the "default view", which means it will be the view shown unless the user clicks on a tab to choose another view.

System Requirements

Campground Master is designed to operate on any PC that can support Windows 95 or later. Generally any computer manufactured after 1996 will work, however following the recommendations below will allow for smoother operating and better functionality (for instance, more features are available when 800x600 or better screen resolution is used, colors look much better on a true-color display, a lot more data can be kept before a Purge is needed if you have more RAM, etc.).

Requirements:

Intel 80386 or better processor (Pentium at 200MHz or better is recommended)
Microsoft Windows 95, NT 4 or later 32-bit operating system.
32MB RAM or more (256MB recommended for 95/98/ME, 512MB for NT/XP)
640x480 VGA 8-bit graphics (800x600 or higher with 16-bit graphics recommended)
25MB free hard disk space
A 2-button mouse (or better)

Installing the Software

If you have the software on CD-ROM it is basically self-installing. Simply insert the CD-ROM and click the "Install Now" button on the window that shows up. If installation does not start automatically, follow this procedure:

> 1. Insert the CD-ROM into the CD-ROM drive.
> 2. From the Windows *Start* menu, select *Run…*
> 3. Type **d:\setup** in the edit box, where "d:\" is your CD-ROM drive letter.
> 4. Press **Enter**.

If you have obtained the software in an electronic form (e.g. a download from the Internet), then simply execute the downloaded "setup" file to start the installation (double-click on its icon in Windows Explorer).

The installation program should start and ask you to confirm the selections. Just click the **Next** button on each prompt to continue, and the software will install in the typical way most users need.

Running the Software

When installing the software, you will have the option to have Campground Master start up automatically when you start your computer. In addition, an icon will be placed on the Windows desktop so you can start or restart the software any time by double-clicking the icon. (For those who have trouble with double-clicking the mouse button, you can also click an icon once and then press the **Enter** key to start the program.)

Note: You may see three icons for the program, in which case two of them will be labeled "Demo" -- one with POS (Point if Sale) and one without. These icons can be used to start the software with the sample database, which can be useful for experimenting. Once the software is in full use, these demo icon should be deleted to avoid confusion.

Logging In and Out

Once the program starts, you will be asked to Log In with an Operator Login and Password. This is necessary to access any of the program's functions. The software initially has one operator with administrative access (able to do everything), so you can log in with the operator name "**Administrator**" and the password "**Password**". (Type them without the quotes.) Once your system is set up, these should be changed for security purposes. This is covered in detail later.

To log in, just follow these steps:

> 1. Click the Log In button on the toolbar (the key icon) or click on <u>Log In/Out</u> on the main menu.
> 2. Type your operator login name. Don't worry about whether to use capital letters or not, it doesn't matter.
> 3. Press the **Enter** key (or **Tab** key) to move to the <u>Password</u> field.
> 4. Type your password. Again, don't worry about capitals. Note that you won't be able to see the letters you type -- they will all be shown as asterisks (*). This is for security. If you make a mistake, it's best to back up to the beginning with the **Backspace** key and start over.
> 5. Press the **Enter** key (or click on the <u>Log In</u> button with the mouse).

You should now be logged in. If you get an error message, you can go back and try again.

Once you're logged in, you should see more of the toolbar icons enabled (in color), and you can click on the tabs (Arrivals, Departures, etc.) to change views. The number of things enabled will depend on your access level.

Logging Out

When you want to log out of the system (to prevent others from gaining access and changing data), just open the Log In/Out dialog as above and click the Log Out button.

The Main Program Window

Caption / Title Bar

This is the standard Windows caption used by nearly all Windows programs. Besides the name of the program, the Campground Master caption has a few informative items in it.

Database name -- You will likely be using the same database at all times, so the database name will probably be the name of your campground (or whatever name you gave your database). If you do change databases, for instance to manage multiple campgrounds, this will tell you at a glance which one you're working with.

Change indicator -- If an asterisk (*) appears next to the database name, this means that the database has been changed and not yet saved to the disk. (You will rarely see this if you have the Auto-save option turned on.)

Operator -- The currently logged in operator is shown, so you can tell whether or not you're operating under the correct log-in.

Workstation -- If you're authorized for the networking version, the caption will also show the workstation ID and (optional) nickname for this workstation.

Window control buttons -- These are the standard Windows buttons to minimize, maximize/restore, and close the window. If you've used Windows programs before, you should be familiar with these. In case you're new to Windows…

The first button, which looks like an underline character (_), will minimize the window (shrink it to a button on the Windows task bar). To get it back after minimizing it, just click on its task bar button.

The second button that looks like a box will either be Maximize or Restore, depending on the current state of the window. Clicking on it once will enlarge (Maximize) the window to fill the entire screen, and clicking it again will restore the window to a smaller size. In most cases, you will want to keep the window maximized so you can see as many reservations as possible in the Rack view..

The last button, (X), will close the window and shut down the program. This is the same as selecting Exit from the File menu.

Main Menu

File   Reservations   Customers   Transactions   Reports   Maintenance   View   Log In/Out   Help

The main menu is always at the top, just under the program caption. It contains all of the main functions of the program and is fairly self-explanatory (each function is detailed elsewhere in this manual).

Toolbar

The toolbar is the row of picture icons below the menu. (It can be turned on and off from the <u>View</u> menu.) The Toolbar can be used for quick access to the most common top-level functions. Each of the functions are also available as Menu commands and as function key shortcuts (**F2** through **F8**), so you can turn off the toolbar without losing functionality if you prefer using the menu or if you're comfortable with the keyboard shortcuts. The icons will normally be shown in color, but will be gray if the option is disabled. For instance, all but the Log-in button will be gray until an operator is logged in.

New Reservation (Phone) -- This will open the New Reservation dialog, the same as the menu selection <u>Reservations</u> | <u>Add New Reservation</u>.

New Customer (Faces) -- This opens the customer editing dialog, the same as the menu selection <u>Customers</u> | <u>Add New Customer</u>. It's handy for adding new customers or for looking up customer information (you can use the Find button on the dialog immediately without adding a new customer).

New Transaction (Cash register) -- This opens either the New Transaction dialog, Unbound Transactions, or the Point of Sale, depending on the Program Options settings. It's most useful for entering transactions like counter sales, expenses, or other income.

Save Database (Diskette) -- This will instantly save the database, the same as the menu selection <u>File</u> | <u>Save</u>. This button will be gray (disabled) if you have the Auto-save option enabled, and you should have that option enabled at all times.

Backup Database (Safe) -- This will create a backup copy of the database, the same as the menu selection <u>Maintenance</u> | <u>Back Up Database</u>. You should make a backup at least once per day, and this button will help you remember to do that since it's right next to the Log-in button.

Log In/Out (Key) -- This is used to log an operator in our out, the same as the Log In/Out menu selection.

Print (Printer) -- This will print the currently visible tab view, the same as the menu selection <u>File</u> | <u>Print</u> (or <u>File</u> | <u>Print Preview</u> if the Always Preview option is enabled).

Search (Magnifying glass) -- This opens the Search function, which allows you to search the current tab view for a site name or customer name. This function has no menu equivalent, but can also be invoked with the **F9** key or **Alt-S**. To search the entire database for a customer or reservation, instead of just searching the current tab view, use the Find Customer and Find Reservation menu functions.

Tab Views (Dynamic Interactive Reports)

Rack	Arrivals	Departures	On Site	Unassigned	Non-Reserved	Payments Due	Transactions

This is the main portion of the screen, where most of the action is. It will fill the remainder of the window between the toolbar and status bar (if present), regardless of the window size. The tabs are discussed in detail in the *Dynamic Interactive Report Screens* section.

Status Bar

For Help, press F1   NUM

The status bar appears at the very bottom of the window, and can be turned on and off from the <u>View</u> menu. It simply shows short help-hints for menu items (whatever the mouse cursor is hovering over), some progress messages (for instance, "Saving database"), and the state of keys like **Caps Lock** and **Num Lock**.

If you're running the networked version, a small box will be shown at the right side with a heartbeat indicator. This indicator changes each time a message is sent or received over the network, indicating that it's connected and functioning. (The character shown is meant to simulate a spinning propeller, in case you're wondering.) If the network connection is not functioning, an "X" will be shown.

Tip of the Day

Each time you start Campground Master, a Tip of the Day window will appear. This presents the user with a helpful tip each day (or each time the program starts). There are over 100 program usage tips covering different shortcuts, special functions, and brief tutorials. Some tips will show "New Feature" in the upper right corner, alerting you to a feature recently added. So even if you've reviewed all of the tips before, it's a good idea to turn the tips back on when you upgrade to a new version of the software.

If you don't want to show the tips any more, uncheck the box <u>Show tips on startup</u>. They can also be turned off (or back on) by going to the <u>Help</u> menu and selecting the <u>Show Tips on Startup</u> option.

The Help menu also has a selection to <u>Show Tips Now</u>, so you can review them at any time. This will show the tips window immediately.

Once you're in the Tips window, you can browse through as many tips as you like using the <u>Next</u>, <u>Previous</u>, and <u>Rewind</u> buttons. Each time you close the window, it will remember which tip you last viewed. Once you reach the end of the tips, it will automatically start over at the beginning, and we recommend letting it continue to cycle through the tips until you understand all of the tips.

Note that for networked workstations, it remembers the last tip (and whether the tips are to be shown or not) separately on each workstation.

Helpful Hints --- Getting the Most Out of Your Keyboard and Mouse

Right-click is your friend

Campground Master makes extensive use of the **right** mouse button to open "Context Menus". These are menus that contain quick-access functions for the object that you right-click on. For example, when looking at any of the main views you'll be able to right-click on a reservation to perform any functions appropriate for it at the time, such as checking in, changing sites, extending a reservation, and much more. The general rule is: right-click on everything, just to see what you can do.

Once you right-click to open the menu, the next click should use the **left** mouse button. In other words, the *only* time you need to use right-click is to *open* the context menu. Left-click does everything else. And once the menu is open, if you don't want to do anything on the menu then you can close it either by clicking somewhere else (*anywhere* else besides on the menu), or by pressing the **ESC** key on the keyboard.

For more details, see the Right-Click Functions in the *Dynamic Interactive Report Screens* section.

Keyboard shortcuts

There are several common Windows keyboard shortcuts that come in handy in Campground Master. Learning these can make you much faster at using the software, since moving the mouse and clicking takes time (and is often frustrating when you're trying to hurry and click in the wrong place!).

Function Key shortcuts

Instead of clicking on the toolbar icons, you can use a corresponding function key. Because **F1** is the standard key for Help in Windows programs, the toolbar icons correspond to F2 through F9:

- **F1** -- Help
- **F2** -- New Reservation
- **F3** -- New Customer (or Find Customer, depending on options settings)
- **F4** -- New Transaction (or Reservation Transactions, or P.O.S. / Unbound Transactions)
- **F6** -- Back up database
- **F7** -- Log in/out
- **F8** -- Print (this will also work on any dialog with a Print button)
- **F9** -- Search

More Useful Shortcuts

These shortcuts to commonly used functions help minimize the need to go to the menus.

- **Ctrl-U --** Find Customer
- **Ctrl-F --** Find Reservation
- **Ctrl-R --** Recall the last reservation created or viewed
- **Ctrl-T** -- Recall the last transactions entered or viewed
- **Ctrl-S** -- Search current view (same as F9 or Alt-S)
- **Ctrl-L** -- Look up Receipt (Find Receipt) -- only if P.O.S. option is enabled
- **Ctrl-I** -- Find Inventory, only if P.O.S. option is enabled
- **Alt-.** (Alt-period) -- Point of Sale sales entry, only if P.O.S. option is enabled

Navigating the tab views with the Tab key and function keys

To quickly change the shown Tab View (assuming no other dialogs are open), you can either use the **Tab** key or **Shift-Function** keys. The **Tab** key will switch to the next one (press **Tab** repeatedly to cycle through them), and **Shift-Tab** will switch to the previous one. A more direct route is to use the function keys with **Shift** held down to switch directly to the corresponding view -- for instance, **Shift-F1** for the Rack view, **Shift-F2** for the Arrivals view, and so forth.

Alt-key shortcuts to the menu and dialog buttons

Whenever you see a letter underlined in the top-level program menu (the "main menu") or on a button in a dialog, you can use the Alt-key with that letter instead of clicking on it with the mouse. For example, hold the **Alt** key down while pressing the "**R**" key to open the Reservations menu since the "R" is underlined. Once a menu is open (either one of the drop-down menus on the top or a right-click context menu), you can just press the associated letter without the Alt key. So to Add a Reservation, simply press **Alt-R** followed by the "**A**" key.

Windows XP note -- There's an option in XP to hide the underlines until you press the **Alt**-key. So if you don't see any letters underlined in the menu or dialogs then just press the **Alt** key and the underlines should show up. You can disable this option in XP by going into Desktop Properties (right-click on an empty desktop area), click the "Appearance" tab, click the "Effects" button, and uncheck the "Hide underlined letters" option. Then keep clicking OK to save everything.

Alternative to right-clicking on the tab views (advanced)

While the right-click can be your friend, there may be times when you would just rather not use the mouse. You can simulate the right mouse button with the "**menu**" key on the keyboard. This key is usually just to the left of the right-hand **Ctrl** key, and has a small picture of a context menu and arrow cursor on it. But first you have to get to where you want to "click", since right-clicking is all about performing a function on a particular item. In Campground Master, use **Alt-G** to put the cursor, or selection focus, into the grid if it's not already there. (This generally shows up as one of the cells being dark blue.) Then use the 4 **arrow** keys on the keyboard to move the selection to the cell you want, and then press the **menu** key. The context menu will open, and then you can use the keyboard to select a menu item, either with the up/down arrow keys and **Enter**, or by using the underlined letter shortcut (eg. "**T**" for Transactions on a reservation context menu). You can also scroll the grid using the keyboard. After pressing **Alt-G**, use the **Page Up**, **Page Down**, **Home**, and **End** keys to quickly move a page at a time up, down, back, and forward. You can also use the arrow keys to scroll past the edge, and the grid will move so that the selection is always visible.

Searching on the tab views

You can search for a particular Site or Customer on any of the tab views by pressing **F9**, **Ctrl-S** or **Alt-S**. The main uses for this are to quickly scroll to a desired site on the Rack view, or to locate a site or customer on the other views.

When you press Alt-S, a small dialog will appear -- just type any portion of a site name, or the start of a customer's last name. Note that it will first search for a site name containing the characters you entered (it will search both the abbreviations and the "Site Name" fields). If no match is found, it will then look for a customer. So for instance if you're looking for a customer with "Smi" in the last name but you have a cabin named "Smiley's", it will match the cabin first.

Either way, if a match is found then the view will highlight the matched reservation (scrolling to it if necessary). In the case of the Rack view, a match of the site name will highlight the first visible cell of the

site and a match of the customer will highlight the first cell of the reservation. (Note that it will only search reservations from today to the last date of the Rack that can be scrolled to, corresponding to the Maximum Future Days setting.) On any of the other views, when a match is found the entire line will be highlighted.

Data Entry Basics

Navigating in dialogs with the Tab key

You will spend a lot of time entering information in dialogs, such as customer information and reservation details. Therefore it's a good idea to learn the fastest way to get around in them. Generally you will use the **Tab** key to jump from one field to another. This will move the text input cursor to the next logical entry field or check box in the dialog. Mastering the **Tab** key (and **Shift-Tab** to back up a field) and also the **Alt**-key shortcuts for the buttons will allow you to do nearly everything in a dialog from the keyboard, without moving your hand to the mouse. Note that the **Enter** key will also move to the next field in most cases, but this was implemented only as a convenience for users that are familiar with an Enter-based system. This is not the Windows standard way of moving between fields, so it's best to get used to using the **Tab** key.

Selecting from drop-down lists

Many of the fields in dialogs will use pick-lists (most of which are user-definable), in the form of a drop-down list. These will have small down-arrow buttons on the right-hand side of the entry field. Initially you can use the mouse to click the down-arrow button to open the list, and then click on the desired option. Alternatively, you can use **Alt**-**down-arrow** to open the list with the keyboard. Whether it is opened first or not, you can use the **up** and **down** arrow keys to change the selected item.

Once you are familiar with the contents of the list, you can also select items quickly using the first letter of the selection. For instance, typing "**F**" in the Rig Type field will typically select Fifth Wheel automatically. In cases where the first letter is used by more than one selection, just press the letter repeatedly to change the selections. For instance, "**T**" may take you to the Tent selection first, and pressing "**T**" again will go to Travel Trailer. (Since "TT" is often an abbreviation for Travel Trailer, this just happens to make sense!)

Checking boxes with the keyboard

When a check box field is selected on a dialog (indicated by a dotted line around it), you can check or uncheck the box by pressing the **spacebar** on the keyboard.

Working with Dates

Another common dialog entry field is a date, which normally uses a "date-picker" control. There are several ways to enter a date. One way is with the mouse -- click the down-arrow on the right side of the entry field, and a calendar will open up. Just click on the date you want, using the arrow buttons to change the month as needed. For moving a large number of months, you can click on the month at the top of the calendar to produce a drop-down list of months to select from. You can even click on the year and it will show up/down buttons to quickly change years.

However, the keyboard can be used effectively if you already know the date you want to use without referring to a calendar. When entering a date field, the month will usually be highlighted at first. Just start typing the date as month/day/year, using slashes just as you would write it. The date will be entered as you would expect. You don't even have to enter the whole year -- for instance, type "**5/3/1**" for May 3rd, 2001. If all you need to change is the day, it's even simpler. To skip the month, start typing with the slash ("**/**"), then type the day. For instance, to change 11/5/2001 to 11/9/2001, just type "**/9**", then you can **Tab** to the next field as needed. There are other ways also -- you can use the **up** and **down** arrows to change the month, day or year (whichever is highlighted), and the **right** and **left** arrows can be used to move the highlight back and forth between the month, day, and year.

Check-Dates

Some date fields, such as the Paid-Through date, also contain a check box. This is a combination field which effectively allows you to select "None" as a date. When the box is unchecked in this case, it means there is no Paid-Through date (they have not paid). The date will be "grayed out" (lighter color) to indicate that it is not actually used. When the box is checked, the date is used just like any other date. Note that selecting a date with the mouse will automatically check the box, allowing you to save a step. If using the keyboard, you will need to check the box first (the **spacebar** can be used to do this from the keyboard), then you can edit the date by pressing the **right-arrow** key to get to the date portion of the field.

Copying and Pasting

The Windows operating system supports copying text from one place to another, to save you from retyping things over and over. The Windows "clipboard" is used for this -- you "copy" text onto the clipboard, and then you can "paste" it somewhere else. This can be useful if you accidentally type information in the wrong place and want to move it, and also when making multiple copies of the same text. There are two different key sequences that accomplish the same thing, so you can use whichever is more comfortable for you. Basically, it is a 4-step process:

1. Highlight the text you want to copy, using the mouse (click-drag) or the keyboard (shift-arrow).
2. Copy the text to the "clipboard", with either **Ctrl-Insert** or **Ctrl-C**.
3. Move to where you want to copy the text, either with the mouse or keyboard.
4. Paste the text from the clipboard with either **Shift-Insert** or **Ctrl-V**.

Note that the text will stay on the clipboard until something else is copied, so you can paste it to another dialog field, or paste it as many times as you like by repeating steps 3 and 4 above.

If you want to move the text instead of copy it, then you can use "cut" instead of "copy" in step 2 above. Use **Ctrl-X** or **Shift-Delete** to cut (or delete) the text. The text will also be copied to the clipboard so you can paste it. Be careful *not* to use **Ctrl-Delete**, since this will delete it permanently rather than put it on the clipboard. (This is one good reason to use **Ctrl-X** instead of **Shift-Delete**, to avoid confusion.)

Note that you can also use this to get data from a report grid into another program, such as Excel. Just highlight the desired calls on the grid (or press **Ctrl-A** to select all cells), then **Ctrl-Insert** or **Ctrl-C** to copy to the clipboard. Then switch to the other application and paste the data. However, only the data cells can be copied this way, not the header row and column. To get the entire report into another program, use the Export to CSV function.

3   Setting Up Your Campground Database

Overview

This section provides a "brief" overview of what is required to set up a Campground Master database for your campground. For the details, refer to the Maintenance section later in this manual. Even if someone else does the setup, it can be helpful to learn about the basics so that you understand the software better, and in case you want to make occasional changes. You can make most changes yourself, such as adding or changing rental sites, adding new operators, adding transaction categories, and more.

Database Basics

The Campground Master database is contained in a single file, which has all of the information specific to your park. This includes the database definitions, program options and settings, operators, sites, and pick-lists as well as all customers, reservations and transactions, and all other data tables.

The Database File Name and Location

The database file that's currently open is always shown at the top, in the caption bar -- like "Database: My Park". When you first run Campground Master, the database name will either be "Demo" (if you loaded the sample database) or "<UNTITLED>". If it's <UNTITLED>, that means the database has not yet been named and saved to disk.

The database file may be given any name you like (typically you would use the name of your park), and it will have a file extension of "**.PRK**" (which you may not always see, depending on your Windows settings). After setting it up for the first time, you should save it to your hard disk using **File** -- **Save As** from the main menu. Typically the file will be placed in the same folder on your hard drive as the program itself, for instance "C:\Program Files\Campground Master\", but it may be placed somewhere else if you prefer (see the guidelines below).

Important: Once you save the database for the first time using File -- Save As (or after starting a New Database through Maintenance), Campground Master will remember that as the default database from then on. If you need to change the default database to be opened when Campground Master starts, use File -- Open to open the desired database and then go to Maintenance / Program Options / Database to change the auto-open database to the current one.

There are some important guidelines to consider when deciding where to store your database file. While the default location is the program's own folder, this may not be suitable in all circumstances.

When choosing a location, keep in mind that Campground Master also places a number of other files in the same folder -- log files, automatic backups, etc., so the database file will not be the only file in that location. For Windows XP, NT and 2000 users, also keep in mind that it must be in a location where all Windows users (all Windows XP user accounts, for instance) have full access to write and delete files. If you have any non-administrator users set up in XP, this usually means setting up a special folder will full access privileges for all users.

If user access is not an issue, you may decide to put the database in "My Documents", which is fine (as long as you remember that this folder will only be seen as "My Documents" by the current Windows user, not other users) -- however we recommend that you create your own "Campground Master" folder in My Documents, so all of the various files it creates don't clutter up your other documents there.

Networking Note: The database should **NEVER** be accessed through the network by another computer. Every computer running Campground Master should store the database on its own hard drive (see more details in the Networking section of the Maintenance Functions chapter). This is not just for reasons of speed (although that would be a factor) -- networking does not operate by sharing files, so if you're trying to set it up as a file sharing system then it's not going to work properly. Even if you're trying to locate the database on a server so it gets backed up automatically, this is not recommended. Instead you should have the server grab the file from one of the workstations when needed, or else have the server actually running Campground Master as the master workstation.

Manual Backups

It's *very important* to back up your database on a regular basis, in case of disaster or computer malfunction. The software has a built-in backup feature, for ease of storing a copy of the database on a floppy disk. We recommend doing a *daily* backup, using a different floppy disk (or disk set, if more than one is required) for each day of the week. The program will remind you to make a backup before closing the program if you haven't done so in 3 days, and will continue to remind you until you do so (this setting can be changed to remind you more often or less often if you prefer.)

Using color-coded and day-labeled disks is a good idea. This way you have 7 different backup copies, and couldn't lose more than a day or two of work unless you have multiple floppy disk failures. (Don't hesitate to make a backup more often, particularly early in the process of setting up the database in case you want to go back to a previous version and start over.)

In addition, we recommend at least a *weekly* off-site backup. Rotate at least 4 different disks (or sets), and make a new backup every Friday night, for instance. Take the backup to another location -- at least in another building. This will help protect your data in case of a fire, theft, or other disaster. In addition to the security of backups, this will give you about 1 month of "oops" protection -- if you realize at some later time that a major database change was made by mistake, you could go back to retrieve the data up to a month old.

See the Maintenance section for more details on making backups and restoring them.

Automatic Backups

The program will automatically make a backup at the start of each day and place it in the same folder location as the database file. The automatic backups include the date in the filename, and are kept for 32 days (older ones are automatically deleted). However, since these backups are still vulnerable to computer malfunction (hard disk failures, viruses, etc), *this is not a substitute for making backups to floppy!* This is only an extra safeguard to make sure you have some form of backup.

Campground Master.ini File

There are a few settings that aren't part of the database because they're specific to each computer. These are stored on the computer so they are used each time without the need to reset them, but are not part of the database file itself. They're stored in a "Configuration settings" file, named **Campground Master.ini**, which is placed in your Windows directory.

The settings stored here include the Printer Setup settings, Network Settings, the last window sizes used (for some resizable dialogs), and the path to the last database opened.

It's a good idea to keep a backup of this file for convenience, however this will need to be done manually (just copy the file to a floppy disk), since it's not part of the database backup function. If you're changing to a different computer, do *not* copy this file to the other computer, since the settings may not apply to that

computer and can cause errors.

Other Files

There are some other files for which you may want to keep a separate backup. These files aren't changed by the program, so they aren't included in the regular database backups.

- **Map image files** -- If you use maps, you'll want to have a back up of the image files (*.bmp), which are in the same folder as the database.
- **Web templates** -- If you use the Export to Web function, keep a backup of the web template files (*.htt). These are in a location specified by the user (but most likely in the same location as the database).

Database Organization

A little background will help you understand how reservations and other database elements interact. Some of this may be getting pretty technical, and it certainly isn't required knowledge to operate the program. But if you prefer to know more about the software so you understand *why* it works the way it does, then this section will help.

The Campground Master database is a *relational* database. This means that it consists of multiple *tables*, which can be related to each other through *relational links*. There are four main tables in the database -- Sites, Customers, Reservations, and Transactions. (Parks and Operators are also tables, as well as all of the Pick Lists, but they're not important for this discussion.) Each table is a collection of *records*, where each record represents one item (a customer, a site, etc.), and each record is a collection of *fields*, where each field is a bit of information (a customer's last name, phone number, zip code, etc.).

In most cases, you will work with the records of a table individually -- for example, when using the Reservation Details dialog, you can only see or change fields in one reservation record at a time. Of course when viewing reports, you are looking at multiple records. Where there is linking going on, it will be transparent to you. But understanding what links do will help you make sense out of some things, like why the Notes column on the Arrivals View doesn't show the notes you just added to the customer's record (because the customer notes are separate from the reservation notes).

This is an example of how the main data tables are related, or linked, to each other:

  - Each Reservation record is linked to one Site record and one Customer record.

  - In addition, a Reservation can have a list of other Reservations linked to it. This can be used for group reservations, for instance.

  - Each Transaction links to the Reservation and/or Customer it applies to, if any. The Reservation and Customer also link back to the Transaction (so one reservation can have links to many transactions).

As you can see, the Reservation table is the primary table from which everything related to it can be reached. When a report shows the customer name and phone number for a reservation, that information is actually coming out of the Customer table, through the customer link in the reservation. Thus if the information is changed for the customer, it is automatically "changed" for every reservation that the customer has ever made.

The advantages of relational databases are many, but primarily it helps keep data consistent and allows the database to be much smaller since unique information is only stored once. (Imagine if you had to enter the site's details for every reservation!)

Setup Checklist

Here is a quick checklist of things that you should do to get the software set up, including some option settings that you may want to change. Refer to the appropriate sections for more details.

Database Setup:

- Park information and Authorization Code -- this must be done first to enable the software!

- Operators and Access Levels -- define operators and passwords as needed.

- Pick lists:
   Site Classes and Types. Keep in mind that these affect many things, especially rates selections.
   Pad Types and Site facing (if used)
   Transaction Categories and Payment Methods -- very important for financial reporting.
      Note: If you plan to export transactions to QuickBooks, you may want to base these on your
      QuickBooks accounts, to make the mapping easy.
   Discounts list, Rig types, How-heard, etc. -- add, remove, or rename the default entries as needed.
   Reservation Types -- You can use your own names for the different types of reservations, or define
   more types as needed.

- Data table fields -- decide which fields are important to you, and disable any that you won't use.

- Shift Functionality -- Enable shift tracking functionality if you need it.

- Schedule Functionality -- If you need to handle hourly reservations, for instance.

- Sites -- set up each campsite. You might set up just a few sites for now to help in testing other settings,
   and continue later.

- Maps -- if you want an interactive map view of your park, you can set it up once all of your sites are set
   up.

- Taxes -- set up the applicable tax rates (make sure you have a Transaction Category for each one first).

- Rates -- set up rates for each site type or class, with specific dates, applicable discounts, etc.

- Metered electric, gas and/or water support (see Sites Setup).

- Import customer and/or reservation data from another source, if available.

Other Settings:

- Program Options and Settings
   Date format, Confirmation number format, Currency format
   Printing Options: Reservation Receipt default format, number of copies, etc.
   Network setup, if applicable
   Point of Sale setup, if applicable
   Online Reservations setup, if applicable

- Options for each tab view (use the Options buttons on each view.)

- Notice text and confirmation letter text for receipts and letters

Park Information and Authorization Code

The Park information is not seen very often in the software, but it's very important. It primarily consists of the campground's name, address and other contact information. This is used on the printed receipts. There are also three Notes fields for the park, which can be used to add additional notes to the printed receipts.

The other important thing about the park setup is the Authorization Code. This code is required to access full functionality of the software (in fact you won't be able to define your sites without one), and is keyed off of the other park information. When you purchase a license for Campground Master you will need to provide your park name and address information, which is used to generate a Key Code. Cottonwood Software will then issue you an Authorization Code, which you must enter to unlock the software. Thus, if the park changes its name or address, a new authorization code will be needed (but you will not be required to purchase a new license unless this is an *additional* installation).

If you have already purchased the software, then the procedure for entering the authorization code will be either in the pocket in the front of the printed manual or in an E-mail confirmation message (depending on the method of purchase). See Park Setup in the Maintenance section for more details.

Operators and Access Levels

Campground Master requires a log-in for security purposes, and for tracking the originator of reservations and transactions. The current operator's name, as well as the time and date, are recorded for every financial transaction, reservation creation, cancellation, check-in and check-out. It's recommended that every person using the software have a different operator name, and be assigned an appropriate security level. In addition, one or more **Administrator** operators should be set up, which may be additional accounts for someone. For instance, the campground manager may have a **Manager** level log-in and also an **Administrator** log-in. This would prevent accidental administrative changes when logged in as a manager, but allow administrator access when needed.

Operator information can only be viewed or changed by an administrator. If no operators have been set up yet, use the default login -- Operator Name "Administrator" and Password "Password". You should change these to something that only you know, but don't forget the administrator login or else you won't be able to get back in to the maintenance functions!

See Operator Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more information on setting up operators.

Each program function requires a certain access level for it to be enabled. The minimum access level required for many of these the functions can be configured as needed. Most Maintenance functions are fixed at the Administrator level, but many others are configurable so you can decide what level can perform the function. Typically this will be either Reservation, Manager or Administrator, depending on how restrictive you need to keep it.

See Access Levels Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more information on setting up access levels.

Pick-Lists

There are several "pick lists" used in the software for fields that have a limited number of options rather than free-form text entry. These are usually presented as a drop-down list in dialogs. This "limitation" is actually a great advantage, however -- it speeds data entry, better organizes the database (and actually makes it smaller and faster), and allows for easy filtering of reports. For instance, you can generate financial reports for a specific site type or class (RV lot, cabin, etc.), certain payment methods (credit cards, cash, Visa, etc.), or any transaction category (daily rate, monthly rate, gift shop, laundry expenses, etc.).

Since each of the pick lists is user-definable, it's not really a limitation at all. The software comes pre-defined with common selections in the pick lists, but you can edit, add, or delete selections as needed (and even add more items later), and define the order in which they appear in the lists. Careful selection of list items is recommended (particularly the Site Types, Site Classes and Transaction Categories), because they affect how you will use the software, and because once the lists are in use, you cannot delete items without causing gaps in the useful data.

The Reservation Types list is a special-purpose list, since each type must also be designated as a particular "base type" to determine how it's used by the program. Renaming and adding multiple reservation types can be useful for reporting and statistical purposes.

See Pick-Lists in the *Maintenance* section for more information.

Customizing Data Table Fields

Each of the data tables in the database (Sites, Customers, Reservations, Transactions, etc.) are made up of a list of Fields. The fields included in the tables are user-definable to a certain extent, adding to the flexibility of the software. For instance, if you don't have a need to ever know about the Estimated Arrival Time for a reservation, you can disable that field and it will be removed from the database. Besides saving disk space, the disabled field will be removed from the dialogs resulting in a cleaner view and slightly faster data entry.

Many of the fields are "Fixed", which means that they cannot be disabled. These fields are crucial to the operation of the software, such as the reservation start date. Others are optional and can be enabled or disabled as needed, as in the example above.

A note about field values -- all fields can have a "blank" state in addition to having data in them. This saves both space and confusion -- for instance, the "number of children" field for customers is blank (unknown) unless you enter a value for it -- it does not assume (or show) "0" children unless you actually enter "0". However there are some cases where "blank" is the same as assuming a value, such as yes/no fields. Blank is assumed to mean "no" for fields like the customer's "Good Sam member" field. In other words, if you don't check the Good Sam box on the customer entry dialog, it assumes "no".

There is a special category of fields called "Attributes", which appear in the Reservation table and the Sites table. There are dozens of attributes, like "Has 50 Amp", "Waterfront", and "Pad Type". These are used primarily for selecting Site Preferences for a reservation. Once the preferences have been selected, the list of sites available will show only sites that have matching attributes. Thus you can easily match a customer to a site that will meet his or her needs the best. Many of the pre-defined attributes won't apply to your particular campground, so you can disable these or rename them to something more useful. For instance, if none of your sites are waterfront but you have some desirable cabins that are cliff-side, just change the text from "waterfront" to "cliff-side".

Finally, some of the customer and reservation data fields can be renamed and used for different purposes. For instance, you can change "# Pets" to "# Meals", or "Phone 2" to "Cell Phone".

Note that once the database is in use, you can still enable and disable fields or change their text. However, be aware that any data in newly-disabled fields will be lost even if you re-enable the field later (assuming the database is saved to disk and reloaded before re-enabling it).

See Define Data Fields in the *Maintenance* section for more information.

Shifts Functionality

If you need to enable the functionality for Shift reporting (for instance if you have 2 or 3 shifts per day and need reporting based on shifts, rather than days), then you need to enable two specific fields in Maintenance | Data Field Definitions (see Define Data Fields in the *Maintenance* section for more information.)

- In the <u>Parks</u> field definitions, enable the **Park_Shift** field.

- In the <u>Transactions</u> field definitions, enable the **Tran_Shift** field.

With these enabled, the Shift Change and Shift Report functions will be available on the Maintenance menu, and the Shift filtering and summarizing options will be present in the Transaction tab view filter and options.

After the shift fields are enabled, you may need to exit and restart Campground Master for the Shift functions to appear on the Maintenance menu. Then you should go to Shift Change and enter the shift number you want to start with (for instance, 1000).

When shifts are enabled, all transactions are tagged with a shift number. In addition to restricting transaction changes after the shift is closed out, this allows shift reports to be done for any shift in history, and helps track down the source of operator errors.

Note: You may want to enable the Shift functionality even if you only have a single shift per day, just so you can use the Shift Report. This report provides a handy summary of the transactions of the shift

Schedule Functionality

Schedules are used for intra-day reservations, for instance hourly rentals, tours, etc. There are several steps required to set up Campground Master to handle reservation "schedules", which are detailed in the Maintenance Section. If you don't need to track intra-day reservations, then you can ignore Schedules.

Sites

The Sites table is the main part of the database setup for your campground. Here you define all of the rental "sites". A site can be a campsite, an RV lot, a cabin, a boat dock, a pavilion, a bicycle, or anything else you need to rent out by the day. The sites table is what shows up in the Rack View (usually the Y-axis of the Rack grid), as well as playing a large part in how other views are used. Every aspect of the sites is user-definable, including the name (actually 3 different designations), the type, the dates available for rental, and dozens of attributes that can be used to quickly determine whether a site fits a customer's needs.

There are some Pick Lists that should be defined before setting up the sites: the Site Classes, Site Types, Site Facing and Pad Types. (These should have been defined in the earlier steps.)   These are helpful in categorizing the sites and simplifying the selection process when making a reservation, as well as filtering statistics when generating reports. Once these pick lists are set up, you can define the details of each site. The main pick lists are the Site Types and Site Classes, as these lists appear on many views and dialogs and makes it easy for you to limit the current view to just Full Hookup sites or Tent sites, for instance. The Pad Types and Site Facing lists are helpful when selecting site preferences for a reservation to narrow the search for a site.

See Sites Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more details.

Maps

You may want to have a map view of your park, which will show the occupied status of each site and can also be used interactively like the Rack view (e.g. right-click menu functions, double-click to make a new reservation on an open site, check availability, etc.). When a map is set up, a new "Map" tab will appear next to the Rack tab. Most of its functionality will be the same as the Rack.

This is an optional function, and of course it requires a graphic image to be used for the map. In addition, a status indicator must be set up for each site on the map. Multiple maps can be used if the park is too large to fit on one map view. If you have a map of your park, it could be scanned in and used -- you could even draw one on paper and scan it in, or even just use a blank image and lay out the site indicators accordingly. If you don't have anything suitable and would like a map graphic created for the program, contact Cottonwood Software for a quote.

See Maps Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more details.

Taxes

You will want to set up any applicable tax rates for ease of transaction entry, rates definitions, and reporting. First make sure you have a Transaction Category for each one (Maintenance / Pick Lists / Transaction Categories), then set up the Taxes.

Note that each different tax category will be will be reported separately and printed separately on receipts. Also note that when defining Rates and entering charges, the tax rates can be used in any combination so there's no need to define "combination" rates.

See Taxes Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more details.

Rates

You will want to set up your applicable rental rates for each site type/class, plus add-on charges, meter rates if needed, and perhaps other rates for convenience. This is one of the more involved processes, and is completely optional (you could enter the amount of each transaction manually), but is well worth it.

Since rate definitions can be categorized by Reservation Type, Site Type, Site Class, and Discount, the design of those pick lists is very important. When selecting a rate to use for a reservation, the list of rates displayed will be filtered by the reservation type, site selected, discount used, and the reservation dates. Therefore you can minimize the selections shown by planning your rates carefully.

In particular, You should have **at least** one Site Type for each different *basic* rental rate. This does not need to include *add-ons* like 50A electric, phone, etc. Alternatively, you can make Site Types more specific so that selection by customer preferences is easier, and use Site Classes to differentiate the rates. In this case, you would define one Site Class for each basic rate you have.

Discounts work similarly, but in most cases these will not be as complicated as site types/classes, since there is usually only one kind of discount rate for each discount club.

See Rates Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more details.

Deposit and A/R Balances

Campground Master keeps a running balance of unused deposits (advance payments toward reservations) and accounts receivable (charges not yet paid). If your account methods include tracking either or both of these, Campground Master can keep track of them for you, or at least help verify that things are in balance if you track these separately.

Deposit and Accounts Receivable tracking and adjustments are discussed further in the *Working with Transactions* section, and making adjustments is discussed in the *Maintenance Functions* section. What you need to know when setting up your database is that you can enter a "starting balance" for either of these, so that the running totals match your previous figures. This is entered as an adjustment, and should be done before entering live transactions so it's recorded in front of other transactions. Deposit and A/R Balance reports can be found in the Transactions tab view report (Summary Transaction Reports).

Import Data From Other Sources

If you have your customer data (or even reservation data) in some other electronic form, it can probably be imported to Campground Master. This can help jump-start the process so that you don't have to start re-entering customers from scratch. However, we recommend entering at least several customers and reservations yourself as practice before going live -- you need to get familiar with the process. In fact, if you have the time or help to enter your entire customer database manually, it's not a bad idea to do so to make sure it's entered in the best format possible, and so that all possible fields are covered.

The Import function is fully covered in the *Import and Export Functions* section later in the manual.

Metered Electric, Gas and Water Support

There are 4 things that need to be done for properly supporting metered electric, gas or water:

1. Enable the appropriate fields in the Data Field Definitions for Sites (or disable them if no metered support is needed).
2. Set the meter wrap-around numbers, depending on the number of digits each type of meter has, in Park Setup / Parks.
3. Enter the current meter reading for each site that has a meter (even if it's 0), in either Reports / Meter Readings or Park Setup / Sites.
4. Define Rates for the meter charges (Park Setup / Rates).

Now whenever you select the electric meter rate for charging a customer, a simple dialog will appear to enter the new meter reading. The Site record will be automatically updated with the new reading, date, and reservation, and the appropriate charge will be added to the reservation.

See Define Data Fields, Sites Setup, Parks Setup and Rates Setup in the *Maintenance* section for more details.

Network Settings

If you have purchased the networking version of the software for use with multiple networked computers, then you need to install the software on each computer (workstation), and then enter the appropriate settings on each computer.

See the Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup function, and the Network Functions section of Maintenance Functions for complete information.

File - Printing Options

There are a number of settings that affect the way reports, receipts, and other things are printed. These should primarily be set up by an administrator and not changed arbitrarily. This function appears here as a convenience (to be near other printer settings and functions), but they are also found under the Maintenance menu. See *Printing Options* in the *Maintenance Functions* section for details.

File - Printer Setup

There are different printer setup functions for each kind of printing that the software does. You can customize the orientation, paper size, and paper source settings for each printing task, and even specify a different printer for each task. All of these settings are remembered so that they only need to be set once.

Note that any printer settings that use the Windows "default printer" will automatically change if the Windows default printer is changed (for instance if you install a new printer). The settings should be re-checked in any case, since the new printer may not support the same paper size or source, resulting in an improper setting.

Campground Master can support any printer that can be driven by Windows. Ink jet printers are the most common type used, and will best allow the graphics and color to be printed. If you have an older dot-matrix printer, it can still be used but you will probably have to use the simpler receipt formats instead of the Reservation Ticket format if it doesn't support the graphics well enough (for lines and various font sizes).

Manager access is required to change printer setup options.

Default (grid-type reports)

This setting is used for everything that isn't a special format. This includes the tab views and any report that prints in a grid-type format. In some cases you will want to set this to Landscape orientation so that more columns fit on the page.

Receipt formats (various)

You can set up different printer settings for each specific receipt format -- Reservation Ticket, Full-page Invoice, Confirmation Letter, etc. For instance, you may want to print receipts on small paper and confirmation letters on normal paper. To avoid changing paper, you can connect a different printer for each printing task (this would even allow printing of invoices and window tags at the same time, for instance).

Receipt Printer

The Receipt Printer setting is specifically for retail-type receipt printers which typically use 3" roll paper. Any receipt printer that has a serial or parallel interface, or a Windows printer driver, should work with Campground Master.

The preferred method of printing on 3" receipt printers is "Direct to Port", because it doesn't require a Windows driver and is very fast. It sends raw text to the printer, so it will print in the printer's native font. Set up the Direct to Port settings to enable this option and select the appropriate interface port.

Note: Even if you use the Direct to Port option, Windows requires that a "default" printer driver be installed in order for printing functions to work. If you don't have any other printer installed, then you should install a generic printer driver just to satisfy Windows. In the Windows Control Panel (or Printers / Add New Printer), add a printer on the local LPT1 port, select "Generic" for the manufacturer and "Generic / Text only" for the model.

Note that the direct-to-port option only works if the printer is directly connected to the computer through a parallel or serial port. If the printer uses a USB connection or is accessed through the network, this option cannot be used. In that case a Windows printer driver must be installed for the printer. Most manufacturers make the Windows driver available on their web site -- call their support line if it's not easy to locate. If none can be found, you can probably use the "Generic" driver, but the paper size will need to be set appropriately and may not work for various receipt lengths.

If using a printer driver, the printer properties may have different paper settings available for fixed-length (often called "ticket") and variable-length (often called "receipt"). You will want to choose the variable-length option. When printing receipts, Campground Master offers two different receipt formats for receipt printers (besides the direct-to-port option above), one of which is "fixed-pitch font". You will probably want to use the "fixed-pitch font" receipt format for the best-looking output. This may depend on the printer -- modern receipt printers can print clearly with the non-fixed (TrueType) fonts, while older ones cannot. If you use the fixed-pitch font, you will need to know the name of the font and configure that through <u>File | Printing Options</u>. This font often refers to "cpi" (characters per inch), like "ANK 15cpi" or "21cpi". See your printer's manual for details.

Note: This printer setting is also used for credit the card slip receipt formats, for instance if you have credit card processing handled by Campground Master.

Note that you don't actually have to have a special receipt printer to use the 3" receipt formats. For instance you can set it to use a full-size printer and select a paper size like #10 envelopes or index cards, to print narrow receipts on specially sized paper.

Purchase Orders

This only appears if the P.O.S. option is enabled. It specifies the setup for Purchase Orders, in case they need to be on a particular printer.

Envelopes and Mailing Labels

The most likely change needed is to set the Envelopes to use Landscape orientation and the proper paper size (e.g. Envelope - #10). Otherwise you may not see anything print on the envelope, since the default is Portrait orientation.

Mailing labels are assumed to be the typical 30-per-page mailing labels. The default printer settings will usually work, but some tweaking of the offsets in File | Printing Options may be needed.

File - Print in Black & White

This setting on the File menu will make any grid-type reports print in a basic black & white format with no colors and no shading of headers. This will save ink, print faster and make printouts look better on non-color printers. This option also appears on the File | Printing Options dialog, but was also placed here for convenience. The option may be changed here by operators without Manager access, whereas the Printing Options dialog can only be accessed by managers.

File - Fit to Page Horizontally

This setting on the File menu will ensure that any grid-type reports don't require multiple pages in width (they may still require multiple pages in length). The downside is that reports may print in a different size text, sometimes much too small (whatever is required to make it fit). This option also appears on the File | Printing Options dialog, but was also placed on the File menu for convenience. The option may be changed here by operators without Manager access, whereas the Printing Options dialog can only be accessed by managers.

By default, if the standard text size is small enough to fit the report on the page horizontally then the standard size is used. In other words, the text might get shrunk but it won't be stretched to fill the page. However, there is an option to stretch the text to fit the entire width, in case you want extra-large printing. This option is under File | Printing Options.

View - Toolbar

You'll see this option in the View main menu, and it controls whether the main toolbar (the large picture icons below the menu) are displayed. While most users will like the toolbar for quick access to the main functions, expert users that know the keyboard shortcuts may prefer hiding the toolbar so that more space is available for the tab views. Manager access is required to change this setting.

View - Status Bar

This option is in the <u>View</u> main menu. It controls whether the status bar is visible, which will appear at the very bottom of the main window. The status bar simply shows short help-hints for menu items (whatever the mouse cursor is hovering over), some progress messages (for instance, "saving database"), and the state of keys like **Caps Lock** and **Num Lock**. Its functionality is minimal, so most users prefer to leave it turned off in order to gain an extra line on the tab views. Manager access is required to change this setting.

View - Color Keys

The Color Keys have a dual purpose -- they show you what the color coding means, and also allow you to change any of the colors. The color keys for Reservations and Maps can be accessed in the <u>View</u> menu, and are also available on all of the right-click context menus for quick access.

Reservation Color Key

The Reservation Color Key dialog shows a list of reservation status conditions, and each status condition will be shown in the current colors defined for it. The list is longer than the dialog allows, so you will need to scroll the list to see them all.

To change a color for a status, first right-click on it in the list (only Managers can change the color settings). You can change both the text color and the background color. The standard Windows color dialog is used to change colors, where you can select one of the basic colors or define your own color. To define your own color, first click on one of the empty Custom Colors boxes. Then click on the approximate color in the "rainbow box", and adjust the brightness slider control (on the right side) until the color is just right. The selected color will be updated dynamically in the box below the rainbow (Color | Solid). Then click the <u>Add to Custom Colors</u> button.

You don't actually have to define a custom color to use any color for a status (whatever color is in the color box will be used when you click <u>Done</u>). However, saving it as a custom color will allow you to easily use it later, and you can use it for other status entries.

When finished changing all of the colors to your liking, click the <u>Done</u> button on the Color Key. If you click Cancel, *all* of the color changes will be cancelled.

Maps Color Key

This is used on the Maps tab view, if maps are enabled. The operation is the same as described above for reservation colors, but the colors apply to site status and other map indicators.

Web Vacancy Grid Color Key

This is used for the Export to Web Vacancy Grid function. This allows you to make the web vacancy grid colors correspond to the design of your web site. The operation is the same as described above for reservation colors, but the colors apply to web page colors instead of reservation status. Note that some of the color entries only apply to background colors.

View Product Authorizations

This <u>View</u> menu function simply shows a dialog with your current authorizations, according to the license you have purchased. There is nothing to edit here, so it's just for reference if you are asked for it when calling for support. The authorization key is entered through the Park Setup, covered elsewhere.

View - Minimize to the Taskbar Tray

This <u>View</u> menu function will hide the Campground Master window and show an icon in the small taskbar tray (usually in the lower right corner, with the clock and other system icons). A button will not be shown on the taskbar as it would with the normal "Minimize" function. This is primarily used for a network servers where you just need to run in the background but not use it as a workstation.

Other Program Options

There are a number of other settings that affect the overall operation of the program. Since these should be set up by an administrator and not changed arbitrarily, they are found under the Maintenance menu. See *Program Options* in the *Maintenance Functions* section for details.

4   Dynamic Interactive Report Screens

Overview

The dynamic interactive report screens, or Tab Views, are the heart of the software and provide the information and functions commonly needed every day. They are "dynamic", meaning that they will automatically update every time a change is made to the database. You don't have to "generate" these reports, since they are always up to date. They are "interactive", meaning that you can work with the data directly on the report -- just right-click on the data and you will be given several operations to choose from.

Tab views consist of a grid for the report itself, plus a control area above the grid. The controls for each view are similar, with dates and quick-pick drop-down boxes for filtering the report, plus buttons and other options specific to the report. Most tab views share very similar right-click menu functions, navigation commands, and other features as described below.

To view any of the Tab Views, simply click on its "tab" (the row of buttons above the views). The selected view will show up instantly.   (There may be a slight delay the first time it's accessed, but it will be much faster thereafter.) The name of the selected view will be shown in bold text so you can easily see which one is active. You can also change tab views using the **Tab** key or the Shift-function keys (see the *Keyboard Shortcuts* section for details).

Each tab view has an access level. Only the Rack view and the optional Map view can be seen when no operator is logged in or if a Guest is logged in. A Clerk access level is required to view On Site and Payments Due, a Manager access level is required for the Transactions tab view, and a Reservations access level is required for the others (and also required to perform functions on the Rack view). Tab views that have a higher access level than the current operator will have their title shown in a light gray text, and clicking it will simply not have any effect.

Tab views will have scroll bars if the data is too large for the screen. To see the rest of the data, simply drag the "thumb button" in the scroll bar or click in the scroll bar in the direction you want to view. With the exception of the Rack, which uses uniform cell widths, the cells in the grids will auto-size to fit the text in them. Therefore each report will have varying widths depending on the length of names, phone numbers, notes, etc. for the items in the lists.

Tab views that display fields in columns may have a Totals row at the bottom. (This can be disabled in Program Options if desired). This will show the total number of reservations shown in the report, and will also show totals for any columns that are appropriate -- such as # of adults, extra vehicles, and balance due.

Tip: Occasionally you will see a cell that is dark blue -- this is simply the grid "cursor", indicating the selected cell, and results from clicking on the grid or pressing **Alt-G**, or from using the Search function. This selection will be moved if you click on another cell, and will disappear if you right-click on a cell or change to another view, or press the **ESC** key (if focus is not on the grid, you may need to click on the grid first). In any case, it's harmless and not part of the report (it will not show on a printed report).

Common Controls and Settings

Overview

The control area above the tab-view reports allows you to filter the information to be displayed. Some of these are common to most reports and are described here. Unique controls are described with each of the reports. Since these are dynamic reports, the view will change immediately when you adjust these controls.

Date Selections

Most important is the date or date range selection -- each view has a start (From) date and most have an end (To) date. In addition to the common date-picker controls, there will be left and right buttons (arrows, "<" and ">") on each side of the dates *if your screen size is 800x600 or greater* (there isn't enough room for them on 640x480 screens). These buttons will increase or decrease the date by one day, making it easy to step through dates one click at a time. Note that when changing one date, if the other date causes a backward date range, it will automatically be changed to the same date. Thus if you increment the From date on the Arrivals tab and the To date is already the same, then the To date will automatically be adjusted to match the new From date. This makes it easy to step through single dates without changing both date-picker controls.

In addition, many reports have buttons for Today, Week, Month and Year. This makes it easy to see these common ranges with a single click. Note that the Departures and On Site views have Yes/Today instead of Today, which is an abbreviation for "Yesterday and Today", so that you can easily see these two days at once. (It's useful to see yesterday's Departures and On Site because the reports are based on the reservation's Last Night, so "yesterday's" customer may not actually check out until today.)

Site Type, Class and Park Selection

The Site Types drop-down list limits the reservations or sites in the report to a specific site type, site class or park (if you have more than one Park record defined). The default is All Site Types, but you can select a single Site Type to view, or in some cases you can view all Assigned Sites (i.e. reservations for which a site has been assigned) or all Unassigned sites.

The drop-down list actually has a few different parts to it:

General selections -- The first part of the list will have the general selections like All Site Types, Assigned Sites and Unassigned Sites (as appropriate). These are a simple way to reset the selection to show all sites or all assigned/unassigned sites.

Site Types -- Each site type defined will be listed, in the order defined in the Site Types Pick List. Selecting one of these will limit the report to only sites of that type

Site Classes -- After a "-- Classes:" divider, the site classes will be listed as defined in the Site Class Pick List. As with site types, selecting one of these will limit the report to that site class. Classes are generally defined as being more general than since types, and thus one site class could include sites of several types.

Parks -- If your database is set up for more than one Park, there will be an additional section for selecting a single park. This will show all sites in that park, regardless of type or class.

Filters -- In addition to selecting a single type or class (or park), you can define an Advanced filter. You can also set up a Default filter, which is the same as an Advanced filter but will be used as the default selection for this report every time it is "reset" (with the Reset or Today button, for instance). Both of these functions use the Site Filtering Dialog.

Important -- if a Default filter is defined for the Rack view, this will also be used for the default when making a New Reservation.

Site Filtering Dialog

The Site Filter dialog is used in many reports to select specific filtering by individual site, site type, site class, or park. This allows you to filter the sites to be included by more than one condition at a time, for instance you can include 2 or more site types at once, or 2 or more classes, or sites of a specific type in a specific park.

The dialog will have 3 or 4 lists on it -- Sites, Site Types, Site Classes, and Parks (if you have multiple parks in the database). Each list is a multiple-selection list, so you can pick one or more from each list (use Ctrl-Click to select multiple entries). If a list has nothing selected, that's the same as selecting all of them (i.e. no filtering is done for that field). To start over and clear the list so no filtering is done, you can click the Reset Filter button

Note that in some cases there will be a "(no site)" entry at the bottom of the lists, which allows you to select reservations that have no site assigned, or transactions that are not bound to a reservation, for instance. Some reports don't allow selecting unassigned sites (for instance the Occupancy Report), so this won't be an option when filtering for those reports.

Be careful about selecting items from more than one list at a time, since the filtering uses "AND" logic -- for instance if you select an "RV" site type and a "Boat" site class, then it would only show a site if it's an "RV" type and it's a "Boat" class. This which would probably result in an empty report. If you want to show RV's and Boats together, then select both criteria from the same list -- either type or class, as appropriate.

Report Options

Most tab view reports have an Options button. This is generally used to select which fields are displayed in the view. These settings are remembered, even after the program is shut down, so you only need to set them up for your requirements one time, and change them only when needed for a special printout, for instance.

Field Selection

Most reports allow you to select what fields are shown. Just check the fields you want to see on the report from the options available. The fields available for a given report are based on the way the report is commonly used -- for instance, there's generally no reason to see the customer's vehicle information on a transaction details report. Also, some fields are always shown and cannot be turned off. The order of the fields cannot be changed.

Deposits, Total Paid, and Balance fields -- These field options aren't actual fields in the record, but are calculated dynamically from all transactions in the reservation.

Auto-Charges and Auto-Balance fields -- If Auto Rates have been enabled, these column options will be available on some tab views. For pending and checked-in reservations, it will perform the auto-rate calculations for that reservation and show what the charges will be (Auto-Charges) or what the balance will be after applying any deposit already made (Auto-Balance). Note that this can take some time to calculate, so be careful about showing this column for a large number of reservations. There are some cases where it won't show a value. If the reservation has the auto-rates disabled, it will show "(Disabled)". Also it won't show a value for reservations that don't yet have a site assigned (since it can't auto-calculate the rate without a site), nor will it show a value for Owner reservations or Monthly reservations that are not pending. For Monthly pending reservations, it will show the amount expected to be due upon check-in, according to the Monthly Program Options.

Days Overdue, Unpaid Nights, and Aged Balance fields -- These are special fields available only on the

Payments Due tab view. For more information refer to the Payments Due section.

Include empty sites when sorted by Site

This is selected by default, and will show the vacant sites on the report in addition to occupied sites. This is handy for using the On Site report for a walk-around checklist, as it clearly shows which sites should be empty.

Include Waiting-List reservations

This option appears on some reports, such as Arrivals, so that you can see if any reservations "would have arrived", useful as a reminder if you want to double-check for openings for the coming week, for instance.

Show reservations which fall in the date range

This option on the Unassigned and Non-Reserved reports, selected by default, will show any reservation that covers the selected dates, even if it started (or will start) earlier that the start date.

Include Owner reservations

If this is checked, Owner-type reservations will be included in the report. Since owner reservations are usually not associated with someone currently present, this is disabled by default on most tabs.

Pop-up Tips

Whenever your mouse moves over the grid in a tab view, you will likely see a variety of little pop-up messages. These are tips that give you a little more information, so that the grid can be smaller and still have the information easily available. For instance, putting the mouse over the last name of a customer will pop up their first names as well. If you hover over a Site name, the site's Description will pop up. And if you hover over the date headers on the Rack view, the full date will be shown if it's not already part of the header (e.g. if you turn off the options to show the Day of Week or Year in the header). Note that these tips will stay on the screen for a few seconds, and will disappear until the mouse is moved again.

In addition to these pop-up tips when hovering, you can get detailed reservation or site information in the form of Quick-Info windows when double-clicking on a cell. If a reservation occupied the cell, you will see almost all of the reservation's details. If you click on a cell with a site name or type (for instance the site headers to the left of the Rack), the Site's details will pop up. To close the Quick-Info window, just press the **ESC** key, or click anywhere outside the window, or click the "X" button in the Quick-Info window.

Right-Click and Double-Click Functions

Much of the functionality of the program is available through the right-click context menus of the tab views. (In fact, many functions can *only* be done through the right-click menus.) This makes working with reservations extremely fast -- see it, click it, and it's done (in many cases).

When you right-click on a cell in the grid, a menu will pop up with operations available for the item you clicked on. This menu will be appropriate for the cell you click on, so it will change depending on which view you are on and which item you click on -- for instance, depending on whether it's the customer name, the site name, a blank cell, etc. Many times you will see one or more of the menu items "grayed out" (disabled). This means that some functions are not available for that cell due to its current state. For instance, you can't cancel a checked-in reservation, so that option will be disabled. You will also see some options change depending on a reservation's status. The software attempts to prevent illogical or impossible operations. See below for an explanation of the functions available through the right-click menus.

Double-Click Functions

In addition to right-click, you can double-click on a cell. There are two possible results of double-click. On an "open" cell in the Rack (a site that's available for the date clicked on), double-click will open the New Reservation dialog, with the site and date already filled in. This is the quickest way to start a new reservation if you can see the desired site and starting date in the Rack view. The other double-click function is to show a Quick-Info window for the selected reservation or site. This will happen for any double-click other than on open cells on the Rack. The Quick-Info window is a temporary window (just click somewhere else or press the **ESC** key to close it), but it shows most information for a reservation and in some cases will show information not available elsewhere, such as any conflicting reservations for that date.

Note that if the Rack shows an Owner reservation in a cell, the site is still considered available so double-click will start a New Reservation as if the cell was empty (open).

Right-Click Menu Functions

View Reservation Quick-Info and **View Site Quick-Info** -- These are often the top selection in the menu, and are the same as double-clicking on the cell (opens a quick-info window).

Reservation Details, **Customer Details**, and **Site Details** -- These open the respective Details dialogs, where you can view and/or edit any of the corresponding details. Note that Manager access is required to change the Site Details.

Find all Reservations for the Site -- This will open the Find Reservation dialog and show all reservations for this site (past, present, and future). This can be handy for seeing who the last person was in the site, or for seeing when the next person is due to arrive, if it's too far in the past or future to see on the rack. From there you can check the Reservation Details for each one.

View Unassigned reservations for this date -- This option only appears if you right-click on a cell that has "No Site" in it, indicating that one or more reservations exist for this date that have no site assigned. It will show a list of all unassigned reservations for the given date (similar to viewing the Unassigned tab).

Search Grid for Site/Customer -- This is the same as the Search icon on the toolbar and the **Alt-S**/**F9** function keys. It will open the Search prompt where you enter the site or customer name to search for.

Change Customer for the reservation -- This is only available if the reservation is a Group reservation and is not yet checked in. This can be used to change the reservation from the group name to an individual customer before they check in.

Check In and **Check Out** -- These will let you instantly check in or check out a reservation. If today's date doesn't seem to match the first or last night of the reservation as appropriate, you will be warned and given the option to change the date in the reservation to today (handy for early check-ins or check-outs). The Transactions dialog will appear so that you can review the customer's bill and adjust it as needed or print a receipt.

Transactions -- This will open the Transactions dialog and allow you to view transactions or enter new transactions for a reservation. See the section *Working with Reservations* for more information.

Confirm, **Guarantee**, or **Cancel Reservation** -- These do exactly what they say, opening an appropriate dialog as needed.

Assign or Change Site -- This will open the reservation dialog and allow you to assign a new site to a reservation, whether it already had a site assigned or not.

New Reservation for this customer -- This will open the New Reservation dialog for making an additional reservation for the same customer. The customer information will already be filled in. This will not affect the current reservation, and is handy for making future reservations for a current customer.

New Reservation -- (Rack view only) -- This option is available if you click on an open (available) site cell on the Rack view. It is the same as double-clicking on the cell, and opens a New Reservation dialog with the site and start date already selected accordingly.

Reserve for the site owner -- (Rack view only) -- This option will only be shown if you right-click on an owner-type reservation. This is like New Reservation, except that the owner will automatically be selected as the customer.

Add a Guest to this Reservation -- This will open the New Reservation dialog, but it's used to add a guest reservation. The site and dates of the selected reservation will be set automatically, so generally you only need to enter the customer information. You can also change the dates if the guest is not staying as long as the "host".

Linked Reservations -- This is used to add one or more reservations that will be linked to the reservation selected, or to change the type of linkage for the one selected. See *Working with Reservations* for more details.

Split Reservation at this date -- (Rack view only) -- Use this to make two reservations out of one, where one reservation ends the day before the date you clicked on, and the other begins on the date you clicked on. This is useful if you want to move a customer to a new site in the middle of their stay (split it, then use Change Site on the new half), or if they will leave for awhile and come back later (split it, then change the start date of the new half). If the split date is today or in the future, the second half will not be checked in yet (it will show a Pending status). If it's in the past, then both halves will keep the checked-in status (assuming it's checked in now). Note that a spit must be done in the normal range of the reservation, not in a Blocked date range.

This is New Start / Last / Blocked Date -- (Rack view only) -- Use one of these three options in current or future reservations to quickly change the reservation dates right on the rack.

Remove Blocked Dates -- (Rack view only) -- If you click on the last date of a blocked range, you can use this option to completely remove the blocked dates from the reservation.

Extend Previous Reservation to this date -- (Rack only, on open site cells) -- Use this to easily extend a reservation (the one immediately preceding the selected cell in the rack) to end on the selected date. It will add days to the end of the reservation resulting in a longer reservation, rather than change the reservation's start date. Note that Owner-type reservations are ignored for this function.

Block Previous Reservation to this date -- (Rack only, on open site cells) -- Similar to <u>Extend Previous…</u>, this will add Blocked dates to a reservation (e.g. when you know that the customer might stay until this date but isn't sure yet, and doesn't want to be charged for the additional days yet.) Note that Owner-type reservations are ignored for this function.

Advance Next Reservation to this date -- (Rack only, on open site cells) -- This will change the start date of the next-in-line reservation on the rack to the selected date. (It will add extra days to the front of the reservation, not change the end date.) Note that Owner-type reservations are ignored for this function.

Make Site Available / Unavailable this date -- (Rack only, on open site cells) -- This will add or remove dates to the site's dates-unavailable or dates-available list as appropriate, changing the "available" status of the site for the selected day. This can be useful for scheduling short periods of maintenance on a site, or to indicate that a site was not available due to an emergency or electrical problem (even if it's a date in the past, this can be worthwhile for accurately calculating Occupancy reports). For longer changes in periods of availability, it may be easier to enter the date ranges manually in the Site Details dialog.

Print for this reservation -- (Any view, if right-clicking on a valid reservation cell) -- This allows you to print either a single receipt or an envelope for the selected reservation. (The receipt format can be selected from the dialog that appears).

Print this view -- This is the same as using the Print icon, or **F8,** or File / Print from the main menu. It is here primarily for consistency.

Print for all reservations -- (all but the Rack and Transactions view) -- In addition to "This View", which is the same as Print this view above, this has options to batch-print mailing labels, envelopes, or receipts for all reservations shown in the current view. (They can also be filtered further if needed, or you can select which ones to actually print, in the dialog that comes up.)

Conflicting Reservation Details -- This option will only appear for conflicting reservations (reservations occupying the same site on the same date), and will be one of the few functions available in that case. This will show a list of all reservations conflicting with that particular site (using the Find Reservation dialog), so you can edit one or more of them as needed to fix the conflict.

Color Key -- This displays the Color Key dialog so you can see the meanings of the reservation status colors, and to change the colors used.

Grid Lines -- This will turn the grid lines on or off. A check mark will be shown next to the menu item if the grid lines are currently on.

Flip Orientation -- (Transactions view only) --When showing Summary reports on the Transaction view, you can flip the orientation so that dates are in rows and the category summaries are in columns. This preference will likely depend on how many dates or how many categories you are summarizing. The transaction orientation isn't saved in general, but will be saved with any "memorized" transaction reports.

Searching Reports

You can search for a particular Site or Customer on any of the tab views by pressing **F9**, **Ctrl-S**, or **Alt-S** (These are all the same function, so use whichever is easiest for you to remember). In some cases (e.g. when clicking on empty cells in the Rack view), you can also use the Search function from the right-click menu.

The main uses for this are to quickly scroll to a desired site on the Rack view, or to locate a site or customer on the other views.

When you press **Alt-S**, a small dialog will appear -- just type any portion of a site name, or the start of a customer's last name. It will first search for a site name containing the characters you entered (it will search both the abbreviations and the "Site Name" fields). If no match is found, it will then look for a customer. So for instance if you're looking for a customer with "Smi" in the last name but you have a cabin named "Smiley's", it will match the cabin first.

Either way, if a match is found then the view will highlight the matched reservation (scrolling to it if necessary). In the case of the Rack view, a match of the site name will highlight the first visible cell of the site and a match of the customer will highlight the first cell of the reservation. (Note that it will only search reservations from today to the last date of the Rack that can be scrolled to, corresponding to the Maximum Future Days setting.) On any of the other views, when a match is found the entire line will be highlighted.

If no match is found, a message will be shown with a couple tips with how to find what you're looking for (or why it might not have been found).

Sorting Reports

All of the views except for the Rack view are tables where each line corresponds to a record and each column is a field of the record. The fields shown by default are appropriate for the selected view (use the Options button to change which fields are shown). By default they are sorted by date or other appropriate field, and whenever sorted by date there will be a blank line inserted between each different date for ease of reading the report.

You can have the report sorted by any field you like, simply by clicking on the column header for that field. A small arrow will be shown in the header, indicating the direction of the sort. If you want to sort the column in the other direction, click the header again -- each click will reverse the sort for that column.

Some views have an option (under the Options button) to include empty sites when sorting by Site. This provides better visual feedback for "empty" sites and is especially useful for walk-around checking, but also makes the report longer.

Blank separation lines will only be used when sorting by date (and some other cases on Transactions). Also note that in certain cases, the program will automatically use a secondary sort. For instance when sorting by Site Type, all of the reservations with the same Site Type will then be sorted by site, and those on the same site will further be sorted by date.

Sizing Reports

As covered in the *Rack Options* section, the Rack view cells are a consistent width determined by the Cell Width setting. The other reports, which are columns of data fields, are auto-sized according to the text in the fields (the cells will grow as needed to avoid truncating the text). However, you can have temporary control over the cell widths if you want to adjust the report for printing. For instance, if you don't need some of the fields or if some columns are blank for all records, you can save space by shrinking those fields to almost nothing. This may reduce the number of pages needed for wide reports, or allow the font to be larger when using the "Fit to Page" print option.

To resize the columns, place the mouse cursor over the dividing line between the column header cells. The cursor will change to a right-left arrow (similar to this: ←→). Then hold the left mouse button down and move the line to the width you desire. You can change the columns to any width, but be aware that this will likely result in truncating text, and since the ellipses (…) will not appear for text on these reports, there is no indication that part of the text is missing.

As mentioned, the resizing is temporary. It will remain the new size for printing or scrolling around, but any action that causes the report to refresh, such as sorting a column or making any reservation change, will cause all of the columns to auto-size again.

Printing Reports

To print the contents of any Tab View report, simply click the Print button on the toolbar (or select File | Print from the main menu). There are several options that can be used to customize the format of the reports, which are described in the *Printing Options* section of *Program Options and Settings*.

Besides those options, don't forget that you can print in Landscape mode to get a wider report on one page. To change to landscape mode, use File | Printer Setup | Default. The setting will be remembered even when the program is closed and restarted.

It's worth mentioning again that you should use Print Preview to see what the report will look like before printing it. This is because the size of the report and the settings (Fit to Page and Zoom Percent) can make the difference between getting a nice report or getting 20 pages that have to be taped together, or a report printed in such tiny text that it's unreadable. The Print Preview function also allows you to step through pages to see what's on each page, so you can select certain pages to print if you don't need the whole report.

If you prefer to print in black & white to save ink (or if you don't have a color printer), it may be a good idea to add the "Status" field to your reports, since the printout won't have the color coding. This is an optional field under the Options button on all views (except the Rack).

Once you select Print (either after Print Preview or instead of Previewing), printing uses the standard Windows print dialog. This allows you to select the page numbers to be printed, which printer to use, and other printer properties. Generally this only requires you to click OK on the Print dialog to send it to the printer. There is no need to wait for the entire document to finish printing -- once it is queued up for the printer, the print dialog will close automatically and you can continue working or print another report.

Exporting Reports to Other Programs

Any of the Tab View reports, as well as almost any report grid in a dialog such as Find Customer, can be exported.

Copy/Paste

You can also copy data directly to another program such as Excel, just by highlighting the desired cells on the grid (or press **Ctrl-A** to select all cells), then **Ctrl-Insert** or **Ctrl-C** to copy the data to the clipboard. Then you can switch to the other application and paste the data. The data is copied in Tab-delimited format, so it can be pasted into nearly any program that supports Tab-delimited data or text. However, only the data cells can be copied this way, not the header row and column. To get the entire report into another program, use the Export to CSV function.

You can also copy the Map view image in the same way (there is no selection of cells, it just copies the entire image).

Export to CSV

Exporting reports to a CSV file is covered in detail in the Import and Export Functions section later in the manual.

Rack (Reservation Grid)

Most of your operations will probably be done directly from the Rack view. This is the primary display, which shows the status of each site on any given date, typically showing the next 2 weeks. Reservations and open sites are color-coded to indicate their status, and each day of the week on open sites can be colored differently as desired (by default the weekends are slightly darker). Each cell in the grid represents one day of one site. There are several options available to customize the look of the Rack (see *Rack Options* for explanations), and there are controls at the top to filter the view.

Red Yesterday/Today Divider Line

You will see a red line on the Rack between yesterday's cells and today's cells on the Rack. Normally this is a vertical line, but may be horizontal if the orientation is flipped. The purpose of this line is simply to indicate the start of current day, and is a very helpful indicator.

Note that by default the first column shown on the rack will be yesterday. This is so that you can see reservations that ended last night, since those customers are likely to still be on site in the morning. You can also tell (by color coding) whether they have been checked out yet, so you can tell that they might still be there. When scheduling new reservations, you may want to avoid placing someone in the same site as a reservation that "ended" yesterday unless they have checked out, in case they plan to extend their stay (or just haven't left yet, in the case of early walk-in customers).

Reservation Cells

Reservations are shown as cells filled with the last name of the customer. If the name is too long to fit, it will be truncated with an ellipsis (…) to indicate that it's not completely visible. One cell for each *night* of the reservation will contain the name. The program deals in "nights" stays, so although most customers will actually leave the morning after their last night, the cell for the departure morning will not show that customer -- it must be available to show the customer staying the following night. Thus if a customer stays for one night, one cell will be filled with that customer's name.

Moving the mouse cursor over any reservation (without clicking) will show the full last name as well as the first name(s) in a pop-up tip. Double-clicking on a reservation will pop up a Quick-Info window with all of the major details of the reservation, including the dates, status, and customer information, plus linked sites, notes, site preference requests and more. Finally, right-clicking on a reservation will present a menu with all major functions available so that most operations can be done from this view. These functions are covered in the Common Controls section.

Pay special attention to conflicting reservations -- these are cells that are bright red with yellow text (these are the default colors, but this can be changed through the Color Key). Although it's very difficult to make a reservation that conflicts with another one through the normal procedures (the program will warn you and not allow it), it may be possible to cause conflicts by manually changing a reservation's data (for instance through the Maintenance functions). If you see a conflicting reservation, double-click on the cell to see a Quick-Info window showing the information for both of them. You can edit the first one with the normal right-click commands, but to edit the second one you may have to find it through one of the other views (for instance, Arrivals for that date).

Open Site Cells

Cells with no customer name are "open" sites. The color may vary depending on whether the day is a weekday or weekend, and whether the site is available on that date (according to season dates or special available/unavailable dates set for the site). Hovering over an empty site won't show anything, but you can see the site's description (and double-click to get a Quick-Info window) by hovering over the site name in the row or column header (the gray button-like cells). Double-clicking on an open site will open the New Reservation dialog (the quickest way to make a reservation for a known site and date that's visible). Right-clicking will pop up a menu with functions for the site, including options to extend or advance preceding/following reservations to this date.

In addition, you may see "No Site:1" (or some other number) in a cell that should otherwise be open. (If the number won't fit in the cell, you will see the ellipsis and can hover over the cell to see the full number.) This indicates that there are reservations for this date which have not been assigned sites, and this will appear in every open site cell for each date that has unassigned reservations. This is essentially a warning that you should not fill the open sites for that date until the unassigned reservations have been assigned sites, or that you should at least leave enough sites open to satisfy the unassigned reservations. To assign sites to the reservations, you should go to the Unassigned Tab View, where they will be listed. (It can't be done from the Rack because the reservations aren't assigned to any particular cell, therefore you can't right-click on any particular unassigned reservation.)

A reminder about double-clicking to make a reservation (or the equivalent New Reservation function from the menu or toolbar) -- be aware that this will make a *new* reservation, even if you select an existing customer from the database. This is *not* the way to assign sites to reservations that have already been made without site assignments, since the original reservation without a site assigned would still be in the system.

Availability Summary Display

You can optionally include a row below the date header that shows the number of sites available for each day

or period. If you prefer, this can be shown as a percentage. Note that the availability number shown will depend on the site types selected -- if All Site Types are shown, then the number includes all types. If you select only one type, then the number includes available sites of only that type.

If adding the row for this is too distracting, you can set it to only show the availability as a pop-up tip when you put the mouse cursor over the date. If the availability by site type is more appropriate, you can also show the availability as a pop-up tip in the site type column. When you hold the mouse cursor over a particular site type, the availability will be shown for the date range selected.

Note that if any of these availability options are selected, it can cause the Rack display to refresh much more slowly when you have a large database.

Rack Controls

Date range selection was covered in the *Common Controls and Settings* section above, but the dates on the rack have some special meanings since it's not a normal table-type report.

You'll notice that the program starts with both the start and end date set to the current date, but obviously the Rack is showing more than one day. The date range is of primarily importance when the Available Only option or the Show Range option is selected, but the controls can also be used to change the Rack dates shown.

The default date range available in the Rack is determined by the past and future minimum days and maximum days settings (see *Rack Options*). You can use the date controls to see dates further in the past or future -- just change the date in the control to extend the range of the Rack. This won't necessarily scroll the Rack to the dates selected, especially when selecting the End date -- you will still need to scroll the Rack view after selecting a new end date.

If the Available Only option is selected, then the Rack will only show those sites that are available continuously from the Start date to the End date selected. (Options for what is considered "available" are covered in the *Program Options and Settings* section.) So by default, if you check the Available Only box, it will show all sites that are available today. This is a quick way to see what's available for a given date range before starting a reservation. Once you know the available sites, you could double-click on one of them to start the reservation process.

Note that if Available Only is selected, the From and To dates selected for the rack can automatically be used as the First and Last nights for a new reservation (when you double-click on an open site). This option can be enabled or disabled through Program Options. If Available Only is *not* selected, the date of the cell you double-clicked on will be used as the First night, but it will only assume one night.

If the Show Range option is selected, then the Rack *does* only show dates in the range selected. This is primarily used when you want to print a Rack view, so that you only print the dates you want. Otherwise it would print all of the rack currently available for scrolling, which is probably a lot more than you want.

The Site Types drop-down will filter the Rack to show only the selected type or class, or All Site Types. Note that this also affects the Available Only option, in which case only the available sites of the selected type will be shown. Also note that if a Default filter is defined, this will also be used for the New Reservations dialog.

The Reset/Today button is handy for resetting the Rack to its default state after scrolling it or checking availability. This sets the date range back to the default, makes sure that the current day (or previous day depending on the settings) is the first row or column shown, clears the Available Only and Show Range options, and resets the Site Types selection to All Site Types.

The Options button opens a dialog with various settings for customizing the appearance of the Rack. These settings are saved and will remain the way you set them every time the program runs.

Rack Options

All of these options are used to affect the way the Rack is displayed (the main dynamic interactive report screen). A description is given here of each option, but more information may be found in the *Rack (Reservation Grid)* section. Note that they also affect the mini-rack view on the **New Reservation** dialog.

Dates on Top -- This is the normal orientation for the Rack. If you prefer it with Sites across the top and dates down the side, then uncheck this option.

Show Day of Week in header -- Controls whether the day of the week (Mon, Tue, etc.) is shown for each date header cell. While this can be helpful, it does take extra space on the grid.

Show Year in header -- Controls whether the year is shown for each date header cell. Helpful if you do a lot of multi-year reservations, but most users leave it off to save the grid space.

Show Site Types -- Controls whether the site type is shown next to the site name in the grid. This can be useful if the site names show no clue as to their type, for instance if they are all just numbers.

Show # sites available each day, in a separate row -- When selected, a row will be added below the date header to show the number or percentage of sites available each day. The number will only include available sites of the selected site type (or other filtered selection). Note that any unassigned reservations will be subtracted from the number shown, since they will occupy sites when they check in. However it will not know which site type(s) will be occupied by unassigned reservations, so the number is subtracted no matter which site type is selected (possibly resulting in a negative number available).

Show # sites available each day, as pop-up tips -- When selected, the availability information will be included as a pop-up tip in the date header cells. Usually there's no need to select both this option and the separate row option above, since they show the same information.

Show # sites available for each site type, as pop-up tips -- When selected, the availability of sites for a particular type will be shown as a pop-up tip on the site type column cells (assuming you have Show Site Types selected also). The availability shown will be for the date range selected in the Rack.

Show availability as a percentage -- When selected in conjunction with any of the availability options above, it will show the percentage available instead of the number of sites.

Default future days -- This defines how many days in the future will be available for instant scrolling on the rack, regardless of future reservations. In other words, a value of 31 will allow you to scroll over to see at least 1 month in the future, without having to change the End date in the header. Note that the actual number of days shown may be greater (up to the maximum, below) if there are reservations beyond the minimum future days value.

Default past days -- The number of days in the past that will be available for instant scrolling, before the Start Date must be changed in the header. (This is also the minimum past days shown.)

Note that the settings above don't limit the ability to view or create reservations. They only help minimize the number of cells in the Rack that the program needs to keep visible under typical usage conditions, to increase response speed. If your computer is fast enough, there is no reason you can't set these to show a full year in each direction by default, so that you rarely have to change the dates in the header and can simply scroll to the desired dates.

Cell Width -- The default cell width for the rack is 50 (measured in pixels, or "screen dots"), so that the date header will display fully. While this allows the most possible grid cells to be shown at once, it may truncate more of the customer names than you prefer. You can increase the cell width to see more complete names. A good medium value is 55, which will allow most common names to fit and still allow nearly 2 weeks to be shown at once on screen with 800x600 resolution. Alternatively, you can reduce the cell width to get a "compressed" view. For instance, set it as low as 3 to see several months at once. This would most likely be a temporary setting, due to the time it takes to display and the lack of names & date information. (Dates will be compressed as the size is reduced, but after a point it can't show date headers). However, the pop-up tips on both the date headers and occupied site cells will still be shown.

Start Rack with yesterday by default --For convenience in seeing who might still be in the park, this option is enabled by default so that the Rack shows yesterday as the first column. A red line separates yesterday from today as an indicator, and to help avoid making new reservations on the wrong date. If this becomes too confusing or you just don't need to see who was on site yesterday, you can turn this off so that the rack starts on today.

Note: The From and To dates on the rack are not affected by this option -- they will still default to today, so that the Available Only function only shows those available today. This can create a slight bit of confusion when using the date-stepping buttons (the arrows on each side of the date). Stepping back one day won't change the first column of the rack, since it's already showing yesterday. On the other hand, stepping forward one day will appear to jump 2 days because the rack will now go from starting yesterday to showing tomorrow. It makes sense when you consider the actual dates selected, but may be a little confusing at first.

Show bars at the start and end of reservations -- This option (enabled by default) helps you visually separate back-to-back reservations by drawing a small vertical bar at each end of a reservation on the rack. This can be especially helpful if you print the rack in back & white. If you don't need the bars and prefer a "cleaner" look, you can disable this function.

Show Unassigned reservation counts in open sites (e.g. "No Site: 4") -- By default, any reservations made without a sites assigned to them will show up on the Rack as a "No Site" notation in *open* site cells for the corresponding dates. This serves as a reminder that there are some reservations on that date that still need sites assigned (so don't fill in all available sites with other reservations!). To see the details on these reservations, you need to go to the Unassigned tab view. However, you may prefer to turn this notation off just for aesthetic reasons, for instance if your normal practice is to leave reservations unassigned until they arrive and checking the Unassigned list is part of your normal routine.

Include Waiting List reservations in unassigned sites count -- When this is checked, any waiting-list reservations with unassigned sites will also be included in the No Site count, so you know that someone may be waiting for a site on that date. Disable this option if you don't want to include waiting-list reservations.

Show Owner reservations -- If this is checked, Owner-type reservations will be shown on the Rack. The sites will be considered "open" in most respects, but appropriate right-click functions will be available on owner reservations. If most of your sites are owned, you may wish to disable this for a cleaner display.

Hide a site if it's unavailable for the entire shown date range -- This option allows you to minimize the number of sites listed in the rack, showing only those that are available for at least part of the date range shown. This can be particularly useful if some sites are only available during certain seasons, or if a large number of sites are currently unavailable for an extended time due to renovation. See the Sites Setup Dialog section in Maintenance Functions for more information on season dates and special dates.

Show only "XXXX" in occupied sites instead of customer names -- This option will eliminate the customer names from the Rack, primarily for use when printing the rack as an availability chart that might be viewed by the public.

Map

The Map view is optional, and requires that you have a suitable map bitmap (image) file available. This tab will appear automatically once a map is set up (under <u>Maintenance</u> | <u>Park Setup</u> | Maps).

The map view is an image representation of your campground, with indicator "elements" placed on each site to show the status. If necessary, you can have multiple maps to represent different areas of your park, or multiple parks -- or even use multiple images to represent the same area but with different aspects (e.g. a separate map showing additional overflow spots available during special events).

Note that when printing a map view, it will automatically be sized to fit on the page. (If printing in Portrait mode, it will fit to the width of the paper but will generally fill only the top half of the page.)

Most of the controls on the map are similar to the Rack -- you can select the From and To dates to show status for a date range, Reset to today, and select the Site Type, Site Class, or Park to show.

Selecting a Map

In addition to the typical controls, there is a drop-down list for selecting which map to view. If you have only one map, of course, this is ineffective. If you have multiple maps, you can select the map to view from the list, or you can cycle through them with the arrow buttons on each side of the list.

In addition to the selection list/buttons, you can use the Page Up, Page Down, Home and End keys to change map pages. Note that the "focus" has to be on the map to do this, so if the key doesn't work, click once on the map first.

You can also place "hotspots" on a map that will change to a selected map when clicked on. This can be used to "zoom in" on a section of an overview map, or you can set up "buttons" on a map image and click on those to change maps.

Options

There are just a few options for the map view:

Default Map -- This selects the default map shown on program start-up and when the Reset/Today is clicked. You can also leave the default blank, in which case the first map will be shown by default, but the map will not change when Reset/Today is clicked. (The map order can be changed in Setup, so you can still specify which map shows up first by changing the order.)

Use reservation color coding -- Select this if you want to see the status for reservations colored exactly as on the Rack and other tab views, rather than the generic coloring for reserved/occupied (map colors). This only applies if there is only one reservation occupying a site for the selected date range. If more than one reservation occupies the site for those dates, it reverts to the generic reserved/occupied colors for the map.

Show Owner reservations -- If this is checked, the appropriate status color will be shown for Owner-type reservations if no other status applies. This is generally the same as "available" except for a lighter color text, but can be useful if trying to locate available sites with or without an owner.

Color Key

The map has a separate color key to determine the color for site indicators. This is a simpler color key, for the most part indicating whether a site is open, occupied now, or reserved (not yet occupied). If it's open, it can also indicate that a site is unavailable, "blocked" by a reservation, or it should be open today but

yesterday's occupant has not yet been checked out. Conflicting reservations are also indicated, and if you have a site type filter selected (e.g. showing only Tent sites), then any sites that don't match the criteria are considered "inappropriate" and will be shown in a different color (normally dark grey).

The color key can be viewed and colors changed from the right-click menu or from the <u>View</u> | <u>Color key for Maps</u> option.

Site Status and Interaction

As described above, the site indicators will be filled with an appropriate status color -- either from the simplified Map color key or from the Reservation color key. Generally any status color other than the "open" color (normally white) indicates that the site is not available for reservations. The one exception is the "may be available" color (normally a very light green). This indicates that there is no reservation for the current dates, but there is someone checked in to that site that is supposed to be leaving. This means that the site should probably be checked before putting someone in it, since the current occupant may not have left yet. Once the occupant is checked out, the site will return to Open status.

Interaction with the Map view is similar to the Rack. When you move the cursor over a site indicator, a pop-up tip will show the current occupant name, or the site description if there is no occupant. If an occupant is due out today, their name will be shown with a note that they are due out today.

Double-clicking will work the same as on the Rack -- if there is an occupant, the quick-info window will be shown for that reservation. If there is more than one occupant for the selected date range, a list of occupants will be shown, and you can view the details of each one from there. If there is no occupant and the site is available (even if there is an occupant due out today but not yet checked out), a New Reservation window will appear, starting a new reservation for that site. The dates will default to the From and To dates selected. If the site is unoccupied but not available or inappropriate for the selected type, a quick-info window will appear with the site information.

Right-click functions are also similar to the other views, as appropriate for the site clicked on (if you click outside a site indicator, the functions are limited to printing and viewing the color key). One exception is that if the site is open for tonight but last night's occupant is not yet checked out, the right-click menu is similar to an open site's menu but has a "For the reservation due out today" sub-menu, where you can access functions for that reservation. From there you can check out the reservation, view details, and other related functions.

Copying the Map to the Clipboard

You can copy the entire map image to the clipboard, including the current site status indications. This could be pasted into other documents, for instance. To copy the map, first click somewhere on the map to make sure it has the keyboard focus. Then use the standard Copy command, either **Ctrl-C** or **Ctrl-Insert**.

Arrivals

The <u>Arrivals</u> view shows all reservations with the First Night in the selected range (defaulting to today, but this is easily changed with the controls). This view is handy for seeing who is due to arrive today. When a camper arrives you can quickly go to this list, verify that they have a reservation, and check them in directly from the list (using the right-click menu). Toward the end of the day, you can refer to this list to see who has not arrived, or perhaps who has arrived but did not get checked into the system. You'll notice that the Name column (the customer's last name) will be color-coded according to the reservation status just like the Rack view. This gives an instant indication of their status at a glance, so you can see which reservations have been checked in.

There's a special control at the top, Pending Only, which when selected will limit the list to those who have not yet checked in (Owner-type reservations will also be excluded, since they don't indicate an actual arrival on their start date). This is handy if you have a large number of arrivals for the day, so the list will shrink as you check people in. You could also use this option to create a no-show list of people you need to call at the end of the day for a status update. Note that Day passes will not be shown as pending since they are assumed to be checked in automatically.

There is an option (under the Options button) to include empty sites when sorting by Site. This provides better visual feedback for "empty" sites and is especially useful for walk-around checking, but also makes the report longer.

Note that reservations on the Waiting List can also appear on this report (if this option is set under the Options button). These will be highlighted with * *Waiting* * in front of the customer name.

You will also see reservations with unassigned sites on this report, which will show "(No Site)" in the Site column.

Departures

The Departures view shows all reservations with the Last night in the selected range (defaulting to yesterday and today, adjustable with the controls). This view makes it easy to see who might be leaving today. (Yesterday is shown as well as today, since those whose Last Night is yesterday will likely check out this morning.) You can switch to this view when somebody checks out, quickly find their reservation and check them out of the system using the right-click menu. If most of your customers pre-pay rather than checking out when they leave, you can use this report to get a list of people who should be leaving today, print it out and make the rounds to check to see if they have left as scheduled. You can then check them out to "close out" the reservation.

There is a special control at the top, Pending Only, which when selected will limit the list to those who have not yet checked out (Owner-type reservations will also be excluded, since they don't indicate an actual departure). This is handy for shrinking a large list to show who has not yet left the campground, or to show what sites still need to be checked for vacancy on the next rounds. While the Name column is color-coded to show which reservations have been checked out, the Pending Only option is still useful if you are printing in black & white mode, and of course to reduce the length of the list. Note that Day Passes will still be shown since they are assumed to be on site any time during the day (they don't "checked out"). They can be excluded by selecting "Assigned Sites" from the Site Types list.

There is an option (under the Options button) to include empty sites when sorting by Site. This provides better visual feedback for "empty" sites and is especially useful for walk-around checking, but also makes the report longer.

Note that reservations on the Waiting List can also appear on this report (if this option is set under the Options button). These will be highlighted with * *Waiting* * in front of the customer name.

On Site

The On Site view shows all reservations that occupy sites for dates in the selected range (defaulting to yesterday and today, which shows any customers that may currently be on-site). The report is sorted by the site by default. This view is primarily used as a quick reference to who is currently in the campground (especially with Current Only selected, see below). It's handy if you need a list for security gate or walk-around purposes, or if someone calls the office looking for a customer. By changing the dates you can see future occupancy, so for instance you could use it to get a list of all campers who will be here on a holiday.

There's a special control at the top, <u>Current Only</u>, which when selected will limit the list to those who are currently checked in (eliminating those who have not yet arrived and those who have already checked out, and also eliminating Owner-type reservations). This will result in a more accurate report of who is actually present. Note that Day Passes will still be shown since they are assumed to be on site any time during that day and do not check in or out. They can be excluded by selecting "Assigned Sites" from the Site Types list.

There is an option (under the <u>Options</u> button) to include empty sites when sorting by Site. This provides better visual feedback for "empty" sites and is especially useful for walk-around checking, but also makes the report longer.

Note that reservations on the Waiting List can also appear on this report (if this option is set under the <u>Options</u> button). These will be highlighted with *Waiting* in front of the customer name.

Unassigned

The <u>Unassigned</u> view shows all reservations that have not been assigned to specific sites. As with the other views you can specify a particular date range. However, this view defaults to a 1-month view (from today to 31 days later) so that you can easily see upcoming reservations that need to be assigned to sites. Their rig information and any special requests (site preferences) are shown to make the task easy. You can assign a site to a reservation by right-clicking on the reservation line and selecting <u>Assign Site</u> (see *Working with Reservations* for details).

Note that the date range can be applied to either the First Night of reservations (only showing reservations which start in the date range), or to a reservations' entire stay (showing any reservations which include the date range). This is an option under the <u>Options</u> button so you can set it either way.

If you want to see all unassigned reservations in the system, regardless of the dates, it's easier to use the <u>Unassigned Reservations</u> function under the <u>Reservations</u> menu, rather than changing the dates as far back and forward as possible.

It's common to have reservations on the Waiting List with unassigned sites, so those can appear on this report as well, if the option is set (see the <u>Options</u> button). These will be highlighted with *Waiting* in front of the customer name.

Non-Reserved

The <u>Non-Reserved</u> view can show three different types of reservation records that are not actually "reserving" space. These can be:

> **Cancelled** reservations (either you or the customer cancelled a previously pending reservation)
> **Couldn't Book** reservations (they tried to make a reservation but you were full so they won't wait).
> **Waiting List** reservations (you didn't have a place to put them yet but they still want to stay).
> **Inquiry** "reservations" (they just inquired but did not make a reservation).

You can also show "All Not Reserved" to show all three types in one report. Both the color coding and the <u>Status</u> column will indicate which type they are.

Note that the date range can be applied to either the First Night of reservations (only showing reservations which start in the date range), or to reservations' entire stay (showing any reservations which include the date range). This is an option under the <u>Options</u> button so you can set it either way.

By default the display shows only Waiting List reservations, since those still have the potential of being turned into a booked reservation. Like the Unassigned view, this view defaults to a 1-month (31-day) date range so that you can check ahead and call customers if a site opens up. The other types are selected using the drop-down list on the right end of the controls above the grid.

The other types of non-reserved reports are mainly useful for historical purposes (e.g. to see if any reservations have been cancelled for the week, or how many couldn't be booked). They may also be useful if you want to "un-cancel" a reservation (the customer changed their mind), or if a couldn't-book customer calls back to see if anything opened up and you can book them now. You should change the status of the original reservation instead of making a new reservation for the same customer (and probably the same dates). This way your statistics for the Unfilled Reservations Report won't show reservations that were actually filled later

To un-cancel a reservation, simply select <u>Un-cancel</u> from the right-click menu. (Manager access is required.)

To change a couldn't-book reservation into a booked reservation, use the <u>Assign Site</u> function from the right-click menu -- the couldn't-book status will automatically be cleared once a site is assigned. If you wish to re-book the reservation without assigning a site, use <u>Reservation Details</u> and simply uncheck the Cannot Book box.

Payments Due

The Payments Due view shows any reservations that might have outstanding payments due, as of the selected date (defaulting to today). Whether payments are due is primarily determined by the Paid-Through Date for reservations, so it's important to make sure that each reservation's Paid-Through Date accurately reflects the payment status. (This field can be easily set every time a transaction is made and the customer checks in or out.) You can filter it further with the options available through the <u>Options</u> button (see below).

By default the report is sorted by the Paid-Through date of the reservation, so the most-overdue accounts are at the top. If the customer has not made any payments (i.e. their Paid-Through Date is blank), the date shown here will be the reservation's First Night, and will be shown in parenthesis to indicate that no payments have been made. You might also see "(Deposit)" if they have made a deposit but no further payments, or "(Payment)" if they have made a payment but no Paid-Through date was set. Unlike most other date columns on reports, blank lines don't separate the different Paid-Through dates. This is because it would usually result in many blank lines, and the date grouping is not important for this report.

The report also shows these special fields:

Reservation Balance and **Customer Balance** -- These are according to the charges and payments applied to the reservation or customer. (Depending on the filtering options, they may have a $0.00 balance even though a payment is due, e.g. for the next month.)

Days Overdue -- This is the number of days since the last Paid-Through date (or their First Night, if they have not paid yet).

Unpaid Nights -- This is calculated as the number days from the last Paid-Through date (or First Night) to the end of their reservation (not including Blocked dates). Thus this is often larger than the days overdue for monthly customers, and smaller than the days overdue in most other cases.

Note that the date selection for this report is a single "Show any due as of" date, rather than a From/To range, since a range doesn't make sense for this report. Thus changing the date or using the Week/Month/Year buttons can be used to show payments that are coming due in the future.

There's a special <u>Show All With Balances</u> option on this report, which will show any reservations with non-zero balances due (unpaid charges on their transaction history), regardless of their Paid-Through date. Reservations with zero balances will also still be shown if they are shown according to the Options. This is handy to see customers that will owe something in addition to their reservation stay when they check out, or any other case where they haven't paid their full balance even though the reservation has been marked "paid" according to the date.

The <u>Options</u> button has a variety of options for selecting which reservations will be shown in the report, in addition to the list of fields to show. You can select criteria for showing pending, checked-in, and other reservation statuses. This can be based on whether there is a balance due for any status. For pending reservations, you can filter based on how long ago the reservation was made or how soon the reservation starts (in case you have prepayment/deposit requirements). You can also filter by balance due (either Customer or Reservation balance) and whether they have made any payments yet. For checked-in reservations, you can filter on how long it's been since their last paid-through date or how soon their paid-through date is coming up (to show long-term residents that require monthly payments, for instance). All of these selections will be kept until you change them, even if the program is shut down.

Aged Balances Due -- There are special fields available under <u>Options</u> that can show "Aged" account balances, such as you might see on a credit statement. These will show how much of a reservation's balance is Current or 30, 60, 90, or 120 days old, and are used for special accounting purposes. These fields require more calculation than the others, so leave these turned off unless you need them.

You can select one or more of the aged balance field options, depending on what time frames you need. The column headers will adjust to reflect the actual ranges being used (e.g. "30-60" or "30-90"). Assuming you have the "Current" option selected, the total of all aged amounts shown (including Current) will be the total balance as of the selected date.

Aged balances are unique in that they use the date selected in "Show all due as of" as the starting point. So for instance if you enter a prior date, all transactions after that date are ignored. Thus you can use this report to find out how much each customer's balance was as of a particular date in the past. In this case, the total of all of the aged balances may not be the same as the "Balance" (or "Customer Balance") amounts because those balances include all transactions regardless of their dates. However if today's date is selected, then all of the aged amounts shown will total up to the Balance shown.

The dates for 30 days, 60 days, etc. are also figured from the date selected, not from today. Therefore you could also enter a future date and it will show aged balances that are 30, 60, etc. days back from that date.

Another important thing to note is that the aged amounts may be shown for either for the Reservation or the Customer's transactions (which may include other reservations or non-reservation transactions), depending on whether the option "Use customer balance" is selected or not.

Transactions

Overview

The Transactions view is different in many ways from the other views. The most obvious difference is that this view shows a list of transactions rather than reservations, and since each reservation is likely to have multiple transactions, a single reservation will result in multiple lines in the transaction list. This view has more filtering options and shows more totals and sub-total information than other views.

Some reservation information is shown for reference and sorting convenience -- the last name is color-coded as usual, plus the first names, site, site type, and first night are shown. Also note that some transactions won't have reservations associated with them, and some won't even have customers associated with them. This will be the case for unbound transactions, as well as any Expense and Misc. Income transactions that you enter for the business.

The other major feature of this view is that it can be used to generate many different summary reports. This makes it much more powerful than the other views -- and much more complex as well. For a better understanding of how to use this report, refer to the *Working with Transactions* section as well.

One thing to remember is that like the other reports, this is a dynamic report. So whenever transactions are made, they will show up immediately. This is a good thing, unless you are showing many days of transactions (or a summary report) and have a slow computer. Although it will only refresh when the view is visible so it won't slow down normal operations, it would still be a good idea to reset the view to Details mode for Today (uncheck the Summarize option and click the Today button) after getting the reports you need.

Detail Transaction Reports

This is the default mode, and is indicated by the Summarize check box being unchecked. Each line will show a separate transaction record (with subtotals as appropriate, described below). You can select which fields are displayed through the Options... button (or the separate "Detail Options..." button if your screen resolution allows).

Dates

By default, the view shows today's transactions, sorted by date (and time, since they are all the same date). Since all transaction types are shown, the charges and the payments would balance out to a $0.00 total at the bottom if all charges and payments entered today correspond to each other. This is often not the case, however, since charges are often posted to a reservation on a different day than the payments.

If you prefer to show transactions by the date of their reservation (to make it easy to check for reservation charges and payments balancing out), you can change this in the Filters dialog. Click the More Filters… button in the control area, and check the option to Use Reservation date instead of transaction date. Now the transactions will be grouped by the date (First Night) of the reservation, and the total and subtotals (if any) should balance out for any reservations that are paid in full.

As with other reports, you can select the start and end date for the report. (If you're using the option mentioned above to Use Reservation Date, then the date range filtering will likewise apply to reservation dates rather than transaction dates.) Since you're likely to have many more transactions in a day than reservations (and you should have no transactions for future dates), there are no Week/Month/Year buttons. To get monthly, quarterly and yearly reports, see the Summary Reports section coming up later.

Shifts

If you have Shifts functionality enabled, you may want to filter your report by the shift. The Filters dialog contains fields to do this, but remember that the dates are also used for filtering -- so if you have a night shift that spans 2 dates, be sure to include both dates in the filter.

Sorting and Totals

You can sort the detail transaction list many ways by clicking on the column header as in other reports. You will notice that sorting by some fields will result in groupings with sub-total lines between each group. This provides a quick way to get mini-summaries for Transaction Types, Categories, Pay Methods, Discounts, Site Type, Site, and Operator. The sub-totals for each group can be useful for some daily accounting tasks -- sort by Payment Method to get the total receipts for cash, Visa, Discover, etc., or sort by Type to get the total Payments (receipts), Tax charged, refunds, etc.

Some of the totals and subtotals need to be explained further. In addition to the total number of transactions at the bottom of the list (and subtotals after each group), you will see values under the Qty, Each, and Total columns.

The Qty total is self-explanatory, although not terribly meaningful unless the list is sorted by Category since otherwise the quantities for days rent, supplies, propane and so forth would be mixed together. (Depending on how your categories are defined, some Qty totals may not be useful in any case.)

The totals under the Total column would seem obvious, but keep in mind that some transaction amounts are added to the total while others are subtracted, even though the individual transactions almost always show a positive amount. For instance, any "Charge" transactions, including Taxes, are considered negative values, and receipts like Payments and Deposits are positive. Expenses are negative, Misc. Income is positive, Refunds are negative, and so forth according to whether the amount would be a credit or debit to the campground. (Also note that when viewing Reservation balances and printing reservation receipts, these values are reversed since they are from the customer's perspective -- charges are positive outstanding balances, while payments subtract from their balance.)

It's important to note that if you accept advance Deposits, the totals on the detail report probably won't mean much. For one, Deposits are added just like Payments, not reflecting true income. In addition, Deposits Applied also affect the total here, even though they don't affect the actual balance due for reservations, etc. So if you're not filtering out these transaction types, the overall total won't be meaningful.

As if this wasn't confusing enough, you have the option to show all totals as positive for summary reports -- more on that later, since it doesn't affect the Detail view.

Finally, there are the totals in the Each column. These are calculated as an average -- the Total divided by the Qty. Obviously these values only make sense in the cases where Qty makes sense, and when the transactions are sorted/grouped by something like Category or Type which will separate the charges from the receipts.

Interpolated Details

If the summary option is selected to interpolate categories for payments, then the details shown will not be real transactions -- they will be interpolated, or calculated, from the original transactions. These are similar to "split" payment transactions, or a result of prior deposits applied to particular categories. Since they're not real transactions, the values will be shown in grey instead of black, and the description will show "(Interpolated)".

This is usually due to using the Receipts by Category quick-report and then unchecking the Summarize box

to view the details. This is useful for locating the source of transaction amounts that appear in the Receipts by Category report -- even though they're not real transactions, they act the same way. You can right-click on them to view the reservation or customer transactions that the result is coming from.

Editing Transaction Details

If you have the proper access level you can edit transaction details or delete transactions. It can't be done directly from this report, but you can right-click on any transaction and select Transactions from the menu to open the Transactions dialog. From there you can view the transaction details and make changes as needed. Refer to the *Working with Transactions* for more information.

Filtering Transaction Reports

There are many filtering possibilities with the transaction reports. The most common ones, Transaction Type and Category, are available as drop-down lists in the controls area (if the screen resolution is high enough for them to fit). The others are available on the Filters dialog, accessed through the More Filters… button.

Drop-down List Filters

As with the Site Types filtering in other reports, when selecting a filter you are choosing to see only those records (transactions) of that type or category. Note that if you see "-----------" in one of the drop-down lists, it means that a more complex filter has been defined from the filters dialog, which can't be shown in the drop-down list.

For Categories, you can select a single category or "All Categories" from the drop-down list, or select any number of categories from the Filters dialog. Keep in mind that Charge type transactions are about the only ones that will have your defined categories, since other types like Payments have their own "payment" category. Thus if you select the "Propane" category, you will see the charges for propane, but not the taxes or payments that are probably associated with it. (This is generally what you would want to see in any case.)

For Transaction Types, you can choose a single transaction type, All Transaction Types, or one of two special groupings from the drop-down list -- All Receipts or All Charges. More specific filtering can be done through the Filters dialog.

Filter Dialog

From the Filters dialog, you can have additional filtering for Payment Methods, Discounts Used, and Operators. Each of these is presented as a multiple-selection list box. This means that you can select a single item in the list (click on it), or you can select any number of items at once (hold the **Ctrl** key down when you click on each item). Note that you can also de-select an item with Ctrl-click also. To disable filtering for a particular field, you can either select all of the items the list or de-select all items. You can also use Reservation Filtering to select the sites or reservation types you want to include, which uses the Reservation Filtering dialog, and also filter customer and unbound transactions by what kind of balance exists for the customer or unbound-set.

Note: If you want to exclude *all* transactions associated with reservations (e.g. to see *only* unbound or customer-only transactions), you can do this by going to Site/Reservation filtering, then uncheck all 3 of the "Include if balance.." options. Therefore it won't include any reservations regardless of balance, thus no reservation transactions will be included. (There will be a warning just in case you do this by mistake.)

The flexibility of filtering any or all of these fields can be useful for customized reports, but you will need to be familiar with the way transactions are defined to avoid mistakes. For instance, if you try to filter by the Cash payment method and the Good Sam discount, your report will be empty because payment methods only appear in Payment transactions and discounts only appear in Charge & Discount transactions -- so no transactions would meet both filter criteria.

The Reset All button is a handy way to clear all of the lists, resetting to "no" filtering.

You can also set the dates in the Filter dialog. While the dates here are the same as the ones in the view controls, you can also select one of the pre-defined date ranges like "Today", "MTD", "Last Year", etc. These simply calculate the appropriate start and end date for the From and To date fields -- you will see the dates change as you click on the buttons. However, they are especially important when memorizing reports. If the date selection is set to anything other than Custom Dates, that selection will be saved with the memorized report -- so for instance you can define a report for Last Month, and it will always be for last month -- the dates won't have to be selected manually every time you load the report.

Shifts

If you have Shifts functionality enabled, you may want to filter your report by the shift. The Filters dialog contains fields to do this, but remember that the dates are also used for filtering -- so if you have a night shift that spans 2 dates, be sure to include both dates in the filter (or select All Dates). You can select the Current Shift, Last Shift, All Shifts, or a Custom shift range and enter the shift numbers.

As with the date filters, the shift range type (Current, Last, etc.) will be saved with memorized reports. This makes it easy to set up a memorized report for the Current or Last shift, or All shifts.

Summary Transaction Reports

All of the summary financial reports available in Campground Master are generated from the Transactions view. You can go to the Summary Report Options dialog by checking Summarize and then using the Options… button (or just click the separate "Summary Options..." button if your screen resolution allows it), for full report control and some pre-defined Quick Reports.

Summary reports are basically a condensation of the detail reports to just the group subtotals in one dimension, with the ability to show multiple days, months, or years in the other dimension. So summary reports are shown as a grid with dates across the top and group summaries (Types, Categories, Pay Methods, etc.) in each row.

You can also flip this orientation (like flipping the Rack view), so dates are in rows and groups in columns. This can be done either through the Options dialog or from the right-click menu. Another option that can result in nicer looking reports is the Grid Lines option in the right-click menu. Turning off grid lines and printing in color to show the shaded "total" rows and columns (*Print Black & White* option turned off) will result in a very professional-looking report.

You have all of the same filtering options for Summary reports as you do for Detail reports, through the Filters dialog, so you can refer to those sections for filtering information.

Simple Summaries

You can generate a quick and simple summary using just the control area in the Transaction view. Select a date range and a Type and/or Category filter as needed, click on a header to sort by one of the grouping fields (Type, Category, Pay Method, etc.), and click the Summarize check box. The resulting summary report will group by the field that you sorted and the dates in the range you selected, showing one row for each day and one column for each Type/Category/etc. Note: if there are more than 10 days in the date range, the orientation will default to dates in columns. If you prefer a different orientation, right-click anywhere on the grid and select "Flip Orientation". You can then print the report with the Print icon on the toolbar.

More Summary Options

For more control over the summary report, click the Summary Options... button if present, or click the Options… button making sure the Summarize check box is checked first. The top area of the Options dialog allows you to select the grouping method (Select one of the options, or None to show only one grand total instead of group totals) and the Summarize period (Daily, Monthly, Quarterly, Yearly or none). If you have Shifts functionality enabled, you can also summarize by shift. Note that selecting None for both grouping and summarize period will result in a single total value -- not terribly useful for a report!

Keep in mind that the date range selected in the filter (or tab view controls) takes precedence over the Summarize period. So for example if you summarize Monthly and selected the date range of 4/1/2001 to 5/1/2001, it will show April and May month summaries in the report but will actually be reporting for only one day in May due to the 5/1/2001 ending date. This could result in a misleading report.

There are some other options you can select for the report, plus a button that opens the Transaction Filter dialog (this is same as selecting More Filters... from the control area in the tab view). Feel free to experiment with different settings (and try the Quick-Report options below). You can't hurt anything by changing the settings.

Hide items with zero totals -- This option is useful for reports such as category reports, When selected, only the categories (or other groups) will be shown that have non-zero totals, so the report is smaller. Of course if you're grouping by Operator, for instance to see if the charges and payments balance out, then you would *not* want to hide the zero balances -- the zeros are what you want to see.

Show charges & expenses as positive values (invert) -- This option is useful for reports that would normally show negative values, such as a Tax category report. (Since taxes are charges to the customer, they are considered a negative amount). This will create a cleaner-looking report.

Show Deposits Applied as payments -- This option will obviously only be useful if your report includes Deposit Applied transactions. Examples of this are the Balance Charges & Payments report and the Accounts Receivable report. Normally the Deposit Applied transaction is considered a negative deposit (payment), so that it negates deposit transactions in terms of the overall Deposits Balance. In these reports, however, it's necessary to consider deposits applied as positive payments so that the balances are correct.

Include cumulative totals for each period -- When this option is selected, two extra rows (or columns) will be added to the report, showing Previous and Cumulative Totals for each date period. This could be used to seeing a running balance, or it may be useful when exporting values to graphing software like Excel. Note that the first period's "Previous" total will be zero unless you also use the option to include all prior dates (below).

Include group totals for all prior dates -- This option is used when you need an all-time total, for instance when calculating the Deposits or A/R balance. It adds 2 extra columns (or rows) to the report, showing Prior totals and All-time totals for each group (e.g. each transaction category). Obviously it can only include prior transactions that are actually in the database, so "All-time" means since you started using the software, or since you last purged old data.

Interpolate Category for Payments -- This is a special-purpose option, primarily used for the "Receipts by Category" report. Payment transactions don't have category information (because a single payment could be entered for any number of charge items with different categories). Selecting this option tells the software to figure out (interpolate) what transaction categories each payment should be applied to. If charges for more than one category were paid for, then the payment will be divided proportionally between the categories.

Include Deposits in Receipts by Category -- This only applies if the Interpolate option is selected. If Deposits are included, then they will be shown in the report as of the deposit date. However they might be reported as "Uncategorized" because they usually appear before any charges are entered. If you need the report to show all receipts as of the date received, then this option should be checked. You may also want to check the next option (include Deposits Applied).

Include Deposits Applied in Receipts by Category -- This only applies if the Interpolate option is selected. If Deposits Applied are included, then the applied amounts will be shown as received on the date applied (rather than the date the deposit was actually received). It should be used in conjunction with the previous option to include Deposits, so that the amount will also be deducted from the "Uncategorized" amount to offset the total receipts for the day. Basically the amount will be "moved" to the correct category on the date it's applied, without showing an additional amount received on that date.

Quick-Reports

From the Options dialog you can select one of the Quick-reports.   These are predefined sets of filtering and grouping for some common reports. You should first select a Summarize period and a date range (from the Filter dialog or in the control area of the tab view), since the Quick-report selections don't affect these, and then click the appropriate Quick-Report button.

Once a Quick-report is generated, you are free to change the filter or options if you like. The Quick-report buttons don't actually change to a particular report mode, they are just a convenience that sets the filters and groupings for you when you click the button, to generate a particular type of report.

If a quick-report is printed without any changes to its filter or options, the name of the report will be used as the header on the printout.

Memorized Reports

Setting up the reports the way you like them can be a chore, and can result in accounting inconsistencies if you don't use the same settings each time. To avoid this, you can save the settings once you have them the way you like, and call up the same settings every time. There is no limit to the number of different reports you can memorize.

To memorize a report, open the Options (or Summary Options) dialog once you have the settings (filter, groupings, summarize period, orientation and other options) the way you like. Note that every setting in the Filters and Options dialogs will be saved to a memorized report *except* the specific dates -- obviously you would want to use different dates each time you run the report. If you select one of the date range selections, such as All Dates, Last Month, YTD, etc., then that selection will be saved with the memorized report and the dates will set appropriately whenever it's loaded. Likewise, Shift range selections (if enabled) will be saved with the report.

Click the <u>Save Report</u> button, and you will be asked for a name for the report. You can make this name as long and detailed as you like, but try to keep it small enough to fit in the Memorized Reports list on the dialog. Click <u>Save</u> and the report settings will be memorized under that name. You can also delete reports as needed by selecting the report name and clicking the <u>Delete</u> button. You can overwrite a memorized report by selecting it in the list before clicking <u>Save</u>.

To recall a memorized report, simply open the Options dialog, click on the name of the Memorized report you want, and click <u>Load Report</u>. The option settings will automatically change to the saved settings (except the dates, as mentioned above). Then click OK to generate the report, or you can click on <u>Filter…</u> to select a date range (You can also select the date range from the controls area on the tab view, but the Filter dialog has the handy buttons for Month-to-Date, etc. that you might prefer to use.)

You can also load a report and immediately View it in either summary or details mode, using the <u>View Report</u> and <u>View Details</u> buttons. (Alternatively you can just double-click on the report name, which will do the same as View Report.) These will automatically load the report, close the dialog, and change to details mode if desired, eliminating the extra prompt and clicks necessary to close the dialog and view the report.

If a memorized report is printed without any changes to its filter or options, the name of the report will be used as the header on the printout.

5   Working with Reservations

Overview

Keeping track of reservations are naturally the main purpose Campground Master. Most functions of the program revolve around the various tasks involved in recording reservation information, locating that information when needed, making changes, and keeping historical data for reporting purposes.

One important thing to remember that "Reservations" are **not** the same as "Customers" in Campground Master. "Reservations" are records that contain the information about a single stay for a particular customer. Most of the actual customer information is stored separately in a "Customer" record, and the reservation only references that customer by an internal number. There are many reasons for this, but the main reasons are efficiency and continuity -- the customer information only needs to be stored once, no matter how many reservations that customer makes over time. Likewise, if you change the customer information, it's automatically changed for all of that customer's reservations.

Starting a New Reservation

The way to start a reservation (or at least the quickest way) will vary depending on the circumstances. For instance, if you're entering a reservation for a walk-in customer and you have the Rack view showing, the quickest method would be to double-click on the cell for today, on the desired open site. That instantly sets the site and the start date for the reservation, saving two steps. If you are taking a reservation on the phone for some time in the future, the quickest way is probably to click on Phone icon on the toolbar (New Reservation).

If you prefer getting all of the customer's information first, it may be easier to use the Add New Customer function (faces icon), enter the customer information, and then click New Reservation on the Customer Details dialog. Or if you're making a returning reservation for a customer that's leaving today, you can flip to the Departures tab, right-click on the customer's name and select New Reservation for this customer so the customer information is already filled in.

Here's a complete list of ways you can start a new reservation:

-   From the file menu, select Reservations | Add New Reservation. (**Alt-R**, **A** from the keyboard.)
-   From a Customer Details dialog, click the New Reservation button.
-   Click on the New Reservation (phone) icon on the toolbar.
-   Double-click on an empty cell in the Rack (the site and start date are automatically filled in).
-   Right-click on a customer in any of the tab views, select New Reservation for this customer
        (the customer information is automatically filled in).

Two other functions can result in new reservations being created, but are used in special cases:

-   Right-click one a reservation in the Rack, and select Linked Reservations, and one of the Add functions.
-   Right-click one a reservation in the Rack, and select Split Reservation at this date.

The New Reservation Dialog

A New Reservation dialog will be opened whenever you need to enter reservation details. (It's also used for assigning sites to existing reservations.) This dialog has entry fields for the basic reservation information, plus a miniature version of the Rack view. This miniature rack view can be used to select a site, and can be filtered by site type, site preferences, and available sites for the desired dates. As with the main Rack, it will show a red divider line to indicate the start of today, and it may also start with yesterday in the first column (depending on the Options settings).

Note: If a Default site type filter is defined for the Rack view, this filter will also be used as the default for this mini-rack view.

First and Last Night

The first thing to do is verify the first and last night of the stay. The first night and possibly even the last night may already be set, depending on how you started the reservation. (Tip -- if "Available Only" is selected on the Rack, both the first and last nights will default to the rack dates when double-click is used.) In this case, the mouse cursor will automatically be placed in the Nights field, with the number **1** highlighted. (To change the number of nights, all you need to do is type the new number, and the 1 will be replaced with the new number.) Otherwise, you will want to select the date for the First Night, and then either select the date for the Last Night or enter the number of nights -- when one of these two fields is changed, the other one automatically adjusts to match.

Another way to select the number of nights is with the "+1" buttons, which make it easy to add 1 day, week, or month to the reservation with mouse clicks. (Note: these buttons will not be available if Days of the Week are enabled, below). A special case exists with the +1W and +1M buttons -- it they are used when the reservation is still just 1 night, they will make the reservation exactly 1 week (7 days) or 1 month respectively, rather than actually "adding" 1 week or month. Thereafter, it will add weeks or month as needed.

Important -- remember that "Last Night" means exactly that -- the last night of their stay. It's not the check-out date, which is typically the following day (the next morning). This may take some getting used to if you've been going by check-out date.

Block To

In Campground Master, the "blocked" date is used to keep the site available for a customer to some date later than the official Last Night. For instance, if they say that they want to stay 3 days for sure but might want to stay 5 days (assuming availability is not an issue), you would typically make the reservation for 3 days (and charge for 3 days), and use the Block To date to block it to the 5th night. It won't try to charge them for the extra 2 days, but the site will be considered unavailable for other reservations for all 5 days (the blocked dates appear in a light grey on the Rack for easy identification). When they check out or decide to whether or not to extend their stay, then you can adjust the Last Night accordingly or remove the Block To date.

Note that Owner and Day Pass reservations cannot have a Blocked date.

First, Last, and Block Period

These fields will appear only if the reservation type is hourly / scheduled. For more information, refer to the Hourly/Scheduled Reservations section.

Days of the Week

If you have reservations that occur on certain days of the week, for instance if customers commonly reserve a site for every weekend for several months in a row, then you may want to enable the day-of-the-week fields for reservations (see Define Data Fields under the Maintenance menu). If these are enabled, then you will be able to select the specific days of the week to reserve, instead of making a separate reservation for every weekend.

If these are enabled, you will see a series of check boxes, with S, M, T, etc. above them. Just select which days to apply. Note that it may default to having none selected, which is the same as if all are selected so you don't need to select them all each time.

Note that if these fields are enabled, it will slow down some processes like updating the Rack view, so only use them if this is a common occurrence.

Reservation Type

The reservation type is very important, and governs how the reservation is treated. This will default to "Normal", which should be used for typical reservations, but the actual options available will depend on the types defined in the Reservation Types Pick List (any of the types can be renamed or disabled if your park has no need for them). A description of each general type is below:

Normal -- A short-term reservation, primary occupant of the site for the designated nights. (It can also be used for long-term reservations that you don't want to include in monthly billing.)

Group -- Similar to a Normal reservation except that it allows linked reservations to have a "group leader" referenced on the Reservation Details. This is typically used for reservations with multiple linked sites, and it allows easy customer changes (from the right-click menu on the Rack) as each group member confirms or checks in to the site. Group reservations also appear in a different color on the Rack, with the group leader in a slightly darker color. See the *Groups and Linked Reservations* section for more details.

Free Stay -- This can be selected for reservations where no charge will be due for the site. This option will only appear for operators with Manager access or above. Free Stay reservations will generally show no charges if auto-calculate is used, and will not appear on Monthly Billing even if they are long-term.

Guest -- This is a special type of reservation, and can only be created through the Manage Guests function on Reservation Details. A Guest reservation occupies the same site as its host (thus many reservations can be made for the same site, presumably temporary guests of the primary ("Normal"), or "host" reservation. Since they are separate reservations, they can have their own charges just like other reservations, and will appear on reports like Arrivals, Departures, and On Site. On the Rack view, guests will be indicated on the pop-up tip when the mouse hovers over the cell, and will also be shown in the Quick-Info window (e.g. when the reservation is double-clicked). See the section on Guest Management for further details.

Day Pass -- A Day Pass reservation is a simple reservation with first/last nights (usually just 1 "night"), and no site assigned. If day passes are enabled, it's actually easier to use the Day Pass button on the bottom of the dialog to make a day pass reservation, particularly if they are already present and ready to "check in".

Monthly -- Monthly reservations are similar to Normal reservations. Use this type if the reservation is a long-term reservation that will pay monthly instead of all at once. Reservations must be Monthly in order for them to be included in the Monthly Billing function (see *Working with Transactions*). This can also aid in filtering these kinds of reservations for reports, and makes the reservation appear in a distinct color on the Rack and other reports. Depending on the settings in Maintenance | Program Options | Monthlies, selecting this type before changing the Last Night manually will automatically set the Last Night to an appropriate date for monthly reservations, and optionally set the Blocked date to an appropriate date. For instance, it can reserve the site to the end of the year, or the end of next month, or make it a certain number of months long.

Owner -- This is essentially a "background" reservation. It's typically used to designate the owner or long-term lessor of a site who isn't always present. Even though the owner's name will appear on the Rack (unless "Show Owner reservations" is disabled on the Options), it won't block a site -- so other types of reservations can be made on top of the owner's reservation. For times when the owner is actually present, a separate "Normal" reservation should be made so the site is blocked, and to have a record of when the owner is present. There will be a special option on the right-click menu for owners, to make a reservation for the owner.

Hourly -- This is a special type for intra-day schedule reservations. For more information, see the Hourly / Scheduled Reservations section.

Est. Arrival Time

If desired, you can enter an estimated arrival time for the reservation. This is helpful for knowing when to expect a customer to arrive, and is only used for your reference. This entry field is free-form so you can enter anything you like, but there is also a pick-list associated with it so you can simply select an option from the list if preferred (this helps keep entries uniform, but is not necessary for this field).

Finding A Suitable Site

If you don't want to assign a site at this time, or if you started by double-clicking on the rack so that a site is already selected, then you can skip to the Customer Information now.

If you know beforehand what site you will use, you can also use the Quick-Pick list to select a site -- just click on Quick-Pick Site, scroll the list if necessary, and select a site. It will automatically be used and shown in the mini-rack, and you can continue to the Customer Information.

Note: the Quick-Pick list will only show sites according to the site type filtering, as will the mini-rack. If you don't find the site you want, try resetting the site type selection to "All Site Types", or uncheck "Use Preferences".

Another way to jump a particular site quickly is by using the Search function -- **Alt-S** or **F9**. Just enter the site number or partial site name in the dialog that opens up, and the mini-rack will scroll down to that site immediately.

Showing Available Sites

If you need to find a suitable site for this reservation, you first need to verify that you have a vacancy for the nights selected. You can do this quickly by checking the box Show Available. Any sites with existing reservations for the selected nights will be eliminated from the mini-Rack view. (The specific sites filtered out follow the same rules as for the Available Only option on the Rack view -- see *Program Options and Settings* for details). If you find that you almost always check the Show Available box, you can save time by making this the default for new reservations. This setting is in the main menu under Maintenance | Program Options | Functions.

Note that if you're making an Owner-type reservation (select "Owner" in the Resv Type list), Show Available will also exclude owner-occupied sites. Otherwise, owner reservations are ignored so you can make normal reservations on the owned sites when the owner isn't present.

If you're familiar enough with your campground's sites to know which ones are suitable for the customer, you can immediately select one of the sites to use (see below) and move on. Otherwise, you may want to further filter the list by selecting a Site Type or Site Class from the drop-down list (both types and classes can be selected from the same list), or by clicking on Site Preferences to enter a detailed list of the customer's needs. Preferences include things like as sewer, cable, rig length, waterfront, or any other attributes you have defined (see the *Maintenance* section for details on defining preferences).

Site Preferences

If you want to select a site by specific attributes, you can use the Site Preferences. The Use (or Use Preferences) box in front of the More Pref's button is checked by default, but in most cases the preferences selections are empty so this has no effect until you select preferences. The exception is when changing sites for an existing reservation -- any previous preferences selected will be used automatically. Any time you want to ignore the preferences, simply uncheck the Use box.

Up to 5 site preferences can be shown on the dialog as checkboxes (to the left of the mini-rack grid), to make the most selections easier. This is set up through Maintenance / Program Options. If preferences checkboxes are set up, simply check the desired preferences and only sites with those attributes will be shown (assuming the Use box is still checked). If the preference you need to select is not available as a checkbox, then you can click the More Pref's button to open the Site Preferences dialog.

The Site Preferences dialog shows a list of all attributes that a site can have. For each attribute, there are three possible selection methods -- a drop-down list, a value, or a Must Have/Must Not Have selection. Note first that any attribute which is blank (showing nothing next to the name) means that the customer doesn't care about that attribute, so it is not checked against the sites. The list should start with all blanks, unless you have already chosen a Site Type from the reservation dialog (that's actually one of the attributes).

If you select a value from one of the drop-down lists, for instance the Site Type, Site Class, Pad Type, or Site Facing, then you will be limiting the available sites to those that match that attribute exactly (this is one reason to define the pick lists for these attributes carefully).

If you enter a value for an attribute (for instance the Rig Length, Site Length, or Site Width), then any site with that value or greater will be shown. Note that entering the Rig Length on the New Reservation dialog is the same as entering it in the Site Preferences.

The other types of attributes, such as 50A, Phone, and Handicapped Access, can be either "Must Have" or "Must Not Have" (or blank). Note that when the attribute is blank there is a check box that's gray, meaning no selection. If you click it once, it will change to Must Have, and the box will be checked. If you click it again, it will change to Must Not Have, and the box will be white but unchecked. Finally, if you click on it a 3rd time, it will go back to the blank (gray) state.

After making your preference selections you can Save them, or if you change your mind you can click Cancel and none of the changes will be saved. Once they are saved, the mini-rack on the reservation dialog will remove any sites that don't fit the preferences criteria (preferences will filter the rack whether Show Available is checked or not, since Show Available only filters out sites with existing reservations).

Note that these preferences will stay with the reservation. They will show up on the reservation's Quick-Info window, and will appear in the Requests column of some of the tab views. Site preferences are especially useful when making unassigned reservations (a reservation with no site assignment), as a way to remember what attributes the customer asked for.

Selecting Sites

By now you should be able to see what sites are available for the selected dates on the mini-rack view. To select a site, just click on an empty cell in the rack for that site, and then click the <u>Add Selection(s)</u> button. Alternatively, you can simply double-click on an empty cell for that site, just like on the main Rack view, or right-click on the site and select <u>Assign Site</u>. That site's cells for each of the reservation dates should immediately fill in, with the word **<new>** in red-on-yellow. You will also see the site name in the <u>Site(s) Selected</u> field.

If any of the dates conflict with other reservations, they will be shown with asterisks (***) in yellow-on-red. You won't be able to complete the reservation with conflicts, so you need to adjust the dates or pick a new site before continuing.

Here's a quick tip -- If you have not yet indicated a start date (for instance if you started from the Phone icon), you can select the date and site at the same time, similar to double-clicking on the Rack View. Just go straight to the mini-rack and select a site on the desired start date. In fact, you can select the entire date range right on the mini-rack -- drag the mouse to highlight all of the cells needed (e.g. 3 cells for 3 nights, starting on the appropriate night) and click <u>Add Selection(s)</u>. The date range will change to the range of cells selected on the rack. Be careful with this, thought, since any subsequent multi-date cell selection will change the dates again to the newly selected cell dates. Only single-cell selections will leave the dates alone once they are set.

If you're booking a group under a single name, or if you need to reserve an additional site for the same person (for example a trailer storage spot), you can reserve multiple sites at once. You can add additional sites to a reservation by selecting another site in the rack and clicking <u>Add Selections(s)</u> again, etc. Each site selected will show in the <u>Site(s) Selected</u> list, in addition to being shown as **<new>** on the rack. If you have a lot of sites to select, you can do it easily using **Ctrl**-click on each one (select multiple individual sites), or click on the first one and **Shift**-click on the last one to select a whole range of sites.

If you select the wrong site or sites and need to start over, use the <u>Clear All Sites</u> button to clear all selected sites You can also select a single site to remove from the <u>Site(s) Added</u> list and click <u>Delete</u>.

Multiple Site Clarification -- although this is referred to as "adding additional sites to a reservation", remember that technically each reservation record can only have one site assigned to it. When you select more than one site, it will actually create multiple reservation records. Each of these reservations will be identical except for the site assignment, and they will be *linked* together and *synchronized*. This linked status will be tracked whenever you make other reservation changes or operations like checking in and out, so they can stay synchronized and act like a single reservation.

For more information about multiple-site reservations, refer to the *Groups and Linked Reservations* section.

Qty Entry Field

If this field is enabled, you can enter a number of sites to be automatically added. See the *Groups and Linked Reservations* section for details.

Checking Rates

Once you have a site and dates selected, you can use the <u>Check Rates</u> button to show the rate(s) available and calculate how much it would be. This is useful if they want to know the rate before making the reservation or giving you more information. If Auto-Rates are configured, then you can have it automatically apply the appropriate rates when the rates selection dialog is opened, so you get an instant total.

Don't Move

An extra preference you can set for the reservation, which is a reservation status rather than a site attribute, is the <u>Don't Move</u> option. If you want to make sure that this reservation is not moved to another site (e.g. to make room for someone else), check this box. This will be flagged as such and the Assign Site functions will be disabled for this reservation (unless of course the <u>Don't Move</u> option is manually unchecked again).

Customer Information

Once the site selection is taken care of, you're ready to either select a returning customer or enter the new customer information. No reservation can be made without at least a customer last name.   (The minimum reservation has a first night, last night, and customer last name.)

Note: If there's already customer information when the dialog is opened (e.g. you're using this dialog to assign or change the site for a reservation, or add a new reservation for an existing customer), then all of the customer information fields will be disabled to prevent accidental changes to the customer.

Note that some of the information in the Customer area will come from (or become part of) the Customer record as well as stored with the Reservation record. This includes the Notes and the number of Adults, Children, Pets, Extra Vehicles and Extra Trailers. This apparent duplication is actually necessary so that it can be changed for each reservation they make (for instance, the number of children tends to change over time). When an existing customer is used, the information is automatically filled in from the customer's record. Any changes you make to the information (including the name, address, and phone) will be saved back to the customer's record, whether it's an existing customer or a new one.

Also note the <u>Customer Details</u> button. You can use this at any time, to enter or edit other customer information such as their vehicle information, driver's license, discount clubs, etc. You can also view their previous reservation history (for instance to see what sites they used before, or to verify an outstanding credit balance from a prior stay) and their transaction history. The amount of customer information you keep track of is up to you, but we believe that the more information you have the better prepared you will be to handle emergencies.

Automatic Zip/Postal Code Lookup

For U.S. and Canadian addresses, you can speed data entry by simply entering the Zip or Postal code in the City field. When you press **Tab** or **Enter** after the code, it will automatically fill in the City, State, Country and format-corrected Zip/Postal code for you. Note that there is no need to enter the spaces or capitalize the letters in Canadian codes, it will do that automatically. You can also use the Zip+4 format for U.S. codes if you like.

Returning Customers

If reserving for a returning customer that you have in the customer database, you don't have to enter the information again. You will use the <u>Find Customer</u> function to select an existing customer from the database.

There are two ways to do this…

The quickest way is to enter a portion of their last name in the <u>Last Name</u> field, then press **Tab** or **Enter**. (One letter is enough, but the more letters you enter the more direct match you will get). A small Select Customer dialog will appear (unless it's disabled in Maintenance | Program Options | Functions), listing any customers that match the last name entered so far. Simply select the customer from the list. (See the next section for details on using that dialog.)

If the above option is disabled (through Program Options), then you can still click the <u>Find Customer</u> button (or press **Alt-F**) after entering a portion of the last name. Any customers with last names starting with the letters you've already entered will be displayed.

In either case, after selecting a customer and clicking "Use", the customer's information will be copied to the New Reservation dialog, including any Notes, and the <u>How-found</u> field will be changed to "Return visit" automatically. If you selected the wrong customer by mistake, you can go back to Find Customer and select a new one (any changes made to the customer fields here in the meantime will *not* be saved).

The other method is to go straight to <u>Find Customer</u> without entering a portion of the name, and then search the list using the available options. There are various ways to search for customers (address, phone, first name, etc.), so this can be used even if you don't know their last name. For more information, see the section *Working with Customers.*

Note that once a customer is selected, the Last Name field will be disabled -- this is a warning that the customer has been selected and any other changes you make (to the address, etc.) will affect that customer's information. If you made a mistake and need to select a different customer, use the Find function (which changes to "Find/Change Cust" once a customer has been selected).

It's important to know that the customer notes will be copied to the reservation's Notes field (and shown here for reference), but future changes to the customer's Notes or the reservation's Notes will not automatically be copied back and forth. This is so that you can keep specific notes for the customer that don't necessarily apply to the past reservations (e.g. "don't put next to the dump next time"), and likewise you can make notes to the reservation that don't stay with the customer (e.g. "cancelled due to flood").

New Customers

If this is a new customer, simply enter the information you know. Starting with the Last Name, you can use Tab to jump to each field in a logical order. Note that the Address 1 and Address 2 are typically used for addresses that require additional lines, rather than 2 separate addresses. This would be important if you plan to print mailing labels, for instance. If you want to store a second address for the customer, you can use the Notes field.

Once you've entered some customer information, you can use the <u>Customer Details…</u> button to enter further details as explained above. It's a good idea to have their rig and vehicle information if you can get it, just in case you need it for authorities (e.g. to find them in an emergency, or if they are reported missing). You can also record their discount club information here for future reference.

Since you did not use <u>Find Customer</u>, a new record will be created for this customer when you complete the reservation. However if you abort the reservation (with the <u>Cancel</u> button), the customer information you entered will *not* be saved. If you want to enter customer information without a reservation (such as entering your old customer records), you should use the <u>Customers</u> | <u>Add a New Customer</u> from the main menu, or <u>Customer Details</u> from the menu, or the Customers toolbar icon.

Notes

If you're changing the site for an existing reservation (or adding linked reservations), any previous reservation notes will appear here. If you selected an existing customer, that customer's notes will appear here, and will be copied to the reservation (if not changed). In any case, you can edit or add notes as needed. Notes will be shown as a single line here, but you can enter multiple line notes as long as you like by clicking the "..." button at the end of the notes entry field. This will open a separate Notes dialog for entering the notes. Any current notes will of course be shown, and the cursor placed at the end so you can begin entering notes immediately. When multi-line notes are displayed as a single line, for instance on the Detail dialogs or in lists, each line break will be shown as a double-backslash (" \\ ").

Finishing Up

At this point, you have several choices. In most cases, if you're making a simple future reservation, you can click Done if you have a site selected successfully or if you want it booked without an assigned site. Or if you're going to ask them for credit card information to guarantee the reservation, click the Guarantee button to save the reservation and go directly to the Guarantee function.

If it's a walk-in that you're ready to check in right now, use the Check In! button at the bottom of the dialog, which will take you straight to selecting the rate and/or entering transactions (assuming the options are set up to do so). Note that If no site has been selected, the button will be "Day Pass" instead of "Check In", since you can't check in reservations without a site assigned. See the section on Day Passes for more information on this.

If you're not checking them in at this time but want to go ahead and add charges or enter a deposit, then use the Charges & Payments button. This will save the reservation and go straight to the Transactions dialog, opening the rates selection so you can add charges immediately.

If this is just an inquiry by a potential customer but you want to record the information for reporting purposes (or in case the customer calls back to make the reservation), click the Inquiry button. The information will be saved but it will not reserve the site. If they do call back to make the reservation, you can find them on the Non-Reserved tab view (or through the Find Reservations function), go to the Reservation Details dialog, and change the status from Inquiry to Pending (or Confirmed or Guaranteed).

If the customer did want to stay but you could not find a suitable vacant site, then you should use either the Waiting List button or Cannot Book button, depending on whether the customer wants to be notified if something becomes available. It's recommended that you use one of these rather than just canceling the reservation without saving it, so that you have some useful statistics later on. Also, if they call back later and you do have an opening at that time, then you already have their information and can re-activate the reservation easily (see the Non-Reserved tab view).

The other option, which will be used most often, is to click the Continue to Details button, which will close this dialog (saving the reservation the same as if Done was used) and open the Reservation Details dialog automatically. From there you can perform further actions -- Confirm or Guarantee the reservation, add charges or a deposit transaction, add guests to the reservation, etc.

The Select Customer Dialog

This dialog appears when entering new reservations, after entering something in the Last Name field and pressing **Tab** or **Enter**. (One letter is enough, but the more letters you enter the more direct match you will get). This dialog will show any customers that match the last name entered so far, and the first one will be highlighted. Pressing Enter will immediately use this customer, or you can use the arrow keys or the mouse to select a different customer to use.

Note: Customers with warning flags will be shown with a red background -- but if it's the currently selected customer, it will be in blue due to the selection highlight.

If no customers matched the initial search, a message will be shown instead of a list. From there you can press **Enter** (or click Add New) to open the Add New Customer dialog and enter the information, or just Cancel to go back to the New Reservation dialog and enter the information there.

Other options on the Select Customer dialog allow you to view (and edit) Customer Details for the currently selected customer, do a more advanced Find Customer (Find More), or add a new customer.

This dialog may be disabled if you prefer -- see Maintenance | Program Options | Functions.

Day Passes

If your park issues something like day passes, assumed to be a pass allowing them to come and go and be in the park any time of the day that it's issued, then the Day Pass function can be used for this.

Day passes are essentially a special kind of reservation without a site assigned, and are created the same way as reservations, using the New Reservation Dialog. Day passes do have a first and last night, a customer, transactions, etc., but do not need to be checked in or out. Once a day pass is created, its type cannot be changed.

The create a day pass, start with the New Reservation function, but not from a specific site -- use the Telephone icon, or start by adding a customer and then use the New Reservation function. Since the New Reservation dialog will default to "today", all you need to do once a the customer info is entered is click the Day Pass button at the bottom. This is in the same place as the Check In button -- as long as no site has been selected yet it will be Day Pass, but if a site is selected it changes to Check In. Note that you can make day passes for multiple days, or you can start them at a later date if you like -- just change the dates as with other reservations.

At that point, you will be taken directly to Transactions / Select Rate(s), with the appropriate rates selected. (You should have one or more appropriate Rates defined as "rental" rates for the Day Pass reservation type.) Just add the appropriate rate from the list (double-clicking on it is quickest) and click Done. The Transaction dialog will then be shown so you can enter the payment and print a receipt.

There isn't a special receipt type for day passes, but any receipt printed will show "Day Pass" in place of the site number. The Window Tag is probably most appropriate for this, since "Day Pass" will be in a large font and could be used in a car window. (A separate receipt can be printed if needed, since the transactions don't show on the window tag.)

Day passes are handled in reports just like any other reservation that has no site assigned. The main difference is that normal reservations cannot be checked in without a site assigned, while day passes are assumed to be "checked in" as long as their date is current. Thus you will be able to see day passes on the On Site report, as well as the Arrivals, Departures, and Unassigned views. They will show "(Day Pass)" in place of the site name, to distinguish them from other unassigned reservations. They will typically be listed below any reservations with sites assigned to them, depending on the sorting used of course. A quick way to see the day passes is to select "Unassigned Sites" from the Site Type drop-down list on these reports (or go to the Unassigned report). Of course the day passes won't show up on the rack since they have no site assigned.

Groups and Linked Reservations

Group reservations and other linked reservations can be created easily, which can save time maintaining reservations for multiple sites.

Clarification -- although they are often referred to as "group reservations", remember that technically each reservation record can only have one site assigned to it. When more than one site is linked, or in a group, it's actually multiple reservation records with internal links between them. This allows them to be handled in certain ways as a single reservation.

Linking Overview

Reservation linking is handled through a system called "Portfolios". This is mostly an internal organization term -- as a user, you see the linkage as a tree structure similar to file folders on the computer. Any reservation can own any number of portfolios (folders), each of which can contain any number of reservations -- which can in turn own other portfolios. Technically there is no limitation to the number of levels or complication of the structure, but in practice you're likely to only use 1 or 2 levels.

In addition to the multi-level linkage structure, each portfolio (set of reservations) can be one of 3 types. Note the distinctions between these types -- it's important in know which type to use for different situations:

- **Synchronized** -- The reservations keep their dates and status in sync automatically, and are combined for billing purposes.

- **Non-synchronized** -- Reservations linked this way can have different dates and have separate transactions for billing.

- **Sub-member** -- Besides being "logically" a sub-member of the owner reservation, transactions will be combined with the "transaction master" reservation. However, it's not synchronized with the portfolio owner so the dates do not have to be the same as the owner reservation.

When showing a list of linked reservations in Reservation Details or the Quick-info window, a tree-structure list is used to indicate the portfolio levels and also the type of linkage for each reservation. These symbols are used to indicate the link relationship with the owner reservation (the portfolio type):

- **=   Synchronized**
- **#   Non-synchronized**
- **>   Sub-member**

Note that in the tree structure, the top-level reservation won't have an indicator, because it's not a member of any higher portfolio. This top-level reservation is considered the "Master" of the linked reservations.

In some cases, an asterisk (*) will be shown in front of one of the reservations. This simply indicates which one you're currently viewing.

Here is an example diagram of a fairly complex set of linked reservations, as it would appear in the drop-down list on Reservation Details or on the Quick-info window:

    RV 1 [Linked master]
      = RV 2 [synchronized with RV 1]
        > Stall 1 [sub-member of RV 2]
      = RV 3 [synchronized with RV 1]
      # RV 4 [not synchronized]
        > Boat slip 1 [sub-member of RV 4]
        > Kayak 1 [sub-member of RV 4]
      # RV 5 [not synchronized]

This looks confusing at first, but it will make sense once you learn the symbols and notice the spacing to indicate levels/ownership. Also note that the relationships are clearly detailed in case it's not obvious from the structure.

In portfolio terms, there are 4 portfolios involved:
- RV 1 owns 2 portfolios -- a Synchronized portfolio containing RV 2 and RV 3, and a non-synchronized portfolio containing RV 4 ad RV 5.
- RV 2 owns 1 portfolio -- a Sub-member portfolio containing Stall 1
- RV 4 owns 1 portfolio -- a Sub-member portfolio containing Boat slip 1 and Kayak 1

However, you can pretty much forget about "portfolios" now. While that's the way it's stored and managed internally, the only thing you're concerned with is their "link relationships", which are already detailed in the tree-structured list.

Some important points:

- Since all synchronized and sub-member reservations are combined for billing (and any synchronized or sub-members of those, etc. all combined with their top-level owner), the reservation for RV 1 will also contain all transactions for RV 2, RV 3, and Stall 1. However, non-synchronized reservations are considered separate "sets" or "top-level reservations" for billing -- so the reservation for RV 4 will include transactions for Boat slip 1 and Kayak 1, and RV 5 will only contain transactions for itself. Thus by using appropriate link types, you can completely control which reservations are combined for billing.

- Only synchronized reservations will maintain identical dates and status. Thus RV 1, 2, and 3 will stay synchronized if a change is made (assuming the appropriate answers are given when prompted to keep them synchronized). But changes to any of the others will only affect that reservation.

- There are no date restrictions for sub-members (for instance it's not like a Guest reservation where the guest's stay can't be outside the host) -- so by using sub-member linking it's even possible to combine billing for separate stays (even on the same site!) for the same customer.

- Even Guest reservations can have sub-member reservations linked to it -- so for instance a Guest can rent a stall or canoe, which can be combined on the guest's bill and not affect the host reservation.

- Any synchronized link can be changed to non-synchronized (e.g. to separate the billing or change the customer) or a sub-member (to change dates independently while keeping the billing combined). However it cannot be changed back to synchronized (since there could be a conflict of dates, etc.). For the most part it wouldn't be necessary to re-synchronize it, since Sub-members have most of the same advantages.

- Any non-synchronized or sub-member link can be changed back and forth, so you can combine or separate billing at any time (but be sure to go back and re-calculate charges appropriately if you don't have auto-recalculation enabled).

- If the dates and/or the customer of any linked reservation is different than the master reservation, then the differences will be noted wherever the tree list is shown.

Creating Linked Reservations

You can create any number of linked reservations directly in the New Reservation dialog, which allows flexible linking when creating reservations.

Notice the two check-boxes next to the Add Selection(s) button. For a single site/reservation, they have no affect. However once a site is added, the checks in these boxes determine how a subsequent reservation is linked to the previous one (or to be specific, how it's linked to the reservation currently selected in the Site(s) added list).

Also note that the Site(s) Added list is a drop-down box, not just text. This allows you to view the currently added sites/reservations regardless of how many there are, and it will be a tree structure with indicators as described above. Additionally, you can select any single site and use the Delete button to remove just that site from the list (or use Clear All as before). Most importantly, you can select any site in the list after adding it to change its dates, preferences, etc. and add linked sites to it (e.g. sub-members). This allows a complete structure to be created as in the example above, all while in the New Reservation dialog.

The "Synchronize with" box is checked by default, which means all sites will automatically be synchronized if you add multiple sites using Quick Pick or double-clicking on the grid. (For convenience, the synchronized sites are also listed in the same line as the owner so you don't have to drop down the list to see the first few synchronized sites).

To make a Sub-member reservation, make sure the desired "owner" reservation is selected in the Site(s) Added list, check the "Sub-member of" box, and adjust the dates if needed. Then add the site you want to be a sub-member (using Quick-Pick, double-click, or the Add Selection(s) button after selecting a site in the grid).

To make a Non-synchronized site (for separate billing), un-check both of the boxes (so it's not synchronized or a sub-member), and then add the site as above.

Important: Any time the "Synchronize with:" box is checked, any changes to the dates, reservation type, or preferences will affect the currently selected (shown) site in Site(s) Added, and of course any of those synchronized with it. Thus it's a method to alter sites already added, but you also need to be careful to avoid altering a site when you didn't mean to.

Once all of the sites have been added as needed, save the reservation as usual and all of the appropriately linked reservations will be created. Note that if you use buttons like "Check In" or "Guarantee", this will only affect the top-level reservation or any synchronized with it. Sub-members and non-synchronized reservations will remain as Pending since their status does not stay synchronized with their owners.

Example: To create the reservation structure illustrated earlier, you would follow these steps after entering New Reservation:

1. Select the dates desired for RV 1 (and 2 and 3)
2. Add RV 1
3. Add RV 2   (note that "Synchronize with:" is already checked)
4. Add RV 3
5. Uncheck "Synchronize with"   (prepare to add non-synchronized reservations, linked to RV 1, which is still selected)
6. Change the dates if needed for RV 4   (note that you must uncheck "Synchronize with" *before* changing dates, or else it would affect the RV 1/2/3 sites)
7. Add RV 4   (note that RV 4 will now be selected in the Site(s) Added list)
8. Uncheck "Synchronize with" again   (it's automatically checked each time you add a site, so subsequent synchronized sites can be added easily -- but we don't' want that)
9. Add RV 5   (RV 5 will now be selected in the list) Also note that it added RV 5 as a non-synchronized site with RV 1 as the owner, even though RV 4 was selected. Since there's no reason to have multiple levels of non-synchronized sites, it simplifies the structure automatically. The same would be true of Synchronized sites added to each other.
10. Select RV 2 in the Site(s) Added list
11. Check "Sub-member of"   (prepare to add the Stall 1 to RV 2)
12. Change the dates if needed
13. Add Stall 1
14. Select RV 4 in the Site(s) Added list
15. Check "Sub-member of"   (prepare to add the boat slip and kayak to RV 4)
16. Change dates if necessary
17. Add Boat slip 1
18. Select RV 4 in the Site(s) Added list again
19. Check "Sub-member of" again
20. Change dates if necessary
21. Add Kayak 1
22. Done (after entering customer information of course)

Note that you can easily review any of the additions by selecting a particular site in the Site(s) Added list. The dates, etc. will be changed to match that site/reservation, and the grid will be moved if necessary to show the selected site (shown as <new> in the grid).

Automatic Multiple-Site Selection

If you're booking a large group and don't want to select specific sites manually, you can use the Qty entry field to let Campground Master automatically select and add as many sites as you need to the reservation. Note that this feature is disabled by default, but can be enabled through Maintenance / Program Options / Reservations.

To use automatic selection, first select the type of site and any preferences, and of course select the first and last night to be reserved. (If you don't care about the site type, or if all of your sites are the same, you don't need to select the type or preferences.) Enter a number in the Qty field, and click Add Selection(s). Campground Master will add as many sites as you request, starting from the top, including only sites which match the selected type and preferences and which are available for the dates selected.

Note that these selections will automatically be assumed to be synchronized with each other by default (they will be linked with the selected site in the Site(s) Added list using the linking option you choose, but they will be synchronized with each other).   If you prefer that they be linked together as sub-members or non-synchronized instead, you can enter a qualifier in front of the quantity number (**=**, or **#** or **>** just like the link prefixes mentioned above) to specify how they should be linked together. The first site will be linked as selected in the checkboxes after Add Selection(s), but the rest will be linked to the first one depending on the prefix before the number. For instance, to add 5 sites all linked as non-synchronized, make sure that neither

the <u>Synchronized with</u> nor the <u>Sub-member of</u> boxes are checked and enter "**#5**" in the Qty field, instead of just "**5**".

The <u>Qty</u> field can also be used to reserve multiple synchronized sites without assigning sites to them. (This will make them all unassigned and will require you to assign a site to each one individually before they check in, so use this with caution.) Simply enter a number in the <u>Qty</u> field, and enter all of the other information as usual. When you click <u>Done</u> or any of the other "completion" buttons at the bottom, it will create that number of unassigned reservations, all synchronized with each other.

Managing Linked Reservations

Even though you have control of the linking when you first make a reservation, there will often be the need to change things. For instance, Group reservations should probably still be made as synchronized reservations initially (to keep dates, status, etc. combined at first), but once the members of the group arrive or confirm their dates you may need to separate them (to change the customer and use separate billing). You may also need to add additional sub-members to individuals in the group.

Note that if you change the customer for a reservation, and if it's a Synchronized reservation, it will automatically be changed to Non-synchronized to separate the billing.

In Reservation Details, the list of linked reservations is shown with the tree structure, and a View function will open the selected reservation in a new Reservation Details dialog. There are 3 separate "Add..." buttons to add reservations with linkages of the appropriate type. Note that it will be linking them to the reservation you're currently viewing in Reservation Details, **not** the one currently selected in the list! Also note that once you're in the Add function (which is the same as creating New Reservations), you can again add multiple levels of reservations.

Right-click functions

You can also perform link functions directly from the right-click menu on the Rack and other tab views. There is a Linked Reservations sub-menu, which allows adding the 3 different types of linked reservations mentioned above, plus 2 functions that allow changing the way the selected reservation is linked to its owner. (Some of these may be disabled depending on the current link status or type of reservation -- for instance, Synchronized reservations cannot be added to Guest reservations.) The options to change the linkage type can be used to combine or separate billing (change a sub-member to non-synchronized, or vice verse), or to change a synchronized reservation to a sub-member (combined billing) or non-synchronized (separate billing) so that the dates or status can be changed separately.

Transactions and Auto-Rates

A single collection of linked reservations can contain some that are billed separately and some combined, and even the combined ones can have different dates. This requires some special handling of the transactions for linked reservations. See *Working with Transactions* / Reservation Transactions section for more information.

Group Special Handling

Groups are generally just linked reservations with the Group reservation type. Working with them is the same as other linked reservations, with a few exceptions.

One difference you'll notice besides the color difference on the Rack is that group reservations will show "[Group]" in the pop-up tips for with the reservation customer, and will have a Group Leader. If this reservation's customer is not the same as the group leader, the group leader's name will appear in the pop-up tip as a group name, like "[Group : Good Sams]". Also note that the Master of a group (not the leader, but the Linked Master) will be shown in a darker color (according to the Color Key). This aids in separating groups visually if you have more than one group and they are next to each other, and also indicates which reservation should receive transactions as long as they are still synchronized.

When making group reservations, it works best if you make the initial reservation under a group name (add a customer whose Last Name is the group name you want to see, for instance). The first customer used for a group will automatically become the group leader for the group. You can change the customers for the individual reservations later (see below).

The group leader will also be shown in the Reservation Details dialog, along with a View button. You can use the View button to see the Customer Details for the group leader (and make changes if needed), but you cannot change which customer is the group leader.

The group leader information is really just a reference, and has no special function other than showing up in various places.

One real advantage to a group reservation is that a "Change Customer" option will be available on the right-click menu if it hasn't been checked in yet. While Change Customer is always available on the Reservation Details dialog, it's handy to have on the right-click so you can change it just before checking them in (it appears right on top of the Check In option as a reminder) -- when an individual for a group arrives, first change the customer name (adding a new one if needed), and then check them in. Note that changing the customer will automatically un-synchronize the reservation, so that the check-in status (and dates if necessary) can be changed for just that reservation. Un-synchronizing also means that when the rates are selected, only the rates for that site will be shown.

Hourly / Scheduled Reservations

A feature called "Schedules" allows any number of different intra-day schedules to be set up, and reservations made for sites in periods such as hours, 15-minutes, half-days or whatever. You specify what periods are included in each day, and they don't even have to be the same length. For instance, you might set up a "Tours" schedule that only has the periods "10AM", "2PM", and "4PM". Periods are just "time slots" that take the place of days, for instance on the Rack view.

To set up Campground Master to handle intra-day scheduled reservations, refer to Maintenance / Park Setup / Schedules.

Once schedules are set up, then you can set up "Sites" to correspond to events or items to be reserved for each schedule. For instance, Sites can be tours, boats, training classes, or anything needed. Reservations are made in much the same way as for daily-type sites, except that you also specify a first and last "Period" along with the dates. You can also set Blocked date/period, and of course the charged-through and paid-through dates also have periods.

There are two things that determine what schedule is to be used for a reservation:
1. The Reservation Type. Each schedule is restricted to one or more reservation types that you define in the Pick Lists.
2. The Site. Each site must be assigned to a particular schedule.

As a quick example, you might set up an "Hourly" reservation type, an hourly Schedule with periods from 8AM to 6PM that is only used for Hourly reservation types, and a number of Sites like canoes and kayaks that are assigned to the hourly Schedule. Whenever you select that reservation type, the New Reservation dialog will change to allow date and period entry for the reservation. When a site type is selected on the Rack View that only includes sites of a particular schedule, then the Rack will change to show a cell for each period instead of each day. (Likewise, the Rack can ONLY show sites assigned to a single period at a time -- so your canoes and kayaks would not be shown on the Rack at the same time as your daily sites.)

Making Reservations for Scheduled Periods

You can make reservations for schedules just like you would for daily sites -- using double-click from the Rack (if a scheduled site type is selected so the periods are shown), or from the New Reservation icon or menu function.

The key is to select the appropriate Reservation Type from the drop-down on the New Reservation dialog -- once a type is selected that's assigned to a schedule, the dialog will convert to a period-based dialog, adding "Period" fields next to the dates and changing the mini-rack to show periods (and only sites that are set up for that schedule).

It's likely that many of your scheduled-period reservations will be for the same customer that also has a daily site rented. In this case, you probably want to link them together and combine their billing. To do this, you want to locate their main reservation first, and go to Reservation Details. Then use the "Add Sub" button to add a Sub-member reservation. Now select the sites, periods, etc. as usual (more than one if needed). When you're done making the reservation and go to Transactions, you can use Auto-Calculate or Select Rates to add the charges for the new reservations.

Checking In

You can check in a reservation from the right-click menu on the tab views, or from the Reservation Details dialog by clicking on the <u>Checked In</u> check box. If it's a walk-in reservation, you can also select <u>Check In</u> directly from the New Reservation dialog.

A checked-in reservation is treated differently in many ways, most of which were already covered in the *Dynamic Interactive Reports* section.

One thing to note about color coding for a checked-in reservation is that once it's checked in, other status flags can affect its color so that a checked-in reservation can appear in several different colors. The most important one is whether it's paid or not -- the text will be red on the Rack for any dates that have not been paid for. (Like other colors, this can be changed through the Color Key). Also, a different background color will be used for Monthly, Group, and Free Stay reservation types once they are checked in.

Normally you will be checking in a reservation with today as the First Night date. If the reservation's First Night is not today, a warning message will give you the choice of aborting the check-in, checking it in and changing it to start today, or checking it in with the original start date. Be careful how you answer this, or you could change the start date by accident and then have to change it back to what it was (if you remember what it was!) These warnings typically happen when initially entering reservations for people that are already here when you start using the software, and later if you forget to check someone in and do it on a later date. However if someone arrives earlier or later than their planned reservation, you will get this warning if you don't change their start date before checking them in. (Actually it's a nice feature to have the software offer to change the date automatically, which saves a step -- just be sure to read the warnings carefully.)

If you do change the start date of the reservation (as a result of the prompt mentioned above), you will also be asked if they will be staying the same number of nights. If you answer No, the reservation's original Last

Night will remain the same. If you answer Yes, then the Last Night will be adjusted automatically to make the number of days the same. If you find this prompt more of a burden than a help (i.e. if you nearly always answer No), then you can turn it off in Maintenance | Program Options | Prompts.

Now, once you've confirmed that you want to check in the reservation, the Transactions dialog will appear so you can enter charges, payment, etc. and print a receipt.   Note that if you click Cancel on the Transactions dialog, it does not cancel the check-in, only the transactions. In addition, you can have it jump immediately to Select Rate(s), where you can immediately select the appropriate rate from a list.

These are both options that can be disabled -- if you prefer not to see the Transactions dialog automatically every time you do a check in, or don't want to select the rate immediately, you can turn these functions off in Maintenance | Program Options | Prompts.

If you checked in a reservation by mistake and want to undo the check-in, go to the Reservation Details dialog and click the <u>Checked In</u> check box, then confirm the undo. Manager access is required for this function.

Note that there is an option to show a warning if the previous reservation has not been checked out before checking in the next one. You can also prohibit checking in before the previous has been checked out, by Access Level. See Maintenance / Program Options / Prompts for more information.

Checking Out

You can check out a reservation from the right-click menu on the tab views, or from the Reservation Details dialog by clicking on the <u>Checked Out</u> check box. A checked-out reservation is treated differently in several ways, most of which were already covered in the *Dynamic Interactive Reports* section. On the tab views, a checked-out reservation is always the same color, typically a dark gray. There's also a Program Option to hide checked-out reservations completely, making the site available again (e.g. in case of early check-outs).

Normally you will check out a reservation on the day after its Last Night, since they would leave that morning. If this is the case, you will notice that the right-click menu on the tab views will show "Check Out (this morning)" instead of just "Check Out". That's a clue that the current Last Night will automatically be assumed when you perform the check out. If this is not correct, you will need to adjust the Last Night to be correct first, and then check them out. Note that this assumption is also true if checking out from the Reservation Details dialog, but there is no "this morning" indication -- it's up to you to verify that the Last Night is correct.

If the Last Night is not yesterday, you will get a warning that they are not scheduled to leave yet, or that they were scheduled to leave earlier. If their Last Night is in the future, your only options are to cancel the check-out (presumably because it was a mistake) or make yesterday their last night. In other words, you can't actually say that they left in the future. However if their Last Night is in the past, you are given the choices similar to Check In -- abort, check out with yesterday's date, or check out without changing the Last Night. Therefore if you forget to check out some old reservations, you can do it later and not affect their departure date. Of course if they really are just leaving, you can have it automatically change the Last Night to reflect that. As with Check Ins, it's a good idea to read all warnings carefully.

Now, once you've confirmed the check-out, the Transaction dialog will appear. (This is an option that can be disabled -- if you prefer not to see the Transactions dialog automatically every time you do a check in, you can turn it off in Maintenance | Program Options | Prompts.) You can verify that their balance has been paid and make adjustments or payments as needed, and print out a new receipt if they need one.

(You also have the chance to adjust the Last Night, just in case none of the previous choices were quite correct.)

If you cancel a reservation by mistake (or if they change their mind and come back the same day), you can undo the check-out through the Reservation Details dialog. Just click on the <u>Checked Out</u> box and confirm the prompt. (You can then go into Transactions and make additions, etc.) Manager access is required for this function.

Transactions

The section *Working with Transactions* covers transactions in depth, so this section will just cover the basics of how transactions can be entered for reservations.

Any time a function is performed on a reservation that might result in additional charges or payments, the Transaction Dialog will be used to enter new transactions. It also shows previous transactions for review or editing. In addition to managing transactions, you can set the Paid-Through date and even change the reservation dates directly from this dialog. If necessary, you can use the <u>Reservation Details</u> button to view or edit any reservation or customer details.

The other function of this dialog is to print a receipt. You can print a receipt with all transactions, or just the new ones added since you opened this dialog.

You can bring up the Transactions dialog at any time from <u>Transactions</u> the right-click menu of tab views, or from <u>New / Edit Transactions…</u> on the Reservation Details dialog. You can also select <u>Transactions</u> | <u>Add New Transactions</u> on the main menu or use the cash register toolbar icon, but this is much more difficult because it will open the generic transaction dialog, from which you'll need to <u>Find Reservation</u> first, then <u>Enter New Transactions for the above Reservation</u>.

Making Changes to a Reservation from the Rack

Overview

Most changes to a reservation's dates or status can be done from the Rack view -- you can change the first and last nights, block dates, change sites, confirm, guarantee, and cancel a reservation all from the right-click menu on the Rack. An appropriate confirmation dialog will appear for any change, and in many cases you'll be automatically prompted for necessary details.

Of course you can also perform many of these through the <u>Reservation Details</u> dialog, but getting familiar with the right-click menu will help streamline the operations by minimizing the steps required.

Changing the Reservation Dates

You can change the first and last dates of a reservation at any time, as well as the Blocked date. (Exception -- the First Night cannot be changed if a reservation is checked in, and none of the dates can be changed if the reservation is already checked out).

The Blocked date allows you to block a site for extra days after a reservation's official Last Night, in case the customer wants to stay longer. This can be at your discretion to allow some slack for typical stay-overs, or by customer request. The dialogs Reservation Details and Change Site allow date changes directly, but most changes can also be made easily on the Rack view itself. See the *Rack* section for command details.

When changing the first night, last night, or blocked dates from the Rack view, you will get a simple confirmation so you can accept or abort the change. Not much can go wrong here, since only "valid" options will be available when right-clicking on the Rack.

If you do change the start date of a reservation that's not checked in yet, you will also be asked if they will be staying the same number of nights. If you answer No, the reservation's original Last Night will remain the same. If you answer Yes, then the Last Night will be adjusted automatically to make the number of days the same. The Blocked date, if present, will not be affected (unless the end date is now later than the original blocked date, in which case the blocked date will be cleared). If you find this prompt more of a burden than a help (i.e. if you nearly always answer No), then you can turn it off in Maintenance | Program Options | Prompts.

Changing Site Assignments

You can change the site assignment from the right-click menu in the tab view, or from the <u>Assign or Change Site…</u> button on the Reservation Details dialog.

When changing the site or assigning a site to an unassigned reservation, a dialog just like the New Reservation dialog will be used so you can do all of the same site preferences and vacancy checks to find a new site. Everything else will be filled in, so just click the <u>Done</u> button when finished selecting the new site.

Note that when changing a site, only one site can be selected for the reservation. To add additional sites you will need to use the Add Linked Reservations option, which is only available from the right-click menu on the tab views.

Moving Checked-In Reservations

If a customer has already checked in on a previous date and is changing sites later (e.g. they stayed at least one night on a different site and now want to move), then you should split the reservation before changing their site. Otherwise, it will move them for their entire stay including prior nights, which would be incorrect and could conflict with prior reservations on the new site.

Therefore, locate the reservation on the Rack and right-click on the reservation cell in the date they will actually be moving. Then select the Split Reservation option. This will create a secondary reservation starting that date, which you can then move to the new site. For more information, see the "Splitting Reservations" section.

Swapping Sites

If you have two existing reservations that you need to swap the sites for, there is an easy way to do this. First use the Assign or Change Site function as described above. Once that dialog opens up, locate the site/reservation you want to swap with. Since it's occupied, you can't just double-click on that site to assign it because that would create a conflict. However you can right-click on that reservation in that site and select <u>Swap Sites with this reservation</u>. If the swap would create a conflict with other reservations, or if the other reservation is flagged as "Don't Move", it won't be allowed. Otherwise it will ask for confirmation -- answer Yes and the swap will be done.

Changing the Customer

This function is only available on the Rack if the reservation is a Group reservation, and is not yet checked in. (It's also available on the Reservation Details dialog for any reservation, but requires Manager access if the reservation is already checked in.)

While not recommended in general, changing the customer with this function is much preferred to just editing the customer details to change the actual customer this reservation belongs to -- you should never just overwrite customer information with that of another customer, in case that customer record has been used for other reservations or transactions.

This which will open a Find Customer dialog, where you can select an existing customer or click "Cancel / Add New" to enter a new customer for the reservation.

If the reservation already has transactions, all transactions will be transferred to the new customer, which could result in that customer's balance to be wrong -- make sure you know what the consequences will be (if the reservation has a balance due, if can result in the wrong customer getting a bill).

Also note that if this reservation is currently synchronized with others, it will no longer be synchronized after changing the customer. This is done without warning, since that's usually what you want to do (if it's a different customer, they're likely to check in or out at different times). However if the reservation has sub-members linked to it, then the customer will be automatically changed for its sub-member reservations as well.

Canceling a Reservation

A cancelled reservation is not deleted from the system, it simply has a Cancelled flag set so that it will not show up on certain reports. You can cancel a reservation using the Cancel option on the right-click menus in the tab views, or you can click on the Cancelled check box on a Reservation Details dialog.

When making a cancellation, you will have a chance to enter notes about the cancellation (it's always a good idea to note who requested the cancellation and why, so you have some proof in case they forget that they cancelled it). The notes will be part of the reservation's Notes field, so if notes already exist you can add the cancellation notes to the end of the existing notes. Also remember that the date, time, and operator making the cancellation will be recorded, which you can see on the Reservation Details dialog.

After entering any notes, the Transaction dialog will appear so that you can check the transactions for any refund needed or delete any charges for the reservation, or charge a cancellation fee. Don't leave unpaid charges on a cancelled reservation or else your reports will be inaccurate, showing charges that were never paid. When canceling a reservation, the account should be "balanced out" so that the balance due is $0.00.

You can "un-cancel" a reservation if a cancellation is done by mistake, or if the customer changes their mind. You can do this from the right-click menus or by clicking on the Cancelled check box in the Reservation Details dialog (which would already be checked). A simple confirmation will be shown, at which point you simply click Yes to undo the cancellation. Manager access is required for this function.

Confirming a Reservation

To the Campground Master software, a *confirmed* reservation is simply a reservation with the Confirmed flag set. This flag is used to set the status color on the tab views, and optionally affect the showing of "available" reservations according to the Function options (see *Program Options and Settings*). For your campground, you may have no specific rules for requiring confirmations, so the use of this flag is at your discretion. (You could even use it for something totally different which you want to see coded as a different color on the tab views, although this could be confusing since the wording for the flag cannot be changed on the menus or dialogs.)

For now we'll assume that it means that a customer has confirmed their stay, so its confidence is greater than a mere "pending" reservation. This could be on a new reservation if it's close enough to the time of their stay, or done later on a reservation made months in advance. You can mark a reservation as "confirmed" from the right-click menu on the tab views, or from the Reservation Details dialog by clicking on the Confirmed check box. Note that the Confirm option will not be available on the right-click dialog if the reservation is already confirmed or if it has been Guaranteed (which is presumed to be a higher level of confidence than Confirmed). Of course it also won't be available if the reservation has already been checked in or checked out.

A simple prompt will ask you to confirm the change. If you are supporting the Estimated Arrival Time field, you may also want to set this when confirming the reservation. This field is available on the Reservation Details dialog.

If you want to undo a confirmation (to revert the reservation back to a *pending* state), open the Reservation Details dialog and check the Pending box (on uncheck the Confirmed box).

Guaranteeing a Reservation

Like Confirmations, a guarantee is basically a flag in the reservation that affects the color coding in the tab views and may have an affect on showing "available" reservations (according to Rack options). In general it's assumed to mean that the customer has provided a deposit or credit card information to guarantee the reservation. You can mark a reservation as guaranteed by using the function on the right-click menu on the tab views, or from the Reservation Details dialog by clicking on the Guaranteed check box, or with the Guarantee button directly from the New Reservation dialog.

In addition to the "guaranteed" status indication, you can record the guarantee information with the reservation. When you guarantee a reservation, a dialog will appear for you to enter this information. You can enter any notes you like, and/or enter their credit card information. Note that the credit card number and expiration date will be verified when you click Save or one of the other options (below) to leave this dialog. If you have a credit card magnetic-stripe reader attached (and assuming you have the credit card in hand), you can simply put the cursor in the credit card number field and swipe the credit card, instead of typing it manually.

If the customer has previously guaranteed a reservation, or has credit card information from a previous payment, that information will be shown here automatically. You can leave it as is or edit it as needed. Note that there is actually only a single field for guarantee info, but the credit card information is encoded into that field and decoded when needed. Also note that when the customer checks in or makes a payment later, it can retrieve the credit card information from the guarantee information.

Once you have entered any guarantee information you need, you also have the option to open the Transactions dialog so you can enter a deposit (which also goes to the "Deposit" function automatically), or you can Continue to Reservation Details (unless you're coming from the Reservation Details dialog already), or you can simply Save the information.

Shortcut tip: If you are entering a deposit, you can skip the Guarantee step and go straight to Transactions (e.g. from the right-click menu). Assuming the automatically-guarantee option is enabled (see Maintenance / Program Options), the reservation will be set to guaranteed status when a Deposit transaction is added.

If you want to undo a guarantee (to revert the reservation back to just pending or confirmed), open the Reservation Details dialog and check the Pending box (or uncheck the Guaranteed box). Note that any guarantee information entered will not be deleted automatically (so it won't have to be re-entered) -- you will have to erase it manually from Reservation Details if you want it cleared.

Splitting Reservations

This function is only available from the right-click menu on the Rack view. The typical reasons to split a reservation include moving a customer to a different site in the middle of their stay, or adding a gap in the reservation when the customer leaves and will come back shortly.

Either way, you are actually creating an additional reservation. The Split function simplifies the process by copying all of the details to the new reservation automatically, and adjusting the dates so that the original reservation ends early (on the day before the split) and the new reservation starts the next day (the day of the split). Note that a spit must be done in the normal range of the reservation, it can't be done in a Blocked date range. If you have other linked reservations synchronized with this one then they will also be split (assuming you confirm the prompt to keep them synchronized), resulting in two sets of synchronized reservations.

If the split date is today or in the future, the second half will not be checked in yet (it will show a Pending status), even if the original reservation was checked in. If the split date is in the past, then both halves will keep the checked-in status (assuming it is checked in now). If both halves are the same status after the split, it may still appear like a continuous reservation on the Rack (if you don't have the start & end "bars" enabled), since it's still all one color and the same name. If you lose track of the split, you can double-click on the reservation to see the First and Last dates, so you can tell which of the two reservations you're clicking on.

After splitting the reservation, you can make the necessary changes to the new reservation just like any other reservation (change the start date, change the site, etc.).

Also note that transactions are not carried over in the split, since they can only be related to one reservation. If the original reservation had an outstanding balance, you may want to adjust its transactions to balance out to the day of the split and move the appropriate charges to the new reservation.

However, the Paid-Through date is automatically adjusted appropriately. If the original reservation was paid through the split date or later, that date will carry over to the new reservation and the old reservation will show that it's paid through its new last date.   If the original reservation was not paid through the split date, then the new reservation will not have a paid-through date (none of it has been paid).

Linking Split Reservations

When you split a reservation, you will be given a choice of whether to keep the two parts separate from each other (not linked), or to link them as non-synchronized (for separate billing), or to link them as sub-members (for combined billing). If you're splitting the reservation for purposes of "starting over", for instance to start a new year for a long-term resident, then you probably want to leave them unlinked, or linked as non-synchronized so the billing is separated. If you're splitting them because you need to move the person to a different site but the stay is continuous, then they should be linked as sub-members so the billing is still combined. It's recommended to choose the sub-member option which makes the later half the new transactions master, so that this new portion carries all of the billing information.

Managing Linked Reservations

In Reservation Details, there is a list of linked reservations and a View function to open the selected reservation in a new Reservation Details dialog. There are also 3 separate "Add..." buttons to add more linked reservations. Each button will add reservations with linkages of the appropriate type. Note that it will be linking them to the reservation you're currently viewing in Reservation Details, **not** the one currently selected in the list! Also note that once you're in the Add function (which is the same as creating New Reservations), you can again add multiple levels of reservations.

Right-click functions

You can also perform link functions directly from the right-click menu on the Rack and other tab views. There is a Linked Reservations sub-menu, which allows adding the 3 different types of linked reservations mentioned above, plus 2 functions that allow changing the way the selected reservation is linked to its owner. (Some of these may be disabled depending on the current link status or type of reservation -- for instance, Synchronized reservations cannot be added to Guest reservations.) The options to change the linkage type can be used to combine or separate billing (change a sub-member to non-synchronized, or vice verse), or to change a synchronized reservation to a sub-member (combined billing) or non-synchronized (separate billing) so that the dates or status can be changed separately.

For more information, see the section "Groups and Linked Reservations".

Synchronizing Linked Reservations

Any time changes are made to a reservation that is synchronized with other linked reservations, you will be prompted with an option to keep the reservations synchronized. This means that the same changes will be made to all of the linked/synchronized reservations, so they will all keep identical dates and status. It's very important to answer this correctly, since making the wrong choice can end up with a mess that's time-consuming to straighten out.

Answering <u>No</u> (to not keep them synchronized) will keep the changes from being made to the other reservations, but more importantly it will make this reservation a stand-alone reservation, no longer synchronized to the other(s). It will still be linked for reference and they will appear in each others' lists of linked reservations, but changes will not be synchronized (and the "synchronized" indication will be cleared). If this is done by mistake, the only recourse is to delete this reservation and add a new synchronized reservation to the rest of the group. If this was the Master for the synchronized reservations, the next one "in line" will become the new Master for any remaining synchronized reservations.

You will usually want to answer <u>Yes</u> to keep them synchronized, but there are some cases where you might want to un-synchronize them on purpose. For instance if one person in the party leaves early or stays later, you can separate him from the group. Another example is if you have two reservations linked for one person, such as a campsite and a trailer storage space, and you need to end one of them prematurely (e.g. he sells the trailer). The proper procedure in this case would be to Split the reservation on the date you want to cancel one of them, and tell it not to keep them synchronized. The first half of the split would remain synchronized, but the second half would be separated so you can cancel one of them.

The Reservation Details Dialog

This is the main dialog for editing everything about a reservation. While most common changes can be done outside this dialog (with right-click functions, for instance), some functions are only available here and nowhere else. This dialog also has a number of information fields that are not editable, such as the time, date, and operator who made the reservation, checked it in, checked it out, or cancelled it.

<u>Helpful Hint</u> -- If you ever close the Reservation Details dialog by mistake (or the Transactions dialog for a reservation) and want to get back to the reservation you were just working on, use the shortcut **Ctrl-R** to recall the last reservation you were working on.

From this dialog you can open further dialogs to see <u>Customer Details</u> or <u>Transaction History</u>, and to add <u>New Transactions</u>, <u>Manage Guests</u>, <u>Assign or Change the Site</u>, or edit <u>Site Preferences</u>. You can also <u>Print</u> a reservation record or <u>Delete</u> the reservation completely (if you're logged in as an Administrator), or <u>Find</u> a reservation if you're browsing from the main menu (see the Find Reservation Dialog below).

Note that the <u>Cancel</u> button on this dialog does not cancel the reservation! It only cancels any changes you have made to the fields, so you can avoid making changes by mistake. If you're just looking at the reservation and have not planned to make changes, you should use <u>Cancel</u> just to make sure you don't save changes made by errant keystrokes. If you make changes that you want to keep, use the <u>Save</u> button. (If you actually want to cancel the reservation, click the <u>Cancelled</u> check box to start the cancellation process.)

Customer Details

This button will open the Customer Details dialog for the reservation's customer, so you can make additional changes or see more customer details. See *Working with Customers* for more information on this. If the customer has the "Warning Flag" set, you will see a red warning icon next to this button.

Note that there is no way to actually change which customer record is assigned to the reservation. You can change any of the customer details, but remember that those changes will be permanent in the customer database. If you selected the wrong customer for a reservation and want to change it once it's made, the only way is to delete the existing reservation and start over with a new reservation. (You could also cancel the reservation instead of deleting it, but that would result in a cancellation in your reports that wasn't really a customer cancellation.)

Change to a Different Customer

This button allows you to change which customer this reservation is for. This should only be used if a mistake is made initially, or when checking in individuals from a group. If the reservation is already checked in, Manager access is required to change the customer record. To change the customer, click this button, which will open a Find Customer dialog. You can then select an existing customer, or click "Add New" to enter a new customer for the reservation.

While not recommended in general, changing the customer with this function is much preferred to just editing the customer details to change the actual customer this reservation belongs to -- you should never just overwrite customer information with that of another customer, in case that customer record has been used for other reservations or transactions.

If the reservation already has transactions, all transactions will be transferred to the new customer, which could result in that customer's balance to be wrong -- make sure you know what the consequences will be (if the reservation has a balance due, if can result in the wrong customer getting a bill).

Also note that if this reservation is currently synchronized with others, it will no longer be synchronized after changing the customer. This is done without warning, since that's usually what you want to do (if it's a different customer, they're likely to check in or out at different times). However if the reservation has sub-members linked to it, the customer for the sub-member reservations will automatically be changed to the new customer (because all sub-member reservations must have the same customer so their billing can be combined).

Manage Guests

This function opens a dialog for adding, viewing, and removing guests of this reservation. See the Managing Guests section for more details. The total number of guest reservations and any balance due for them is also shown for convenience.

Reservation Status

The current status of the reservation will be indicated by a check-box. You can change the status by simply checking a different box (only those possible will be enabled), or by un-checking the box that's checked to un-do a status like Checked In, Checked Out, Cancelled, etc. Any appropriate confirmation prompts or other messages will appear, the same as if the action is done from the right-click functions on the rack. The status of Day Pass and Owner reservations cannot be changed (they have no applicable status), so the status options will be disabled.

Activity History

This will show a summary of the date, time, and operator for when the reservation was made, checked in, checked out, and/or cancelled.

Don't Move

The Don't Move flag can be set if you want to avoid moving this reservation to another site. This will be flagged as such for color coding, plus the Assign Site functions will be disabled for this reservation.

Assign or Change Site

This will let you change the site assignment for the reservation -- see the section on Changing Site Assignments for more details.

Site Preferences

Although the reservation probably already has a site assigned, changing site preference settings can still be useful if the reservation rates are based on preferences (e.g. 50A, pull-thru, ocean view, etc.).

Reservation Type

Some reservation types can be changed and others can't. Guest and Day Pass reservation types cannot be changed, but you can change a reservation to and from Normal, Group, Monthly, Owner and Free Stay as needed. (Free Stay can only be selected if you have Manager access.) In addition, changes to the reservation type might be restricted based on your operator access level (configurable through Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels).

Guarantee Info

If the reservation has been guaranteed, this will have any notes or credit card information entered when it was guaranteed. While this field can be edited here if necessary (if logged in with a suitable access level), this should be done with care. Putting information here won't automatically make the reservation guaranteed, nor will clearing the text undo the guaranteed status (use the status checkboxes for this). Also note that if credit card information was entered, this information is also in the guarantee info field in a special "encoded" format, so care must be taken to avoid corrupting that data. To edit the information without disrupting the credit card data, click the "..." button next to the text field. This will open a dialog with the credit card information and other notes separated and you can edit them as needed.

Linked Reservations

If this reservation is linked with other reservations, they will be shown here in a drop-down list. (Although the list appears "enabled", you cannot change the contents of the list.) If this reservation is the Master of a synchronized list of reservations, it will show "Master of:" in front of the linked reservations. You can jump to the Reservation Details of the linked reservation shown by using the View... button next to it. Note that this will open a new Reservation Details dialog in the same position, and may happen so fast that you don't notice it. Be sure to check the Site field to see which reservation you're viewing.

You can also add additional linked reservations using one of the Add... buttons (see Groups and Linked Reservations for more details).

Group

If this is part of a group, the Group Leader (group name) will be shown, and there will also be a button to View the group leader's customer details. (Note that this views the Customer Details of the leader, not the Reservation Details -- use the View button next to the linked reservation list above to view the reservation details.)

The group leader cannot be changed for a reservation once it has been made (although its customer details can, but that would of course affect anything else that customer is used for.)

Disable automatic rate calculations

If auto-rates are enabled, there may be times when you want to disable the automatic re-calculations (for instance, if you are giving a special rate to a reservation). Check this box to prevent further automatic re-calculations.

New / Edit Transactions

This opens the Transactions dialog for the reservation, the same as using the Transactions function from the right-click menu on the Rack, etc.

Transaction History

This will open a list of all transactions for this reservation, in the Transaction History dialog. This can be used for reference, or to print a complete transaction history. You can also use Transaction History to move transactions up or down in the list, to create a more logical ordering for prior transactions. (To edit the individual transactions or print a receipt, use the New /Edit Transactions option.)

Auto-Charged Thru

If auto-rates are enabled, this shows the last night that has been included in auto-rates calculations. This is helpful to know what dates have been charged, but in most cases is not used since recalculations are done "from scratch" each time.

Quote / Confirmation

This is an extremely useful function, used for getting a quick quote or rate check and also for printing confirmation letters without actually adding charges to the reservation yet. It essentially opens the Transactions dialog, but with some important differences. For one, no transactions added during Quote/Confirmation will be saved. Therefore you can auto-calculate charges (if enabled), select rates, or even add manual charges to the reservation for the purposes of printing a confirmation, without actually charging them yet. This is important for accounting if you don't want to show charges until the reservation is checked in. In addition, this function can be set to automatically add the appropriate charges (see the Auto-Rates Options in Program Options), so it can be used like the Check Rates function.

Another difference is that the default receipt type (and number of copies) can be set specifically for this function -- typically this is the Confirmation Letter. See File / Printing Options / Receipts to set the default.

You can also send an E-mail confirmation to the customer instead of printing a confirmation letter. To enable this function, the SMTP Setup must be completed and the customer must have an E-mail address. An E-mail Confirmation button will be added to the Quote/Confirmation dialog if this is enabled.

You'll also notice that all of the Payment/Deposit buttons are disabled -- this is to prevent these transactions from being entered here by mistake, since they won't be saved.

Online Req. text

This button will only appear if this reservation came from an online reservation request (processed by Campground Master), and if the Reservations data field "Online Raw" has been enabled so that the raw request text is saved. This allows you to view the original online request text in its raw form, just in case you need to review it.

Notes

Notes will be shown as a single line here, but you can enter multiple-line notes as long as you like by clicking the "..." button at the end of the notes entry field. This will open a separate Notes dialog for entering the notes. Any current notes will of course be shown, and the cursor placed at the end so you can begin entering notes immediately. When multi-line notes are displayed as a single line, for instance on the Detail dialogs or in lists, each line break will be shown as a double-backslash (" \\ ").

Printing a Reservation

You can print an entire reservation record with the <u>Print</u> button. This will print a simple table with each field name and value, so it's only meant for reference purposes, not to be given to a customer .

Deleting a Reservation

If you made a mistake in a reservation that can't be undone (such as selecting the wrong customer) or if you made a duplicate reservation by mistake, you may want to delete it entirely. Only an operator with Administrator access can delete a reservation, since it's a permanent deletion and can affect the integrity of the database if the wrong reservation is deleted. (This is another reason to avoid using an Administrator login unless you know that you need to make such changes.)

To delete a reservation, simply click the <u>Delete</u> button. You will be asked to confirm the permanent deletion. However, if the reservation has any transactions then it cannot be deleted. This is a safeguard to prevent deleting financial information by accident. Generally if a reservation has had transactions then it wasn't a mistake and should not be deleted, but perhaps just needs to be checked out or cancelled instead. If you absolutely want to delete the reservation and all of its transactions, you can go to the New Transactions dialog, delete all of the transactions, and then delete the reservation.

When a reservation is deleted, all references to it are cleaned up as well. This includes removing it from the reservation history of the customer and any guests, and removing it from any linked reservations. If this was the "Linked Master" for synchronized reservations, the next synchronized reservation in line will become the new master.

Managing Guests

This Guest Management dialog is accessed from Reservation Details of the "host" reservation.

A reservation's guest list is actually a list of additional Guest type reservations. There is no limit to the number of guests you can add to a reservation, and of course they are optional. The purpose of adding guests is simply to have information on everyone in your campground, particularly adults and additional vehicles. This can be for security purposes or simply to allow guests to be charged separately for the add-on charges for extra people and vehicles.

A Guest reservation occupies the same site as its host (thus many reservations can be made for the same site, presumably temporary guests of the primary ("Normal"), or "host" reservation. Since they are separate reservations, they can have their own charges just like other reservations, and will appear on reports like Arrivals, Departures, and On Site. On the Rack view, guests will be indicated on the pop-up tip when the mouse hovers over the cell, and will also be shown in the Quick-Info window (e.g. when the reservation is double-clicked).

To add a guest reservation, use the <u>Add a New Guest Reservation</u> button. (This function is also available from the right-click menu on the Rack.) This will open a New Reservation dialog, which operates just like any other new reservation except that the site is already selected and cannot be changed. Generally all you need to do is verify the dates (in case the guest is not staying as long), enter the customer information, and continue to charges/payment or check them in.

The First Night and Last Night for a guest must always be within the dates of the host reservation.

Since guests are separate reservations, they must also be checked in when they arrive and checked out when they leave. Guests will show on the Arrivals and Departures views so they can be checked in and out separately. Note that guests must normally all be checked out before the host reservation is checked out. Likewise, a guest reservation cannot check in before its host. If you want to allow guests and their host to

arrive or depart in any order, you can allow this through a setting in Maintenance / Program Options / Reservations.

If a guest does not show up, or you need to cancel a guest reservation for any reason, you can use the Cancel Selected Guest Reservation function on the Manage Guests dialog, or you can cancel the guest from its own Reservation Details like any other reservation. It will be automatically removed from the host's guest list when cancelled.

Note that the Reservation Type for guests cannot be changed. If a mistake is made and the reservation should not be a guest, the most likely recourse is to cancel the reservation and start a new one.

The Notes Dialog

The Notes dialog is used to enter multi-line notes, or just to get a better view of long notes. It is invoked from any dialog that has a "..." button at the end of a Notes entry field, such as the Site Details, Customer Details, Reservation Details, or New Reservation.

Any current notes will of course be shown here, and the cursor will be placed at the end so you can begin adding to the notes immediately.

Simply enter the notes as you want them to appear, using the Enter key to start new lines. Long lines will wrap around automatically in this dialog, but be aware that when showing the notes in the Quick-info pop-up windows, the lines won't wrap and may cause the window to be very wide.

When multi-line notes are displayed as a single line, for instance on the Detail dialogs or in lists, each line break will be shown as a double-backslash (" \\ "). Also note that extra "blank" lines at the beginning or end will be removed automatically.

Since both the Enter key and Ctrl-Enter are used to start new lines in the notes entry box, you must use **Alt-S** or click on the Save button to close this dialog.

The Find Reservation Dialog

This dialog can be opened directly from the main menu (Reservations | Find Reservation), or from the Reservation Details dialog if that was opened from the main menu. It's also used in various functions such as listing all reservations for a given site or conflicting reservations, so you can view or edit the details of each reservation. It can even be used to generate simple reservation listing reports with your own filtering criteria.

There is also a handy shortcut key that will open this dialog -- **Ctrl-F**.

The Find Reservation dialog allows you to search the reservation database in a variety of ways. By default, it will show all reservations that are on site during the next week (Filter by Date selected, starting today, ending 7 days later, and Resv period selected). In many cases, this may be sufficient to find what you're looking for (you can sort by any column shown to help you look), but several other options are available.

In addition to (or instead of) filtering by the reservation dates or the date the reservation was made, you can also filter by the Last Name, Confirmation Number, Site Name, Operator, or Notes. To select one of these filters, first check the Filter by box. The default is Last Name, but you can change that in the drop-down box next to Filter by. Then enter the text in the next field, which will either be labeled "Starting With" or "Containing" depending on the search type selected.

When searching by Last Name or Operator, you don't have to enter the whole name, just the first part. Of

course the more letters you enter, the more precise the search will be. After entering a few letters, press **Tab** or **Enter** (or click <u>Search</u>). A list of matches will show up, and you can scroll down the list to select another one using the arrow keys. When searching by Confirmation Number, Site Name, or Notes, any reservation containing the text entered will match (it doesn't have to start with the text entered).

If you prefer to see the entire list of reservations (not recommended for large lists of several thousand), you can uncheck both the <u>Filter By</u> option and the <u>Filter by date</u> option. All reservations will be shown, and you can sort by any column to help you find a customer.

For even greater control of what reservations to search or view, use the Reservation Filtering button.

Once a list is displayed, you can print the entire list by just clicking the <u>Print List</u> button. Therefore this dialog can also be used to print out filtered reservation lists.

Once you find the desired reservation, select it by clicking the line with the mouse. The Search button will change to either <u>View</u> or <u>Use</u>, depending on what it will do (determined by how you came to the Find Reservation dialog). Click View or Use, or double-click on the reservation line, to complete the selection and perform the indicated function. (If only one reservation is displayed, you can simply press **Enter**).

Unassigned Reservations

This dialog will show all "active" reservations in the system that don't have a site assigned. While the Unassigned tab view is similar, the tab view will only show reservations for a specified date range, whereas this report shows them for all reservation dates. You can also view the reservation details and make corrections directly from the list.

There is an option to include Waiting List reservations, which is similar to the Non-Reserved tab view except that it will show them for all dates (and only if they are not assigned to a specific site).

Reservations that are Cancelled will not be shown, nor will Inquiry, Can't Book, or Day Pass reservations.

6   Working with Customers

Overview

Remember that "Reservations" are **not** the same as "Customers" in Campground Master. "Reservations" contain the information about a single stay for a particular customer, such as the dates, status, payments, site and so forth. If you want to work with the information pertaining to a particular stay, you should refer to Working with Reservations.

Adding Customers

During normal operations you should just enter new customer information on the New Reservation dialog as you make a reservation. To enter customer information without making a reservation, such as entering your old customer records, use the Customers | Add a New Customer from the main menu. You can also use the Add Customer button (faces icon) on the toolbar.

At this point you should see Record ID: <NEW RECORD> in the dialog, indicating that you are starting a new customer record.   If you see any other record ID, then you are editing an existing customer record. The cursor should already be in the Last Name field, so you can just start entering the information, using the **Tab** key between each field. You can use **Shift-Tab** to back up a field, and of course you can use the mouse to jump to any field you like.

Note that most customer fields are free-form, so you can enter the text in any format you like and any length needed. For example, in the phone number fields you can put "Cell: 123-4567" or "555-1212 ext. 54". The only exceptions to this are the drop-down fields, which must be one of the selections in the list, and the numeric fields, including the Rig Size and the Adults, Children, etc. (Length fields can have a single-quote character, for "feet", but it is not necessary.) If any value is not valid, you will be warned before leaving the dialog and will get a chance to correct it. Any extra "spaces" typed at the beginning or end of entries are automatically removed, to avoid problems when sorting and searching for customers.

There are a couple fields that will do some auto-formatting for you. The State field will automatically be capitalized if only 2 letters are entered. Also, if a phone number is entered as simply 10 digits, or 11 digits with 1 as the first digit (no punctuation, spaces, or any other info), then it will automatically be formatted as (123) 456-7890.

When you're finished with a customer's information, you can click Save -- or you can immediately click Add New to add another record so customers can be entered one after another. Each time you click Add New, the current customer info will be saved and the cursor will immediately jump to the Last Name field to help speed entry. Another time-saver is to use **Alt-A** on the keyboard instead of using the mouse to click Add New.

If you decide not to enter a new customer, even after entering some information, click the Cancel button. You will be warned if any new information would be lost by canceling the changes to the record, so you can abort the Cancel and get back to the dialog to Save it instead.

The more information you can enter for a customer, the better. Besides the obvious reasons for having more information, some of the information will help save time later. For instance, some of the values are automatically transferred to reservations when making a new reservation, such as Adults, Children, Rig Type, and Notes.

There is no limit to the number of customers you can enter. You could enter every old customer you have information for, just in case they come back. But remember that the more customers you have in the database, the longer it will take to find a particular customer (for instance, locating a particular "Smith" when making a new reservation). It can also slow down operations, like loading up the Find Customer list. So a good medium would be to start by entering customers whom you know come back often. (Any currently booked customers and future reservations that are already booked should be entered through the New Reservations dialog so you can enter both customer and reservation information at once.)

Automatic Zip/Postal Code Lookup

For U.S. and Canadian addresses, you can speed data entry by simply entering the Zip or Postal code in the City field. When you press **Tab** or **Enter** after the code, it will automatically fill in the City, State, Country and format-corrected Zip/Postal code for you. Note that there is no need to enter the spaces or capitalize the letters in Canadian codes, it will do that automatically. You can also use the Zip+4 format for U.S. codes if you like.

Automatic Mixed-Case Formatting

If you prefer to have names and addresses capitalized but don't want to use the Shift key, you can turn auto-formatting on. See Maintenance / Program Options / Formats.

Vehicles

In addition to the rig type, etc., up to 4 other vehicles can be entered for a customer. Use these any way you like -- for cars, trailers, boats, bicycles, off-road vehicles or anything else you need to keep track of. The first vehicle ("car") is shown here, but you can enter more by clicking the More Vehicles button. While the fields are free-form, we suggest the license plates be entered as state/license (using 2-letter state codes) just for uniformity and ease of sorting if necessary.

Discounts

The discount options can be used to help select appropriate rental rates. You can enter up to 3 discounts that a customer qualifies for, and optionally enter their membership numbers. The first discount shown will automatically be used when they make a reservation (but can be changed manually if needed), and the appropriate rates for that discount (if defined) will appear in the rates selection list on the Transactions dialog. Also note that if transactions are entered later using a discount that's not one of the 3 the customer has, it will be added to the customer record automatically if there's an empty space for it.

Exclusions

The option for excluding the customer from the mailing list can be used if the customer requests to be removed from your mailing list. While it won't affect printing receipts, you can filter them out when printing mailing labels and envelopes. The E-mail list exclusion will work similarly, although support for E-mailing customers is not present in the current software version.

Warning Flag

The warning flag can be used to black-list customers or for any other purpose where you need to check the customer's information before making a reservation for them (you should indicate the reason for the warning in the Notes field). If this flag is checked, then a bright red warning icon (an exclamation point in a triangle) will appear on this dialog, plus the Reservation Details and the New Reservation dialog when that customer is selected. Customers with warning flags also appear in red on the Find Customer list. It doesn't prevent any action, it just warns you that you need to check the notes. You can get a list of all customers with warning flags with the menu function Customers | Customers with warning flags.

Viewing and Editing Customer Information

To edit any customer, you can use the Add Customers button (faces icon) on the toolbar or the Customers | Customer Details selection on the main menu. If a customer was not already selected on the current tab view, you will then need to use the Find button to get to the one you want to view or edit (see below). If you enter part of the customer's Last Name before clicking Find, then that will automatically be used to do an initial search. (This must be done on a "New Record" -- don't try to do it on top of an existing customer record!)

The quicker way to get to a customer, if you have a current reservation for the customer, may be to find them on the On Site tab or other tab view and use the right-click function Customer Details (right-click directly on the customer's name to edit that customer). Or if you already have a Reservation Details dialog open, just click the Customer Details button.

In any of these cases, the Customer Details dialog will open. (This is exactly the same dialog that's used to add customers in the previous section.) However, if you open it for a particular customer (from right-click or from a Customer Details button), there won't be any navigation buttons. Therefore you can only see that one customer. If you used the main menu or the toolbar to view customers, you will see buttons to navigate between customer records. You can use the navigation buttons to step through customer records. The Previous and Next buttons step forward or backward, as expected. The button to the left of Previous, which looks like |<<, will jump to the very first record (it's meant to look like the "back-to-beginning" button on audio tape and CD players). Likewise, the >>| button to the right of Next will jump to the very end of the database.

At the top you will see something like "Record 5 of 53", and a Record ID. Don't be alarmed if the Record ID doesn't match the record number -- there can be gaps due to deleted customers. The Record ID is a fixed stamp on the record that's used by reservations and transactions to refer to the customer. The other record number is simply a sequential number that is just used to indicate where you are in the database, and is not part of the actual customer record.

See the *Adding Customers* section for more details on entering the customer information. You can also Print a customer record (which is a raw table with the customer fields).

New Reservation can be used to immediately make a new reservation. It is unique in that it will save the customer information and close the Customer Details dialog first, and then open the New Reservation dialog with the customer information filled in. (It closes the Customer Details dialog first to avoid circular dialog problems.)

Reservation History will open a list of reservations that this customer has made or has been a guest of. It contains a summary of the reservations, with their current status flags (checked in, cancelled, etc.). To see more information, you can double-click on it or click once and then click the View the Selected Reservation Details button, which will open the standard Reservation Details dialog, where you can make changes if you wish. If any old reservations have been purged for this customer, you will see "Reservations" and "Nights" totals for the reservations previously purged. This will tell you how much the customer has stayed in the past that's not in the current "live" reservations list.

Warning -- be careful when going this far to edit reservations, since it's possible to start from the reservation dialog, click to customer details, click to reservation history, and click to edit the same reservation but in a different dialog (you're several layers deep at this point). The results are unpredictable for this circular situation, and depend on whether you click Save or Cancel at each step of closing the dialogs.

New/Edit Transactions can be used to directly enter or edit transactions for this customer. Keep in mind that these transactions will not be associated with a reservation! Only use this if entering non-reservation transactions, such as gift shop purchases.

Transaction History will open a list of all transactions for this customer (including all transactions made for every reservation by this customer), in a raw table format. This can be used for reference, or to print a complete transaction history. If any old transactions have been purged, a "Total Payments" amount will be shown for transactions previously purged. This will tell you how much the customer has paid in the past that's not in the current "live" transaction list.

When you're finished editing a customer's information you can click Save, or you can click Cancel (or the **Esc** key) if you were just looking and don't plan to make any changes. If you were editing and decide not to keep changes you've made, click the Cancel button. You will be warned if any new information would be lost by canceling the changes to the record, so you can abort the Cancel and get back to the dialog to Save it instead.

E-mailing a Customer

If the customer has an E-mail address entered, you can click on the blue "E-mail" tag next to it to send them an E-mail. This normally opens your E-mail application, e.g. Outlook (assuming Windows knows your default E-mail application), with the customer's E-mail address already filled in. However if the SMTP Setup has been done in Campground Master, then the internal E-mail function will be used instead of your default Windows E-mail application.

Notes

Notes will be shown as a single line here, but you can enter multiple-line notes as long as you like by clicking the "..." button at the end of the notes entry field. This will open a separate Notes dialog for entering the notes (discussed in the *Working with Reservations* section) . Any current notes will of course be shown, and the cursor placed at the end so you can begin entering notes immediately. When multi-line notes are displayed as a single line, for instance on the Detail dialogs or in lists, each line break will be shown as a double-backslash (" \\ ").

The Find Customer Dialog

If you want to find a particular customer (or print a customer report), you can use the <u>Find</u> button on the Customer Details dialog. If you enter part of the customer's Last Name on the Customer Details dialog before clicking <u>Find</u>, then that will automatically be used to do an initial search. (This must be done on a "New Record" -- don't try to do it on top of an existing customer record!)

You can also get to this by using the Find Customer button from the New Reservation dialog, or by using the main menu selection <u>Customers</u> | <u>Find Customer</u>. If you tend to use Find Customer most of the time before adding a new customer, there is an option to make the customer toolbar icon go directly to Find Customer instead of <u>Add New Customer</u> (see <u>Maintenance | Program Options | Functions</u>).

There is also a handy shortcut key that will open this dialog -- **Ctrl-U**. (Ctrl-C would have made more sense, but that's a standard command reserved for the "Copy" function by most Windows programs, including Campground Master.)

The Find Customer dialog allows you to search the customer database in a variety of ways. If you don't enter part of a customers's name before clicking Find Customer, then the initial list will either be blank or it will have the entire customer list, depending on the option selected in <u>Maintenance | Program Options | Functions</u>.

Note: If all customers are shown initially, only the most important fields are shown to make it faster (name, city, state, and notes), but after making any filter changes the fields shown will change according to the filter type. For instance if you do want to see all of the fields for all customers then you can check and then uncheck the Filter By box to refresh the list.

If you did enter part of the last name first, then of course the list will already show matching customers.

Regardless of what's shown initially, the default search method ("Filter by") is Last Name, and the cursor will already be in the "Starts With" field ready for you to type a name. You don't have to enter the whole name, just the first part. Of course the more letters you enter, the more precise the search will be. After entering a few letters, press **Tab** or **Enter** (or click "Search"). A list of matches will show up, and the first entry will be selected by default, and you can scroll down the list to select another one using the arrow keys.

If you prefer to see the entire list of customers (not recommended for large lists of several thousand), you can uncheck the "Filter By" option. All customers will be shown with nearly all of their information, and you can sort by any column to help you find a customer.

Other filtering options include address, city, state, zip, country, phone number, E-mail, driver's license, vehicle license, discount type, discount ID, and notes. The searches are somewhat intelligent -- for instance, a phone number search allows you to enter any portion of a phone number, and any punctuation is ignored. For instance, entering "555" will match any phone number (in any of the 3 phone number fields) containing three 5's in a row, even if they are separated like in the number (915) 552-0406. In addition, the list will always show the appropriate fields -- for instance, if you search by zip code, the address fields are displayed but not the phone numbers or licenses.

One a list is displayed, you can print the entire list by just clicking the <u>Print List</u> button. Therefore this dialog can also be used to print out filtered customer lists. You can also use <u>Export List</u> to export the data to a CSV file.

Note: Customers with warning flags will be shown with a red background -- but if it's the currently selected customer, it will be in blue due to the selection highlight.

Once you find the desired customer, select it by clicking the line with the mouse and clicking <u>Use</u> (the Search button automatically changes to Use once a customer is selected), or double-click on the customer line. (If

only one customer is displayed, you can simply press **Enter**). This will open the Customer Details dialog for that customer, or if you're making a new reservation it will put that customer information in the reservation. A shortcut to using the mouse to click on a customer is to press **Alt-G**, which will jump "into" the grid, then use the up/down arrow keys to select a customer.

If you don't find a customer or you're finished with finding customers, typically you would click Cancel. In some cases, the Cancel button may show "Cancel / Add New", in which case that will take you right to the Add New Customer dialog ready to enter a new one (this depends on how you got to Find Customer in the first place). This is probably what you want to do in most cases, but if it's not then just Cancel out of that dialog also.

Add New Customer

In some cases, an Add New Customer button will be available so you can add a new customer instead of selecting a different one, for instance if the customer you're looking for isn't in the database. Just use this function to enter the customer information, and that new customer will be used for whatever function you're working on.

Merge Customers...

You will also see a "Merge Customers.." button in the dialog. This is useful if you see multiple customer entries for a customer that you know are really the same person. This button will be enabled if you select 2 or more customers at once, and will allow you to merge them safely.

Merging Customers

Duplicate customers may be added by accident if the operator doesn't use the Find function often enough when making reservations, or if the customer isn't noticed in the list. Under normal circumstances you would not want to delete one of them, since that would lose any reservations or transactions made with that customer. However, the Merge Customers is a safe way to combine them -- all of their reservations and transactions will also be combined into a single customer.

Merging Customers is done by first using the Find Customers function to find likely candidates for merging. Duplicates will likely be spotted accidentally on occasion when doing a Find for other reasons, but you can manually search for duplicates to merge any time. Just open the Find Customer dialog and search for all customers with last names starting with "A", for instance, and then go through the list.

If you find multiple entries in the customer list for the same person, select all of the ones to merge (using **Ctrl**-click on each one), and press the Merge Customers button. The Merge dialog will open, listing each of the ones you selected.

Note: Merging can only be done by operators with Manager access level or higher. The Merge Customers button will not be enabled for lower access levels.

The Merge Customers Dialog

The customers selected to be merged are listed in the Merge Customers dialog. Now you will need to select the customer record to "Remain" after the merge. This is important because only the customer details in this remaining record will be saved -- the details in the other customer record(s) will be lost (this does not include reservations and transactions -- those will all be merged into the remaining customer).

Some of the most critical information about each customer is shown in the list to help you make the decision. Typically you would choose the record with the most up-to-date or most complete information. If you need to see more details, or if you see some information in one that you want to transfer to the one to be kept, you can use the View Customer Details button at the bottom (or double-click on the customer).

Once you're sure that all of the information you need is in a single customer record, make sure that customer is selected (highlighted in dark blue), and click the "OK, Merge!" button. The reservations and transactions from all of the customers will be moved to the selected customer, and rest will be deleted.

Important! The Merge function cannot be reversed! Make sure you have recent backups, especially if you're using the auto-save option.

Customers with Warning Flags

A customer's warning flag can be set on the Customer Details dialog. This report will list all customers in the database with warning flags for a quick reference or to allow printing them out. Since the warning will show up as a bright icon whenever you start a new reservation or view the details for a customer, it's not necessary to use this separate reference most of the time. It's mainly here for convenience in printing the list, but may also be useful for printing a report showing all of the reasons customers get put on warning (the Notes field is shown, which should be used to indicate the reason).

Once the list is shown, you can double-click on any entry to open the Customer Details for that customer, and make any changes if needed, including taking them off the warning list. If you do remove their warning flag, the list will be updated immediately.

Deleting a Customer

If you created a customer by mistake, you may want to delete it entirely. Only an operator with Administrator access can delete a customer, since it is a permanent deletion and can affect the integrity of the database. If you just want to get rid of a duplicate entry, you should use the Merge Customers function instead of just deleting it.

To delete a customer, simply click the <u>Delete</u> button in the <u>Customer Details</u> dialog (available from the <u>Customers</u> main menu or by clicking the Customers toolbar button. You will be asked to confirm the permanent deletion. However if the customer has any transactions or reservations then it cannot be deleted, and you will be notified of the reason. This is a safeguard to prevent deleting financial information or reservation history by accident.

If you absolutely want to delete the customer and all of its transactions and/or reservations, then you can do so by following this procedure (starting at the <u>Customer Details</u> dialog showing the customer to be deleted):

1. Click the <u>Reservation History</u> button.
2. Click on a reservation in the list and click <u>View the Selected Reservation Details</u>.
3. Click on the <u>New Transactions</u> button.
4. If there are any transactions in the list, delete them:
   a. Click on transaction in the list
   b. Click on <u>Delete Selected Item(s)</u>.
   c. Repeat steps a and b for each transaction.
5. Click <u>Done</u> on the Transactions dialog.
6. Click <u>Delete</u> on the Reservation Details dialog.
7. Repeat steps 2 through 6 until all reservations are deleted.
8. Click <u>Close</u> on the Reservation History dialog.
9. Click <u>Transaction History</u> to see if there are any more transactions for this customer.
10. If there are no transactions, then <u>Close</u> the history and click <u>Delete</u> to delete the customer.
11. If there are transactions, then you will need to do the following to delete the transactions:
    a. Close the customer dialog with <u>Save</u> or <u>Cancel</u>.
    b. Open the New Transaction dialog with <u>Transactions</u> | <u>Add a New Transaction</u>.
    c. Click <u>Find Customer</u>, locate the customer in the list, click on it, then click <u>Use</u>.
    d. Click Enter New Transactions for the above Customer.
    e. Delete transactions as in steps 4 and 5 above.
    f. Return to the Customer Details dialog, find this customer and click <u>Delete</u>.

Administration note: It is possible to change the customer link for a reservation using the <u>Maintenance</u> | <u>Raw Data Tables</u> | <u>Reservation</u> function, and manipulating the numerical index values. This will not be discussed here since it is very intricate and dangerous. If you feel this is necessary, contact technical support.

7   Working with Transactions

Adding Transactions

There are basically two ways to enter transactions -- either through the Transactions Dialog used for normal charge/payment transactions (for reservations, customers, and unbound transactions), or through separate transaction entry dialogs for Expense and Misc. Income transactions. Note that only operators with Manager access or above can enter Expense or Misc. Income transactions. Any operator with Clerk access or higher may enter other transactions.

How Transactions Work

You may be used to thinking of a "transaction" as being a complete financial deal -- for instance, the rent charges, the taxes, and the payment. In Campground Master, this would be recorded as 3 separate "Transaction" records, essentially one for each line on a receipt. This level of detail allows Campground Master to generate a number of very useful and flexible financial reports.

The Campground Master transactions data is a very simple collection if individual transaction "line items". Each record is essentially an individual line item -- a single charge for a number of nights, a sales tax charge, a payment, a refund, and expense entry and so forth. These are tied together into something useful by the way they are linked to reservations and/or customers. Most of the time you will work with the Select Rate(s) function (described later) instead of entering individual charges, but you should still understand how each kind of transaction is used.

You can also use Campground Master to enter all of your campground expenses and miscellaneous income if you like, replacing the functions of a general ledger. You can generate a variety of reports for accounting purposes, such as a detailed expense report for the year or a categorized monthly income and expense report.

Each transaction has a number of fields for classifying, categorizing, calculating, and reporting purposes. The primary field is the **Type**, and then there is a **Category**, a **Description** (you can enter what you like), a **Payment Type**, the **Discount Used** if applicable, a **Quantity**, the rice **Each**, and **Total** (automatically calculated). Every transaction also has a **Reference** field, where you can enter anything you like. Long descriptions that the customer doesn't need to see should be entered here instead of the Description field, for better receipt formatting. (The Reference field is also used for some internal information, such as credit card numbers, payment transfer links, inventory links, etc..) If you need to add a note on the receipt, use the Memo transaction type.

In addition, every transaction is stamped with the date and time made and the operator who entered it. Expense and Misc. Income transactions also have a **Reference** field where you can enter a check number, invoice number, or any other reference information needed.

For reservations, all transactions for the reservation are linked together so that you have a record of all charges and payments for that reservation. If it's a monthly reservation, you can add charges and payments as needed for each payment period, and print out a receipt with either a complete history or just the new transactions each time.

Transactions for reservations (and customers) are typically entered in charge/payment pairs. That is, you add "charge" transactions such as daily rate charges, discounts and taxes, then you add "payment" transactions such as deposits, payments, credits and refunds. In the end, these should all balance out to a zero balance if the account is paid in full. The order of the transactions makes no difference (for instance a deposit is usually entered long before any charges are applied). They will still show up appropriately grouped

on the receipt.

For customers, all transactions are linked together for every reservation the customer has made, plus any reservations that have been entered for the customer outside a reservation. For example you can enter gift shop purchases for a customer and print a separate receipt for that purchase, and it won't show up as part of the reservation transactions. You can also get a list (and print a statement) for all of the customer's past transactions at once, for instance a summary for when they leave.

In addition, you can enter "unbound" transactions. These would include your expenses and miscellaneous income, but also any transactions that don't have customer information, such as a walk-in to buy RV supplies that you don't want to add to your customer database. If you have the P.O.S. option, then the Point of Sale function is normally used for merchandise instead of Unbound transactions, but the concept is the same.

Deposit Balance

Deposits are tracked so that the program knows which deposits have actually been applied, rather than just deposits paid. This will primarily be noticed in that whenever a non-deposit transaction is added to a reservation after a deposit, a "Deposit Applied" transaction is automatically inserted. This won't show on receipts and doesn't affect the customer's actual balance, and is only used for reporting and balance-tracking.

There is a "Deposit Account" Quick-Report under Transaction Summary Reports for showing the current deposits account balance (and the running total at any time in the past), and also a Deposit Balance Adjustment function under Maintenance for entering manual adjustments if needed to keep it synchronized with external accounting.

Note that the balance is actually calculated on-the-fly from all transactions in the database. Thus the balance can be shown for any previous day in the database's history.

A/R Balance

As with Deposits, the program can calculate the Accounts Receivable balance at any time. This is essentially based on the total outstanding balances (charges less payments) for all transactions. Deposits are not included until they are Applied, so unapplied advance deposits don't affect the A/R balance.

There is an "Accounts Receivable" Quick-Report under Transaction Summary Reports for showing the current balance (and the running balance at any time in the past), and also an A/R Balance Adjustment function under Maintenance for entering manual adjustments if needed to keep it synchronized with external accounting.

Note that the balance is actually calculated on-the-fly from all transactions in the database. Thus the balance can be shown for any previous day in the database's history. However this also means that any "future" charges (charges added for future reservations) will also be included in the calculation, so if you add charges (or payments) ahead of time for customers not yet arrived, be aware that this will affect your A/R balance.

Transaction Types

Every transaction must be one of the predefined Types. The type of the transaction determines where it appears on receipts, how it is handled for reports, and whether it's a debit or credit to the customer (for receipts and the customer's balance) and to the campground (for reports).

Charge

This is the standard transaction type for any purchase or other charge to the customer. A Charge transaction can have a category (selected from the Transaction Category list you define), a quantity, a price for each, and the total amount (calculated by the software). The description defaults to the category selected for convenience, but can be changed to be more specific.

Charges can also have a Discount Used, which is a selection from the discount types. This is used for generating reports to show how much of the charges were based on each discount type.

Tax

This is similar to a Charge, but is only used for adding taxes to the statement. Besides reporting purposes, it's separate from the Charge type so that taxes can be shown separately on receipts. A Tax transaction will have a category (typically a special selection such as "sales tax" or "hotel tax"), and has quantity/each/total values (see below for a suggestion on these). The description defaults to the same text as the category.

Discount

This is essentially a negative Charge, used for indicating the amount of discount separately from the charge, both for reporting purposes and for the customer's convenience on the receipt. For instance, if the normal rate is $20.00 and the Good Sam rate is $19.00, you should enter a Charge of $20 and a Discount of $1.00 to get the same result. That way there's no confusion of whether they received the discount rate, they can see exactly how much they saved, and you can generate reports showing how much each discount program is "costing" you.

Discount transactions can have their own category, or you can use the generic "Discount" category. You can set the quantity and each price just like Charges – for instance, enter the number of days for Qty and the discount per day in Each. The Discount Used field will be set appropriately (from the Pick List), and the description defaults to the Discount Used also. Note that Discount transactions will be shown on receipts with a "Discount : " prefix in the description, unless the description already contains the word "Discount".

Payment

This is the general payment type, for a customer paying his bill. It will have a Payment Method (cash, check, Visa, etc.). The Qty is typically left blank, so it just has an each/total value, but a Qty can be entered for special payment types like Traveler's Checks if you prefer. The category is predefined as "Payment" and cannot be changed, and the description defaults to the same as the Payment Method selected in the dialog, but can be changed to something more specific if desired.

Deposit

Deposits are basically the same as payments, just separated for clarity on the receipts and for reporting purposes. In addition, the program keeps track of a "unapplied" deposits as a deposit account balance. Whenever a charge transaction is entered *after* a deposit, a separate Deposit Applied transaction will be inserted to show that this deposit has been applied and is now earned income.

Deposit Applied

This is an automatic transaction -- there is no way to add it manually. It's added whenever a Deposit is "used", i.e. a charge has been added to a reservation that had a deposit. These transactions show an "Each" amount, but they don't affect the customer's balance due (because the Deposit already does), and it won't appear on receipts. The Total on the Transactions dialog will be blank to indicate that it doesn't figure in the balance due.

Note that only the "charged" amount can be applied, so for instance if there was a $100 deposit followed by a $75 charge, only $75 of the deposit will be applied. The other $25 is still available to be applied or transferred. Also note that there may be negative deposits applied in cases where a transfer is done or a refund is issued, so that the total deposit applied is kept in balance (in terms of how it affects the total deposit account balance).

Payment Transfer and Deposit Transfer

Payment and Deposit transfers allow money to be moved from one customer or reservation to another. In most respects this is identical to entering a negative payment in one place and a matching positive payment in another place. For more information, see the section on Transferring Deposits and Payments.

Credit

Credit transactions are for miscellaneous credits toward an account. This is most often used for coupons or promotions that aren't a monetary payment, but reduce the amount of monetary payment needed. They are treated like a discount in most respects, as they have a Transaction Category but don't have a Payment Method. One distinction from Discounts is that Credits are not automatically taxed like Discounts are. The description should be used to describe the purpose of the credit (bad weather allowance, credit for helping with mowing, etc.), and the description will have a "Credit : " prefix on receipts. Also note that credits are shown in a separate section on receipts, below the sub-total for charges and discounts (and taxes).

Refund

Refunds are essentially negative Payments. They have a Payment Type (how the refund was paid to the customer), and have "Refund" as the category. The description defaults to the payment method but can be changed to show the reason for the refund. You can just enter the amount in Each, or you can use Qty/Each to show more detail and have the total calculated (e.g. 3 days at $20/day).

Note that even though Refunds are negative payments, the value entered should be positive since it's subtracted from payments. Also note that it won't allow you to enter refund unless there is a credit balance due to the customer. If you're refunding something that has already been charged, you need to add negative charge transactions first (or a credit) to indicate the merchandise or services "returned", so there is a negative balance due. Then add a refund transaction to represent money actually refunded to the customer.

Memo

This is not really a transaction, but just a note that will show up on the Transactions list and optionally printed on receipts. You can add a memo any time you want to explain the reason for a charge, credit, refund, etc., and it will be saved like any other transaction. Memos are not be printed on customer receipts by default, but you can make it printable by checking the option when you enter the memo. While the memo descriptions can technically be any length, they should be kept short to avoid pushing the Each and Total columns over. If necessary, just add multiple Memos.

If you need to change a memo from non-printable "Memo" to a printable "Print Memo" (or vice versa), click on the Category field for the memo. A drop-down selection will let you change the memo type.

Expense

Expenses are never associated with reservations or customers. They are individual entries for campground expenses. You can set the category, payment method, description, reference, qty and amount each to whatever you like. You can also enter detailed Notes (a better place to put long descriptions so that reports are formatted better).

Misc. Income

Misc. Income transactions, like Expenses, are never associated with reservations or customers. They are meant to be individual entries for other campground income not recorded elsewhere, such as vending machine income, dump fees, etc. You can set the category, payment (receipt) method, description, reference, qty and amount each to whatever you like. You can also enter detailed Notes (a better place to put long descriptions so that reports are formatted better).

Deposit Adjusted, A/R Adjusted

These transactions are only used when applying an adjustment to the deposit balance or accounts receivable balance (running totals kept within the program). They don't appear on most reports since they don't affect charges or receipts, and are only a factor in bookkeeping.

The Transactions Dialog

Using the Transactions Dialog

No matter how you get to the Transactions dialog, it will already show any previous transactions for the reservation, customer, or previous unbound transactions in the same session (see those sections for details). These will be shown in the transaction grid on the dialog, and will have a white background to show that they are old transaction. Any new transactions entered will be shown with a light yellow background.

If you need to see more details about the transaction, hold the mouse over the Type or Total for the transaction. A pop-up tip will show the date and time it was made, the operator it was made by, and any reference or payment method information. For more details, or to edit details like the reference information, click the Details checkbox located above the right side of the transaction list.

To add transactions, simply use the buttons to the left of the transaction grid -- either use the <u>Select Rate(s)</u> function, or select an individual transaction such as <u>Charge</u>, <u>Payment</u>, etc. You can also use the keyboard shortcuts (**Alt-S** for Select Rates, **Alt-A** for Charge, etc.). If you have Auto-rates enabled, there will also be a button to auto-calculate rate charges -- just click that button to calculate all of the appropriate charges for the reservation.

P.O.S. note -- If you have purchased the Point of Sale option, a <u>P.O.S.</u> button will be present at the top (near the Done button). You can use that button (or press the **F4** key) to access the point of sale function to enter merchandise sales into a reservation or customer's transactions. After the P.O.S. transactions are entered, just click Done on the Point of Sale dialog to get back to here -- all of those transactions will be added to the transactions here. Then you can enter payment and print a receipt for everything at once.

Payment Method

The default is to not show a payment method selection field on the Transactions dialog, since it can be selected when you use the Payment button anyway. Therefore you may not see this selection field on the Transaction dialog. However you can show a Payment Method selection field here so you can select the method before entering the payment. See Maintenance / Program Options / Prompts to enable this field.

Discount Used

If you have previously used a discount for this reservation/customer, or if the customer has a discount defined, that discount selection will be pre-selected for your convenience. Otherwise, you should select the discount used by the customer before selecting rates.

Setting the Paid-Through Date

Any time a payment is made for reservations, you should verify that the reservation's Paid-Through date is updated appropriately. To set this date, click on the Paid-thru field for the reservation in the top grid. This is discussed further in the *Reservation Transactions* section.

Selecting Rates

For site rentals and many other common transactions, you will probably have a number of Rates defined to speed the entry process, and to avoid mistakes that can occur if you had to enter the value each time. In fact this will probably be the most often used function in the Transactions dialog.

For more details, see the *Selecting Rates* section.

Entering Individual Transactions

Even with comprehensive rates definitions, you will probably enter most payments and deposits as individual transactions, as well as the occasional special charge, credit, refund, etc. See the *Transaction Types* section for a description of each type.

For more information on manually entering individual transactions, see the Entering Individual Transactions section.

Issuing Refunds

If you need to issue a refund to a customer, there's a recommended procedure to keep things in balance. You must first enter "negative" charges to offset the charges for which you want to give a refund (e.g. for days not stayed or merchandise returned), and then enter a Refund transaction. This will allow the transactions to balance out.

Entering a negative charge can be done either manually (use the Charge function and enter a negative *Quantity*, not a negative amount), or by using Select Rates if it's a rental adjustment. When you select rates, you can enter a negative number for the number of days, or you can use the "Invert amounts" option at the bottom of the Select Rates dialog. If their Last Night has already been adjusted and is earlier than the Paid Through night, then Select Rates will already know that a refund is needed and will use a negative number of days when a rate is selected.

Then you will enter the actual Refund -- the amount to be refunded will already be assumed, since the customer has a credit due from the negative charges entered. See the section on entering Refund Transactions for more details.

Deleting Transactions

If you have manager level access, it's very easy to delete transactions, both old and new. While this is handy if you click on the wrong transaction type button when adding transactions, it can also be a dangerous thing. To delete a transaction, all you need to do is click on any part of it in the grid and click the Delete Selected Item(s) button. You can delete multiple items at once as well, using **Ctrl**-click or **Shift**-click to select multiple lines.

You will get one warning prompt, so be sure to answer "No" to the prompt if you don't mean to delete anything. In particular, old transactions can be deleted just as easily as new ones, and you cannot get them back using the Cancel button.

Note: If you want to give the customer a credit or refund, ***don't*** just delete transactions to do it! This can result in incorrect reporting, and of course gives no indication of what transpired. It's better to use the refund procedure described above.

Old transactions (any that were added in a previous shift or previous day) can only be deleted by Manager-access operators. In addition, auto-rate transactions cannot be deleted without manager access once the reservation is checked in. If you need to clean up auto-charges, you can undo the check-in (from the Reservation Details dialog), delete the charges, and then check it back in.

Transaction Details

Normally the transactions list just shows the basic information -- type, category, qty, description, and amounts. However it's sometimes useful to refer to other information, particularly for seeing the dates, reference info and other details of prior transactions.

To see all of the details for every transaction, just check the Details box above the list. New columns will be added to the list for all of the other details (you will probably need to scroll to the right to see them). These include the Payment Method and Discount Used (when applicable), Check # / Reference, the date, time and operator when it was made, a Receipt #, reservation date (if applicable), and Shift (if enabled). The Receipt # is an internal number assigned to each transaction session (only or transactions added after version 1.2 of the program will have a receipt #).

If you have Manager access, you can edit some of the data (Check #/Ref, Payment Method and Discount Used). If you have Administrator access, you can also edit the date, time, and Receipt #. The Operator and the Reservation date cannot be changed.

Transaction Color Coding

Some color-coding is used for the entries in the Transaction dialog, to aid in spotting certain types. Since all new transactions for the current session are yellow, the real color coding only applies to "old" transactions.

Any auto-calculated transactions will be shown in blue. This helps distinguish charges that were not part of the auto-rates calculations (e.g. manually added charges), and also indicates that those charges cannot be deleted once the reservation has been checked in (except by a manager). If auto-charges need to be re-done, you need to undo the check-in, delete the auto-charges, and then check it back in.

Any payments, deposits or transfers "in" to the reservation will be shown in green (assuming they are positive amounts). Any refunds, transfers out, or negative payment/deposit values will be shown in red.

Memo transactions will be shown with either blue or red text -- printable memos will be shown in blue, non-printable memos in red.

All other transactions will be shown with the normal white background. If you're using auto-rates, a typical reservation will have only blue and green transactions (auto-charges and payments), possibly with a white Deposit Applied transaction and perhaps white Memos.

Open Cash Drawer

If you have a cash drawer installed (and set up through *Maintenance / Cash Drawer Setup*), then there will be a button to Open Cash Drawer. You can click this any time to open the cash drawer, assuming your operator access level us high enough according to the Access Levels setup (by default, all Clerks can do this).

In addition, the cash drawer can be configured to open automatically when you print a receipt, provided there was some kind of payment received or refund issued that would require the drawer to be opened (so just re-printing a prior receipt or invoice won't open the cash drawer).

Note: If you're not planning to enter transactions but just need to open the cash drawer, a quick way to do this is to open a Transactions window (e.g. click on the cash register icon or press **F4**) and the click the Open Cash Drawer button.

E-mail Confirmation

If a reservation has not yet been checked in, and if you have the SMTP Setup completed, then this button will be shown. Just click this to send an E-mail confirmation to the customer (using the currently entered transactions -- note that this may be different than the result from Quote/Confirmation if charges have not yet been added).

Print Window Tag

If the option is enabled to show this button, then you can simply click the button to print a window tag. Unlike the other printing functions, this won't shown a preview or print dialog -- it will immediately print the tag without further prompting. See Maintenance / Program Options / Functions to enable or disable this button. Note that if more than one linked reservation is shown in the reservation grid at the top of the dialog, then you can print tags for individual reservations (sites) by selecting a reservation in the grid before printing the

window tag.

Finishing Up Transactions

When you're finished entering transactions, you may want to print a receipt (which is also commonly used for a reservation ticket for the office files), or you may be finished and ready to move on. Obviously you can just click one of the Print buttons to print a receipt, or Done if you're finished, or even Cancel if you don't want to save any of the new transactions.

First it should be noted that there are two separate things happening on this dialog -- the transactions and the reservation information. If you change any of the reservation paid-through date(s) at the top, those must be saved as well as the new transactions. So remember this if you click Cancel. The software will ask you if you want to abandon "changes" if you have made any date changes, or if you want to abandon the new "transactions" if you or added transactions, so you will have a pretty good clue as to what would be cancelled. But if you made both date changes and added transaction, then it will only ask about the new transactions.

Now, assuming you are done and/or want to print a receipt, some validation will be done before continuing. For example, it will not allow any transactions without an Each amount. (It will warn you and move the cursor to the transaction amount that needs to be filled in.) It will also check to make sure you have selected a Pay Method if you have any transactions that need one, and a Discount Used if there are any Discount transactions

For more information on printing receipts, invoices and letters, refer to the *Printing Receipts* section.

Recalling Transactions

There may be times when you want to see what you just did, after closing the Transaction dialog. To bring it back up, use "Edit the Last Transaction Viewed" under the Transactions menu, or simply press **Ctrl-T** on the keyboard.

To bring up other transactions, you can locate the customer or reservation related to it and get to it from there, or you can go to the Transactions tab view. The Transactions tab view shows all transactions for the day by default. If you want to bring one up in the Transactions dialog again, just locate it in the list, right-click on it, and select Transactions.

Auto-Rates

If properly configured, auto-rate calculation can take rate selection even further than Selecting Rates, by making it a 1-click or even a no-click operation.

Depending on the Auto-Rates Options (Maintenance | Program Option), you may or may not see an Auto-calculate Rate Charges button on the Transaction and Select Rates dialogs. Auto-rates are disabled by default, because the rates must be set up very carefully for it to work properly. (See the Auto-Rates Setup section for details.)

If auto-rates are enabled, then they can also be set to automatically be added when a reservation is created or checked in. In either of these cases, charges become fully automatic and the Select Rates dialog may never be needed except for special cases.

If it's not set up to be fully automatic, then you can still click the Auto-calculate Rate Charges button on the Transactions dialog to instantly add the appropriate rate charges. This eliminates the need to go into Select Rates, pick the rates that apply, and so on. They will be added directly in the Transactions dialog as new charges.

Recalculating auto-rates

Obviously when changes are made to a reservation such as extending the stay, the charges need to be adjusted.

You can set the option to automatically recalculate rates whenever there is a change, but that could result in a lot of rate adjustments and re-adjustments when "tinkering" with a reservation (this may depend on how many different add-ons affect your rates). It may be better to leave the re-calculation disabled, and make sure the staff is trained to use the "Auto-calculate Rate Charges" function on the Transactions dialog whenever changes are made. If the Auto-calculate function is used and the rates are already correct then it won't change anything, so it never hurts to double-check it. (Note: This assumes that the "Credit & add only charges that have changed" option is used for recalculating rates -- other options can result in a lot of redundant adding & removing of charges.)

Linked Reservations

As with the manual Select Rates function, rates are automatically calculated for linked reservations if they are synchronized or sub-members. Likewise, you need to be aware that if the reservations are made non-synchronized later, then the rates need to be recalculated for **both** the original master reservation and the non-synchronized reservation. The charges for the linked reservation will be removed from the master, and added to the non-synchronized reservation. If necessary, you can transfer part of the payment from the original master reservation to the non-synchronized reservation so that the master still balances out, and then a payment or refund can be added to the non-synchronized reservation to make up the difference due to the changes.

One way to avoid some of the issues above is to avoid using non-synchronized whenever possible. For instance if a reservation that's synchronized needs to be checked out early, change it to a sub-member instead of non-synchronized. That way the billing is still combined, and only affects the master reservation.

Deleting Auto-Rate Charges

To prevent "rate tampering", auto-rate charges cannot be deleted without a Manager operator access level once the reservation is checked in. If a mistake is made requiring that the rates be removed (e.g. the reservation is checked in by mistake, or a mistake is made that will look too confusing if an auto-recalculation is done), then you must undo the check-in to make the reservation Pending. This can be done from Reservation Details by unchecking the "Checked In" box. Then you can delete the auto-rate charges (which will be in blue). They will be re-added appropriately when the check-in is done again (assuming that's the auto-rate option you're using), or if the Auto-calculate Rates function is used again.

Entering Individual Transactions

Overview

Even with comprehensive rates definitions, you will probably enter most payments and deposits as individual transactions, as well as counter sales and the occasional special charge, credit, refund, etc. (See the Transaction Types section for a description of each type.)

Prompt-for-Details vs. Grid-Entry

There are two different ways transaction information might be entered, depending on the "Prompt for details when entering transactions" option setting in <u>Maintenance | Program Options | Prompts</u>. This option is selected by default, which means that whenever you click one of the transaction-type buttons, a dialog will open for entering the transactions. This is the most user-friendly method, and allows more information to be entered. The option to not use these prompts is really only there for backward-compatibility, since early users of the software may be used to the grid-entry method. The prompt-for-details method will be discussed here, but a section on the grid-entry method appears below for reference.

To enter an individual transaction, just click the appropriate transaction-type button to the left of the transaction table. As soon as you click the button, a dialog will appear with selections and/or fields for entering the data. These dialogs are detailed below.

Regardless of which method is used for entering transactions, you can edit or delete individual transactions in the grid. Just double-click on any cell in the grid to edit it, or click once to select the cell and start typing (what you type will immediately replace the current text). The only things you can't change are the Type (determined by the button you clicked) and the Total (calculated by the software). Those are shown in gray to indicate that they can't be edited.

Generally only the "new" transactions (those added during this dialog session) can be edited or deleted. The old transactions from previous dialog sessions can be edited or deleted only if you have Manager access or above.

Charge, Discount and Credit Transactions

Charges and Discounts are essentially the same thing, except that a discount is treated as a negative charge, and must have a "Discount Used" associated with it. The typical use for Discount transactions would be for discounted rates or items, for which you would enter the normal price as a Charge and then add the Discount as a separate transaction. This is helpful both for reporting and tracking discounts given and also for indicating the amount of discount on the customer's receipt.

Credit transactions are similar to Discounts in that they are basically negative Charges, but there are a couple important differences -- Credit transactions cannot be automatically taxed, and they don't have a "Discount Used" associated with them. Credit transactions are typically used for things like coupons (which don't usually reduce the sales tax, for instance), or for other special credits to a customer like that have nothing to do with using a discount club. Also, Credit transactions will appear on the receipt in a separate section below the sub-total for charges, discounts, and taxes.

Enter Charge Information

When this dialog opens, focus will be in the Transaction Category list. You must select an appropriate category for the charge (using the up/down arrow keys or the mouse), then you can press **Enter** or **Tab** to move to the description field.

Note that the description will automatically default to the name of the category you selected. You can leave it at this or change it to whatever you like. It's recommended to keep descriptions fairly short so that they fit on the receipts, since there is a limited amount of room. The text size on the receipt will be shrunk to make it fit, but it can only shrink to a certain size, and it doesn't appear professional when one long entry is in smaller text than all of the others. About the size of the normal "Item Description" header is a good rule of thumb.

Also note that if you change the description then you should eliminate the existing text because the category may still appear on the receipt (depending on an option set in File | Printing Options). For instance, if you change the description of a Gift Shop charge, don't leave "Gift Shop" in the description. Make it something like "Flower Basket", and the receipt will show either "Flower Basket" or "Gift Shop: Flower Basket", depending on the printing option.

Next you will enter the Quantity and the Each dollar amount. When entering dollar values, you don't need to enter the dollar sign ($) -- it will be added for you. Also note that the Quantity can be any number, including decimal numbers like 1.75. You can also choose to leave the Quantity blank, and a single quantity will be assumed.

Finally, you need to select the taxes that apply. Any taxes selected here will result in automatic Tax transaction entries, so you don't have to enter taxes manually. If default taxes have already been set up in the Taxes Setup, then the default tax(es) will already be selected. Make any changes needed, then click Save (or you can use **Ctrl-Enter**, or just press **Enter** repeatedly until it gets to the Save button and then it will save the charge.)

When completed, you will see the Charge transaction and possibly one or more Tax transactions appear in the Transaction dialog. If the reservation had an unapplied Deposit transaction, you will also see a "Deposit Applied" transaction inserted, which simply indicates that the deposit has now been applied to charges.

If you made a mistake and need to make changes, you can either Delete the new transactions and do the Charge again, or just click on the field in the grid that needs to be corrected and enter the new value. be careful about making changes, since the Tax will *not* be re-calculated! If an amount needs to be changed, it's best to Delete the Charge and all associated Tax transactions, and then re-enter the Charge so it recalculates the tax.

Don't worry about having multiple tax transactions when you're entering more than one charge or discount -- they will be combined on the receipt so only won tax transaction appears, provided the "Combine taxes" option (File | Printing Options) is selected.

Enter Discount Information / Select Discount Used

The main difference when entering a Discount transaction is that when you click the Discount button, if you haven't already selected a "Discount used" on the Transaction dialog then a list of discounts will be shown to choose from. (If the reservation or customer used a discount previously, it will already be selected so you don't have to select it again). Just select the appropriate discount (with the arrow keys or mouse) and click OK or press **Enter**. You can also double-click the discount to do it in a single step.

Then the same dialog will appear as for Charge transactions, described above. Note that you can select a category just like Charges, or you can select the generic "Discount" category. This is up to you, and only affects reporting. We recommend selecting the same category as you did for the charge corresponding to this discount, so you can have more detailed reporting.

The Description will default to the Discount Used, rather than the category. This can also be changed if desired, but it looks best on receipts to show the type of discount used.

Make sure you enter the "Each" amount for the discount as a positive value -- it will be subtracted from charges, but the entry must be made as a positive amount. For instance, just enter "5" to give a $5.00 discount.

Alternatively, you can enter a discount percentage (e.g. enter "10" for a 10% discount) and the amount to be discounted. The program will calculate the amount of the discount for you. The amount to be discounted will default to the amount of new charges added this session, but you can change it if needed.

Corresponding Discount and Tax transactions will be generated as they are for charges.

Note that Discount transactions will be shown on receipts with a "Discount : " prefix in the description, unless the description already contains the word "Discount".

Enter Credit Information

Entering a credit is just like entering a Charge or Discount. However you won't be prompted for a Discount Used, and there will be no tax selections. Just select a category (which defaults to a generic "Credit" category, but you can change it), change the description if desired, and enter the Quantity (if > 1) and Each amount. Again, the amount should be entered as a positive value even though it will be subtracted from the charges.

Note that Credit transaction descriptions will always be prefixed by "Credit : " on the receipts, and they will appear in a separate section below charges and discounts.

Tax Transactions

Taxes are usually handled automatically when selecting rates or entering charges. However you may have an occasional need to enter a tax manually.

To enter a manual tax, just click the Tax button on the Transactions dialog. This will open the Enter Tax Information dialog. (If no Tax Rates are defined for the database, there will not be a Tax button.)

Enter Tax Information

First you will select a tax category from the list. When you select a category, notice that the Tax Rate shown will automatically change to the rate defined for the taxes. When you have the tax category selected, just press **Tab** or **Enter** to jump to the Amount field. If there were any charge or discount transactions already entered, the amount will already have the total assumed to be taxed. If this is correct, just click Save. If you need to adjust the amount to be taxed, just enter it and then click Save.

The tax transaction will be added to the Transactions dialog. Note that Tax transactions are handled differently in that the "Qty" field is actually the dollar amount to be taxed, and the "Each" field is the tax rate. This won't affect the way you enter the tax with this dialog, but be aware of this when you are looking at the entries in the grid.

Payment, Deposit, and Refund Transactions

Payments, Deposits and Refunds are all entered exactly the same way. The only difference you will notice is the default in the Amount field when the dialog opens.

Enter Payment Information

First you should select a <u>Payment Method</u> from the list. If a payment method was already selected for transactions (or if a previous payment transaction was entered), the previous payment method will already be selected. In addition, if credit card information was previously entered for any of this customer's transactions, or if you enter or swipe a credit card first, then the payment method type may be selected automatically. In that case, just press **Enter** or **Tab** to go to the Description field. Otherwise, use the up/down arrow keys or the mouse to select a payment method first.

Note that the <u>Description</u> will automatically default to the name of the payment method you selected. You can leave it at this or change it to whatever you like. It's recommended to keep descriptions fairly short so that they fit on the receipts, since there is a limited amount of room. Note that the description will always be preceded by "Payment : " on the receipt, so you don't need to repeat that. (Likewise, Deposits and Refunds will be prefixed by the transaction type on receipts.)

The <u>Quantity</u> field is usually left blank, but you may enter a quantity if you prefer. This might make sense for special types of payment like Traveler's Checks or campground membership coupons. Note that depending on the payment method, the Qty field may be disabled (this is configured in the Payment Methods Pick List). For instance, Cash, Check and Credit Card payments don't normally have a Qty, just an Amount. One notable exception is for coupon-type payments, which can be configured so that each coupon has a set value and only a Qty is entered.

The <u>Amount to pay</u> field will usually be automatically set to the customer's current balance (or credit balance if you're doing a refund), since most of the time the balance will be paid in full. Be sure to change this if needed.

If you are accepting cash or a traveller's check that's not exactly the amount due, you can use the <u>Amount Tendered</u> field to enter the amount actually received. This will calculate the change due and show it on the dialog. If the amount tendered is entered, it will also appear on receipts along with the change due, and is saved with the transaction (in the Reference field). If the option is enabled to show a change-due prompt, then a pop-up message will also be shown when the receipt is printed. (See Maintenance / Program Options / Functions).

The <u>Ref / Check #</u> field can be used for anything you like (or left blank). Most often this is used for a check number. If it's a Check payment type (as configured in the Payment Methods Pick List), then the number entered here will automatically be added to the description for the receipt. If you don't want it there, then you can go back to the description field and change it before clicking Save.

Note that the <u>Ref / Check #</u> field does not show on receipts, so it is private. You can view it later by checking the "Details" box on the Transactions dialog, and it will also appear in the Detailed Transaction reports. Also note that this field is enabled according to the flag for each payment method, set up in the Payment Methods Pick List. So if it's not enabled and you think it should be, check the pick list settings.

Credit Card Information

If the payment type is a credit card, you can enter the information here. If you have keyboard-wedge-type a credit card reader attached, you can simply swipe the card and the fields will be filled in automatically (make sure the text cursor is in the <u>Credit Card #</u> field before swiping the card -- **Alt-C** is a shortcut to jump to that field).

Note that if you do use a credit card reader, you may need to adjust its "termination" settings and make sure the credit card processing settings match the number of tracks that the reader will read.

Even if you don't have Campground Master set up to process credit card authorizations, having the credit card information in the system can save time later, for instance the next time a customer calls to make a reservation and you need the credit card information to guarantee it. In fact, your operator access level may require you to enter credit card information for any appropriate payment methods.

Also note that the credit card information can be shown on the customer's receipts, with an optional signature line. You can also have it print a special credit card signature slip automatically when a credit card payment is entered. See Maintenance / Printing Options / Credit Cards.

Processing Credit Cards

If you have enabled credit card processing (and assuming that you have the required 3rd-party processing software installed, etc.), then you can process the credit card right here on the payment dialog. This also assumes that your operator access level is sufficient for credit card processing.

After entering the credit card number, expiration date and optional name (or swiping the card successfully), press the "Process" button to request authorization.

The program will not let you Save a credit card sale unless it's processed and approved successfully. If you find that it's not possible to get a payment approved, perhaps due to phone lines being down, then you should save the information and enter it later (or request that they come back, or pay with an alternate payment method).

After you press the "Process" button, all other controls will be disabled except the Process button, which will now be an "Abort" button. Abort can be used (and should **only** be used) if you decide that the processing will not be completed due to a phone line problem or processing software problem. Note that the Abort will actually just "request" that the process be aborted. If it appears that the processing software has already picked up the request and is in process, it cannot be aborted. It will eventually time out and return an error if the processing software does not respond. Not that it's still possible that the transaction goes through, in which case you need to adjust the time-out settings to allow for a longer delay.

Once processed, a response will be shown. If it's approved, clicking OK on the response will immediately close the Payment dialog. (There's also an option to skip showing the approved message so the dialog closes automatically.)

You may see additional CVV2/CVC, Zip and Address fields below the credit card entry fields, depending on the processing options. These can be entered after swiping the card or before -- except that if the option is selected to immediately process the card after swiping, then you need to enter these before swiping the card. While these are always optional, you often save money on processing charges if this information is entered. If the transaction is for a customer with address information already entered, those fields will be filled in already. You can verify these with the customer and/or change them if necessary.

Debit Cards

At this time, Campground Master doesn't directly support debit cards with PIN# entry and cash-back. If it's a Visa or MasterCard type debit card, then it can be processed just like a credit card if you like. Otherwise, you will have to use the processing software's own interface to process the debit card outside of Campground Master, then enter the payment in Campground Master separately.

Important: If you give them cash back, you should change the Amount Paid to be the total amount for the debit card payment, and then do a Refund transaction for the cash back (with a payment method of Cash selected) -- this way the amount of cash in the drawer and the total debit card charges will balance with the

reports at the end of the day.

Forced Sales

There may also be a <u>Force Sale</u> button shown next to the Process button, which will allow you to force the authorization of the credit card sale. This should only be used if you have already received an approval card from a voice authorization. After pressing this, you will be asked to enter the approval code you received for the transaction. It will then submit the transaction to the processing software as a forced sale. This will usually be approved as long as there are no errors in the card number, etc.

Voiding credit card payments and refunds

After a credit card payment (or refund) has been processed and approved, it cannot be deleted without voiding the credit card transaction. To do this, you simply highlight it on the Transactions dialog and click Delete Selected Transactions as you would for any other payment. After a warning, a Void dialog will open with the credit card information, and you can submit the void transaction for processing. See "Voiding credit card transactions" for more details.

Enter Deposit Information

Deposits are entered the same way as payments, except that the Amount will not have a default value. Just select a payment type and enter an amount, and click Save.

Note that when you add a deposit, it's not "Applied" yet -- while it does show up on the customer's balance due (as a credit), it won't affect the overall A/R balance. It's added to the overall Deposits balance until it's applied. When a charge transaction is entered *after* a deposit, then a separate Deposit Applied transaction will be inserted to show that this deposit has been applied and is now earned income.

Enter Refund Information

Refunds are entered the same way as payments, except that the Amount will default to *negative* balance due. This is because the balance due itself should be negative at the time you enter the refund, indicating that a balance is due the customer. Thus the Amount should actually be a positive value, equal to the amount to be refunded. (Make sure you enter a positive amount here if you enter it manually.)

Reminder: If you need to issue a refund to a customer, there's a recommended procedure to keep things in balance. You must first enter "negative" charges to offset the charges for which you want to give a refund (e.g. for days not stayed or merchandise returned), and then enter a Refund transaction. This will allow the transactions to balance out. Entering a negative charge can be done either manually (use the Charge function and enter a negative *Quantity*, not a negative amount), or by using Select Rates if it's a rental adjustment. After entering the negative charge transactions, then you can use this Refund function to enter the amount refunded.

Voiding Credit Card Transactions

This section only applies if you have credit card processing enabled, so that the credit card transactions are processed through Campground Master. Otherwise, credit card payment transactions can simply be deleted like any other transactions (and with the same restrictions depending on your access level).

If you do have credit card processing enabled (and the setup indicates that Voids are possible through your

processing software), then removing credit card transactions requires that the transaction be Voided before it's settled with your merchant processor. After a credit card payment (or refund) has been processed and approved, it usually cannot be deleted without the Void procedure. To do this, you simply highlight that payment or refund on the Transactions dialog -- the button that's normally "Deleted Selected Item(s)" will change to "Void Selected CC Item", so click this button. A Void dialog will open with the credit card information, and you can submit the void transaction for processing.

Note that you might not be allowed to Void a transaction, or may only be allowed to Void it before the Transactions are Saved, depending on your operator access level.

The Void process is similar to processing payments -- it requests the void from the processing software, and shows a response. It can also be aborted if necessary.

There may be an additional option on the Void dialog to delete the transaction without processing the Void. This is restricted depending on your operator access level (see Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels), and should **only** be used in situations where you must delete the transaction from Campground Master but cannot get the Void processed automatically. If the Void cannot be processed for legitimate reasons (e.g. the batch has already been settled), then you should cancel the Void process and enter a Refund transaction instead.

Transferring Deposits and Payments

Payments and Deposits may be transferred in part or in full to any other reservation or customer. In most respects this is identical to entering a negative payment in one place and a matching positive payment in another place. For various reasons, however, it's better to use the transfer functions.

For one thing, negative payments are not possible by non-managers. Also, the transfer function makes it relatively easy to move the money without mistakes (they will match automatically), and it provides an accounting "trail" of the transaction. The Reference field of the transactions will contain information on where the money is transferred from and to.

When doing a transfer, you first need to select the appropriate type from the Transactions dialog. Keep in mind that you can only transfer money that's "available" to transfer. For instance, a Deposit Transfer can only be done up to the amount of the deposit balance (unapplied deposits). If there were no deposits, or if all of the deposit has been Applied to charges already, then a deposit transfer cannot be done. Applied deposits do count as payments, however, so a Payment transfer could be done to move deposit money that has already been applied.

The other factor in choosing the transfer type is the status of the destination. If it's a pending reservation, you may want to only transfer a deposit to it, not a payment. (This depends on your accounting practices -- in some cases, it's not proper to have payments on future reservations.)

The program will decide how much is available to transfer -- Payments can be transferred up to the total amount of payments (and applied deposits) made, even if there are already charges. It will suggest an amount that deducts the charges (assuming you want a zero balance after the transfer), but you can enter the full amount of payments if desired. Deposits can be transferred up to the amount of unapplied deposits, as mentioned above.

Transfers must be entered as a positive amount, and cannot be made if there is not a positive amount available to transfer. (If you mean to transfer the other way, change the "From" option to "To".)

Entering the Transfer Information

The dialog that appears for transfers will show the current reservation or customer information, and the amount available for transfer. To complete the transfer, you need to do 3 things:

1. Select whether the money is going To or From the current reservation or customer (From is the default).

2. Select a reservation or customer for the other side of the transfer, using one of the Find functions.

3. Enter the amount to be transferred, and optionally change the description.

Finally, click Save to perform the transfer.

The Transactions dialog will show one side of the transfer. If you click the Details box, you can see a reference to the other side in the Check # / Ref column. This will show a record number and either a confirmation number or a customer name, depending on whether it was transferred to a reservation or a customer.

Note that if you Cancel the Transaction dialog, both sides of the transfer will be cancelled. However if you Delete a transfer transaction, it's possible to delete only one side of the transfer. If it can locate the other side, it will ask if you want to delete the other side also -- you should always answer Yes so that an imbalance is not created.

Grid-Entry Method

As mentioned before, this is the "old" way of entering transactions. The differences are described briefly here. This only applies if the prompt-for-details option is disabled.

When a transaction-type button is clicked, a new transaction of that type will appear in the grid, often with some information already filled in and with the next suggested entry field ready to edit. For instance, click Charge and the category list for the new charge transaction will be opened for your selection (using the key shortcuts is fastest, but you can also use down-arrow or the mouse to select one).

As another example, clicking the Payment button will fill in the category and description with suggested values, and fill in the Total Amount Due as the payment amount (no Qty is needed). Just press Tab to complete the entry, or you may type a different amount to replace the default amount.

Note that for Payments, the Payment Method for that transaction will be set to the current value of the Payment Method selection. (If you haven't selected a payment method yet, a dialog will prompt for the payment method to be used first.) Thus you can enter multiple payment transactions with different payment methods by changing the Payment Method drop-down between transactions.

When entering values, you don't need to enter the dollar sign ($) – it will be added for you. Also note that Qty can be any number, including decimal numbers like 1.75. Clicking the buttons for other transaction types will fill in fields with the program's best guess according to the type.

You'll also notice that the cells will grow as needed to accommodate longer categories, values and descriptions (sometimes requiring you to scroll to see the Total), and you can add as many transactions as necessary despite the size of the list (it will scroll as needed). It's recommended to keep descriptions fairly short so that they fit on the receipts, since there is a limited amount of room. The text size will be shrunk to make it fit, but it can only shrink to a certain size, and it doesn't appear professional when one long entry is smaller than all of the others. About the size of the normal "Item Descriptions" header in the dialog is a good rule of thumb. Also note that while the description often defaults to the category (in charge transactions, for instance), if you change the description then you should eliminate the existing text because the category may still appear on the receipt (depending on an option set in File | Printing Options). For instance, if you change

the description of a Gift Shop charge, don't leave "Gift Shop" in the description. Make it something like "Flower Basket", and the receipt will still show "Gift Shop: Flower Basket".

Taxes Special Handling

Tax transactions have special handling in the dialog to speed the tax entry process. First it will see if you have Taxes set up (Maintenance | Park Setup | Taxes). If so, then it will show a selection of the defined tax categories. Simply select the appropriate tax and the selected rate will appear in the Each column. By default, it will also automatically put the total of all new Charge transactions in the Qty field (adjusted for any Discount transactions). The tax will then be the result in Total because it simply multiplies the Qty by the Each price. If the incorrect taxable amount is in the Qty field, you can back up to change that.

One common problem with this automation is when you have some charges that are taxable and some that aren't, you have to change the taxable amount in the Qty field. One way to avoid this is to always enter taxable transactions first, then the Tax, and then the non-taxable transactions. Remember that the order won't matter since the Tax transactions are separated on the receipt. Of course if you've defined Rates for everything with proper taxes, then you won't even have to enter taxes manually. Another problem is if you have prior charges that were already taxed, it doesn't take that into account and will attempt to tax all charges again.

If for any reason you calculate tax separately or don't like the automation, you can enter Tax before any other charge transactions and enter the tax amount in Each. Although the Qty will show "0", the software will assume this means "no qty information" rather than multiplying by zero. Also note that if you don't have Taxes set up and have no categories with "Tax" in them, you will have to select a category yourself for Tax transactions. This could be anything you want it to be, perhaps the category for the charges being taxed.

Printing Receipts

You can print receipts from the transaction dialog at any time, whether you have entered new transactions or not. This can be used to print additional receipts or summary statements for the customer.

You should first select the Receipt Type, if the default is not appropriate. The default will be the type selected in File | Printing Options, and the Ticket form is the original default. Just select the desired type in the drop-down box before clicking one of the Print buttons to change the style that prints (this will not change the default for next time). For details on the different formats, see the *Receipt Types* section.

One the receipt type is selected, you can print the receipt. There are two choices for printing:

Print Reservation Receipt will print a receipt with all of the transactions shown, old and new.

Print Only Some Transactions will print the same kind of receipt but with only certain transactions. There are 3 different choices for this.

Print...New -- If you have added new transactions in this dialog session (they will be in yellow), then only those will be printed. If you have not entered any transactions since opening the Transactions dialog, then this function will print all transactions added in the previous session. Thus you can use this to re-print the last "new" receipt.

Print...Since last zero-balance -- This will generally print any transactions since the last full payment was made. Technically it will find the last "zero-balance" point in the transactions and print any after that point. Since the order of the transactions affects this, there may be cases where it doesn't correctly find what you would consider the last paid-in-full point (for instance if a new charge is added before they make a payment for previous charges, without paying for the new charge to zero the balance). Also note that if there is currently a zero balance (it's already paid in full), then rather than printing no transactions at all, it

will print all transactions since the zero-balance point prior to the last transaction (everything since "last" paid in full).

Since paid-in-full -- This is similar to the zero-balance option, except that it will also consider a credit balance to be "paid", not just zero-balances. For instance if they paid an extra $20 on their last bill, it won't print the last bill or the payment, only transactions since that time.

Print...Since date -- This allows you to print transactions added since a given date (including those added on the given date).   This is most useful to work around problems of payment order mentioned above, or if you need to print an invoice for multiple meter readings or other charges added in different sessions.

Information on Receipts and Invoices

Receipts are much different than other reports printed in Campground Master. They are "forms" rather than a grid, so they don't use most of the Print options (Black & White, Fit to Page, etc.). The receipt contains much of the reservation information (confirmation number, number of nights, customer info, vehicle information, site info, etc.), plus a standard disclaimer text, park information (from the Park record), and in some cases an "Additional Notes" section. (If the reservation is not yet assigned to a site, then the first Park record information will be used by default.) If the Check-in and/or Check-out time fields are enabled for Park records, then the receipts will also show these for the customers information. It will also show the check-out date, so they are clear about what date they actually need to leave. If you don't want to show these on the receipt, then you need to disable these fields under Maintenance | Data Field Definitions | Park Fields.

The statement will first list all Charge and Discount transactions, and a sub-total for them. Next it will list taxes if there are any, and Total Charges. Then it will list any payments, deposits, discounts and refunds, and a balance due, credit balance or statement total. It will also show the Paid Through date for the reservation if there is one, as a reminder to the customer when the next payment might be due. If you're printing only New transactions rather than all of them, then the receipt will also show any previous balance (from prior transactions) and the total balance due or credit balance.

There should be plenty of room for all transactions in most situations. Because these receipts are often folded in half and put up in slots for each site in the campground office, the software will attempt to fit the transactions in the top half of the page, shrinking the text if needed. However it can only shrink it to a certain extent (to remain readable), so at some point it will continue down the page if a lot transactions are present.

If there are so many transactions that it won't fit on the page, they will simply be cut off, as there is currently no allowance for a second page for receipts. (Approximately 45 to 50 transactions will fit on a page.) If this happens (most likely for a complete statement on monthly reservations), you could split the reservation at some point and thus start a new set of transactions. Or you could manually reduce the number of transactions by *very carefully* combining multiple charges and payments into single transactions and deleting the extras. Splitting the reservation would be the preferred method. It shouldn't be necessary more often than once per year if they pay every month, and it would be good to "close" the reservation at the end of the year and start over anyway, for reporting purposes.

If the receipt is for multiple reservations linked together, the receipt can also show a list of other sites (reservations) that are combined with this receipt. (See Maintenance / Printing Options / Receipts to enable this feature.) The list will include all synchronized and sub-member reservations under the "master" reservation. If the date(s) or check in/out times for any of the linked reservations are different than the master reservation (i.e. different than the information at the top), then those differences will also be shown.

Receipt Types

There are four basic receipt types:

Ticket form -- This type was designed to look like a common printed form, familiar to many campgrounds doing hand-written tickets. This is also the only type that will contain the Additional Notes section, which comes from the Park record. There is also a no-color form which will print faster, and also forms with the Site and Dates on the left-hand side (which may work better when folded for showing in windows, etc.). To customize the Notice section of the receipts, see Maintenance | Park Setup | Notice message.

Full-page invoice -- This is designed for a full-size page (Letter, A4, etc.), and prints a professional-looking invoice with the word "Invoice" at the top. The customer's address position can be adjusted for use with window envelopes (see File | Printing Options). There is also a no-lines version that will print faster, which doesn't put lines around the transaction table. To customize the Notice section of the receipts, see Maintenance | Park Setup | Notice message.

Full-page receipt and full-page statement -- These are identical to the full-page invoice, except that the header will show "Receipt" or "Statement" instead of "Invoice". In addition, the Notice message can be set up differently for these formats.

Register-style statement -- This is similar to the full-page statement above, but the transactions table is in a credits/debits format, similar to a bank statement or check register. This is useful for long-term residents where they might not pay the exact bill each time. They can see at a glance what their balance was on any given date.

Quick-receipt -- this is a basic fast-printing receipt, with no lines or color. It is also small and will print on half-pages or small paper sizes like A5 (landscape mode). This format does not include the "Notice" and customer signature sections like the Ticket and Invoice forms.

Confirmation letter -- This is in the form of a letter, designed for use as a reservation confirmation. It has the transactions table like the other receipts (with no lines, for a more letter-like appearance), and also includes a customizable text section for the confirmation notice (see Maintenance | Park Setup | Confirmation letter text) as well as a Notice at the bottom (see Maintenance | Park Setup | Notice message). The Notice will not include a customer signature line as it does on invoices and receipts. The customer's address position can also be adjusted for use with window envelopes (see File | Printing Options).

3" Receipt Printer -- This is generally only used for retail-type receipt printers, typically using a 3" or smaller paper roll. This will print a special format suitable for a narrow printer, so it could also be used with any small-format paper slips. The transactions are printed on two lines instead of one so there is room for the description. If your printer does graphics and non-fixed (TrueType) fonts well enough, then you may be able to use the first (non-fixed) option. Otherwise, you may need to use the "fixed-pitch font" option for more readable printing. Make sure you have the printer's fixed-pitch font and number of columns set up in File | Printing Options if you use the fixed-pitch font option.

Note that there is no special provision for a paper cutter on receipt printers. If the driver for your printer has an "automatic" cutting function which knows when the printing is finished, that should work, but otherwise a paper cutter is not directly supported. You may also be able to insert special control characters in the bottom text that prints at the end of the receipts to tell the printer where to cut the paper (this works best with the direct-to-port format below).

3" Receipt Printer, direct to port -- This is the preferred method of printing on simple 3" receipt printers, because it doesn't require a Windows driver and is very fast. It sends raw text to the printer, so it will print in the printer's native font. Note that this option will not be shown unless the Direct to Port settings have been set up through File | Printer Setup, and it only works if the printer is directly connected to the computer through a parallel or serial port. If the printer uses a USB connection or is accessed through the network, this option cannot be used.

Credit Card Slip -- These formats are designed for the customer to sign when paying by credit card, and work on 3" receipt printers so they're similar to the 3" receipt printer formats above. Normally you would not select this unless Campground Master is doing the actual credit card processing, and then it's normally configured to print the slip automatically. However you can select this to print another copy if necessary. Note that both the these formats (normal and fixed-pitch font) use the corresponding 3" Receipt printer settings.

Window Tag -- This is a special form used to print a form suitable for placing in vehicle windows. It includes the park name & address (small), customer name, confirmation number and vehicle license numbers, plus the Site name, first night, and last night in large font. This can be printed on plain paper (typically folded in half after printing, or on special long tags fed in the printer like envelopes, or even a 3" receipt printer in landscape mode (if it supports TrueType fonts). If the paper is large enough to be folded in half (e.g. larger than about 6" tall), then you can fill the bottom half with rules and other text (see Maintenance | Park Setup | Window Tag bottom text).

Note that while a window tag is not technically a receipt, it can only be printed from the same functions receipts are printed -- the Transactions dialog, Reports | Reservation Receipts, and the right-click printing functions such as Print for this Reservation | Receipt.

Selecting Rates

For site rentals and many other common transactions, you will probably have a number of Rates defined to speed the entry process, and to avoid mistakes that can occur if you had to enter the value each time.

When you click the Select Rate(s) button a new dialog will appear, with applicable Rental Rates and Add-Ons shown by default. You can change the Rate Type to see other types or all types using the drop-down list. Some applicable reservation information appears at the bottom of the dialog for reference when selecting rates or entering quantities (the number of nights, discount, and any synchronized sites are shown).

Note that the rates shown in the list are based on a lot of different factors in the Rates Setup. If you're not seeing a rate you expect to see, you need to review the rate definition and the reservation. A rate might not appear if the discount type selected is different than defined for the rate, or if the site's type or class is different, or the length of stay is too long or short, or if the reservation date range is outside the rate's season or in the special exclusion dates.

Note for Linked reservations: The Select Rates function can only show rates for either a single reservation or a synchronized set of reservations at once. Therefore if the reservation is linked to sub-members, you will need to do Select Rates for those separately. (A warning message will appear if this is necessary.) To Select Rates for a particular reservation, select (highlight) that reservation from the list in the Transactions dialog before clicking the Select Rates button.

Rate Quick-Finder

If you have the rate codes memorized and prefer using the keyboard, you can select the rate by typing the rate code in the Rate code quick-finder field (the cursor will start there so you can just start typing). When the correct rate is selected, just press **Tab** to move to the Sites or other Qty field if needed, or go ahead and Add the rate (**Alt-A**).

Discount Used

This is a drop-down list of discounts, identical to the discounts on the Transactions dialog. Any previous discount used will be automatically selected here. There are two reasons this selection is duplicated here:

1. When checking in customers, this may be the first dialog that appears (it will "skip" the Transactions dialog if the Options are set up to do so), so you need to be able to select the rate here.

2. It can also be handy to check different discount rates at this point to find the best rate. Just select different discounts and the applicable rates will be shown immediately.

Auto-calculate All Rates

If auto-rates functionality is enabled, this button will instantly select the appropriate rates and quantities for the reservation. Actually this can be done directly from the Transaction dialog instead of coming into Select Rates, but if you prefer to see the actual rates selected first, then you can do it from here. (This is also useful when using Check Rates, if the option to do it automatically for Check Rates is disabled.)

Adding Rates

Just click on the desired rate in the list (or use the quick-finder), change the qty field(s) if necessary, and click Add. If you know that the quantities don't need changed, you can just double-click the rate and it will be added with the default quantities immediately (see below for more about the quantities). Therefore in most cases, such as simple daily rates, all you will need to do is double-click the appropriate rate, then click Done to finish the rates selection.

Override auto-selection

By default, the rates list will show rates that are specific to the current reservation (by site type, discounts, etc.). However there may be times when you want to select a rate that's not normally used for this reservation. Check the Override box to disable the filtering and show every rate defined for the selected rate type. Note that this is separate from the auto-rates calculation, so it won't affect auto-calculations.

Note: If the override option is used, it probably means the rate definitions need some adjustments. However it is provided as a quick fix or to manually select a non-standard rate.

Quantity Fields

Whenever a rate is highlighted in the rates list, one or more quantity boxes may appear to the right. These depend on the options selected in the rate definition, and can include a period quantity (Day, Week, Month, or Year), a Site quantity, or a simple Qty field (or any combination of these). By default, these will be filled with a number appropriate to the reservation for which you're adding transactions.

For example, the Days quantity will automatically be filled with the number of reservation nights. This assumes that the rate applies to all of the dates of the reservation -- otherwise it will only include the number of days that match the rate definition. Weeks, Months, and Years will be filled with a "truncated" number for the period -- thus a 20-day reservation would show 2 weeks, since it's assumed that you will also add the extra 6 days as a daily rate. (However if the reservation was for less than 7 days and you use a weekly rate, it would still assume that they are paying for 1 week minimum, not 0.)

Note -- the default number of days (or other period) automatically takes into account the paid-through date, and also any previously selected rates (but only during the same Select Rate(s) dialog session -- any charges added previously won't be taken into account unless the Paid Through date has been updated accordingly).

For instance, for a 16-day reservation that has already been paid through the first week, it will start by showing 9 days unpaid (this shows at the bottom of the Rate Selection dialog). If you then add a weekly rate, it will know that 1 full week has not been paid/charged yet, so the quantity will be 1. After adding that week, when you select a daily rate to complete the charges, it will know that only 2 days are needed at the daily rate. This also works for reversing charges -- if a reservation is checked out and its paid-through date is 2 days later than the last night, selecting the daily rate will correctly assume -2 days.

If the reservation is synchronized with other reservations, the Site quantity will automatically reflect the number of synchronized sites that satisfy that rate's criteria. Keep in mind that a group of reservation may cover more than one site type, so you may have to Add more than one rate to cover all of the synchronized sites.

Once the quantities are verified to be correct, just click Add to add the rate with the quantities shown to the Rates Selected list at the bottom. (Note: If the qty is 0, then Add will not do anything.) The tax amount is automatically calculated and shown along with a total. If you need to correct a rate, highlight the entry in the Rates selected list and click Delete Selected Item(s). Then add the rate again if necessary.

Multiple Rates

You can repeat the rates adding process to select multiple rates of any type before leaving this dialog, and each one will appear in the Rates Selected list at the bottom with an updated quantity. When all needed rates are selected, click Done to accept all of the selected rates and add the rate charges to the New Transactions dialog. In fact, it's recommended that you add all of the rates at once, so that the number of days, weeks, etc. is calculated correctly (it will keep track of the number of days being added for the currently added rates, but if you click Done and then come back into Select rates, it won't remember what rates have already been added).

Metered Rates

For metered electric, gas and water rates, there is a special dialog that appears when you Add the rate. (This requires that the "Ask for meter reading" flag be set on the Rate Definition.) This dialog shows the site name, the previous reading and date, an actual reading date selection, and a button to view the last reservation that read the meter (in case there is a dispute). All you have to do is enter the new reading, and it will add the appropriate rate charge and also update the reading information in the Site record. if the reading was actually taken on a previous day, you should also select the correct date for Actual date of reading. Note that any other quantity entries on the Select Rates dialog will be ignored (and the rate definition should be fixed to not ask for a quantity if you see a Qty box).

Note that meter wrap-around is handled automatically, as long as the wrap-around figure is set in Maintenance / Park Setup / Parks. For instance if the meter only has 4 digits and the last reading was 9900 but it now shows 0200, just enter 200 and it will know that 300 units were used. Note that the wrap-around must be less than 25% of the entire range (e.g. 2500 if it's a 4-digit meter). An error will be shown if the figure you enter cannot be understood as either greater than the previous reading or a reasonable wrap-around.

Other Options

There is an option to Invert amounts of the rates -- this will turn all quantities into negatives, so this can be used to cancel out a charge or for refunds -- however, note that the transaction categories will **not** be changed to "refund" or "credit", so this could affect reporting. If you're not concerned with reporting refunds separately from charges, then this is the easy way to do it. Of course if you're just canceling a reservation, it's probably best to just delete any associated charge transactions directly in the Transaction dialog, rather than adding negative charges.

If you're entering rates for multiple linked reservations, there will be an option to Use separate entries for each site. This is normally selected by default (but can be changed to unselected by default in File | Printing Options), and will result in a separate line-item charge for every site for which you're adding a rate. The separate charges will also include the site name, so the receipt will show a record of all sites that have been charged.

However, there may be times when you prefer not to show separate lines for each site. For instance, if you have many (over 20 or so) sites linked, then the receipt may not hold all of them. Also note that there will be a separate line item for each transaction defined in the rate -- so for instance if the rate includes a Charge, a Discount, and a Credit (e.g. a coupon), then all 3 of these would be duplicated for each linked site.

Finishing Up

When you're done selecting rates, transactions will be generated according to the transaction templates in the rate definitions, plus transactions for any auto-added taxes. These will appear as new transactions in the Transactions dialog, just as if you entered them manually. You can adjust them if necessary or delete any that you added by mistake. (Take care in deleting individual transactions back in the Transactions Dialog, since the tax won't be re-calculated.)

Reservation Transactions

Access to the Transactions dialog for a reservation is available in several places. The simplest way to get to it is to click on Transactions in the right-click menu of the tab views (for the appropriate reservation, of course). If you're already in a Reservation Details dialog, then you can simply click the New/Edit Transactions button. You will also get the Transactions dialog automatically when performing certain functions like checking in, checking out, and canceling a reservation.

You can also get to it through the main menu (Transactions | Enter Reservation Transactions). If a reservation is already selected (highlighted) on the current tab view, then transactions for that reservation will be shown. Otherwise, you will then need to use the Find Reservation dialog to locate the reservation for which to make the transaction.

Note for linked reservations -- Since transactions can only be added to one reservation, typically you would use only one of the reservations for all of the transactions when one person is responsible for them all. However, this can result in some inconsistencies in transaction reports that are grouped by Site Type or Site (all of the charges and payments will appear on one site, even if the linked reservation is on a different type, such as a Cabin and a Boat Dock). The only way to avoid the inconsistencies would be to enter separate transactions on each reservation, but that would require you to print multiple receipts for the customer. There isn't a good solution to this, just be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the two ways of doing this.

Also note that when entering reservations for synchronized reservations, the software may warn you if you're not adding them to the "master" reservation. It's recommended to keep them all with the master when possible. (This will happen automatically by default, but there is an option to disable the automatic-master transactions, resulting in a warning if you don't select the master.) When adding rates, you can add the charges for all of the synchronized reservations at once, so it's easy to keep them with the master.

Using the Transactions Dialog for Reservations

At the top of the Transactions dialog is reservation information most likely to be needed when determining the rates. This is a grid showing the main reservation and any reservations linked to it for which billing is combined (synchronized and sub-members). In addition to some typical reservation fields, it shows the number of nights in the reservation, the Charged-Through date and the Paid-Through date.

The Paid-Through date is of special importance -- before finishing transactions, you should verify that this is correct. For convenience, there is an <u>All Paid Thru Last Date</u> button which will automatically put each reservation's Last Night in the Paid Through date, to indicate that it's paid in full. Also note that if you do enter a payment and forget to set (or change) the paid-through date, you will get a warning prompt when you click <u>Done</u>. The prompt will give you the option to automatically make it paid through the last date (most likely), or to not adjust the paid-through date, or to go back and change it yourself.

You can use <u>Reservation Details</u> button to get to the Reservation Details dialog and make any changes necessary before adding charges (although this button will be disabled if you got to the Transaction dialog from the Reservation Details dialog).

For further details, refer to the *Transactions Dialog* section.

Special Considerations for Linked Reservations

A single collection of linked reservations can contain some that are billed separately and some combined, and even the combined ones can have different dates. Therefore the Transactions dialog will show a list of reservations that will be billed together, with their dates (first, last, charged-thru and paid-thru).

Important points about the Transactions dialog (e.g. New / Edit Transactions) for linked reservations:

- Since the reservations listed in Transactions might not be synchronized, the dates cannot be changed directly. Reservation Details must be used to make date changes (except for Paid-Thru, which you can click on to change).
- To view Reservation Details for any of the reservations listed in Transactions (if more than one), select that reservation before clicking the Reservation Details button.
- Select Rates can only operate on one set of synchronized reservations at a time (it can't handle reservations with different dates). Therefore to select rates when more than one group of synchronized reservations are involved, you may need to do it in separate groups. For each one, select one of the reservations in the list before clicking Select Rates.
- If Auto-Rates is enabled, it will calculate for ALL reservations appropriately -- there is no need to do it in multiple groups as with Select Rates.
- You can print Window Tags for individual sites/reservations -- just select the site in the list before printing a window tag.
- Any other receipt formats will print using the "master" reservation's site, but will also include as many of the linked sites as will fit in the designated space on the receipt. (This is an option that can be disabled in File / Printing Options / Receipts)

Auto-rates notes

The auto-rates calculations will always include charges for all appropriate linked reservations (synchronized and sub-members, but not non-synchronized). These will be added to the "top-level", or "transaction master" reservation. Also note that if auto-recalc is enabled (to automatically recalculate whenever a change is made), ALL linked reservations are recalculated whenever a linkage change is made. For instance if a reservation is changed from Synchronized to Non-synchronized, that may result in charges being moved around to the new top-level reservation (for each non-synchronized set).

Another important note is that if you have it set up to auto-add charges when they check in, this will actually happen when the first of any linked reservation (with combined billing) is checked in, and it will add charges for ALL appropriate linked reservations. So for instance if a sub-member is checked in first, charges for that reservation, it's owner, and any other synchronized or sub-member reservations in the tree will be added. Furthermore, they're always auto-added to the top-level/master reservation (and the Transaction dialog would automatically open for that reservation).

In our example above, lets say that Stall 1 was checked in before any of the others (their horse arrives early). Since it's in a synced/sub billing group, the top-level reservation (RV 1) will be selected for billing, and charges for all combined-billing reservations will be added (RV 1, RV 2, RV 3, and Stall 1). While this is an unusual situation, it's probably appropriate -- presumably any synced or sub reservations are all for the same customer (it will only combine billing for the same customer anyway), you would expect them to pay for everything the first time they check in, even if they're not ready to use all of their sites yet. Remember, you can always change the linkage to create separate billings if needed.

Customer Transactions

You may occasionally want to make transactions that are applied to a customer but not to a reservation, such as gift shop purchases, or advance deposits for reservations not yet made. To do this, you will need to use the Transaction button on the toolbar (the cash register), or Transactions | Enter Customer Transactions from the main menu. If a customer is already selected (highlighted) on the current tab view, then transactions for that customer will be shown. Otherwise, this will open a Find Customer dialog to locate the customer for which to make the transaction. (This works the same as Find Customer in New Reservation dialogs -- sort by the appropriate column, find the customer, click on it and click Use.) Once you find the customer to use, just click the Use button to enter transactions.

At this point, the Transactions Dialog will appear, just like for reservations. It functions in every way like the reservations dialog, with the exception that the customer information will be shown instead of the reservation at the top (there is nothing to edit here, but you can go to Customer Details). You will see any previous transactions for this customer, including any transactions for reservations this customer has made. Therefore you could use this to print a transaction receipt/statement for the customer that covers all of his past reservations.

Another difference is the receipt appearance, even though it's the same format as the reservation receipt. The Site and first/last nights area will be blank, the disclaimer/signature area will not be shown, and the park information will use the first Park defined in the database (since there is no reservation and thus no associated site to get the park information from).

One final thing to remember is that transactions here will ***not*** be reflected in any of the customer's reservations. This may be important for "balancing" reservations -- don't enter a payment for reservation charges here because the reservation will still show a balance due. You should get to Transactions through the appropriate reservation to enter any reservation charges or transactions.

For further details, see the *Transactions Dialog* section.

Unbound Transactions

P.O.S. note -- If you have purchased the P.O.S. option, you will probably never use Unbound transactions -- you will use the Point of Sale for any merchandise sales. Refer to that section for details. If you don't have the P.O.S. option, then Unbound Transactions are used as described below.

You may occasionally want to make transactions that are not applied to a customer or a reservation, such as gift shop purchases by walk-in customers (no need to clutter the customer database with non-campers or strangers). To do this, you can use the Transaction button on the toolbar (the cash register), or Transactions | Enter Unbound Transactions from the main menu (depending on options settings for the action of the cash register icon).

At this point, the familiar Transactions dialog will appear, just like for reservations and customers. The main difference is that there is no customer or reservation information at the top. Another difference is the receipt appearance, even though it's the same general format as the reservation or customer receipt. It will only show the park information, (the first Park defined in the database will be used, if you have multiple Parks set up).

If you do Select Rates for unbound transactions, the Merchandise rate type will be selected by default, since you're most likely entering counter sales.

The Deposit button will be disabled for unbound transactions -- deposits cannot be properly tracked for unbound transactions (and don't really make sense), so they are not allowed.

Since unbound transactions are not linked to a customer or reservation, they will only appear in the Transactions report (tab view) once you've entered them -- there is no other "transaction history" function for unbound transactions. If necessary, you can edit an unbound transaction by locating it on the Transaction report and using the Transactions option on the right-click menu. All transactions entered at the same time (one Transaction dialog session) will still be grouped together, so for instance you can make changes to a counter sale and print out a complete new receipt. (Note: this only applies to unbound transactions entered with Campground Master version 1.2 or later -- previous versions did not support the grouping.)

For further details, see the *Transactions Dialog* section.

Transaction History Dialog

This dialog is used for the Transaction History function from Reservation Details and Customer Details. It basically shows a list of all transactions for that reservation or customer, including the details of each transaction.

Most of this information can also be accessed through the New / Edit Transactions functions on those dialogs, but there are a few special purpose functions available here.

Prior transactions -- If you have previously used the Purge functionality to clear out old reservations, then a customer's Transaction History will show the total amount of payments the customer had in the purged transactions. This is simply for informational purposes so you can see if the customer has been a regular visitor. (Since only "balanced" transactions can be purged, you can assume that there was no outstanding balance for the purged transactions, so the amount "charged" was equal to the amount paid).

Print and Export -- You can print this detailed history list if needed, or export it to a text file.

Move Up and Move Down -- If you have sufficient operator access (Administrator by default), you can move

selected transactions in the list. This order affects the order that transactions are printed receipts on receipts, so it can be useful when entering prior transactions that were missed. It can also be useful for getting payments categorized properly in the Receipts by Category report (because charges must appear before the payment for those charges in order to categorize the payments properly).

Note that if you're in a reservation's transaction history, moving transactions will also move them in the customer's history. However if you're in the customer's history (e.g. from Customer Details), moving transactions only affects the order in the customer's history, not the corresponding reservation.   Therefore always access Transaction History from the Reservation Details if you need to move reservation transactions.

Also note that moving transactions here does not generally affect their order in the Transaction tab view (reports), because that sorts by date, time, and the record ID. (Moving transactions around doesn't affect the record ID, only the logical position in a list.)

Warning -- Be very careful about moving Deposit and Deposit Applied transactions -- the order of these is very important for proper reporting of deposit account balances and exporting deposit amounts to QuickBooks.

Misc. Income and Expense Transactions

These transactions are different than others in that they are not done in charge/payment pairs, don't have separate tax and discount entries, and so forth. They are single transaction entries, like entries in a ledger. As such, you won't use the same grid-style transaction dialog as you do for reservation and customer transactions. These should only be used if you are using Campground Master as your only accounting software, which would probably only be suitable for the smallest of campgrounds. Manager access is required to enter Expense and Income transactions.

To enter these transactions, use the menu functions to <u>Enter an Expense Transaction</u> or <u>Enter a Misc. Income Transaction</u> from the <u>Transactions</u> main menu. If you use the Transaction button, then click on the appropriate button at the bottom of the dialog to enter an expense or misc. income transaction. Note that the operator will need to have a Manager access level or higher to enter these transactions -- the menu/button options to enter them will be disabled otherwise.

At this point you will get a small dialog for either expenses or income (they look the same, just with different wording). Here you can enter the transaction date (defaulting to today but you can use it to enter old transactions easily), the payment or receipt method, check # or other reference, category, description, total amount and any notes.

These fields have all been covered in other sections and work the same here, except that you'll notice that no other transactions have a field for <u>Check # / Reference</u>. This is only used for these ledger-type transactions, and you can use any text you like in this field. You'll also notice that there is no Qty/Each, just one Total Amount field. As with others, no dollar sign is needed here, just enter an amount like "123.95" or "100".

After entering the transaction data, just click <u>Save</u> (or <u>Cancel</u> to abort it). When you view the Transactions tab, you will see the new transaction (assuming you're viewing the date entered in the transaction dialog).

Monthly Billing

This function is available under Transactions on the main menu, and is used for adding monthly charges to all reservations with the reservation type set to Monthly.

Overview

The Monthly Billing function uses the auto-rates functionality to add appropriate charges to all of your long-term reservations at once. Through the various configuration options, you can customize it to the way your business bills long-term residents or reservations.

Only reservations of the Monthly type (and optionally Owner type) will be used in monthly billing, so make sure that you set this type for any reservation that you need to bill on a monthly basis. This is done when making the New Reservation, or it can be changed through Reservation Details.

The table on this dialog shows the basic reservation information, plus the current balance due and the new charges that will be applied for this month's billing. If you want to print this as a report or export it, you can use the Print List or Export List buttons. Note that the New Charges amount might remain even after charges are applied (depending on the settings), although the Current Balance amount will change to include the new charges.

Rates Setup Requirements

Monthly billing uses the defined Rates and the auto-rates calculation logic, so you don't need to specify the monthly rate for each and every reservation. (This also allows price changes to be automatic for everyone). In order for monthly billing charges to be correct, you must have the Rates set up properly, following all of the same guidelines as Auto-Rates. If there are rates that should not be used for monthly billing, for instance your normal daily rates (presuming you have a separate rate for pro-rating partial months), then you need to make sure that those rate definitions don't have "Monthly" included in their Resv Types list. Of course if there are some that shouldn't be included for any auto-calculations at all, like special add-ons that you add manually, then make sure those have the "Exclude from auto-rates" option checked.

If you need to charge a special rate for some reservations (perhaps a promotional deal, or if they have been a long-term resident that you allow to stay for an older rate), then the only way to do it without handling it manually each month is to set up a special rate for them. Since the rates can't apply to an individual, you need to have some other way of indicating that the special rate be applied to them, One way is to set up a special Discount and define a rate for that discount.

Another way to do special rates would be to use an "add-on" rate. They would be charged the base rate along with the rest, but by defining an add-on rate (use it a negative Charge transaction to discount the rate if needed), you can apply a special discount for selected reservations according to a reservation attribute field. There are many "extra" attribute fields that can be redefined for this use. For instance, change the "Close to Diner" attribute to "Grandfathered rate", and make the rate apply to that field. Then just set that attribute to "must have" in the Site Preferences for the reservations to be grandfathered.

Charged-Through and Bill-To

The program generally determines how much to bill by doing auto-rates calculation for the days between the reservation's current "Auto-charged through" date (which is automatically adjusted each time) and the Bill-To date you specify in the Monthly Billing dialog. The Bill-To date is set automatically to the end of the nearest month -- for instance if it's now March 25th, it would set the Bill-To to April 30th, assuming you want to pre-bill them through April. If it's April 3rd, it would still set it to April 30th, assuming you're going to do billing for

this month. If the program guesses wrong, you can simply change the date or use one of the End-of buttons to quickly set it appropriately.

In the above example, any reservations that have not been charged for all of April (including any only partially charged through April) will be included in the list to be billed. You can also opt to show any not yet paid through a particular date, regardless of how far in advance they might have been charged. This is normally included so that you can include customers that have been charged for the month but have not yet paid.

Actually, The "Also include any not yet paid thru" option is usually selected for another reason -- after adding charges to the reservations listed, the list will be refreshed. Since the auto-charged-through date is also updated for the reservations, any that are now charged through the indicated Bill-To date will not be listed, which means they would probably all disappear before you get a chance to print them. (You could adjust the date to the next day to get them back, but that might also show some you didn't expect to print). So we recommend always setting this option, and using the same date for both the bill-to and paid-thru settings.

Although auto-rates are used, you can tweak the actual amount of time billed for various special cases using the options settings described below. In the simplest scenario it would add charges from the end of this month to the end of next month, resulting in a single monthly charge. The monthly billing can also "fill in" charges to catch up billing (for instance if they only paid for a partial month upon check-in, or if they are scheduled to leave in less than a month).

Obviously it's important to keep the auto-charged-through date accurate for the reservations. In general this is not a problem if you use the auto-rates functionality. However this date may get cleared or improperly set if someone adds charges manually or deletes previous auto-charges. It's a good idea to review the charged-through dates of all of the reservations before doing the billing to look for problems. This is easily done by sorting the list by Charged-Thru (click on the column header). If you see any that aren't correct, just double-click on the line to open the Reservation Details and adjust the date.

Errors

If it cannot find any applicable monthly rates for a given reservation, it will show "ERROR" in the New Charges column. If you see this, you need to review your Rates definitions and find out why none of your rates apply to that particular reservation.

Another common error is an incorrect amount due to a rates definition mistake. The only way to detect this is to scan through the New Charges column and see if any rates don't look right. If you see one that's questionable, simply put the mouse cursor over the value in New Charges. A pop-up tip will show what charges will be applied to the reservation, including the description, amounts, etc. This can help you pinpoint rate definition problems.

Options

The options selected here will be remembered each time you use Monthly Billing, and usually don't need to be changed from month to month once you have it working the way you want. Except for the first one, these are all accessed through the Billing and Printing Options button.

Show synchronized reservations -- This will allow you to see not only the master reservations to be billed, but also all synchronized reservations. Note that this does not affect which reservations the charges are applied to or printed, but allows you to see the New Charges broken out by site. Since it doesn't affect the billing or which actual reservations are shown and billed, just *how* they're shown, it has been placed on the main dialog instead of in the Billing and Printing Options.

Exclude reservations not yet checked in -- if you don't want to pre-bill monthlies that haven't yet arrived, check this option.

Exclude reservations leaving before the bill-to date -- While the auto-rates calculations can handle the actual charges to the end of their stay, there may be other reasons that you don't want to bill them at all this time (for instance if their actual departure date is often uncertain, and you prefer to charge them when they leave).

Use paid-thru date as the bill-from date, if the reservation's charged-through date has not been set -- While this is not generally recommended, you may need to set this to cover reservations that might not have a charged-through date due to charges adjustments. (A better method would be to review all of your monthly reservations and manually set their correct charged-through date in Reservation Details).

The next group of 4 options are the most important for determining what to charge each reservation depending on its last charged-through date, the bill-to date, and its Last Night (departure date). Note that if all 4 of these are NOT checked, then 1 month's charges will simply be added to each reservation to be billed, starting from the current charged-through date. The following 4 options are for fine-tuning the billing.

Charge to at least bill-to -- With this option set, it will add charges all the way from the last charged-through to the bill-to-date, no matter how many months (or partial months) that would be. This is great for "catching up" on missed billings, but may bill for more than you expect if a reservation's charged-through date isn't accurate. Note that the reason it's worded as "at least to..." is because it can still bill beyond the Bill-To date if the next option is set.

Charge only in full months -- This option can be used if you don't want any partial-month billing to occur. For instance if your bill-to is April 30 but the reservation has already been charged through the 15th, it will still add 1 month (and adjust the charged-through to May 15 after billing). This is a good choice if you don't try to keep your billing in sync with the 1st of the month and just charge months from their first night. Note that this can still be overridden by the next option.

Limit charges to the end of the reservation -- This will prevent charging a full month if their Last Night occurs before the bill-to-date -- it will attempt to use weekly or daily rates as appropriate to bill their remaining time. More precisely, it charges from their current charged-through to their last night, charging a partial month if needed. So if the previous option was also checked along with this one, the example given above would still result in a partial-month bill if their last night was May 10, for instance.

Don't add any charges if already charged for part of the month -- With this option selected, then instead of billing for a partial month or charging beyond the bill-to date, it simply wouldn't add any charges at all if it can't add a full month. This effectively overrides the previous 2 options, since it can't add charges past the bill-to and it can't add partial month charges.

Handle synchronized reservations individually -- If this is checked, then charges will be added to each reservation individually (and individual invoices printed) for synchronized reservations. While this is normally not done for short-term reservations (the "master" usually takes the charges for all of the synchronized sites), there is an important reason to do it for monthly billing -- if any of the synchronized sites has meter charges, those cannot be combined into the master so you will need to print separate invoices for those anyway. If synchronized sites are always non-metered (e.g. a storage space) then it would be OK, but otherwise it's recommended that synchronized sites be handled separately for monthly billing.

Include Owner-type reservations in addition to Monthly types -- Check this if your owner reservations also need to pay monthly charges like a maintenance fee.

Printing Options

Include dates charged in descriptions -- When this option is checked, every charge line on the invoice will

---

show the dates it's charging for. This is very useful for keeping track of what's charged, but it does make the description longer.

Invoice format -- This will initially default to the "Reservation Receipt default format" selection chosen in File | Printing Options. You can select a different type here to be used for monthly billing, and it will be saved for future monthly billings (but will not affect other receipts). Thus the default receipt type for monthly billing can be different than the type used for normal receipts. See Receipt Types in the *Working with Transactions* section for details on the different types.

Note that only one copy of each receipt will be printed (each time the printing button is pressed) -- the "Copies" setting in the Printing Options is ignored.

There are 5 options for selecting which transactions will be printed on the invoice:

Print All Transactions -- This prints all transactions for the reservation. For long-term rentals this can grow large quickly, so it may only be appropriate for seasonal or shorter situations.

Print "new" transactions -- If "Print Invoices" is used, this will print only the new charges added here (or transactions from the last session of monthly billing *or* the transaction dialog, if you haven't added the monthly charges yet). If "Pre-print Invoices" is used, it will include the new charges *plus* the transactions from the last session.

Print unpaid/unbalanced transactions -- This is the most common option, and will print any transactions since the last full payment was made. Thus it will also include any previous charges that have not been paid, whether it's overdue charges or charges for the electric meter, etc. Technically it will find the last "zero-balance" point in the transactions and print any after that point. Since the order of the transactions affects this, there may be cases where it doesn't correctly find what you would consider the last paid-in-full point (for instance if a new charge is added before they make a payment for previous charges, without paying for the new charge to zero the balance).

Print unpaid transactions -- This is similar to the zero-balance option, except that it will also consider a credit balance to be "paid", not just zero-balances. For instance if they paid an extra $20 on their last bill, it won't print the last bill or the payment, only transactions since that time.

Print transactions starting this date -- This allows you to print transactions added since a given date (including those added on the given date).   This would be appropriate for monthly billings if you don't want to include past-due charges or other charges added earlier, even if they aren't paid yet (The invoice will always show any previous balance and new balance due, so it would only exclude the transaction detail for previous transactions.

Editing and Selecting Individual Reservations

If there are some reservations that shouldn't be billed this time, or if you need to print bills for just certain reservations, you can do this by selecting individual reservations in the table. Use Ctrl-Click to select one or more lines. Only those selected will be affected by any of the button functions below the table -- extending, charging, or printing. (If none are selected, then it's assumed you want to use all of them -- there is no need to select them all.)

Extending Reservations Automatically

At some point you may need to extend all of the monthly reservations to keep the site reserved. Depending on how you set the dates initially (see the Monthlies Options under Maintenance | Program Options), you may want to do this every month, or perhaps just extend them for another year at the end of each year. Either way, all you need to do is click the Extend 1 Month button. This will either extend all listed

reservations (if none are selected), or just the selected ones. You can click it as many times as needed to add additional months -- you will see the Last Night advance for each reservation. Note that this only changes the Last Night for the reservations, not the Blocked date.

If extending a reservation will cause a conflict, an error message will be displayed and that reservation will not be extended (any others that don't conflict will still be extended). You will need to find the conflict and correct it before you can extend that reservation.

If a reservation ends on the last day of the month, extending it one month will extend it to the last day of the next month, even if it's a shorter or longer month. However if it ends on any other day of the month, it will extend it to the same day on the next month if possible. (If the next month is too short, it will extend to the last day of that month.

Adding Charges

Once you're ready to add the charges to the reservations (and have confirmed that the New Charges look correct for all of the reservations), just click the Add Charges button. The charges will automatically be added to each reservation and the Current Balance will be updated in the table.

However, if it's necessary for your accounts receivable that you can't add charges yet but you do want to print invoices for next month, then you can use the Pre-print Invoices function (see below). For instance, you may want to pre-print invoices on the 25th of the month to be mailed out, and then come back later to add the charges on the 1st of the month.

An important note -- since some of these new options can result in some reservations having no new charges added, you should check the list to see if any have $0 for the New Charges. You may not want to print invoices for those, or and adjustment may need to be made to your rates definitions or to the reservation's auto-charged-through date. To skip them easily, sort by New Charges and then highlight only those with non-zero charges before pre-printing invoices.

Another important note -- since the reservations listed is based on charged-through instead of paid-through, the New Charges for most or all of the reservations will change to $0 after you click Add Charges (because the charged-through is instantly updated, and now they are charged in full). If you don't have the "Also include any paid-through..." option selected, with the same date as the bill-to date, all of those just charged will be removed fro the list before you get a chance to print them. So, you either need to use the Pre-Print function first, before adding the charges, or you need to select the option to include any reservations not paid-through the bill-to date.

Printing Invoices, etc.

You can print invoices after adding charges, or you can pre-print invoices (show next month's charges without actually adding them to the reservations). You can also print mailing labels and envelopes if needed (these functions will take you to another dialog for printing mailing labels and envelopes, but will not close the monthly billing dialog). As with the other functions, you can select individual reservations to print if needed.

Finishing Up

Once you've printed the invoices and/or added the charges, there's nothing else you need to do -- just Close the dialog until the next billing time.

8   Other Reports

Overview

Specialized reports are found under Reports on the main menu. There are three different statistical reports that are based on reservations, providing useful statistics to aid in managing and marketing your campground. In addition, there are Meter Reading reports for each type of meter (some or all may be disabled if not supported by your sites), Mailing labels, Envelopes, and Batch Receipt printing. To generate each report, start by clicking the appropriate menu item.

Note: All Transaction reports, such as receipts, charges, taxes, deposits, income, and so on, are accessed through the Transactions tab view. In particular, click the Summary Options button on the Transactions view for a variety of reports and customization settings.

Report Dialog Controls

Each of these reports is created interactively from a dialog. Just select the desired options in the dialog, then click the Generate Report button. You can then Print the report, or adjust the options to generate other reports. Whenever you have finished generating reports of a particular type, just Close the dialog. The last options you selected (except for the dates) will be saved for that report and used as the default the next time you open that report dialog.

The reports are grid-based summary reports similar to the Summary Transaction reports in the Transaction tab. Thus they use the same print option settings and have the same look. One difference is that there is no right-click menu in these report grids (but the common Grid Lines and Orientation options are available in the dialogs). Most of the controls in the three different report dialogs are similar, as detailed here.

Dates

You can select any start and end date for the reports, to filter reservations occurring in the selected date range. There are also helper buttons to quickly select Month-to-Date, Year-to-Date, Last Month and Last Year date ranges.

Summarize period

You can summarize the reports by days, months, quarters, or years. This results in one column (or row) for each day, month, or year of the selected date range. Keep in mind that the date range selected takes precedence. So for example if you summarize by month and selected the range 4/1/2001 to 5/1/2001, it will show April and May months in the report but will be reporting for only one day in May due to the 5/1/2001 ending date.

Site/Reservation Filtering

Most of the reports can be filtered by site type/class/park, and also by specific reservation details. This button will open the Reservation Filtering dialog and allow complex reservation selection and/or Site Filtering.

Auto-Generate

By default, you must click the Generate Report before it will calculate a report and fill the grid, since some reports can take a significant time to generate. If you're reporting on a small date range or using a fast enough computer, you can select the auto-generate option so that the report is refreshed every time you change one of the options. This can be useful for experimenting with the controls to see how they affect the report before generating a report for a large date range.

Grid Lines

Any of the reports may have their grid lines turned on or off by checking or unchecking this option.

Dates on Top

The orientation of any report can be flipped with this option (uncheck it to put the dates in rows).

Hide groups with zero totals

The wording is slightly different according to each report, but the option does basically the same for each report. It will prevent showing group rows or columns (but not date summaries) that have no possible results for the entire date range. Each report treats this slightly differently. In the Occupancy report, it will hide any site types with no available sites in the date range (according to the other options). In the How-Heard report, it will hide any sources that had no reservations reporting that source. In the Unfulfilled Reservations report, it will hide any of the reservation statuses that had no reservations with the given status.

Show as Percentages

Any of the reports can show either percentages or total number of reservations (or reservation nights). When showing percentages, some of the totals may be an Average percentage rather than a Total percentage. (If they are totals, then they should add up to 100% for that row or column). If there are no possible sites/reservations for a given cell total, it will show dashes (---).

If not showing as percentages, each cell will have two numbers, in the form "80 / 95". The first number is the total number of reservations (or nights) for that value, and the second number is the total that could be possible for that date period (all available site nights for the Occupancy report, or all reservations for that period in the other reports). If there are no possible sites/reservations for a given cell total, it will show dashes (--/--).

Note: a space is included in front of the --/-- values so that it's not interpreted as a date when copied or exported to Excel.

Show total possible sites

This only applies if not showing the report as percentages, and when selected will show the values in fractional format (e.g. "3/6"). This is no by default, but it can be turned off so only the number (e.g. "3") is shown. This is helpful when the data needs to be exported to Excel, for instance, for further manipulation.

Count sites even if unavailable

When this option is available for a report, selecting it will include sites in the calculations for each date even if it's not available for that date, according to its season dates and/or special dates available or unavailable. (It doesn't matter whether the site was "open" on that date or whether had a reservation.) Since this can result in less meaningful results, such as in Occupancy reports, you can disable this so that a site is only counted in the total possible for occupancy for a given date if it's available for that date.

Use all reservation nights (vs. arrivals)

For the How-heard Report and the Unfulfilled Reservations, you can generate statistics one of two ways. The two options can result in very different results, each of which have their advantages, but when the results each way are compared to each other it can be especially useful.

With this option selected, it will count each night of a reservation as a separate "hit", like a separate reservation with the given value or status for each night of the reservation. Thus a reservation lasting 30 nights would count 30 times, while a reservation lasting 2 nights would only count twice. This also means that a reservation starting in May and ending in June would count some for May and some for June in a monthly report.

With this option not selected, every reservation counts only once regardless of its length, and it only counts for the date on which it started. Thus a reservation starting in January and ending in June would only count once, and only for the January total in a monthly report. In fact this can result in many reservations that cover the report's date range being skipped entirely because they started before the date range. (However, this report is much faster to generate.)

The reason to check a report each way is to compare the results. For instance, when looking at "highway signs" results in a How-heard Report, a high percentage based on arrivals and a low percentage based on nights could mean that you get a lot of customers from highway signs, but they only stay a short time compared to other references. This revelation might even affect your advertising decisions because it creates a lot of work and expenses (checking them in and out, small credit card transactions, etc.) for smaller bits of income.

Print

Each report has a Print button which will print the current report. This may print just the grid, or print the requested envelopes, mailing labels, or receipts, depending on the report type. A preview will be shown before printing if you have the "Always preview reports" option enabled under File | Printing Options.

Export List

Each report has an Export List button, which can be used to export the currently shown list/grid to a CSV file (see the *Exporting Reports* section for more details). This could be used to get the meter lists into a PDA for taking readings, or for exporting a mailing list to be used in another program.

Housekeeping Report

This report provides a list of sites or rooms that may need "housekeeping" attention due to a customer arriving and/or departing on a given day. It can also include all occupied rooms, in the case where all occupied rooms need to be cleaned.

For each site, it will show an "<u>Out</u>" and an "<u>In</u>" status so you can see at a glance what is happening with a site.

The <u>Out</u> column will show either Departing, Checked Out, or Occupied. It will be blank if the site was unoccupied last night.

The <u>In</u> column will show either Arriving, Checked In, or Occupied, or else it will be blank if the site will be unoccupied tonight.

Various options let you customize which room status you care to see, and if you need the extra information of Site Type, ETA, or Reservation Type. You can also set a site filter to eliminate rooms which never need housekeeping attention.

Note that "scheduled" sites, for instance those used for hourly reservations, will not be shown in the housekeeping report.

Occupancy, Availability, Arrivals & Departures Reports

These four reports are very similar in usage, with the differences being only in the content of the reports.

Occupancy Report (and general report usage)

This report will show the percentage of site occupancy (reservations filling the sites) for a given date range. The report can group the results by Site Type or Site Class, or show the results for each individual site.

You can select which site types or classes to report, which will affect the Average Percentage totals for a date period -- for instance if you exclude seldom-used site types like boat docks, your average for the period would more accurately reflect the actual occupancy average. Of course occupancy is averaged for each of the site types as well, so you know precisely how much of each site type is filled.

Counting sites even if they are unavailable is usually not appropriate, but might be useful to indicate what the overall occupancy percentage would be if you made them available the whole time.

When not showing percentages, you can see how many total site-nights were available for each period (sites times the number of nights -- for instance, 30 nights in a month times 100 sites would show 3000 site-nights). It also shows how many were filled for each period. This can help illustrate that 80% resulting from 8 out of 10 is not as significant as 80% resulting from 800 out of 1000.

The averages are calculated from the totals of all groups, so they are weighted accordingly. Thus you can see groups of 80% and 100% average out to 82% rather than the "expected" 90%, because there were more possible site nights in the 80% group than the 100% group.

This report shows Average percentages in both total directions (for all site types over the total date range, and for all dates of a given site type). There is no requirement for percentages to total up to 100% as in some other reports, since that can only happen if all sites are full for all nights in the range.

Note that this report counts all types of reservations by default, including guests, owners, and day passes. Since these don't normally occupy a spot, or there can be multiple reservations of this type in one spot, this can result in numbers higher than 100% in reports by Site, Site Type or Site Class. To exclude these, or to include only reservations of certain types, use Site/Reservation Filtering and select only the types to be counted in the report.

You can also use this report to check occupancy levels for future dates, since it will also count pending reservations already made for the future. (Note however that it can only count reservations that have sites assigned to them.) This can be useful for predicting and preparing for a busy season, or for seeing when you need to do more advertising to fill more spaces, perhaps by sponsoring a special event or sending out coupons in a normally slump period.

Special Groupings

In addition to reporting occupancy by site type, class, etc., you can report occupancy by Discount Used and Reservation Types. These can be useful for statistical purposes, but note that when showing the total possible sites or percentages, the "total possible" for each grouping (e.g. for each discount or reservation type) will actually be the total of all sites available.

Also note that when grouping by Discount Used, the discount for any "future" reservations (any not yet checked in) is actually assumed to be the customer's first discount, if any. This is because reservations that haven't been checked in probably don't have the "Discount Used" field set yet, since charges haven't been added. (However if the Discount Used has already been set for the reservation anyway, it will be used.)

Availability Report

This report will show the percentage or quantity of sites available for a given date range. It's almost identical to the Occupancy Report, except that it's showing the "opposite" numbers -- e.g. if 90% of the sites are occupied, then 10% will be available. Actually this report is most useful when showing the # of sites available (instead of percentages), for future dates. It can be printed out as a quick-reference summary of availability.

Arrivals Statistics Report

This report is similar to the Occupancy Report, and has all of the same options and functions. The difference is that the Arrival Statistics report only "counts" reservations on their arrival date, whereas the Occupancy Report counts each date of the reservation's total stay.

The primary use for this report is to get a summary of the number of parties arriving each day. It could be considered a summary of the Arrivals tab view, showing only daily totals instead of the details of each reservation. Of course you can use it for other special purposes through filtering, for instance you could use the reservation filter to create a report showing how many parties arrived each day that are Good Sam members.

Departures Statistics Report

This report is similar to the Arrivals Report, and has all of the same options and functions. The difference is that the Departures Statistics report only "counts" reservations on their last date, so you can see how many are due out each date or period.

Important: Since this report is based on the Last Night of each reservation, remember that the dates shown are *not* the departure date -- for instance, the number shown for October 3rd will actually be the number departing on the morning of October 4th.

How-heard Report

This report shows you the sources of your customers. It will group the totals by each category you have in the How-heard pick-list. It can be useful to see which advertising methods are paying off. You can select which site types to include in the reports, so for instance you can compare results for full-hookup deluxe sites vs. electric/water sites (perhaps to see where the big-spenders are coming from).

The percentages are based on all reservations (or reservation nights) found for each period. In addition to the percentages for each summarized date period, it will show an average percentage for all date periods combined (the entire date range). Since it also includes a category for "no info" (when no How-heard value is selected by the operator), the total of all How-heard categories should be 100% for each date period.

Unfulfilled Reservations

This report is useful for seeing how many reservations have been "missed" due to customer cancellations, inquiries that did not turn into reservations, and not being able to accommodate customers. It will report percentages (or totals) in five categories:

> **Could Not Fill** (the "couldn't book" flag on reservations)
> **Cancelled** (presumably cancellations by the customer)
> **Waiting List** (couldn't book them but they wanted to know if something came available)
> **Inquiries** (information saved but no reservation made)
> **Filled or Pending** (either successful past reservations or booked future reservations).
>> The Filled or Pending category is included even though they were not unfulfilled, just so that the totals can be seen for proper perspective.

Note that you can use this report to report on future dates as well as the past, which can indicate when you have a lot of customers already waiting for space (perhaps to prepare some extra sites to take on the demand).

In addition to the percentages for each date period of each category, the average percentage for the entire date range is shown. Since all possible status conditions are covered, the Totals for all categories should be 100% for each date period, as well as the Averages.

If you don't select the Show as Percentages option, you will see the actual number of reservations (or reservation nights) for each of the categories, which can also be useful.

You can also select which site types to report, which would allow you do make comparisons between cancellations of deluxe sites vs. economy sites, for instance.

Meter Reading Reports

These three reports are identical except for which meter fields they report. Any of these reports may be disabled, if the corresponding Site Data Fields for meter support are disabled. They show the site name, the current occupant (the reservation scheduled for today, if any), the last reading date, and the last reading. Reservation access level is required to view this report.

These reports show the current meter reading as well as an input field to "batch" enter new readings (which can also be used for recording the readings on the printed report). If the Rates are set up properly for automatic charge calculation, this is the easiest and quickest way to add meter charges to reservations. It can also be used to adjust the readings for sites with no reservation.

Report Settings

Show only sites with previous readings -- this is selected by default, which generally will be any sites that actually have meters. If you want to see all sites even if they don't have previous meter readings (such as when entering readings for the first time), uncheck this box.

Filter by last reading date -- this allows you to select a date range for the last reading. This is handy for getting a list of meters that need to be read (and customers billed) for the current day or week. By default, the start date will be 45 days ago and the end date will be 25 days ago, so it will show any readings up to 2 weeks "overdue" and any readings that will be "due" within about 5 days (assuming a monthly reading schedule. These dates can be changed as preferred, and the changes will be saved in terms of the number of days prior to the current day (so for instance the 45-to-25 days range is saved, not the actual dates).

Reservation types to show/charge -- Regardless of which sites are shown, you can select which reservation types to show on those sites. For instance, if you read all meters but only want to add meter charges to your Monthly reservations, then click Select Resv Types and select only the Monthly type. All non-monthly reservations will be hidden from the report (but the sites will still be shown). Therefore when new meter readings are entered in batch mode, the sites will be updated as if no reservation was on the site, and no charges will be added. In addition, you can use this to disable all reservation types, in which case no reservations will be shown at all. Use this to enter the starting meter readings before adding charges the first time, or if you simply want a reading report with no reservation information.

All of the options above are saved and will be used the next time you use any meter reading report (all of the meter reports use the same option settings).

By default the list is sorted by site, but you can change this to any order you like. Once you have the list showing what you need, you can print the list. There should be plenty of room left on the paper to enter the new reading, so it can be used as a walk-around list.

Right-click and double-click

Functions to enter readings or view details are available on the right-click menu -- click on any cell that's not empty, such as the Site Name or Occupant. You can enter new readings and add the charges to the current reservation, or enter manual adjustments without charging a reservation. You can also view site details or reservation details.

Note that the double-click function is different depending on which column you click on and whether a reservation is shown:

Site Name -- Double-clicking in this column will open Site Details, where you can directly enter a meter reading without charging a reservation.

Occupant -- Double-clicking in this column will open Reservation Details. From there you could go to New/Edit Transactions to enter charges if desired (but there's a more direct way to enter meter charges, described below.)

Reading Date or **Meter Reading** -- Double-clicking on one of these columns will open a dialog where you can enter the new meter reading. However there is a slight difference depending on whether a reservation is shown. When the site has no occupant shown, you simply enter the reading and Save it, and the site's reading is updated. If there is an occupant shown, it will actually open the Transactions / Select Rates for the occupant's reservation and then the meter reading entry dialog. When you enter a reading here, the charges will be added to the reservation automatically. For more information, see *Entering Single Meter Readings* below.

Batch Reading Entry -- Double-clicking in this column will simply put the cursor in that field so you can enter a new reading for batch processing (see below).

Entering Single Meter Readings

You can manually adjust readings from the right-click menu (Site Details) or by double-clicking on any Site Name. This will open the Site Details dialog, where you can enter a new reading. Remember, however, that entering a reading this way will clear the reservation link so you won't be able to use the "View reservation read by" button, and also does not add charges to a reservation.

Select the Add Meter Charges to Reservation option from the right-click menu, or double-click on the old meter reading, to quickly enter a meter reading and have the appropriate charges added to a reservation. This will take you directly to the Transactions dialog with Select Rates opened up to show the appropriate rates definitions for the meter (electric, gas or water as appropriate). If there is only one rate available, that rate will automatically be used and all you have to do is enter the new reading. Just enter the new reading, (and the actual date of the reading if it wasn't today), and press the "Done (auto-close...)" button on the meter reading entry dialog to immediately close the transactions dialog and get back to the meter list.

Note that meter wrap-around is handled automatically, as long as the wrap-around figure is set in Maintenance / Park Setup / Parks. For instance if the meter only has 4 digits and the last reading was 9900 but it now shows 0200, just enter 200 and it will know that 300 units were used.

If you need to enter other charges or want to print a receipt immediately, then instead of using the "Done..." button, click Save after entering the new reading. The Transactions / Rates dialogs will remain open.

You can also open the Reservation Details for the site's current occupant by double-clicking the occupant name. You will then be able to use that dialog's New / Edit Transactions button to add a meter charge for that reservation as above (it just takes a few more steps this way).

After entering a reading (or multiple readings), you can use the Print buttons at the bottom to print receipts, envelopes, or labels for all of the reservations with new readings.

Entering Multiple Meter Readings (Batch Entry)

When many meter readings need to be entered and charges applied to reservations, the batch entry method is quickest. Just click on the empty "Batch Reading Entry" column for the site -- the cell will be blue (selected) -- and type the new reading, then press **Enter** or **Tab** to step to the next row. The new readings will remain in this column and will be in a light yellow color. As with single readings, wrap-around is handled automatically (if the wrap-around is within a 25% range). An error will be shown if the figure you enter cannot be understood as either greater than the previous reading or a reasonable wrap-around.

If you have linked/synchronized reservations, you may have the option to Handle synchronized reservations

<u>individually</u>. If this box is checked, the meter charges for each site will be added to the individual reservations. However, other charges for synchronized reservations are usually added to the Master reservation instead of the individual reservations -- so to be consistent and avoid having to print multiple invoices, leave this option unchecked.

You can also select the date of the actual readings. This will not affect the date of the charges (that will always be the current day), but if the meters were actually read on a previous day, select the appropriate date here so that the information is correct on the sites. (If some meters were read on different dates, enter readings from each day one at a time, set the reading date, and Add Charges... then repeat for each additional day, resetting the date each time.)

Once all of the batch readings are entered, click the "Add Charges & Update Readings" button. Charges will be automatically applied to each of the current reservation (if there is one for the site), and the site will be updated with the new reading. These steps may be repeated to enter more readings if necessary, just don't close the dialog before printing invoices or else it won't remember which ones need to be printed.

There are two Rates Setup requirements for adding meter charges automatically:

1. There must be one and only one meter rate defined (for that meter type) with the "Ask for meter reading" option that will apply to the current reservation on the current date. If there is more than one, an error will be reported and the reading will not be updated. Note that if you have multiple rates defined with different date ranges, it will use the one that applies to the current date, regardless of the reservation's dates.

2. There may also be one other meter rate that does not have the "Ask for meter reading" option. This can be used for a non-multiplying "base rate" that applies each time the meter is read, for instance if your charges require a $5 per month base fee plus actual usage.

After all of the readings are entered (using either the single or multiple method), you can print the invoices for all of the new charges, and also print labels or envelopes if needed. Using these buttons will open the appropriate dialogs to print Batch Receipts or Mailing Labels/Envelopes. Further options for printing can be found in those sections. As long as the Meter Reading report dialog is kept open, it will remember which reservations have new charges to be printed so you can use the print functions multiple times as needed.

Note: Be careful about using batch entry to enter "adjustment" readings or charges for short-term customers -- when using the "Add Charges" function, it will assume that the current reservation in each site should be charged for the meter. So if the wrong customer is already on that site when the readings are entered, the charges will be applied to the wrong reservation. In this case you should find the correct reservation and go through its Transactions / Select Rate(s) to enter the new meter reading. Or if it's just an adjustment with no charges to be applied to a reservation, use the Site Details to enter the new reading.

Mailing Labels and Envelopes

The dialogs for these reports are identical, they just print different formats. You can get to this report dialog from the main Report menu or from a right-click menu on a tab view (print an envelope for the selected reservation, or print mailing labels/envelopes for all shown reservations).

Mailing Labels are formatted to the industry standard "30-up" label sheet on Letter size (8.5" x 11") paper -- Avery numbers 8460, 8660, 8920, 8940, etc. While this format cannot be changed, if the labels don't print in the proper position then you may need to adjust the Printer Offsets in File | Printing Options. Experiment with plain paper before using labels.

Envelopes are formatted for a #9 or #10 envelope by default, but can be sized to any envelope by changing the paper size and orientation in File | Printer Settings | Envelopes and the address offsets in File | Printing Options. You will probably also need to change the Printer Settings for Envelopes to use Landscape orientation if you have to feed them end-wise, besides selecting the proper paper size (e.g. Envelope - #10).

If you want the return address to also be printed on the envelope, you can enable that and set its position in File | Printing Options. Note that if you have multiple Park records in your database, the return address printed for each customer will be from the park associated with its most recent reservation (the most recent being the last one actually created, regardless of whether the reservation is for a past or future date).

If you're preparing for a mass mailing of an advertisement, you should check the Filter out "Exclude from Mailings" customers box to eliminate those who do not want mail.

If entering this dialog from the main Reports menu, all customers will be shown in the list to print. If entering from a right-click menu on a tab view, then only those customers from that view will be shown. The Filter out duplicate customers box is checked by default, since tab views can often show multiple reservations for the same customer. Of course you can always uncheck this, perhaps so that labels and receipts are matched up properly even for those customers with multiple reservations.

You can also filter the customers to print by checking the Use reservation, with optional filtering box. (This check box is not shown if entering from a right-click on a view, since you're using reservations already.) First this will eliminate any customers that do not have reservation records (customers entered as guests, or who only purchased something in the gift shop, etc.).   Then you can further filter the list with the Reservation Filtering button. Since this filtering is identical to the filtering used for batch-printing receipts, it is described separately below. Note that the filtering options are not saved once the report dialog is closed.

The total number of customers in the list is shown at the bottom. Also note that you can double-click on any line to get the Customer Details dialog, where you could fix an address, check the Exclude from Mailing flag (for instance on ones that have no zip code), or any other changes. The list will be re-generated with any updates you make.

If you would like to print out the list or export the list to a CSV file, use the Print List or Export List button. This will print or export the entire contents of the list in the dialog, just as it is shown.

Once you have them filtered as needed, you can trim down the list further by selecting only those customers to print. For instance, it may be handy to sort them by zip code (the default), and select only those records with zip codes. Use the multi-select methods to select multiple records (click / shift-click for a range, ctrl-click for individual lines). If none are selected, all will be printed (the same as selecting all records).

Finally, just click Print (or press **F8**) to print them.

Reservation Receipts (Batch)

This report dialog is similar to the mailing labels/envelopes dialog. You can get to this report from the main Report menu or from a right-click menu on a tab view (print a receipt for the selected reservation, or print reservation receipts for all shown reservations).

You can filter the reservations to print with the Filtering button. If entering this report dialog from the Reports main menu, it will show only reservations made today by default. Therefore if you print a batch of confirmation letters for reservations made each day, it's all set (but you may want to further filter out any that have already checked in if you have walk-ins). See below for details on the filtering dialog. Note that the filtering options are not saved once the report dialog is closed.

The total number of reservations in the list is shown at the bottom. Also note that you can double-click on any line to get the Reservation Details dialog, where you could make changes if needed. The list will be re-generated with any updates you make.

If you would like to print out the list or export the list to a CSV file, use the Print List or Export List button. This will print or export the entire contents of the list in the dialog, just as it is shown.

Once you have them filtered as needed, you can trim down the list further by selecting only those reservations to print. Use the multi-select methods to select multiple records (click / shift-click for a range, ctrl-click for individual lines). If none are selected, all will be printed (the same as selecting all records).

Once you have what you want to print selected, you will want to select the receipt format to print. As on the New Transactions dialog, this will default to the selection chosen in File | Printing Options. You can select a different type here, and it will only affect this one printing (it will not change the default). See Receipt Types in the *Working with Transactions* section for details on the different types.

There are 4 options for selecting which transactions will be printed for each one:

Print All Transactions -- This prints all transactions for the reservation.

Print "new" transactions -- This will print all transactions added in the last Transaction dialog session. Thus you can use this to re-print the last "new" receipt.

Print unbalanced transactions -- This will generally print any transactions since the last full payment was made. Technically it will find the last "zero-balance" point in the transactions and print any after that point. Since the order of the transactions affects this, there may be cases where it doesn't correctly find what you would consider the last paid-in-full point (for instance if a new charge is added before they make a payment for previous charges, without paying for the new charge to zero the balance). Also note that if there is currently a zero balance (it's already paid in full), then rather than printing no transactions at all, it will print all transactions since the zero-balance point prior to the last transaction (everything since "last" paid in full).

Print unpaid transactions -- This is similar to the unbalanced option, except that it will also consider a credit balance to be "paid", not just 0-balances. For instance if they paid an extra $20 on their last bill, it won't print the last bill or the payment, only transactions since that time.

Print transactions starting this date -- This allows you to print transactions added since a given date (including those added on the given date).   This is most useful to work around problems of payment order mentioned above, or if you need to print an invoice for multiple meter readings or other charges added in different sessions.

Finally, just click Print Receipts (or press **F8**) to print them.

Reservation Filtering Dialog

This dialog allows a number of filtering options to aid in generating lists with Find Reservation, printing mailing labels and envelopes, and batch-printing of invoices or confirmation letters.

The first section is the date filtering. If selected, there are 6 different options for date filtering (only one date option can be used at a time).

Next you can filter by the length of stay. You can specify a range of nights or just a minimum number of nights (by leaving the maximum set to 0). Note that this only includes actual nights stayed or reserved, not blocked nights.

The next section includes options to include any that have a balance or not. You can even select *only* credit balances to print, in case you need to send refunds.

Next, you can use Site Filtering to select the individual sites, site types, site classes, and/or parks to include.

Next is a special section that allows a reservation to be included even if the reservation itself doesn't match the criteria, but a reservation that it's linked to does match the criteria. For instance, this option could be used if you want to include all reservations for a particular site plus any reservations linked to those.

Finally, you can filter by the reservation type, reservation status, the discount used on the reservation, and how they heard about your park. You can make single or multiple selections in each list as needed. (Selecting none of the options in the list is the same as selecting all of them.)

To clear all filter selections (to do no filtering at all so all reservations in the database are included), click the Reset All button.

9   Import and Export Functions

Overview

Campground Master supports a number of functions for getting data to and from other programs. While most smaller campground owners will find that Campground Master does everything they need, it can be useful for accounting to export the transactions into QuickBooks, or export reports or raw data to a standard format to be processed by other programs. Reports like the On Site report and Meter Reading reports can even be exported to a Palm or Pocket PC to use as a walk-around checklist.

The Import function can be used to transfer customer and reservation data from another system into Campground Master, to avoid retyping everything.

If your campground has a web site, then you may find the Export to Web function useful for showing your web site visitors what vacancies you have. Of course this is only as useful as you make it by updating the web site often enough, but if you want to take reservations through the web it can be very helpful. Note that this function is actually covered in the Online Reservations chapter instead of here, since it's related to online functions..

Note that Manager access is required for any of the export functions, and only Administrators can use the Import function.

P.O.S. Note: If the P.O.S. option is enabled, then there will be an additional function for importing inventory/vendor data. See the Inventory Setup section in the *Point of Sale* chapter for details.

Importing Customer, Reservation or Transaction Data

The Import function can be found on the main menu: <u>File</u> | <u>Import</u> | <u>Import Customer/Reservation/Transaction data</u>. You must have Administrator access to use this function.

IMPORTANT: Make sure you have a backup before doing the import, so you don't have to manually delete data if a mistake is made!

There are two primary requirements for the data to be imported:

1. It must be in either a comma-separated-value (CSV) or tab-delimited (text) format. If it's a CSV format, make sure that any fields with commas are enclosed in quotes (this is the standard).

2. The fields must be in a form that equates to the fields in Campground Master. For instance, Site names (if importing reservations) must match either the Site Name or Abbreviation fields of the sites you've defined in Campground Master. There are some special-purpose import fields that can be used if the name is not separated into First/Last or if the City/State/Zip is all in one field.

Importing Customers vs. Reservation

Keep in mind that customers and reservations are separate in Campground Master. Reservations are "linked" to customers, but the customer data is in a separate table. Reservations also include the site number and dates of the reservation. Likewise, Transactions are separate but linked to the reservations.

You can import just the customer data from a customer list, or you can import the customers along with reservations at the same time if your import file contains the necessary information. You will see when defining the import fields (below) that there are two sets of fields -- one for Customers and one for Reservations. If you're importing just the customer data, then you will only select fields for customers.

If the import data has sites & dates information, then you can also import the reservations by selecting the reservation fields. You must have a first night and last night for the reservation, and preferably a site for it also (otherwise they will all be "unassigned" and you will need to assign each one to the appropriate site manually). When importing reservations, it will first create a customer record (checking for duplicates), and then will create a reservation record for that customer. If your import data has multiple reservations for a single customer, that's fine -- it will create the customer only once, and will create multiple reservations for it.

Sometimes the data to be imported is separated into two separate files -- one for customers and one for the reservations. This will work as long as there is a unique identifier field for each customer (often called an "index" or "key"), and the reservation file uses that identifier as a link to the customer. Alternatively, if the reservation data has at least the customer's last name and first names, that can be used to link the reservations to the correct customer.

If there is a unique customer ID, then you will need to enable the "Cust Import ID" field so it can be imported. See Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Customer Fields. Import the customer data file first, and be sure to import this ID field along with the other customer information. Then import the reservation data file, again selecting the customer Import ID field for the appropriate column so it can associate each reservation with the proper customer.

There is also a Resv Import ID in the Reservation fields. This field is important if you want to import transactions and the transactions are in a separate file from the reservations (assuming there's a reservation ID link for each transaction in the transaction data file). If this is the case, enable the Resv Import ID field and import it along with the other reservation data. Then use that field when importing transactions to identify the reservation for each transaction.

After all of the importing is done, we recommend that you disable the Import ID fields again since they're no longer needed. This will save space in the database.

Importing Transactions

Transaction importing requires some special handling, detailed below. Most likely you will need to create a special file suitable for importing transactions, so that the proper fields exist. The importing capabilities are limited to records with similar information and organization to Campground Master's transaction data, so this may require some custom programming to accomplish.

1. Transactions can only be imported if Reservations have previously been imported. If only Customer data is imported, Transactions cannot be imported because there must be reservations for the transactions to be assigned to.

2. Transactions must be imported separately from reservations, even if they are in the same file -- import reservations first, then start the Import over and import the transactions.

3. The import file must include the Reservation Confirmation # field for each transaction (and optionally the Site can be included), matching the imported reservations (and these must be assigned to columns along with the Transaction fields). Alternatively, it can include just a unique ID, or index, for the reservations. This is how the transactions are matched up with the reservations so they can be applied properly. Multiple transactions may be imported for each reservation as needed.

4. If the import file does not have the transaction Type and Category fields, all transactions will be assumed to be Deposits. As with other imported values, the Type and Category names imported must exactly match the one of the pick-list values in Campground Master. Of course a Total field is required as well for

transactions, which is often the only thing imported, such as a deposit balance. If a Qty is available, a Qty field plus an Each field can be used instead of Total (it will calculate one from the other as needed). The rest of the Transaction fields are optional.

Importing Customers from QuickBooks

You can import a customer database from QuickBooks accounting software using this same Import function. First you need to export the data from QuickBooks using its Export Addresses function: File -> Utilities -> Export Addresses. You may see a prompt for selecting the names to export, in which case you should select All Customers/jobs from the list (you don't need to vendors and employees, and probably don't need "other names"). Then click OK and enter a file name to export to, such as "Customers.txt". This will be a tab-delimited file that can be used for importing below, and will have appropriate address/city/state/zip information if you entered this data uniformly into QuickBooks.

The Import Process

There are several easy steps to importing.

1. Select a file. You can enter the entire path to the import file, or use the Browse button. When browsing, it will look for .csv and .txt files by default, but you can change the file type to show all files if needed.

2. Select the file format. Select either comma-separated or tab-delimited. Don't worry if you get it wrong -- the data will obviously look wrong when you import it if you choose wrong, and you can simply change this selection and do the Import again.

3. Load the file for preview. Click the Load Import File button to read the data. The data is not actually added to your database yet, it's just loaded in the list on the dialog for previewing and editing.

4. Define fields to import. If the file loaded successfully you should see the data in nice columns in the table. If the import file had headers in it, you'll even see the headers in the first line, like "first name", "last name", "city", etc. Now comes the important part -- you have to decide what each column means, in terms of Campground Master fields. This is usually pretty easy to do. Just right-click on each field (either the header or the actual data), and then select the field that corresponds to that column. Customer, Reservation and Transaction fields are listed separately, and there is also a separate list for Site Preferences (primarily used for preferences that might affect the charges, like 50A service). The column header will then change to that name so you know you've defined it. You don't have to assign fields to each column -- just skip any that you don't need or don't have corresponding fields. If you make a mistake, use the Remove function on the right-click menu. See the notes below for more details.

5. Select fields to use for duplicate-removal. When the data is imported, duplicate customers will be automatically removed if possible. This not only applies to data you're importing, but also to any customers already in your database (it won't remove duplicates from your database, but it will avoid importing duplicates.) This requires at least a Last name and First name field (the data isn't much use without those anyway). You can also choose to check the Zip code field and/or the Address line 1 fields, to avoid filtering out common names like John Smith unless they live at the same place. If you uncheck these fields, or if they're not available in the imported data, then it will assume any that match first and last names are duplicates.

6. Convert names/addresses to mixed case or upper case. Other programs may force or suggest that customer information be all upper case, which is easier to enter but is not as professional looking on receipts, and also takes up more room so less information can be shown on the Rack before it has to be truncated. So you may want to decide to start entering the information in mixed-case, and you can also have the import function convert the old information. Conversely, you can make sure that all of the old

information is in upper case if you wish to keep with that procedure. Note that this only affects the data during this session, not data already entered or previously imported into Campground Master.

7. Edit data if needed. The preview list is fully editable, so you can delete any records that you don't want to import (like obvious duplicates or blank records), and you can even enter corrections as needed here before importing. Just click on a field to select it and start typing to replace it, or click twice to edit the value without replacing it. Likewise, just click any field on a row and click the Delete button to delete the record. (Ctrl-click for multiple selection also works.) Note that it the import file included a header row, you should also delete that row so you don't get a customer that's just a header.

8. Import the data. When everything looks right, click the Import Data! button to perform the import. You may see an error or warning prompt about duplicate filtering or field definitions if there seems to be something missing. As the data is imported, you will see customer/reservation totals and a duplicate total count up at the bottom.

When the import is complete, all records imported are removed from the list, but there may be some records left over in the list and a message saying that some errors were detected. To see why a record was not imported, just hold the mouse over the record in the list -- an error message will be shown with the reason for the error. Errors are typically a result of records that don't have a last name (required by Campground Master), or for sites that weren't recognized (if importing reservations), or dates that were not formatted properly. You can ignore them and close the dialog, or you can manually edit the records and run the Import again, as many times as needed to get them all imported.

When all is finished, just Close the dialog -- the data is imported to the database and the reports will be refreshed if necessary.

Notes on Importing Reservations

Reservations are tricky to import because many of Campground Master's reservation data fields are unique, and the software must make certain assumptions. As mentioned above, the primary criteria is that the site names must match. If this isn't the case and you have a lot of reservations you would like to import, you might adjust the site names temporarily to math the data to be imported, and then change them back. (Using copy/paste to and from a spreadsheet like Excel can make it easy to change them back to what you wan after importing the data.)

IMPORTANT: If you don't assign a field to be the site name, or if the site name for any reservation is empty, then the reservation will be made "unassigned" and you will have to assign the site yourself after import. If the reservation has a site name but it just doesn't match one in the database, it will not be imported and will be left in the list as an error.

The dates must also be formatted properly, and the imported data must contain at least a first and last date. It's also important that you know whether the "last" date is the "Last Night" the way Campground Master defines it, or if it's the "leaving" date (Last Night + 1). You can choose either Last Night or Last Night+1 for that import field accordingly. If there is "extra" data after the date (some programs export a timestamp after the date), that's fine -- anything after the first blank space ignored. (There's one exception -- for the "Date Made" reservation field, if the time is detected in the same field after the date, that will be used to fill the Time Made field automatically.)

The date order (mm/dd/yyyy or dd/mm/yyyy) will be assumed to follow your computer's international date settings -- for instance in Canada, the date is assumed to be dd/mm/yyyy. There is a little flexibility in the date format -- for instance, dashes or periods can be used instead of slashes, and there doesn't need to be leading zeroes or centuries (e.g. 1/3/02 is fine). The date can also have the year first as long as it's 4 digits, e.g. yyyy/mm/dd or yyyy-mm-dd (in this case the month is always assumed to be 2nd). The date can also be in "long" format, with the month name (at least the first 3 characters of it), the day of the month, a comma and the year as 2 or 4 digits. For instance, "July 5, 2005" or "Oct. 10, 05".

Since reservation status cannot generally be imported unless the imported status names match the Campground Master status names (except in the case of ReserveRight or GuestTracker), the program will assume that any reservation ending prior to today is checked out, and any reservation starting after today is pending. Any that cross today will be checked in automatically. Of course none of these will have transactions, so transactions will have to be added manually if needed. The "operator" field for check-ins and check-outs will be set to "(imported)", and the date/times for the operations will be set to reasonable values (the check-in date will be the actual start date, check-out date will be the end date). If a confirmation number is not imported for a reservation, then one will be generated for it.

If the imported file contains multiple reservations for the same customer, then duplicate customers will be "merged" properly and the reservations will be applied to a single customer (according to the duplicate-filtering rules mentioned above). Likewise, if the customer already exists in the database, the reservations will be added to that existing customer.

Duplicate reservations are also detected to a certain extent. It will check for a reservation with the identical site, dates, customer, and type, in case the same reservation was already imported from a different record. Other fields are not checked, it simply assumes that the same customer could not have two reservations on the same site for the same dates.

Some fields can be selected more than once, and the data will be combined into the one field in Campground Master. For instance, any data that doesn't have a direct import correlation can be imported to the Reservation Notes or Customer Notes fields. Each imported field will be added to a new line in the Notes. Likewise you can combine license number & state fields into the single license field in Campground Master, or add multiple First Name fields together.

IMPORTANT: No conflict-checking is done when importing reservations, except checking for duplicates! If you already have reservations entered that conflict with imported ones, or if the imported data contains conflicting reservations, you will have to sort these out manually after importing. The Conflicting Reservations report under the Reservations menu will be helpful for cleaning these up.

Hopefully everything will go well and you'll have all of the necessary details to get started. Of course a lot of the things normally entered in Campground Master may not be there for the imported reservations if the imported data doesn't have the information (like how-heard, reservation type, etc.), but the essentials will be there to get you started.

Exporting Reports and Data to Other Programs

Any of the Tab View reports, as well as almost any report grid in a dialog such as Find Customer, can be exported. You can also export any of the raw data tables found in the Maintenance | Raw Data Tables functions.

There are two ways to get the data in another program -- through Copy/Paste, or with the Export to CSV function.

Copy/Paste

To copy data directly to another program such as Excel, just highlight the desired cells on any grid report (or press **Ctrl-A** to select all cells), then **Ctrl-Insert** or **Ctrl-C** to copy to the clipboard. Then switch to the other application and paste the data. The data is copied in Tab-delimited format, so it can be pasted into nearly any program that supports Tab-delimited data or text. However, only the data cells can be copied this way, not the header row and column. To get the entire report into another program, use the Export to CSV function.

Exporting to Tab-Delimited Format

As mentioned above, when data is copied from a grid it's already in tab-delimited format. Thus you can create a tab-delimited export file by using the copy function above, then open Notepad or any text editor, and paste the data into it. Then save the file as a ".txt" file. However, as mentioned above, this will not contain the header rows or columns. To get the headers you must use the CSV export function below.

Exporting to CSV Format

"CSV" is a common file format, which stands for "Comma Separated Values". You can export any of the grid reports to a CSV file which can be loaded into a spreadsheet like Excel, or loading into a PDA like a Palm or Pocket PC. When a report is exported to a CSV file, it will contain all of the data and also the headers, just as shown in the current view or dialog grid.

To begin the export, either use the Export Current View option on the File menu (this is used for any tab view report), or click the Export List button on any of the other dialogs that have a grid-type report. Alternatively you can press **Ctrl-F10**, which will work for any of the supported reports.

Next you will see the standard file dialog. Just enter the filename and select the location (navigate to the desired folder) and click Save. The file will have the extension ".csv" so it's recognized by other software as a CSV file.

To get the data into your other software, you'll need to locate the appropriate function. This is usually an "Import" function under a "File" menu, but programs can vary.

If you want to load the exported data into a Palm PDA, you will need to use a 3rd-party program that can read CSV files. Many such programs are available. We recommend a popular program called MiniCalc, which sells for around $30.

Technical notes: To ensure that data with commas is imported properly, all fields are enclosed in quotes. Most CSV import functions will remove the quotes properly. Also, if the data itself includes quotes (the double-quote character ("), these will be automatically converted to single-quotes in the CSV file. While this isn't strictly the standard, it helps some programs cope with the data better.

Exporting Transactions to QuickBooks

Overview

This feature allows you to export the Campground Master transaction data to a file that QuickBooks can import (IIF format). Transactions can be exported as often as daily (daily totals are exported), or it can be done once a week, once a month, or however often you need the data in QuickBooks.

All of the charges will be transferred by transaction category, and all of the receipts will be transferred by payment method. The daily totals can be exported to QuickBooks either as General Journal entries for each category and payment method or as a single Cash Sale transaction with line items breaking out the category details.

If you have accounts receivable (e.g. you add charges to reservations before payments are received, such as monthly rent), you can have the A/R balance go into an Accounts Receivable account in QuickBooks. If you take advance deposits, they can also be assigned to a separate QuickBooks deposits account until they're applied, to track deposits as a "liability" against the actual receipts.

Using the QuickBooks Export Function

To begin the export process, open the Export dialog from File | Export | Export Transactions to QuickBooks. This dialog contains all of the setup and options needed for exporting. Generally you only need to do the setup and set the options the first time, and thereafter you only need to verify the date range and click the button to do the export.

Note that if you already use QuickBooks, you may want to base your Pick List setup for Transaction Categories and Payment Methods according to your QuickBooks accounts, to make the transactions in Campground Master map easily to your existing accounting system.

QuickBooks Preparation

Before getting started on the Campground Master side of it, you should have the following accounts set up in QuickBooks (some of these are probably already there):

- Undeposited Funds account (type: Other Current Asset)

- Accounts Receivable account (type: Accounts Receivable)

- Advance Deposits account (type: Other Current Liability)

- A number of Income type accounts where the Campground Master's charges will be transferred. This can be separate accounts or it can be Inventory Items in one or more Income accounts.

- One or more Income type accounts where the Campground Master's taxes will be transferred.

- One or more Other Current Asset type accounts for your credit card merchant(s), where credit card payments will be mapped into. You may also want other bank accounts corresponding to various Payment Methods in Campground Master, but you can also use the general Undeposited Funds account mentioned above for cash and checks.

In addition, you'll need a Vendor set up for sales tax (possibly more than one vendor, for instance one for Sales tax and one for Lodging tax, depending on your reporting needs).

Also, you should add a Customer (go to Customers / Customer:Job List to add one) called "Daily Sales" or perhaps "Campground Master Sales". This will be used for all of the data imported from Campground Master.

Now you need to export the QuickBooks lists so Campground Master can use them. Select from the menu: File -> Utilities -> Export... (or in later versions, File -> Export -> Lists to IIF). An Export dialog will open where you select the lists to be exported. Export the following lists:
> **Chart of Accounts**
> **Customer List**
> **Vendor List**
> **Item List**

Click OK, then select a location for the export (IIF) file that you can remember, and enter a name for it. Click Save, and when it confirms that the export is complete you can return to Campground Master.

Export to QuickBooks Setup

Although you need to do this first before exporting, it's at the bottom of the Export to QuickBooks dialog because you only need to do it once (unless you change configurations in Campground Master or QuickBooks, requiring different account mapping).

Import accounts...

You'll need to import the lists file created above (in QuickBooks Preparation) before setting up the other account mappings. You could skip this and type all account names manually, but besides being error-prone that would take much longer.

This is done inside the Export to QuickBooks dialog -- it's not a separate import function in the Campground Master menus since the it's only temporary, for setting up the QuickBooks mappings. You will need to import these again each time you need to use these setup functions (but you don't need to do the export from QuickBooks again unless the accounts change there). Click the button "Import accounts, etc. from QuickBooks" (in the Setup section of the dialog), and navigate to the file you just exported from QuickBooks. Open that file, and the lists should be imported almost instantly. You can tell if they imported correctly by dropping down one of the lists in the Setup area -- if it's not empty, then the lists were imported.

Note -- If you close Export to QuickBooks dialog, you will need to do the Import again the next time you need the lists the Setup functions (but you don't have to export the lists from QuickBooks again unless changes to accounts are made -- just import the same file again). The imported QuickBooks lists are only kept temporarily, since they aren't needed by Campground Master once the setup is completed.

Export Method

Before setting up the mappings, you should decide whether you're going to be using the General Journal export method or the Cash Sale export method, since some setup parameters will be affected by this. While you can change this at any time, it's a good idea to choose one method and stick with it, for consistency.

We recommend using the **Cash Sale** method -- select that method and continue on to the next step unless you need to know the details of how they work.

The General Journal entries method will create a pair of journal entries for each transaction category (for charges) and each payment method (for receipts), in addition to entries for deposits if applicable. All entries go through Accounts Receivable -- that is, every charge entry is treated like an A/R amount, and every payment entry is a payment against A/R. The net difference is essentially the change in your A/R balance for the day, and will be reflected in the QuickBooks A/R balance accordingly.

This method is not used very often because the imported information is not in a very "user-friendly" form, although it is the "simplest" method in terms of a straight transfer of transactions, and is usable if your Transaction Categories map directly to QuickBooks "Income" accounts. However, journal entries don't allow QuickBooks "Item" info from the mappings to be used, so if you use Items in QuickBooks for your different categories of sales, then the Cash Sale method will be a better choice.

The Cash Sale method will create a single Cash Sale in QuickBooks for each day (or you can combine all days into one, but this is not recommended). This is just like creating a Sales Receipt for a customer. The charges will be added as Items sold, using the Items mapped to transaction categories, and receipts will be added as negative entries on the sales receipt, itemized by payment method. If you're using auto-taxes for any of the accounts in QuickBooks, it will also include the applicable tax entry.

Quantities can also be included when using Cash Sale, so for instance it will show how many daily rates,

weekly rates, extra adults, etc. make up the total. A calculated "Rate" will also be shown, but this is only useful if each of your transaction categories represents a uniquely priced item. Otherwise the Rate is just an average (and only accurate to 4 decimal places, though this does not affect the accuracy of the totals).

Deposits, Deposits Applied and an A/R balance adjustment will also be added as entries in a manner to make the total value for the sale balance out to zero. (This is because QuickBooks cannot handle a negative sale, which could happen on occasion if the day's sales and receipts don't balance.) Optionally, you can leave out mappings for some of the Receipt payment methods such as Cash, Checks, and Traveller's Checks. In this case, the balance should be the total receipts for these, and thus you can use "Undeposited Funds" as the account for the Cash Sale to have these receipts automatically go into undeposited funds.   (You would get the same result by mapping them to Undeposited Funds and letting the cash sale balance out to zero, except that would result in multiple entries to undeposited funds instead of just one.)

One advantage of the Cash Sale method is that you can easily see daily activity snapshots in QuickBooks, by browsing the Cash Sale receipts. However this may just not make "sense" for your accounting methods, in which case the Journal entries can be used.

Note that Misc. Income and Expense transaction types are always exported as individual Journal entries, even if you use Cash Sale for the export method. This is because they are not the customer charge/payment transactions, and should be transferred individually just as they were entered. Actually, if you use QuickBooks for your accounting then you should probably **not** be using Campground Master for Expense transactions or Misc. Income -- those would be better suited for direct entry into QuickBooks, which can record more detailed information about them.

Customer:

Select a QuickBooks Customer to use (e.g. the "Daily Sales" customer created in the QuickBooks Preparation above).

This is particularly important for the Cash Sale export method, but is also required for the A/R entries when using the General Journal export method. Generally this is just a dummy customer created in QuickBooks like "Campground Master Sales", as created above in the QuickBooks Preparation section. If the customer has address information, that will appear on the sales receipt in QuickBooks.

Account for Accounts Receivable balance:

Select an account to use for Accounts Receivable (e.g. the "Accounts Receivable" account mentioned in the QuickBooks Preparation above).

This is required to be "Accounts Receivable" when using the General Journal export method. If using the Cash Sale method, it can be any account you want to use for any "balance" for the sale. This should still be "Accounts Receivable" if you ever carry an A/R balance (i.e. if the charges don't balance with receipts for the day). While this is optional and not strictly needed if you always balance your transactions (e.g. all reservations are paid in full as soon as they check in), it may help things balance in the occasional case that a reservation isn't paid in full.

Important Note: If you do use Accounts Receivable, be sure that all Receipt Payment Methods are mapped to an account (or at least all mapped to Undeposited Funds). Any difference between the mapped Transaction Categories (Charges) and mapped Receipt Payment Methods will be considered a change in the A/R balance, resulting in a zero net change for the day (basically the A/R keeps things in balance -- if you didn't get paid for something, the difference must be A/R). If using the Cash Sale method, this means that the total of the cash sale will always be $0.00.

Account for Deposit Balance (optional):

Select the account for your deposits balance here (e.g. the "Advance Deposits" account created in the QuickBooks Preparation above).

If you accept advance deposits, you should track those separately from other payments (usually as an "Other Current Liability" account in QuickBooks). In fact if you enter "Deposit" transactions in Campground Master at all, this must be set up or else the Deposit transactions will not be exported to QuickBooks. If you don't have an appropriate account set up, simply create an Other Current Liability Account named "Advance Deposits" for this purpose.

Campground Master will keep the Deposits account in QuickBooks up to date by adding any new Deposits and subtracting any Deposits Applied, and the deposits will also be added to the appropriate receipts accounts (e.g. check, credit cards, etc.) when they are received. This helps keep things in balance even though the charges have not yet been entered to offset the deposit received.

Account for Cash Sales:

Select an account to use for the balance of cash sales (e.g. the "Undeposited Funds" account mentioned in the QuickBooks Preparation above).

If you're using the Cash Sale export method, you need to select an account to receive any remaining balance. If you map everything properly, there really shouldn't be any balance, but an account is still required. You can use Undeposited Funds (as mentioned earlier), or create an "Unknown balance" account to catch any unexpected imbalance, or use some other asset account (some accounts may not be allowed by QuickBooks).

Mappings

Now for the tedious part -- you need to map every Transaction Category (almost) and Payment Method (possibly twice) to an appropriate QuickBooks "Account" or "Item". Details are found in the sections that follow, but here's a checklist:

- Taxes Mapping for Auto-taxes (Cash Sale method only). Note that to use auto-taxes, you also need to check the "**Handle taxes separately from charges**" box below the Taxes mapping button -- in most cases this must be checked for things to work properly.
- Transaction Categories Mapping
- Receipt Payment Methods Mapping
- Expense Payment Methods Mapping (if you use any Misc. Income or Expense transactions in Campground Master)

Preparing to Export

Now that everything is set up (and should be saved so you only need to do it once), you just need to select the dates to export, whether to combine the dates or not, and the location of the file. Although the file name and all/single options are saved each time, these should be double-checked every time you export just to be sure.

The dates will default to just today. This works well if you export at the end of every day, but that probably won't always be the case. Just change the dates for the range of transactions you need to export. Keep in mind that these are really transaction dates, not reservation dates.

If you choose to Export all as a single date, the transactions will be totalled only once for the entire date

range, and only one set of transactions will be exported. If you don't care about daily reporting and just want to minimize the number of entries each month, then this may be what you want to do. However be careful about overlapping dates into 2 or more exports, which would result in duplicate reporting!

If you choose to Export each day individually, then the transactions will be totalled separately for each date in the range. The results will be exported either as a Cash Sale for each date or a complete set of Journal entries for each date, depending on the export method selected. This gives you maximum detail in QuickBooks.

Note that Misc. Income and Expense transaction types are always exported as individual Journal entries, regardless of the choice here.

The File path should be the complete path and filename of the file to be exported. (Whether you export each day individually or all as a single date, it still only generates one file containing all of the transactions.) You can use the Browse button to locate a suitable folder and enter a file name. The file will be a QuickBooks "IIF" file (Import Information File), with an extension of ".iif".   Generally you can re-use the same file name every time you export, if you're going to be importing it to QuickBooks immediately afterwards. If you ever needed to re-generate an import file for a given date, you can simply change the dates on the dialog and export a new file.

Exporting the Data

Finally, just click the Export! button to create the export file. It should only take a few seconds, and will report success.

You may also see a warning if there are any charges that weren't mapped to QuickBooks accounts -- this usually indicates that some transaction categories or payment methods were missed, so you need to go back to Setup and check the mappings. Additional or changed transaction categories could also cause this.

When using the Cash Sale export method, note that if there are no transactions for a given day, then no Cash Sale will be exported for that day.

Importing the File to QuickBooks

Once the transactions are exported, open your QuickBooks database and select from the menu: File -> Utilities -> Import... an Import file dialog will open. Just select the file created above and click Open, and the data will be imported. For Cash Sales, you can review the imported data by going to Customers -> Enter Sales Receipts (you may need to use the Previous/Next buttons to locate the correct date.) To review journal entries, go to Reports -> Accountant & Taxes -> Journal, or select the Accounts Receivable account from Lists -> Chart of Accounts.

Repeating an Export (Corrections)

You may need to re-export data once in awhile, especially when initially setting up and testing. However you need to delete all of the previously exported data from QuickBooks to avoid duplication.

If you're exporting as a Cash Sale, this is easy -- just go to Enter Sales Receipts (in QuickBooks), locate the one for the date(s) you need to export again, and delete it -- **Ctrl-D** usually works, but there's also a menu function to delete the sale. If you're exporting as General Journal entries, you'll have to manually delete each of the exported entries manually.

Once that's done, simply repeat the export and import process above.

Taxes Mapping for Auto-taxes

This dialog is used to map each of Campground Master's Transaction Categories for Taxes to a QuickBooks Inventory Item and/or Account. These mappings are used for exporting Tax transactions for auto-tax entries. This may only need to be done if you're using the Cash Sale method and you have auto-tax items set up in QuickBooks. Otherwise, tax categories should be mapped along with the Transaction Category Mapping for other charges. However if you receive an error message when importing to QuickBooks related to tax items being blank, then you need to use tax mappings, and map them as auto-tax rates.

Assuming you used the Import accounts from QuickBooks function first, this may be as simple as picking from lists. If you didn't import the items/accounts from QuickBooks, you can still enter the account names manually, but that is very error-prone.

The process is as follows:

1. Select a tax category to map from the left-hand list (only categories that you have set up in Taxes Setup will be shown.) Note that the Tax Rate will be automatically filled in as defined in Taxes Setup. The Tax Rate field is just for reference, and isn't actually used for calculations in QuickBooks. Don't change it.

2a. If this will map to an inventory item in QuickBooks, select that item from the QuickBooks Inventory Item drop-down list. The Account and Description will fill in automatically for that item. You can leave the description or edit it as needed, but don't change the Account, since this has already been assigned to that item in QuickBooks.

Important: Taxes are not normally mapped to Inventory Items, and in fact QuickBooks 2005 will report an error if you attempt to do so. You should select only an Account (below). This selection is only present here for backward compatibility.

2b. Or, if you're not mapping to an inventory item, select a QuickBooks Account from the next drop-down list.

3. Select a Vendor from the drop-down list. This required for taxes, and should be the vendor you have set up as the tax commission or state comptroller (where you pay your sales taxes, for instance).

4. Enter a Description if necessary.

5. If this is an auto-tax item in QuickBooks, check the Is this an auto-tax rate? box. (Since you should only be doing this mapping for auto-taxes, this should always be checked.)

6. Click Add Mapping. The details of the mapped category will appear in the bottom list, and the category will be removed from the first list so you know it's mapped already.

7. Repeat for all tax categories, then click Save. All of the mappings will be saved and used each time you use the Export function.

Mapping Notes

Any of the tax categories you map here should *not* be mapped in Transaction Categories Mapping.

You can map multiple categories to the same item/account in QuickBooks if needed. They will generate separate entries to the same item/account.

If you need to change a mapping, select it from the bottom list and click Delete. It will be removed from the bottom list, but it will also be selected automatically in the category/item/account lists, so all you have to do is make any changes and click Add Mapping again.

Transaction Categories Mapping

This dialog is used to map each of Campground Master's Transaction Categories to a QuickBooks Inventory Item and/or Account. These mappings will be used when exporting Charge, Discount, Credit, and possibly Tax transactions as sales totals. It will also be use for the Misc. Income and Expense transaction Journal entries (note that these will not use the Inventory Items, only the Accounts).

Assuming you used the Import accounts from QuickBooks function first, this may be as simple as picking from lists. If you didn't import the items/accounts from QuickBooks, you can still enter the account names manually, but that is very error-prone.

The process is simple:

1. Select a transaction category to map from the left-hand list

2a. If this will map to an inventory item in QuickBooks, select that item from the QuickBooks Inventory Item drop-down list. The Account and Description will fill in automatically for that item. You can leave the description or edit it as needed, but don't change the Account, since this has already been assigned to that item in QuickBooks.

2b. Or, if you're not mapping to an inventory item, select a QuickBooks Account from the next drop-down list, and then enter a Description.

3. If this is an auto-tax item in QuickBooks, check the Taxable? box. (Actually it seems to work best if this is *always* checked.)

This setting is important only if using the Cash Sale export method, but it must be done properly to avoid errors when importing to QuickBooks. If you're not sure, refer to your QuickBooks account list to see if this item/account is taxable. (If any of the items are set up to auto-tax in QuickBooks, you will also need to set up Taxes Mapping separately.)

4. Click Add Mapping. The details of the mapped category will appear in the bottom list, and the category will be removed from the first list so you know it's mapped already.

5. Repeat for all categories, then click Save. All of the mappings will be saved and used each time you use the Export function.

Mapping Notes

If you are using auto-tax in QuickBooks for any of the inventory items/accounts then you will need to map the corresponding tax category separately, and *don't* map them here for charges. (If you receive a tax-item error when importing to QuickBooks, you will need to map the taxes separately.)

All Transaction Categories defined in Campground Master will be shown in the category list, even if they aren't normally used for charges. Thus you don't need to map the categories "Deposit", "Payment", etc. If you do want to just clear out the list so you know you're done, you can map them to dummy accounts (no transactions will be exported for them anyway).

You can map multiple categories to the same item/account in QuickBooks if needed. They will generate separate entries to the same item/account.

If you need to change a mapping, select it from the bottom list and click Delete. It will be removed from the bottom list, but it will also be selected automatically in the category/item/account lists, so all you have to do is make any changes and click Add Mapping again.

Receipt Payment Methods Mapping

This dialog is used to map each of Campground Master's Payment Methods to a QuickBooks Inventory Item and/or Account, for any receipts (or misc. income) transactions. These mappings will be used when exporting Payment, Refund, and Deposit transactions as sales totals.   It will also be use for the Misc. Income transaction Journal entries (note that these will not use the Inventory Items, only the Accounts).

Assuming you used the Import accounts from QuickBooks function first, this may be as simple as picking from lists. If you didn't import the items/accounts from QuickBooks, you can still enter the account names manually, but that is very error-prone.

The process is as follows:

1. Select a payment method to map from the left-hand list

2a. If this will map to an inventory item in QuickBooks, select that item from the QuickBooks Inventory Item drop-down list. The Account and Description will fill in automatically for that item. You can leave the description or edit it as needed, but don't change the Account, since this has already been assigned to that item in QuickBooks.

Important: Payment methods are not normally mapped to Inventory Items, and in fact QuickBooks 2005 will report an error if you attempt to do so. You should select only a QuickBooks Account (below). This selection is only present in Campground Master for backward compatibility.

2b. Or, if you're not mapping to an inventory item, select a QuickBooks Account from the next drop-down list, and then enter a Description.

3. Click Add Mapping. The details of the mapped payment method will appear in the bottom list, and it will be removed from the first list so you know it's mapped already.

5. Repeat for all payment methods, then click Save. All of the mappings will be saved and used each time you use the Export function.

Mapping Notes

If you're using the Cash Sale export method, you can opt to leave some of the methods unmapped and let those receipts be the balance of the cash sale. This would typically be the ones like Cash and Check, and the your "Account for Cash Sale" (on the previous dialog) would be "Undeposited Funds". However we recommend against this because it could result in a negative balance (e.g. you have a large cash refund to someone), which cannot be imported to QuickBooks. It's best to map all payment methods.

You can map multiple payment methods to the same account in QuickBooks if needed. They will generate separate entries to the same account. However if you typically put all receipts in the "Undeposited Funds" account, we suggest creating Items in QuickBooks to sub-section the Undeposited Funds for separating cash, checks, and credit cards. This is because the true payment method in the cash sale cannot be set individually for each receipt type as they are all combined into one cash sale. To make a separate payment item, create a New Item in QuickBooks, set it to a Payment type, enter an appropriate Item name, Description and Payment Method (e.g. "Check"), and group it with other undeposited funds. Now when you map the Receipt Payment Methods to the appropriate items, they will all go into Undeposited Funds as expected but will show as separate items when making deposits.

If you need to change a mapping, select it from the bottom list and click Delete. It will be removed from the bottom list, but it will also be selected automatically in the lists above, so all you have to do is make any changes and click Add Mapping again.

Expense Payment Methods Mapping

This dialog is used to map each of Campground Master's Payment Methods to a QuickBooks Account, specifically for Expense transaction Journal entries. If you never enter Expense transactions in Campground Master, these mappings aren't needed.

Assuming you used the Import accounts from QuickBooks function first, this may be as simple as picking from lists. If you didn't import the accounts from QuickBooks, you can still enter the account names manually, but that is very error-prone.

Remember that you're mapping payment methods for expenses here, so this is money going out, not money received. Thus a credit card payment method should be mapped to a credit card account, not the merchant/bank account that receives your credit card sales.

The process is as follows:

1. Select a payment method to map from the left-hand list

2. Select a QuickBooks Account from the drop-down list, and then enter a Description.

3. Click Add Mapping. The details of the mapped payment method will appear in the bottom list, and it will be removed from the first list so you know it's mapped already.

5. Repeat for all payment methods that you might use for Expense transactions, then click Save. All of the mappings will be saved and used each time you use the Export function.

Mapping Notes

You don't need to map all payment types, only the ones that you might use when paying for expenses.

You can map multiple payment methods to the same item/account in QuickBooks if needed. They will generate separate entries to the same item/account.

If you need to change a mapping, select it from the bottom list and click Delete. It will be removed from the bottom list, but it will also be selected automatically in the lists above, so all you have to do is make any changes and click Add Mapping again.

10   Online Reservations

Overview

Campground Master supports Online Reservations in a few different ways, depending on your needs. You can use one part of it or any combination of parts:

- Retrieve reservations from made through Friend Communications' online service, *Reservation Friend*.

- Retrieve reservations from the online service *Webervations.com*, and also update the availability data for your park.

- Retrieve and extract reservation data from formatted E-mails (like form submissions from your web site, or E-mail notifications from other online services). Multiple E-mail formats can be handled in case you get requests from more than one source.

- Create "vacancy grid" web pages with availability data and upload them to your own web site.

Refer to the Online Reservations Setup section for the various requirements for each part.

General Guidelines for Taking Online Reservations

While Campground Master is not a real-time online system in itself, it can integrate with 3rd-party reservation services like Reservation Friend or Webervations.com if you want the customer to get instant feedback (e.g. the reservation is accepted and they get a confirmation immediately, without your intervention). You can also achieve near-real-time functionality with your own web site if you constantly update the online availability information (e.g. after any local reservation change) and check for new online requests regularly. Naturally a high-speed Internet connection is recommended for this, especially if you get more than a few reservations per day.

Avoiding Conflicts Between Online and Offline (Local) Reservations

In general, accepting online reservations is only fool-proof if you set aside certain sites to be used *only* for online requests, since the person online can't see your local system at exactly the same time as you. Without this separation of sites, you could potentially be making a reservation on the same site and for the same day as someone online, resulting in a conflict. Campground Master lets you designate which sites are to be shown as available online (assuming you use one of the options to upload availability data, either to your own web site or to Webervations).

If separation of sites isn't practical, you can also minimize potential conflicts by taking requests only for a certain type of site instead of taking requests for a specific site number. The customer would select the type of site, and you would select an appropriate site for them as you process the request locally. You can also combine this with limiting the number of sites available online. For instance if you have 40 cabins and 50 tent sites, you might designate only 20 cabins and 20 tent sites for online availability

You can also specify a number of "online release days" as a buffer -- for instance, you may specify that online reservations can only be made for dates at least 3 days in the future (or any number of days you think is appropriate). This allows you to handle short-term walk-in customers without worrying about conflicting with online reservation requests.

Handling the Online Requests

All online reservation requests must be "processed" and "saved" locally in Campground Master by a human operator -- they aren't automatically added without your knowledge. This requires an operator to view the reservation request and make sure everything is in order before saving it.

While this isn't quite as convenient as a fully-online system, it does help eliminate "junk" requests from the Internet, duplicate customers, missing information and other problems with automatic systems. For instance you can respond to requests with incomplete information before accepting them. You can also reject requests from known trouble-makers, and keep someone from causing problems like reserving entire blocks of sites without intending to show up. If you don't guarantee a specific site as requested, you also have the option of selecting a more appropriate site before confirming the reservation.

While processing online requests, the operator can assign a site if necessary, process a credit card deposit, send a confirmation E-mail to the customer, and save the reservation into Campground Master. Assuming that most of the information is filled out properly by the customer on the web site, this is a fairly quick and easy process and eliminates the need for customer information to be typed in manually.

Retrieving Online Reservations

Overview

To retrieve online reservations and update online availability information, go to <u>Reservations</u> / <u>Retrieve Online Reservations</u>. Of course you will first need to have everything set up appropriately first -- refer to <u>Maintenance</u> / <u>Online Setup</u> for complete details.

Retrieving and processing online requests generally requires a few steps:

1. Select the desired <u>Source</u> (only sources you've enabled will be shown, and thus there may only be one source option).

2. <u>Retrieve Online Requests</u> -- This will go online to retrieve any new requests from the selected source. All requests retrieved will be displayed in the list.

3. <u>View / Process Request Details</u> -- You will need to open each request, perform any necessary functions like selecting a site, entering the deposit, etc., and then Save it.

4. <u>Upload Site Availability</u> -- Whether or not there are any new requests, you can upload the current availability information to the Internet.

If you're set up for more than one source (e.g. E-mail and Webervations), you can repeat the steps above for each source.

Note that the operator access level required to retrieve and process requests is Manager by default, but it can be modified through Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels.

Miscellaneous Functions

The main processing functions listed above are described in sections following this one, but there are a few other functions available on the main Online Reservation Requests dialog.

Paste & Process Request Text

This function can be used to manually process requests that can't be retrieved directly, or for testing. For instance, if the only E-mail account you have is through America Online, then E-mail requests can't be retrieved automatically. You will need to copy the request from the America Online E-mail window, then use this function to paste it into a processing window. The processing will proceed just as if it was retrieved directly, e.g. the parsing rules will be applied to extract the data from the text.

Note that you may need to get the complete "source" text and paste it, including the E-mail header information, for requests to parse correctly. The "Message-ID" part of the header is used as the default Online Request ID, so unless your parsing rules extract another value for this unique ID, the E-mail header must be included. For America Online, you need to use the "View Message Source" function to get the complete raw message text with the header (this may be in various places depending on the AOL version, but it's commonly under the "Actions" menu when viewing a message).

Re-process Downloaded Requests

When requests are downloaded from the source, they are placed in a local file (this helps avoid accidental deletion, since they may be removed from the source as soon as they're retrieved). When you use this re-process function, it will read the file with the previously retrieved data and parse the requests already in it, instead of going online to get new requests. Since all downloaded requests are actually appended to any previous requests in the file, you could potentially accumulate requests indefinitely into the same file. (See the Delete function below to clear the file.)

Re-processing requests won't be necessary under normal conditions, but it's likely to come in very handy while getting started and tweaking your setup. You can simply use this function to read requests from the file, which will of course be faster than downloading them, and it will also grab previous requests that may have already been deleted form the server. Don't worry about creating duplicate reservations, though -- once a request is processed and Saved, its Online ID is stored so can't be processed again. Any of these prior requests that you've saved will be indicated as such in the list.

Delete all Downloaded Requests

Once you're sure that all downloaded requests have been processed (Saved or Ignored as appropriate), you may want to delete the downloaded requests. While deleting them is technically not necessary, this will "clear the clutter" in the temporary files used for storing the downloaded requests. It will also speed up processing (or at least re-processing) of future requests. Of course it will not delete any Saved reservations, since those are already recorded in your database.

Note that this is completely separate from deleting requests from the server (e.g. the POP3 mailbox, or the Webervations pending requests queue). You will generally want to have Campground Master delete them from the server automatically each time they're retrieved to avoid excess accumulation there. See the Online Setup section for the option to delete requests from the server.

Downloading Requests

When someone makes a request from your web site or from a service like Webervations, it just sits on a web server or in an E-mail mailbox waiting to be picked up, or "downloaded". You should perform this function regularly (preferably a few times per day), for instance anytime you check E-mail, so the requests can be processed and confirmed promptly.

To check for and retrieve any new online reservation requests, go to Reservations / Retrieve Online Reservations. Select the Source if necessary, then click the Retrieve Online Requests button. Campground

Master will connect to the Internet (if necessary), and retrieve any waiting requests. Depending on the setup options, it may also automatically delete the retrieved requests from the server to keep it tidy (this also minimizes the time needed to retrieve requests the next time).

If any new requests are retrieved, they will be displayed in the list. Note that if it retrieves a request that has already been processed, then the status of that request will be shown as "Saved" so you don't process it as a duplicate. Of course if it's automatically deleting requests from the server when it retrieves them, then there shouldn't be any such duplicates to show.

Retrieving E-mail Requests

When "E-mail" is selected as the Source, it will check the POP3 mailbox (as designated in the setup) for any new E-mail messages. It will download all E-mail messages present, and attempt to parse each one to see if it's a request. If there are some messages that aren't recognized as valid requests, they will still be included in the displayed list of requests. The status of unrecognized messages will be set to "Ignored" and the Notes column will show the message subject (so you can see if it's just a junk message). If you see an ignored message that looks like it should be a valid request, you can use the function at the bottom to Edit Original Text, and try to salvage it by editing the text.

All E-mail messages retrieved are also saved in a temporary file "email.txt", located in the folder you designate in the online reservations setup. This can be viewed with a text editor like Notepad or Wordpad if desired. You can use the Re-process Downloaded Requests function to read this file and scan all E-mails again if needed (for instance if you're still testing your parsing rules). Once you're sure that you don't need the saved E-mails any more, use the Delete all Downloaded Requests function to clear this temporary file.

By the way, there is no danger of getting a virus or other malicious E-mail problem, since Campground Master simply scans the text of the message -- it won't run code in an E-mail, and any attachments to the E-mail are completely ignored (actually the attachments are retrieved as text, so they are harmless).

As mentioned in the online setup section, you may want to have all requests go to a POP3 mailbox separate from your normal E-mail. The main problem with sharing the mailbox is that when you retrieve your other E-mail, you would be removing requests from that mailbox so they can't be retrieved and processed automatically here.

If it's not feasible for you to use a separate POP3 mailbox for requests, then if there are any requests that didn't get picked up the last time you used the Retrieve function, you will need to copy the request text from your other E-mail program and use the Paste & Process function here. Therefore it would be a good idea to do the Retrieve just before you check your other E-mail so that any requests waiting in your mailbox are retrieved automatically. Also make very sure that the "Delete messages from server..." option is *not* enabled in the Online Connections setup for E-mail requests if you're sharing a mailbox.

Retrieving Reservation Friend Requests

When "Reservation Friend" is selected as the Source, it will check the POP3 mailbox (as designated in the setup) for any new reservations made through that service. This works exactly the same as described above for E-mail requests, except that separate connection settings are used for Reservation Friend so they may be retrieved from a different POP3 mailbox. Also, the temporary E-mail file is named "email_friend.txt" for messages from this source.

Retrieving Webervations Requests

When "Webervations" is selected as the Source, it will send a download request to the Webervations web server to get any new requests. It will download all new requests and extract the data from them. All requests retrieved are also saved in a temporary file "webervations_xml.txt", located in the folder you

designate in the online reservations setup. This can be viewed with a text editor like Notepad or Wordpad if desired, although it's actually in XML format. You can use the Re-process Downloaded Requests function to read this file and parse all requests again if needed (for instance if you're still testing your parsing rules). Once you're sure that you don't need the saved requests any more, use the Delete all Downloaded Requests function to clear this temporary file.

Processing Requests

Once any new requests have been retrieved, the next step is to "process" them. This is mostly just a matter of looking at the request details to make sure everything is in order, selecting a site if needed, and then save them so they become a real reservation in Campground Master (also creating the appropriate customer record and deposit transactions as needed).

All "new" requests will be shown in the list in the Online Reservation Requests dialog. A "new" request is any request just Downloaded, or added with the Paste & Process function, or Re-processed Downloaded Requests.

The Status column will show one of the following values:

Unprocessed -- It's a new request, not processed and saved as a real reservation yet.

Saved -- It has been processed and saved as a real reservation.

Ignored -- It has been viewed and ignored for now, during this session. This may include retrieved E-mail messages that were not recognized as valid requests.

Error -- The request could not be parsed using the defined parsing rules (either an error in the rule definition or a problem with the request data). If you hold the mouse cursor over that line in the list, the error details will be shown. You should check any of these to see whether they can be salvaged using the Edit Original Text function.

The Notes column would normally show any reservation notes extracted from the request, but if a request has an error or if it's ignored due to missing information, then the Notes column will include the Subject of the E-mail message. This will help you determine if it needs further attention.

Processing a Request

You can view a request's details and process it by selecting the request in the list and clicking the View / Process selected request button at the bottom. As a shortcut, you can also just double-click the request in the list. If it's a Saved request, this will take you to Reservation Details since it's already a real reservation. Otherwise it will take you to the Online Request Details dialog, where you will process the request and make it a real reservation. Once you've saved it there, it will be designated as such on the list and you can continue with the next one.

Once all new requests have been suitably processed by either saving them or ignoring them, you can proceed to uploading the new availability data and/or deleting all downloaded requests to clean things up.

Note that you can also attempt to process requests that have an "*Error*" or "Ignored" status. Of course an error may still prevent it from being correctly processed, but you can at least see what fields were retrieved. If a request was previously Ignored, you can use View / Process to essentially undo the ignored status and complete the processing for it.

Editing a Request's Original Text

There may be times when a request can't be parsed or processed correctly due to a problem with the original text (e.g. the E-mail message may not be formatted as expected, causing it not to be parsed correctly). As long as the request has not yet been Saved as a real reservation, you can view the complete retrieved request in raw text format by selecting the request and clicking the Edit Original Text of selected request button. This will show the raw text and you can do any editing necessary. When you click Save, it will attempt to parse the request again. Note that the original request will be deleted from the list, and the newly parsed request will be added to the bottom of the list.

Ignoring a Request

You can designate a request as "Ignored" by selecting the request in the list and clicking the Ignore selected request button at the bottom. This is usually done for requests that you decide not to save, like junk requests. Actually it does nothing except set the status in the list to "Ignored", mostly for your own convenience so you know you didn't skip it by accident, in case you have a lot of requests to process.

Note that ignored requests are not saved in the database at all -- once you close this dialog window, it will be gone -- except that it will still be in the temporary download file as long as you don't click Delete all Downloaded Requests. Thus you could ignore it for now and use the Re-process function later to retrieve it -- at which time it will show "Unprocessed" again (the Ignored status is temporary, it's not remembered). If you just need more information from the customer and may want to keep it later, it would be better to save it as an Inquiry instead of ignoring it (this can be done through the Online Request Details dialog).

Online Request Details

The Online Request Details dialog is invoked through Online Reservation Requests, by selecting an unprocessed request in the list and clicking the View / Process selected request button below the list. As a shortcut, you can also just double-click the request in the list.

Request Fields and Values

The request will be shown in a simple table of Fields and Values. Each field will be shown as extracted from the request data, using the Parsing Rules you've defined. Note that the fields are shown in the order that they were extracted, which is generally the order that they appear in the parsing rules. Only fields that were successfully extracted will be shown. Thus if a parsing rule is defined to set a field like "50 Amp" if it's requested, but it wasn't requested, then that field may not be shown in the list.

Many fields will show both the record type (table name) and field name, for instance "Reservations : First Night". In some cases there may be an index number after the record type, for instance if more than one transaction is to be created for the reservation then you might see "Transactions[+1] : Type".

Some "fields" aren't necessarily data fields, for instance a "Unit Type" may be shown that specifies the type of site requested. This is a temporary value that's used when selecting a site, but will not be saved with the reservation. Another example of a temporary value would be "Number of sites requested" -- this is used to determine how many linked reservations will actually need to be created from this request.

Editing Fields

If you see obvious mistakes in a field value, you can edit the value before saving the request. Just click on the value twice (once to highlight it and again to enter editing mode). Some values may be drop-down lists instead of editable text, just as they would be on other dialogs. For instance the Rig Type would be a drop-down pick list.

Only true data fields can be edited -- temporary values as mentioned above and other pseudo-fields cannot be edited.

Close (skip for now)

This will simply close this window and go back to the list of requests, without processing (saving) this request.

Note that any editing done to field values *will* be saved as long as you're still processing the list of requests, so the changes will be remembered if you come back here to View / Process the request. However any changes not saved as a real reservation will be lost if you close all the way out of the Retrieve Online Reservations dialog.

Selecting a Site

Before saving the request, you will usually want to assign a site (or sites) for the reservation using the **Select a Site** button. This function will let you select a site using the same "Assign or Change Site" dialog used elsewhere in Campground Master. You may notice a couple minor differences, however. Since this is not a real reservation yet, everything in the site selection dialog will be disabled except for the controls necessary to select a site. For instance, you can't use "Guarantee", or view customer details. Also note that any preferences selected or changed here will not show up when you return to the request details.

If the request specified a particular site already (either by specific site name or because only one site matches the online site data field designation of ID/name/class/etc.) , then it will be assigned automatically and you don't have to select one at all. However you could change the site if needed -- it will ask if you want to start over and select a new site if a site has already been selected.

If you have set up Site data fields like "Site_Online_Email_Type" and the request specifies one of the designated types (instead of a specific site), then the site selection dialog will only show sites of that type and "Requested Type" will be shown in the drop-down list where "All Site Types" is usually shown. Likewise for Webervations requests, only sites matching the request parameters (Room Name and Unit Class) will be shown by default. You can override this if necessary to select different sites, by changing the "Requested Type" selection to something else. Obviously this is not recommended under normal circumstances, since you could be giving the customer a site they don't want.

If the request was for multiple sites (according to the "Number of sites requested" value, if present), then you must select exactly that many sites while in the site selection dialog. It will not allow you to save the selected sites if the quantity is not correct -- they must all be selected at the same time. Note that if it's for multiple sites, it will actually create multiple reservations as it always does for multiple sites, and they will all be linked as synchronized reservations.

Send an E-mail

This function can be used if you need to send the customer an E-mail to ask for more information, or perhaps reject the request. This will open an E-mail window where you can enter your message. However if you intend to accept the request and just need to send an E-mail confirmation, you should use Save & Continue to Details, and do Quote/Confirmation from there (see below).

Save ... Done

If everything looks OK on the request and you don't need to do anything more than save it as a real reservation now, click this button. Some validation will be done, and if everything is OK then it will be saved.

Entering a Deposit

If you use a 3rd-party online service, then the actual deposit might be received and processed by them already. If you have appropriate parsing rules set up, the Transaction for this deposit will be created automatically, so no further handling would be needed.

If you retrieve credit card information from the request and need to process the deposit locally, then you will need to do that manually. First you will use the Save & Continue to Details function (covered below), which will take you to Reservation Details. From there you will go to New/Edit Transactions and enter the deposit just as you would for a phone reservation. If you're handling credit card charges in Campground Master, you would do the credit card processing there as well. Note that it helps if you have the parsing rules extract the credit card information into the Guarantee Info field for the reservation, so it will be used automatically when you go to enter the deposit transaction.

Sending a Confirmation

Again, if you're using a 3rd-party online service, then that service probably already sends a confirmation to your customer. If you're taking requests from your own web site, however, you probably want to send them an E-mail confirmation now. To do this you will first select Save & Continue to Details, enter the deposit if needed, then use the Quote/Confirmation function to send the E-mail confirmation (just like when you take a phone reservation).

Save & Continue to Details

If you're ready to save the request but want to make other adjustments, or perhaps need to process a credit card deposit or send a confirmation E-mail, then select this option. The request will be saved as a real reservation and you will be shown the Reservation Details. You can do anything there that you would normally do after creating a new reservation. Once you're done, you will be taken back to the list of requests. (If you need to go back and do more with it, you can get to it easily from the list of requests by using the View / Process function again.)

Save as an Inquiry only

There may be times when you need more information from the customer before saving the request. Use this function to save the request with the current information as an "Inquiry" reservation. Then when you get the information you need, you can locate the inquiry through the Non-Reserved tab view to edit it and change it to a "Pending" or "Guaranteed" request.

Note: If you want to request the needed information by E-mail , it's easiest to use the Send and E-mail function before saving it as an inquiry, since you won't be able to come back into here after you save the request as an inquiry. Otherwise you would need to go to Reservation Details, then Customer Details, then click on the E-mail link there to send an E-mail.

Duplicate Customers

After you Save a request, Campground Master will check for any similar customers in the database (by last name and zip/postal code). If it finds a potential match, it will ask if you want to merge them to avoid duplicate customer entries. If you do, then the Merge dialog will be shown so you can verify the information and choose which customer record you want to keep. The one you don't keep will be deleted and all of its reservations and transactions will be transferred to the one you do keep -- so you can either keep the original one or the new one, depending on which one has the more accurate or complete information.

Uploading Site Availability Data

Once all processing is done, or any time you want to update the sites available on your web site or on Webervations, then access this function through <u>Reservations</u> / <u>Retrieve Online Reservations</u>. It's not necessary to retrieve or process any requests before using the Upload function here -- you can do it any time, for instance after entering reservations locally, if you want to keep the online information current.

The type of "Upload" done will depend on the <u>Source</u> selected, as described below.

E-mail -- Regardless of where the E-mail requests actually come from, the Upload function for the E-mail source is actually the same as the Export to Web Vacancy Grid function through File / Export. However when you use the Upload function here, it will automatically do both the Export step and the Upload step in a single click, without showing the Export to Web setup dialog. This assumes of course that the Export to Web FTP settings have been set up in Online Reservations - Connections & Options. Otherwise it will export the pages and then show an error message indicating that it can't do the upload step.

Reservation Friend -- Uploading site availability is not available for this service.

Webervations -- If you have a Webervations account and have done the setup for this, then clicking the Upload button when Webervations is selected as the source will create and upload the availability to Webervations in their required format. For more information, see the Online Reservation Setup sections. Note that Webervations sends you an E-mail each time you do an upload, and that's where any data errors are reported (other than connection errors) -- Campground Master will not see these error messages, so be sure to check your E-mail soon after uploading.

Exporting to Web Vacancy Grids

The Export to Web Vacancy Grid function is accessed through the File / Export Menu. This dialog contains a sections for setting up the export details as well as the export and upload functions.

If you're using the Online Reservations functionality to retrieve and process E-mail reservation requests, this export function is also considered the "upload half" of E-mail processing since both are most likely associated with your own web site. Thus the "Upload Site Availability" function on the online request dialog also uses this function, but without actually opening this dialog. Thus you'll need to make sure things are set up appropriately here before using that upload function.

Overview

The Export to Web feature allows you to show vacancy status on your web site, essentially like a compressed Rack view with no customer details. The pages can also have active links in each vacant cell on the grid which make a reservation request for that site on that day.

The program will generate the web pages to your specifications, and then you will need to upload them to your web site. There is an Upload button on the dialog which you can use to upload the pages after creating

them, if you've configured the FTP settings (see Maintenance / Online Setup). Therefore you could easily upload the changes several times per day as needed. You can also use any 3rd-party FTP software to upload the pages after using the export function. The pages can also be time-stamped so the web site visitor knows how recent the page was updated.

One or more sets of 12 pages will be generated, one page for each month for the next 12 months (the current month may be partial, starting with the current day). You can select what sites are shown on each set of pages -- show all sites in one set, or make a separate set for each Site Type or Site Class. If you have multiple Parks set up, also have the option to generate a separate set for each Park.

Selecting Sites

To select which sites to include on the pages, use the Select Sites to Include button. This will open the familiar Site Filtering dialog, where you can select the sites to include by individual site or by Type, Class, and Park.

Next you can choose whether to show all sites on one web page, or create separate pages by type, class, or park. Of course this will depend on how you want to present them on your web site -- your web site will have to include a link to the first page of each set. Only one link is needed if they're all in one set, while many separate links might be needed if you show a different site type or class on each page. Note that you only need to link to the first page in a set (the current month) -- the generated grid will already contain links to the other months.

Template File(s)

The web pages will be generated using templates of your own design, so you can match your web page's style. The templates are basically HTML web page files with two insertion markers in the page:

```
###VACANCYGRID###
```

This must appear exactly as shown somewhere in the template file. The HTML code for the entire vacancy grid will be inserted here, replacing the marker. (Don't put it inside a comment tag, or else the entire grid could be commented out!)

```
###ASOFDATE###
```

This marker is optional, and will be replaced by the current time and date. This is just for the visitors' reference, so they know how recently the grid was updated. This could be placed at the bottom of the page below the grid.

Template File Path

Enter the path containing the template files, or use Browse to locate them. Browse will open a File-Open dialog for the file type ".htt" and a dummy name for the file -- just navigate until you find the folder with the templates and click Open.

The file or files must be named a certain way:

> If showing all sites on one page, the template must be named "All.htt".

> If showing separate pages by type, class, or park, you must have one template file for each type, class or park. This allows you to have different formats or links on each set of pages, accordingly. The template must have the type/class/park name, followed by ".htt". If the name contains spaces, replace the spaced with dashes (minus signs). For instance, for the site type "Normal RV", the template would be "normal-rv.htt". It doesn't matter if the letters are upper-case or lower-case.

An example "All.htt" file has been installed to your Campground Master folder. You can copy and/or modify that file as needed. It is a text file, just as all HTML files are text.

Output File Path

Enter the path for the generated web page files. This can be the same as the template path or different.

When the files are generated, the template names will be converted to lower case, have ".html" as the extension, and will be prefixed by "vacancyMM", where MM is the month offset (00 for the current month, 01 for the next month, etc.). For instance, "vacancy00all.html" for all sites on one page, or "vacancy00normal-rv.html" for the Normal RV site type.

Formatting

You can use the Repeat dates setting to adjust how often a new set of date column headers appears in the grid. We recommend every 20 rows, so that when the visitors scroll the page they will always be able to see the headers, even if they have a low-resolution monitor. You can change this value to fit your tastes. or blank it out to avoid repeating the column headers at all (except the top and bottom, which will always have them).

The font face and size for the grid can be entered to match your web site. Keep in mind that these are the literal strings that will be used in the <font face=??? size=??> tags in the HTML page. The font face will be enclosed in quotes (so you don't need to enter quotes).

You also have complete control over the colors used in the grid. Use the Define Grid Colors button, which opens up a Color Key dialog for defining the colors. Note that some color definitions only affect the foreground or background color -- these are indicated with comments like "BG ignored" and "FG ignored". Some colors can be defined separately for Mon-Fri cells and Sat-Sun cells, so weekends can be seen easily.

Finally, each vacant site in the grid can have a text designator in it for Vacant, Reserved or Unavailable, and the "V" (vacant) cells can optionally be linked to a script on your site, or set up to generate a simple E-mail request for a reservation. You can define the link format to anything you want -- it will be enclosed in a hyperlink tag like <a href="(your link here)">.

Link Format

The default link format can be used to send an E-mail to you with the details of the request. (Note that the E-mail field from the Park Setup will be inserted the first time you open this dialog. If the Park E-mail has not yet been set up at that time, you may need to insert it yourself). In case the default link is overwritten, here is the default:

```
mailto:(your park E-mail here)?subject=Reservation request for site <site>, arriving on <date>
```

Note that the link can have <site> and <date> markers in it as shown above, which will be replaced automatically with the site and date for the corresponding cell that the person clicked on in the vacancy grid. There are actually 4 different date formats that can be specified, so you can use whichever works best for you our your web site:

Marker:	Example:
<date>	May 23, 2006
<date-mdy>	5/23/06
<date-dmy>	23/5/2006
<date-ymd>	2006-5-23

If you have an existing reservation-request form on your site, your webmaster may be able to set up a cgi-script which can be used in place of this E-mail link that will automatically jump to the form and insert the site and date information. It's also possible to extract the parameters using Javascript code in your form's web page. To pass the site and date as parameters to your reservation form page, use a link format like this:

```
http://www.mywebsite.com/reservationform.html?<site>&<date-mdy>
```

Note the "?" and "&" characters before <site> and <date-mdy> -- these are standard separators for parameters in links. Sample Javascript code to extract these parameters into your form's site and arrival date fields has been included in the next section.

Finishing the Export

When everything is set the way you want it, click the Export Web Page Files button. The pages will be generated and you will see either a "success" message or an error message, if something didn't work (e.g. a template file was missing).

All of the settings will be saved when the dialog is closed, so the next time you want to generate the pages, you only need to click the Export Web Page Files button.

Uploading the Pages

After exporting, you still need to upload the pages to your web site (unless you host it on your own computer, which is not usually the case). There are many good FTP programs available to assist in uploading, or you can use the built-in FTP uploading function. Here are some 3rd-party programs you may want to try:

WS_FTP, by Ipswitch: http://www.ipswitch.com/
FTP Voyager, by RhinoSoft: http://www.RhinoSoft.com/
Macro Scheduler, by mjtnet: http://www.mjtnet.com/
1ClickFTP, by CyberTech: http://www.1clickftp.com/

The primary benefit to using a 3rd-party program is that the uploading can be done in the background while

you continue to use Campground Master, whereas the built-in function must complete the upload before you can use other Campground Master functions.

To upload the pages with Campground Master, simply click the button Upload Files to Web Site. (The FTP settings must be configured first -- see Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations Connections & Options). A progress window will be shown to indicate how far along it is. Once the upload is complete, you can close the dialog.

Sample Javascript to Insert Form Values

If you already have a reservation form on your web site (using the standard HTML <form> tags), you can use the Javascript code below to extract the <site> and <date> parameters from vacancy grid "V" links and use them as default values in your form. If you don't yet have a reservation form, or if you want an example form that will work well with the Online Reservation functionality, see the next section.

You should have your web site designer do this if you're not familiar with editing HTML pages in text form. The Javascript code assumes that the "Link Format" in your Export to Web Vacancy Grid setup is in this format:

```
http://www.mywebsite.com/reservationform.html?<site>&<date>
```

The first big block of script extracts the site and date from the variables in the link, then the other blocks show how to use those as default values in your form's <input> fields.

Important: Make sure that none of your site names have the "&" character in them, or else they will confuse the code.

Insert this code before the form to extract the variables:

```
<SCRIPT TYPE="text/javascript">
//
//  This block of code extracts the <site> and <date> variables
//

var var1 = location.search.substring(1, location.search.length)

// replace %20's with spaces so they're readable
while (var1.indexOf("%20") != -1)
{
  var index = var1.indexOf("%20")
  var first = var1.substring(0,index)
  var last = var1.substring(index+3,var1.length)
  var1 = first + " " + last
}

// replace %26 with the & so we can find it
while (var1.indexOf("%26") != -1)
{
  var index = var1.indexOf("%26")
  var first = var1.substring(0,index)
  var last = var1.substring(index+3,var1.length)
  var1 = first + "&" + last
}

// extract the two parameters
myparams = var1.split("&")
var param1 = ""
var param2 = ""
if (myparams.length > 0) { var param1 = myparams[0] }
```

```
   if (myparams.length > 1) { var param2 = myparams[1] }

   // see if it's in "May 23, 2005" format

   dateparts2 = param2.split(",")
   if (dateparts2.length == 2)
   {
     dateparts3 = dateparts2[0].split(" ")
     if (dateparts2.length == 2 && dateparts3.length == 2)
     {
       mon = dateparts3[0]
       day = dateparts3[1]
       year = dateparts2[1]
       if (year.length == 3 || year.length == 5)
         { year = year.substring (1, year.length) }
       if (year.length == 4 && year.substring(0,2) == "20")
         { year = year.substring(2,4) }

       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Jan") { mon = "1"}
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Feb") { mon = "2"}
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Mar") { mon = "3" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Apr") { mon = "4" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "May") { mon = "5" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Jun") { mon = "6" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Jul") { mon = "7" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Aug") { mon = "8" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Sep") { mon = "9" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Oct") { mon = "10" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Nov") { mon = "11" }
       if (mon.substring(0,3) == "Dec") { mon = "12" }

       param2 = mon + "/" + day + "/" + year
     }
   }

   </SCRIPT>
```

Insert this code in your form to insert the default value for the site requested (<site> parameter).
(You may need to modify the actual <input...> code to match your form's requirements.)

```
   Site Requested:
   <SCRIPT>
   document.write('<input type="text" name="Site_Name" value ="' + param1 + '">')
   </SCRIPT>
   <NOSCRIPT>
   <input type="text" name="Site_Name">
   </NOSCRIPT>
```

Insert this code in your form to insert the default value for the arrival date (<date> parameter). (You
may need to modify the actual <input...> code to match your form's requirements.)

```
   Arrival Date:
   <SCRIPT TYPE="text/javascript">
   document.write('<input type="text" name="First_Night" value ="' + param2 + '">')
   </SCRIPT>
   <NOSCRIPT>
   <input type="text" name="First_Night">
   </NOSCRIPT>
   (MM/DD/YYYY)
```

Sample Web Reservation Form

We've put together an example of a web form that you could use on your web site, along with the Parsing Rules needed to extract the data form the E-mail you would get when someone fills in the form.

The sample form, along with a CSV file with sample parsing rules that would parse that particular form, can be downloaded from our web site. The parsing rules CSV file can be imported to a parsing set through the Edit Parsing Set dialog.

From our web site's home page, click on the "Downloads" link in the menu, and go down to the bottom to locate the "Sample Online Reservation Form" links.

Keep in mind that this is only an example -- since it uses some default values for selections like How-Heard, Rig Type, Site Type, etc, it probably would not be appropriate for any particular park without modification. Your web site designer can use this to start with or get some ideas from, but it needs to be tailored to your particular application before actual use.

This also assumes that your web provider has some kind of form script that you can use to handle the HTML "<form>" processing. In the sample form, a CGI script called "formmail.pl" is used. This happens to be what our web host supplies, but other web hosts may use a different script or you may have to set up your own (formmail is a popular one that can be found various places on the web).

Online Reservations Setup

Overview

Online reservation functions will be disabled until the required setup is done. The setup for online reservations is fairly advanced and will require some knowledge of internet settings, plus a basic understanding of computer programming logic will be helpful if you need to set up parsing sets for E-mail requests.

All of the Online Reservations setup functions require Administrator access.

The specifics of the setup depend on which types of online requests you want to handle -- retrieving and parsing formatted E-mail requests, uploading vacancy grid pages to your own web site, or integration with the Webervations online reservation service.

Once you've decided which parts of the online reservation support you need to use, there are 4 major steps that need to be performed for setup:

- **Data Fields** -- Enable the appropriate data fields needed for online request processing.

- **Connections & Options** -- Set up the connection parameters required for each type of processing used.

- **Parsing Sets** -- Define the parsing rules for extracting data from the requests.

- **Site Fields** -- Fill in the specifics of how each site will be used and identified for online requests.

Each of these is covered in detail in the following sections. See the "Setting Up" checklists for each type of online reservation handling for a quick guide to what's needed.

Requirements

There are various prerequisites for using the Online Reservations functions in Campground Master, outside the program itself.

Internet Access

It should go without saying that access to the Internet is required for online reservation processing by Campground Master. Of course if you use a 3rd-party service like Reservation Friend or Webervations then you could let them handle the online reservations separate from Campground Master, but if you don't use Campground Master's functionality to retrieve those reservations then you would have to enter them into the system manually.

More specifically, you will need to be able to access the Internet anytime you want to retrieve online requests and/or update the sites available on the Internet. A constant connection is not needed, but a high-speed connection is recommended if you do this often.

You will also need to make sure that any firewall or other security software allows Campground Master the appropriate types of access to the Internet. For instance it will need POP3 access to retrieve requests directly from E-mail or Reservation Friend, secure HTTP (HTTPS) access to retrieve requests from and update the Webervations availability, and FTP access to upload availability to your own web site.

Note that access is only required from one computer running Campground Master. So if you have a networked installation, only one of the Campground Master workstations requires Internet access. The rest can be protected from the Internet if desired.

E-mail Requests

We refer to "E-mail requests" rather loosely throughout this documentation, but be aware that not just any E-mail request can be handled. A request must have a certain structure in order for Campground Master to extract the data from the E-mail text automatically, using Parsing Rules that you define. The request text is assumed to be some type of web form submission or formatted confirmation from a 3rd-party online reservation service. For instance, most web forms send an E-mail to you that have one field on each line, with a field name followed by the data. The parsing rules allow much more flexibility than that, but that's the general idea. See the Parsing Rules section for more details and examples.

In order to retrieve E-mail requests automatically, the requests must be available in a "POP3" mailbox. This is an Internet mail standard. However some E-mail services don't make this available, like America Online, and web-based E-mail services like Hotmail or Yahoo may not allow POP3 access. If you don't have a POP3 mailbox, then you will have to copy the text out of the E-mail and use the "Paste & Process" option to process the requests.

It's also strongly recommended that you have a POP3 mailbox set up exclusively for online requests. While any non-request E-mails can be ignored automatically, there are other problems with trying to retrieve requests from the same mailbox as you use for your own mail. The main problem is that when you retrieve your E-mail from another program like Outlook, any requests that might already be in your mailbox will be deleted from the POP3 server -- so Campground Master can't retrieve them automatically. You would then have to copy them and use the Paste & Process option to manually process them. This can quickly turn into a nuisance and possibly missed reservations.

Of course if you're taking reservation requests from a form on your own web site, you may also want to show the current site availability and update it as often as possible. For this you can use the Export to Web Vacancy Grid functionality. This is covered in a separate section, but in general this is assumed to be the "upload" half of E-mail request processing.

Refer to the <u>Setting Up for E-mail Requests</u> section for more information.

Reservation Friend

If you use the 3rd-party Reservation Friend service (through Friend Communications), Campground Master can retrieve and extract the reservation data from E-mail confirmations that they can send in a special format. If you don't have a web site or don't want to spend the time to set up reservation forms on your web site, you can use this service to accept online reservations. They can also accept credit card payment directly for full payment of the reservation. As of this writing, they charge a percentage for reservation payments taken through their service, with no annual fee.

To use this service, you will first need to get an account with Friend Communications, and go through their setup process (add your sites, descriptions, rates, etc. as needed). You will also need to decide which sites you want to designate as available for reservations through their service -- since availability can't be updated from Campground Master, it's recommended that you select only a portion of your sites for online reservations through their service, and treat them as being restricted to online reservations.

You can also specify that sites will be "released" from Reservation Friend a certain number of days before the arrival date, so they could be used for walk-in customers if no online reservation was made for them. You can configure Campground Master to know which sites are available and how many days before arrival they should be released, to help avoid double booking.

Since Reservation Friend data is sent to you as E-mail messages, you also need a "POP3" mailbox for these. We recommend using a separate mailbox for these messages to keep them separate from your normal E-mail, and if you're also getting E-mail requests from your own web site or another service then you should keep it separate from those also. Friend Communications can provide a POP3 mailbox for these if necessary, or you can tell them to send the messages to any mailbox you desire. You can also get their normal "human-readable" confirmation E-mails separately from this special form data, and that can go to your everyday E-mail account without affecting the online reservations function..

Refer to the <u>Setting Up for Reservation Friend</u> section for more information.

Webervations

Campground Master supports the download and upload protocols for Webervations.com, a 3rd party online reservation service. If you don't have a web site or don't want to spend the time to set up reservation forms on your web site, you can use this service to accept online reservations. As of this writing, Webervations charges a flat $80 per year for their service. They will show availability for a site (or a class of sites as a whole), which Campground Master uploads to their server, and makes requests available for downloading directly into Campground Master.

To use this service, you will first need to get an account with Webervations, and go through their setup process (add your sites, descriptions, rates, etc. as needed). You will also need to decide whether you want requests to be made for a specific site or only for a "class" or "type" of site (so you can select the site for the customer). This will determine how you set up Webervations, and also how you set up the fields in Campground Master to select sites appropriately.

Refer to the <u>Setting Up for Webervations</u> section for more information.

Setting Up for Export to Web

If you're interested in setting up Campground Master to export the web vacancy grid and upload it to your web site, the following areas need to be addressed. (See the related sections for details.) If you're not familiar with web site programming, we recommend that you get the assistance of your web site designer.

- Make sure you have FTP access to your web site, to upload the web pages once they're generated.

- Set up the FTP connection settings for uploading.

- Create one or more web page template files to be used when generating the pages.

- Set up the other configuration options through <u>File</u> / <u>Export</u> / <u>Export to Web Vacancy Grid</u>.

- Enable the Site data fields "Site_Online_ExWeb_Ex" and/or "Site_Online_ExWeb_Release_Days" if you want to limit online or offline availability of sites.

- Fill in the Site data fields above with the appropriate values.

Note that this functionality is often used in conjunction with the E-mail Requests functionality, so a request form on your web site would feed requests to Campground Master through E-mail.

Setting Up for E-mail Requests

If you're interested in setting up Campground Master to retrieve online reservation requests from E-mail messages (e.g. web site form submissions or online service confirmations, or from your own web site's reservation form), the following areas need to be addressed. (See the related sections for details.)

- Make sure the Reservations data field "Resv_Online_Request_ID" is enabled.

- Make sure you have a POP3 E-mail mailbox available that will receive the E-mail requests.

- Set up the POP3 connection settings for downloading E-mail (must at least be "Enabled" for some other setup functions to be available).

- Set up one or more Parsing Sets to extract the data from the E-mail. You'll need to know the format of the requests -- if using your own web site form, you might want to tweak it to make parsing easier and get as much information as possible in the format Campground Master uses.

- Enable the Site data fields "Site_Online_Email_ID" and/or "Site_Online_Email_Type" if the site name or type in the requests will not be exactly the same as the site name and type used in Campground Master. You also need to decide how you want to handle requests -- e.g. assign a site yourself, or use the customer's requested site if possible, etc.

- Fill in the Site data fields above with the appropriate values.

Setting Up for Reservation Friend

If you're interested in setting up Campground Master to retrieve online reservation data from Reservation Friend, the following areas need to be addressed. (See the related sections for details.) For the most part, this works exactly the same as for retrieving other E-mail requests.

- Make sure the Reservations data field "Resv_Online_Request_ID" is enabled.

- Make sure you have a POP3 E-mail mailbox available that will receive the reservation data from Reservation Friend.

- Set up the POP3 connection settings for downloading the E-mail messages (must at least be "Enabled" for some other setup functions to be available).

- Enable the Site data fields "Site_Online_Friend_ID" and "Site_Online_Friend_Release_Days".

- Fill in the Site data fields above with the appropriate values -- in particular, the ID for each site must be set to the text value that Reservation Friend calls the site.

- Set up one or more Parsing Sets to extract the data from the E-mail messages. There is a default parsing set for Reservation Friend built in, but some of the rules may need to be adjusted to match your particular setup (see below).

Transactions Notes

Since Campground Master has to use its own charges, discounts, and taxes (presumably from your Rates definitions), the only real transaction imported from the online reservation is the Deposit, if they paid one. The total amount due, plus any discounts, taxes, and add-ons selected on Reservation Friend will be imported as "Memo" transactions for your reference, but they will not affect the customer's balance.

Parsing Rule Adjustments

The default parsing rules for Reservation Friend are set up to handle the basic implementation as known at the time of the program's release. There may be some adjustments required to the rules depending on your particular setup on Reservation Friend and/or additions they make to the fields available.

Adders (reservation add-on items) -- There is a list of some typical "adders" available on Friend, but you have probably added your own adder definitions. The rules are set up to look at the adder ID numbers and insert a memo transaction with appropriate text. If an adder ID is not recognized, the resulting memo transaction will indicate this. You should review all adders you use on Friend and make sure the 5 sets of Trans parsing rules (for Trans[1] through Trans[5]) each contain a rule for every adder ID you use. Of course you can also change the text used for the memo if you like. If you don't know what your adder ID's are, you can ask Friend for the list or create some test reservations and look at the resulting text of the E-mail for the ID numbers used.

Unit Types -- There is a "unit type" field which will contain the rig types according to the list you set up on Friend. Since this is extracted to the Rig Type field, we recommend that you set up Friend with the exact names from the Rig Type Pick List in Campground Master (the "Normal Text" field of the pick list). Otherwise you'll need to modify the rules to convert the unit types returned from Friend into the appropriate Rig Type in your pick list -- which would require a series of "Set value if Compare-to matches" rules. If you don't use this field at all, you may delete this rule.

Amp Service -- There is an "amp service" field which will contain a value according to the selections you set

up on Friend. The default rules only check for this being "50", in which case the reservation preference field "50A" is set to "Must Have". If you set up other values for this, or need to check for values other than 50, then the rules will need to be modified accordingly. If you don't use this field at all, you may delete this rule.

Setting Up for Webervations

If you're interested in setting up Campground Master to retrieve online reservation requests from the online service Webervations.com, the following areas need to be addressed. (See the related sections for details.)

- Create an account on Webervations.com

- Set up the Webervations connection settings, using your Webervations account information (must at least be "Enabled" for some other setup functions to be available).

- Decide how you want sites to be represented in Webervations (see below) .

- Make sure the Reservations data field "Resv_Online_Request_ID" is enabled.

- Enable the Site data fields "Site_Online_Weberv_ID", "Site_Online_Weberv_Name", and "Site_Online_Weberv_Class".

- Enable the Site data fields "Site_Online_Weberv_Ex" and/or "Site_Online_Weberv_Release_Days" if desired.

- Fill in the Site data fields above with the appropriate values.

- Set up one or more Parsing Sets to extract the data from Webervations. There is a default parsing set for Webervations that should work in most cases, though you might need to make some small changes or additions depending on your Webervations account setup.

Webervations Site Configuration

When you set up your Webervations account, you need to create a number of "Rooms", and optionally "Unit Classes". You can also specify how many "Units" are available for each "Room". So instead of actually creating a separate room for each of your sites, you can treat the "Rooms" in Webervations more like the Site Types in Campground Master. So for instance you can have a "Normal RV" room, "Deluxe RV" room, "Tent" room, etc. Then for the number of units in each room, enter the number of sites you have of that type.

On the other hand, there's no need to match up with your site types exactly. If you want to create more specific rooms, you can do so. For instance you might want to divide them by 30A/50A service, lakefront vs. street-front, or however you would like to allow the customer to choose a site or location. Campground Master allows you to specify the "Room Name" used in Webervations for each site, so you can assign them as needed.

Now assuming that you treat the rooms similar to site types as described above, a reservation request will indicate the "Room Name", which is really the type of site. If there happens to be only one site of that type configured, then it will automatically assign that site to the reservation. Otherwise, you will need to select the site yourself when processing the reservation.

Alternatively you can set up a room for each site you have. This would be appropriate if you have a small number of condos or cabins, for instance.

Whether you set it up as groups or just individual sites, be sure to set the "Site_Online_Weberv_Name" data

field for each site appropriately so it matches the room name you used in Webervations. This is case-sensitive. If a value is entered for a site that doesn't match a room name exactly, Webervations will report an error when you upload availability data (and of course a request for that room might not work since it doesn't match the site). Note that Webervations sends you an E-mail each time you do an upload, and that's where errors are reported -- Campground Master will not see the error messages, so be sure to check your E-mail soon after uploading.

The Unit Class, which equates to the "Site_Online_Weberv_Class" field, is usually set to "Default" unless you specify a different class in Webervations. You could use this to divide up classes similar to the Site Class in Campground Master, but it's not required unless you need more than 50 "Rooms" defined in Webervations. Remember that one "Room" in Webervations can actually be as many Sites as needed, so 50 Rooms is usually sufficient unless you want every site listed individually.

The "Site_Online_Weberv_ID" field is not currently used other than when uploading availability to Webervations. You should set this field to be the same as the room name ("Site_Online_Weberv_Name") to make it work properly. Otherwise it may upload more "rooms" than you intend (see below).

Of course you don't have to expose all of your sites to Webervations. You decide which ones you want to be available for online reservations, and set those up in your Webervations account.. Use the field "Site_Online_Weberv_Ex" to exclude sites from Webervations availability so they're not uploaded.

You can also use the "Site_Online_Weberv_Release_Days" field to remove sites from online availability a specified number of days ahead of time -- but this assumes you're uploading availability at least once per day. Campground Master actually uses this to create the availability data accordingly -- Webervations doesn't know about this value, so if you don't update your availability often enough then it's irrelevant.

Note that when you upload the availability data, an entry will be created for each unique combination of "Room", "ID", and "Class", indicating the number of units for each room are available for that combination. This must match what Webervations expects. This is why we recommend that the Room and ID always be identical, and that you just use "Default" for the Class (unless you create multiple classes in Webervations of course). This is the way Webervations expects it.

Data Fields Used

There are several data fields associated with retrieving and processing online reservations. These are all disabled by default to minimize database size for those not requiring this function, but they must be enabled before the online reservations processing can be used. See Maintenance / Data Field Definitions to enable data fields as detailed below:

For any online reservation processing:

The Reservations data field "Resv_Online_Request_ID" **must** be enabled for any online processing (except Exporting to a web vacancy grid). This is used to store a unique identifier for each online request, so duplicate requests can be ignored.

The Reservations data field "Resv_Online_Request_Raw_Text" can be enabled if you want the raw text of the online request (e.g. the actual E-mail or Webervations data) to be saved with the reservation for future reference. It's not needed by the program at all, but might be useful if there's any question about what was actually in the request. You can view the request text through Reservation Details. **Warning** -- this will use a lot of space in the database, so if you expect to receive hundreds of online requests per year then this might not be worth the memory used. Instead, you could keep copies of the temporary download files before deleting them (but this requires manually copying the files in Windows).

For E-mail request processing:

The Site data field "Site_Online_Email_ID" is optional -- it can be enabled if the site name or number you expect in E-mail requests is different than the Full Name for the sites.

The Site data field "Site_Online_Email_Type" is optional -- it can be enabled if requests will be made by the type of site rather than specific site numbers.

For Exporting to a web vacancy grid (on your own web site):

The Site data field "Site_Online_ExWeb_Ex" is optional -- it can be enabled if you want to exclude some sites from the availability information on your web site.

The Site data field "Site_Online_ExWeb_Release_Days" is optional -- it can be enabled if you want to specify that sites are removed from online availability a certain number of days ahead of time. See the section Online Connections -- General for more information on release days.

For Reservation Friend processing:

The Site data field "Site_Online_Friend_ID" **must** be enabled for Reservation Friend functionality. This will contain the site name as they report it in the reservation data.

The Site data field "Site_Online_Friend_Release_Days" is optional, but should be set up if Reservation Friend releases the site for walk-in reservations 1 or more days prior to the arrival date. See the section Online Connections -- General for more information on release days.

For Webervations requests and availability upload:

The Site data fields "Site_Online_Weberv_ID", "Site_Online_Weberv_Name", and "Site_Online_Weberv_Class" **must** be enabled for Webervations functionality.

The Site data field "Site_Online_Weberv_Ex" is optional -- it can be enabled if you want to exclude some sites from Webervations availability.

The Site data field "Site_Online_Weberv_Release_Days" is optional -- can be enabled if you want to specify that sites are removed from Webervations availability a certain number of days ahead of time. See the section Online Connections -- General for more information on release days.

Online Connections - General Setup

Currently there is only one option under the General section, but it takes some explanation.

Consider any dates past the "Release Days" as only available for Online Reservations -- Set this option if you want to consider sites as unavailable for local reservations if it's available for online reservations, according to the Release Days field(s) for each site.

As mentioned in Data Fields Used, there is a "Release Days" field for each of the types of online reservation services that can be uploaded to (Webervations and the Export to Web for your own web site), and also for the Reservation Friend service since they support this functionality. If one or more of these fields is enabled, and also assuming that the site is not excluded from that type of online reservations, then the site will be

marked as unavailable for local reservations after the # of release days specified.

As an example: If you have the Release Days for Export to Web set to 3, then that means the site is released from online availability 3 days ahead of time (3 days from today). That also means that it's available for online requests starting 3 days from now (e.g. someone could be reserving the site online for any dates 3 days from now or later). Therefore, you should avoid making local reservations for it that might conflict with the online reservations. Setting this option will make the site show as unavailable on the Rack starting 3 days from now (e.g. the first 3 days will be available, but after that it will be considered unavailable for locally made reservations).

Sites that are considered available for online reservations in this manner are shown in a different color on the Rack (a medium blue by default, different than the normal grey for unavailable). They will also be excluded from the list of available sites any time "Show Available" or "Available Only" is selected.

Note that if an attempt is made to create a reservation covering an online-only date, either a warning or error will be shown depending on the Access Levels setting and the current operator's level. If the operator doesn't have access to make local reservations for online-only dates, an error will be shown and the reservation cannot be saved. The access level required is Manager by default, but it can be modified through Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels.

Online Connections - Export to Web

Campground Master has built-in FTP (File Transfer Protocol) functionality for uploading web pages to your web site after using the Export to Web Vacancy Grid function. Some familiarity with your web host provider's uploading requirements is needed to configure this functionality. Obviously the first requirement is that you have your own web site, and that the web server that it's on supports uploading the web pages with FTP. It should also go without saying that the computer must have a connection to the internet.

The basic settings are the same as for any FTP program. Contact your web host provider for the actual settings to be used (just ask for your "FTP configuration settings for uploading web files"), but example entries are shown below:

Host Name/Address: **mywebname.myhost.com**
Port Number: **21**
Username: **myusername**
Password: **mypassword**
Remote directory: **public_html/vacancyfolder**

Passive Transfer -- This option can be selected for most web hosts, but some will not allow it. If you're having trouble with the upload, try changing this option.

Online Connections - E-mail Requests

In order to retrieve online requests from E-mail, the appropriate settings need to be configured in Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Connections & Options. This allows Campground Master to retrieve E-mail messages from a POP3 mailbox. (POP3 stands for "Post Office Protocol 3", which is a standard E-mail system used on the Internet.) These settings are similar to configuring most E-mail applications in Windows, like Microsoft Outlook.

To use the E-mail retrieval functions, Campground Master must be able to access a POP3 mail server via the Internet. For more details, see the Online Reservations Setup / Requirements section.

Enable retrieval of online reservation requests from E-mail

This box must be checked to enable the E-mail portion of Online Reservations support. If this is not checked, the "E-mail" option will not be available in other Online Reservations functions.

Automatically connect to the Internet each time

If you use a dial-up internet service, you can select this option to connect automatically when it needs to retrieve E-mail (and it will also disconnect automatically when done).

POP3 Server Settings

You will need to enter the appropriate settings for accessing the POP3 mailbox. The host name/address is usually "mail" or "pop" followed by your ISP or web host domain name. An example is below:

Host Name/Address: **pop.myisp.com**
Port Number: **110**
Username :   **myusername**
Password :   **mypassword**

If you have any questions about the proper settings to use in POP3 Setup, please contact your Internet provider.

Delete messages from server immediately after retrieving them

Use caution when choosing this option. Once you have things running smoothly, this can be selected if (and **only** if) the POP3 mailbox you're using is dedicated to online requests -- otherwise it would delete all of your other messages also, before you can download them with your normal E-mail program. If this option is not checked, messages will continue to accumulate in the mailbox (and take time to download each time), until you manually delete them. You could still delete messages by logging into the mailbox from another E-mail program, but you would have to be careful about deleting requests not yet processed.

Remember that all retrieved messages are also stored in a local file when they're retrieved, so even if you delete the requests from the mailbox but don't get a chance to process them, you can use the Reprocess Downloaded Requests function to get them from the downloaded file later (until you use Delete the Downloaded Requests of course).

Local Working Directory

This is where the downloaded requests will be saved locally, in a file named "email.txt". This defaults to a blank entry, which means it will use the same folder as the Campground Master database. If you prefer to put it somewhere else, enter the entire path name here.

Defaults for Online Deposit Transactions

If you're using a 3rd-party reservation service and they take a deposit for you, then you probably want to use a special Payment Method and Description for these deposits (since they're not coming directly into your normal account). If the payment description field is left blank, it will default to the payment method name.

You can also designate a special Operator name so you can identify them on reports. If this is left blank, the transaction and reservation will be recorded with the operator logged in at the time the request is processed.

Note that even if you won't be receiving deposits online, you can set the operator name to be used in "Created by" for the reservations.

Note that if you enter a deposit locally after saving the reservation request, then these values aren't used for that deposit transaction (the current operator is used).

Online Connections - Reservation Friend

In order to retrieve online requests from Reservation Friend, the appropriate settings need to be configured in Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Connections & Options. This allows Campground Master to retrieve the reservation data E-mail messages from a POP3 mailbox.

These settings are exactly the same as for setting up for E-mail Requests, so refer to that section for details. The one exception is that the downloaded requests (in the local working directory) will be named "email_friend.txt" instead of "email.txt".

The connection settings are separate so that you can use a different POP3 mailbox for Reservation Friend requests than you do for other E-mail requests -- this is recommended so that you can handle them separately. You can also specify different defaults for online payment transactions, so for instance you can indicate that the deposit (or payment) was made directly to Friend Communications.

Online Connections - Webervations

In order to retrieve online requests from Webervations (and upload new availability data to them), the appropriate settings need to be configured in Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Connections & Options. This allows Campground Master to retrieve reservation requests directly from your account on the Webervations web site, using their special protocol. For more information on what's required for using Webervations, see the Online Reservations Setup / Requirements section.

Enable retrieval of online reservation requests from Webervations.com

This box must be checked to enable the Webervations portion of Online Reservations support. If this is not checked, the "Webervations" option will not be available in other Online Reservations functions.

Automatically connect to the Internet each time

If you use a dial-up internet service, you can select this option to connect automatically when it needs to retrieve requests (and it will also disconnect automatically when done).

Clear pending requests from server after they're retrieved

Once you have things running smoothly, this option can be selected to delete processed requests from the server. If this option is not checked, requests will continue to accumulate on the server (and take time to download each time). There is no other way to delete the requests -- even if you don't leave this option checked all the time, check it once in awhile to clear the accumulated requests.

Remember that all retrieved messages are also stored in a local file when they're retrieved, so even if you delete the requests from the server but don't get a chance to process them, you can use the Reprocess Downloaded Requests function to get them from the downloaded file later (until you use Delete the Downloaded Requests to clear them out, of course).

Other Settings for data retrieval

You will need to enter the appropriate settings for accessing your account on Webervations. Note that only the <u>Username</u> and <u>Password</u> for your account should be modified unless otherwise instructed. The rest of these entries default to the proper settings to use, as of the time of this writing. **Be careful not to modify them!** Just in case you need to fix them, here are the correct settings (again, accurate as of the time of this writing, but they may change if Webervations changes its format):

Download host:	**https://secure.webervations.com**	Port: **443**
Download file:	**/magic-scripts/down/download_bookings.asp**	
Upload host:	**http://uploads.webervations.com**	Port: **80**
Upload file:	**/magic-scripts/down/get_cgmaster_xml.asp**	

Local Working Directory

This is where it will save the downloaded requests locally, in a file named "webervations_xml.txt". Other temporary files may also be placed there, for instance the availability data to be uploaded. The path defaults to a blank entry, which means it will use the same folder as the Campground Master database. If you prefer to put it somewhere else, enter the entire path name here.

Confirmation # Format

Webervations doesn't assign confirmation numbers to requests, so Campground Master will assign one according to the format you specify. This is exactly like the main confirmation format specification, except that there's a special "<O>" tag (the letter O, not the number 0). This will insert the unique Online ID from Webervations into the confirmation number if you like. The default format is "RWEB<O>", which will be the online ID prefixed with "RWEB". Thus you will be able to easily see that it came from Webervations. For complete formatting options, see the Maintenance / Program Options / Formats section of the documentation.

Defaults for Online Deposit Transactions

If you're using a 3rd-party reservation service and they take a deposit for you, then you probably want to use a special Payment Method and description for these deposits (since they're not coming directly into your normal account). If the payment description field is left blank, it will default to the payment method name.

You can also designate a special Operator name so you can identify them on reports. If this is left blank, the transaction and reservation will be recorded with the operator logged in at the time the request is processed. Note that even if you won't be receiving deposits online, you can set the operator name to be used in "Created by" for the reservations.

Note that if you enter a deposit locally after saving the reservation request, then these values aren't used for that deposit transaction (the current operator is used).

Online Setup - Parsing Sets

Overview

The parsing engine in Campground Master is the "brain" behind automatically processing online reservations for E-mail requests and Webervations. The parsing engine is used to examine and extract the reservation data whenever you use the functions in <u>Online Reservation Requests</u> to retrieve online requests, re-process downloaded requests, or paste & process requests.

Setting up the parsing rules for the engine is almost like writing a little computer program. The rules are use by the engine to look through the text of the request and figure out how to extract the customer's name and address, the dates they want to stay, what kind of site they want, and all of the other vital information for the reservation. Obviously some experience with programming or database manipulation is helpful, but if you're patient and follow the examples then you should be able to set it up. See the Parsing Rules Technical Details section later for more information.

"Parsing" Defined

"Parsing" is a computer term that generally means manipulating or extracting useful information out of some data. In this particular context, it means extracting the various bits of reservation data out of the E-mail text or other downloaded data.

Parsing Sets and Parsing Rules

A parsing "set" is a group of parsing "rules". Each parsing rule is like one command in a computer program, defining where to find a single data field like the customer's name. A set of these rules, along with a few other parameters, is a parsing set that defines how to extract a complete reservation from one bunch of data, for instance one E-mail message.

The parsing sets are divided into sections depending on the source of the request -- one section for E-mail requests and one section for Webervations. This helps avoid confusion for both you and the parsing engine. However each section can have any number of parsing sets. For instance if you receive E-mail requests from several different online reservation services, you would create a separate parsing set for each service (since the requests would most likely be in different formats for each service).

In some cases you might even have separate sets for different types of requests from the same source. For instance if you have two forms on your web site that ask different questions, like one form for camping sites and one for cabins, you can set up a separate parsing set for each form. You just need to have some unique text in each type of request so that Campground Master can tell them apart and use the right parsing set for it.

Webervations Default Parsing Set

Since Webervations requests are known to have a certain format, the complete definition of this parsing set is already in Campground Master. When you first select Webervations for the parsing set type, this default will be loaded automatically. In fact you don't even need to go into the parsing set setup -- the default set will be added if necessary when you first retrieve Webervations requests.

As of this writing, you should not need to make any changes to the parsing set in order for it to work. However if a change to the parsing set is needed, you can edit it just like any other set. If for some reason you make a mistake and need to start over with the default, you can delete the entire default parsing set, close the parsing set dialog, and it will be replaced when you open the dialog again.

Reservation Friend Default Parsing Set

The general format of the reservation data E-mails from Reservation Friend is already known, so a default parsing set has been set up in Campground Master. When you first select Reservation Friend for the parsing set type, this default will be loaded automatically.

However, you may need to make some changes to the parsing set in order for it to work completely. In particular, you may need to configure it to work with your specific reservation options (50A, extra adults and other "adders"), and for your Rig Type selections. Since the same parsing engine is used for Reservation Friend as for E-mail requests, refer to those sections for details.

E-mail Parsing Sets

Since there is no standard format for E-mail requests, you will have to set this up on your own. However there are some examples later to help you get started. If you're using a 3rd-party reservation service, we may have a parsing set already configured for that service which you can import into the program. (If we don't already have one, we may be able to create it from some examples of their E-mail confirmations.)

Parsing Rule Details and Examples

The basic functionality of the setup dialogs will be covered first, followed by detailed information about parsing rules and some practical examples.

Setup Parsing Sets Dialog

To add or edit parsing sets, go to Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Parsing Sets.

Parsing Set Type

This is basically equivalent to the "Source" selection for retrieving online reservations. Select the appropriate type of request for which you want to set up parsing sets, e.g. E-mail requests, Reservation Friend, or Webervations requests.

Parsing Set List

This works the same way as the Rates setup dialog, in that it shows a list of defined sets (of the selected online parsing set type), and has functions for Edit, Add, Insert, Delete, Copy, Move Up and Move Down, plus the standard Print and Export functions.

To edit a parsing set, for instance, just click the one to be edited and click the **Edit parsing set definition** button. Or you can just double-click on it to edit it. This will open the Edit Parsing Set dialog.

To add a new parsing set, click the **New parsing set definition** button. The same dialog that's used for editing is used to add a new set.

The order of parsing sets can make a difference if you're checking for multiple request formats and use different Identifying Text for each set. They will be processed in the same order that they appear in this list. The one with the most specific identifying text should be at the top. (It would actually be pretty unusual if the identifying text was ambiguous enough that the order would matter anyway, since it's a good idea to make it as specific as possible.)

If you have a parsing set that works great but you need to set up another one that's almost the same, you can use the Copy function. This will also duplicate all of the parsing rules for the copied set(s). This can be handy if you get different requests in the same format except for a small difference. Of course the Identifying Text needs to be able to distinguish the two sets also (more on this in later sections).

Warning -- if you Delete a parsing set, all parsing rules associated with it are immediately deleted too. While this should be obvious, we mention it as a warning because one accidental "Delete" could wipe out a whole lot of work on parsing rules.

Edit Parsing Set Dialog

When you Edit, add New or Insert a parsing set from the Setup Parsing Sets dialog, the Edit Parsing Set dialog is used.

This dialog defines one parsing set, which consists of 4 items:

Set name

This is for your use to identify the set when listed in the Setup Parsing Sets dialog, so just make sure it's different for each set you define.

Identifying Text

This field is important for the parsing to be successful. This is particularly important for E-mail requests, since other types of E-mail need to be filtered out from processing.

Each parsing set should have a different identifying text value so that the parsing engine can determine which parsing set to use for any given E-mail. Furthermore, it should be something unique that not only identifies an E-mail as being a request (as opposed to some other junk E-mail), but also distinguishes requests that need to use this parsing set from requests that need to use a different parsing set. Remember that it will look at the E-mail header in addition to the text of the E-mail, so it's common to use the "from" E-mail address or the subject of the message to identify it. Some simple examples are below:

- "**request@reservationservice.com**" -- This parsing set would only be used for an E-mail with that address in it, which presumably would only be E-mail requests from that online service.

- "**Form: Cabin Rental Request**" -- This parsing set would only be used for and E-mail with that text in it, which would presumably be the subject of messages sent from the cabin rental form on your web site.

- "**RIG_LENGTH_REQUIRED**" -- This parsing set would only be used for and E-mail with that text in it, which is one of the field headers in messages sent from the RV space rental form on your web site (and presumably not present in the cabin rental form, for instance).

- *(empty)* -- If you're using an E-mail mailbox that's dedicated to requests (so the mailbox doesn't get any other junk E-mail), and you only expect one type of request, then you can leave the identifying text blank (don't actually put the word "empty" in it). You could also have a default set with blank identifying text, but make sure it's the last one in the list so any others are checked first.

Try to use something as unique as possible, but don't worry if some other E-mail happens to come in with that text in it by accident. The program will try to parse it, but will simply show an error if the E-mail message doesn't have all of the other fields defined by the parsing rules.

Note that the identifying text is **case sensitive!** Make sure you have any capital letters exactly as they will appear in the E-mail.

Parsing Rules

This is a list of all parsing rules defined for the set. As with the Setup Parsing Sets dialog, the standard Edit/Add/Insert/Copy/Delete/Move functions are available.

The list of rules is a little different than other lists. The "Rule Details" listed will be shown in a format determined by the type of rule and the basic settings for it. This can take some time to get used to, but basically it just shows the type of rule, and the main parameters of the rule (begin/end text, etc.). For instance, rules that have a before and after text and presumably extract some data between them will be shown like "Before___After", where the underline is assumed to be where the extracted text will be. Rules that have the "Append" flag set will have a "+" at the beginning of the rule details. Rules that use the "After previous field" location will have a "..." in them to indicate this.

Notes

You can add notes to the set if you like, which will just be shown in the list of sets in the Setup Parsing Sets dialog.

Importing Rules

If we have a pre-defined set of parsing rules for a particular type of online service, you can import them from a file that we send you instead of adding them all yourself. The format of this import must be precisely as expected, so this should only be used with files provided by us.

Save and Test Parsing Set

As you're setting up your parsing rules, it's helpful to test them frequently to see how they're working. You'll probably want to do this after each new rule is added at first, but don't get lazy about it -- you should test it with various combinations of data before trying it for real requests.

Entering Test Data

When you click "Save & Test Parsing Set" on the Edit Parsing Set dialog, a large window will open where you can enter sample data, for instance a sample E-mail that would need to be parsed. You can type in the data manually, or copy and paste it from another program.

If you already have an E-mail request that you've received, then naturally you would want to use that to test with. Just copy/paste the E-mail text into this window. However it gets even easier the next time -- the last test data used with each parsing set is saved in the database, so you don't have to paste it in each time. Of course you will eventually want to test with various requests with different data, etc. to make sure it works for any possible combination.

E-mail Message Text

When testing the parsing rules for E-mail requests that you expect to eventually have Campground Master retrieve directly from your E-mail box, you should include the full header and raw text as it comes from the POP3 server. Depending on your E-mail program, this means selecting a "Full header" option, or perhaps a "View Source" option to see the raw E-mail text. If you can't find a way to do this, then you may need to get the E-mail request connection portion functioning so you can actually retrieve an E-mail from the server through Retrieve Online Reservations, then copy that E-mail text from the "email.txt" file (where Campground Master puts retrieved messages). If you're working with Reservation Friend requests instead of E-mail requests, the E-mail text will be in the file "email_friend.txt" instead.

Testing the Rules

Once you have the test data entered, click "Test". It will parse the data using the current parsing rules for this set, and also check to make sure the Identifying Text for the set is present. If there's an error in the rules definition or other serious error, it will show an error message. If there is no error that aborts the parsing, then the Online Reservation Request Details dialog will be shown, just as if you're processing a request received the normal way. Any fields parsed successfully from the data will be shown in the list, so you can check the accuracy of the parsing rules. Of course the "Save" functions are disabled since this is just a test.

Edit Parsing Rule Dialog

When you Edit or add a New parsing rule from the Edit Parsing Set dialog, the Edit Parsing Rule dialog is shown.

The basic method of entering a rule is to set each of the fields in this dialog, in top to bottom order (some fields will be disabled based on the Parsing action choice, so not all fields need to be entered in all cases).

The details of all the different types of rules and how they're used is covered in the section Parsing Rule Technical Details.

Where to look for field -- This has two choices, "Anywhere in the text" or "After previous field".

Parsing action -- There are several choices for what to do if this rule is satisfied. Just select from the list.

Text before field, Text after field, Compare to, and **Set value to** -- enter the text for any of these that are needed, according to the selected parsing action.

Number of Characters -- enter the maximum number of characters to extract (from between the Before and After text), or the exact number of characters to extract if the After text is blank.

Field descriptor -- This is the Campground Master data field (e.g. reservation, customer, or transaction field) that will be set to the value resulting for the parsing rule. It will show the descriptor in text here and you can edit it, but the easiest way to set the field descriptor is to use the **Select Field** button, which opens the Select a Data Field dialog.

Append to any previous text for the same field -- Select this box if you want the parsed text to be added to the field instead of replacing it. For instance there may be several bits of information in the request that you want to put in the Reservation Notes.

Convert to Mixed-case, Convert to UPPER-case -- select one of these if you want the parsed text to be converted automatically. This is commonly used for names and addresses, in case the customer didn't use the proper capitalization.

Trim any extra leading and trailing spaces from the value -- Actually all data fields are ultimately trimmed before being saved into a reservation, so this option is checked by default. However this option can be disabled for intermediate parsing, for instance when appending several bits of text to one field. This allows you to insert spaces where needed or keep any spaces in the extracted data.

Notes -- You can add any notes you want, which could be handy for an unusual parsing setup that you may need to figure out at a later date. This dialog is the only place these notes will be shown.

Select a Data Field Dialog

This dialog is used to select a Campground Master data field (e.g. a reservation, customer, or transaction field) to be used in a parsing rule. It will open when using **Select Field** from the Edit Parsing Rule dialog.

The Data Field list on the left-hand side will show fields that can be used for the selected Data Table (record type). It may also have "pseudo-fields", which aren't real fields in the database but can be chosen just like a real field to handle the parsed text a certain way. For instance if you choose "Number of Nights", it will actually use the given value to calculate the real Last Night field value when parsing the text.

The Linked/Relational Data Field list on the right-hand side will only have fields in it if the field you choose on the left is a relational (linked) field. For instance if you're looking at Reservation fields and select the "Customer" field on the left (which is a relational link to the customer data table), then all Customer fields will be shown on the right. When there is a list on the right, you must choose one of those fields for the selection to be valid. So for instance you could choose "Last Name" from the list of customer fields. Note that in this case it would have been the same thing as selecting "Customers" directly in the Data Table list and then selecting "Last Name" in the left-hand list -- it's just two ways of getting the same result.

Once you have selected the desired field, click OK and it will convert it into the proper Field Descriptor for the parsing rule. As a shortcut, you can just double-click on the desired field.

Parsing Rules Technical Details

Parsing rules are pretty simple at the basic level of "if you find this then put the text here". This section covers the technical stuff -- for some actual examples that are easy to understand, see the next section with the Parsing Set Example.

Types of Rules (Actions)

If you're getting data from a web form that you design or have designed for you, then it should be easy to set up the rules because you would naturally design the form to ask for all of the information in a format that's very similar to the Campground Master data. In that case, most or all of your rules will be the basic "Extract Field Value" type and will be very simple to implement.

Other types of rules are available to handle special situations that would mostly be an issue if you're trying to parse a request from some other service that uses different types of data. For instance, they might have a field that has the dollar charge for extra adults but does not give the actual number of adults, like Campground Master needs it. You could use the rules to convert various charge amounts into the appropriate number of adults.

Each action type, or rule type, is detailed below. Each type of rule accepts different parameters (before,

after, compare-to or set-value text), depending on its function. All of them also need a field descriptor and allow other options like append and convert options, except the Ignore Field rule. Note that the number of characters can be specified also, but to keep it simple this option is covered separately below.

<u>Extract Field value</u>

This is the basic rule used to extract text from the data and set a field value to that text. All you need to do is enter the text that will appear before the value (before-text) and the text that will appear after the value (after-text). For instance, if the request has the customer's last name after the label "LASTNAME:", then enter that label for the before-text. You also need to tell it where to stop extracting the value, so for instance if you know there won't be anything else on that line, enter "**\r**" (carriage return) for the after-text.

You can leave the before-text blank if you want to start extracting immediately from where the position pointer is in the data -- this assumes that the Where to Look is set to "After Previous Field".

<u>Extract Field value if not equal to 'Compare to'</u>

This rule is similar to the previous one in that it looks for the field between the before and after text, but it also lets you specify an exception to extracting the data. In addition to the before and after text, fill in the Compare-to text. The data found will be extracted only if it does not match that text. For instance, the request might specify a site number, or "N/A" if they don't select a site. Use this rule to extract the site number specified as long as it's not "N/A".

You might wonder why there's not a rule to extract a field value if it *is* equal to the compare-to text. That's because the "Set Field value if Compare to matches" rule below can do the same thing.

This rule can also be used to extract a field value only if the text is non-blank, by leaving the Compare-to text blank. In other words, rather than just extracting a blank field, it would skip the extraction and not set the field at all.

<u>Set Field to a fixed value (always)</u>

This rule doesn't actually extract anything from the text. It simply sets a field value no matter what (assuming this parsing set is used). You just enter the set-value-to text for the field.

This rule is generally used to set a default value, for instance to set the How-found field to a specific value for all online requests, or perhaps to set a default for the number of adults in case they didn't specify it in the request. Remember that a rule could follow later in the set that extracts the field if it does find the value in the request, which would replace the default value.

<u>Set Field value if 'Text before field' is found</u>

This rule is similar to the previous one, except it looks for some before-text and only sets the value you specify if that text is found (ignoring anything else actually in the request). This would be used for things like special options that appear as unique words in the request. For instance if the request would have something like "2 ADULTS" in it for the number of adults, it's hard to extract a value appearing before the text. So you can add a number of rules, one for each reasonable number, such that each rule would set the # Adults field to the specific value it finds (e.g. if it finds "3 ADULTS", set the # Adults field to "3").

<u>Set Field value if non-blank data is found</u>

This rule looks for before and after text like the normal Extract rule -- but instead of setting the field value to the extracted text, it will set the field to a specified value as long as the text between the before and after text is not blank. (Remember that whitespace characters like space, tab, carriage return and line feed are considered blank.

Set Field value if 'Compare to' matches

This rule looks for before and after text like the normal Extract rule -- but instead of setting the field value to the extracted text, it will set the field to a specified value as long as the text between the before and after text matches the compare-to text. As an example, lets say the request is expected to have either "Electric: 50A" or "Electric: 30A". If you have a preference field for 50A (which must be set to "Must Have" to show that they want 50A), then you could use this rule. Set the before-text to "Electric:", the after-text to "A", the Compare-to text to "50", and the Set-value-to text to "Must Have".

Set Field value if 'Compare to' doesn't match

This is similar to the previous rule, except that the field will be set if the data does *not* match the compare-to value.

Set Field value if no previous value was set (default)

This rule is intended as a catch-all case, for instance if you have several Set Field value rules for the same field, checking for various conditions, and then need to set the field to a particular value if none of the other checks produced a value. This is essentially defining a default value.

Note that the "previous value" it's looking for is according to the Field Descriptor, not just the same before and after text in previous rules. So if you have several rules looking for an "Electricity" value but the rules actually set different data fields (e.g. 50A, 30A, and 20A preference fields), then this doesn't act as a default for "Electricity" -- it would only act as a default for one specific data field.

There is a subtle difference between using this at the end of the other comparisons and just setting the field to a fixed value as a default before the comparison rules (whereas the default field value would be overwritten if one of the comparison rules were satisfied). The key is that this particular rule does nothing unless the before and after text is located, so the field will not get set at all if the request does not have the before & after text.

Ignore Field (set position for next field)

This rule only has one parameter, the before-text, which is just the text that you're looking for to activate this rule. This rule doesn't set any fields, it just looks for the specified before-text, and if it's found then the position pointer for following rules is set to that position (on the next character after the before-text found).

Obviously this rule only has a use if there is a rule following it that has "After previous field" for where to look. It can be useful for setting a starting point, for instance if a number of fields are in a known order without unique labels in front of each one. Just locate some identifying text that comes before all of the values -- for instance the request may have a label "Address:", which is known to be followed by several lines with the pieces of the address. Use the Ignore Field rule to find "Address:", and then a number of Extract Field rules with blank before-text to read in the data fields sequentially.

Number of Characters vs. Text after field

Any rule that has "Text after field" as a parameter will also have "Number of characters" as an option. Either or both of these values can be specified, depending on what you need to do.

If the after-text is specified but the number of characters is blank (or zero), then it will simply extract all of the text between the before and after text as described in the actions above.

If the after-text is blank but the number of characters is 1 or more, then it will extract exactly that number of characters (starting after the before-text), and leave the position pointer at the next character. This is useful for parsing data values of a fixed length, especially from a string of data with no labels or field dividers. Remember that you can also leave the before-text blank, so it starts exactly where the last rule left off. Note

that if it reaches the end of the request before the required number of characters are found, it will just keep what it finds -- this can be used to just extract everything to the end of the request, for instance if there are notes of unknown length at the end, with multiple lines and no unique ending character to stop with.

If both the after-text and the number of characters is specified, then the number of characters is assumed to be a maximum. So it must find the after-text, and the position pointer will be moved to the next character after that as usual, but if the data extracted between the before and after text is longer than this maximum number of characters then it will be truncated. For instance, this can be useful to extract just a fixed part of a line but leave the position pointer starting on the next line.

General Parsing Rule Order

There are a couple restrictions for the order of parsing rules in a parsing set. Regardless of the order that the fields appear in the request text, the order of parsing rules must follow these guidelines for successful parsing:

- Reservation fields and Customer fields can be in either order and intermixed if needed. However there must be at least one Reservation field **and** one Customer field successfully parsed before a Transaction field can be parsed (due to the required linking relationship).

- If you're extracting more than one Transaction, using indexed records like Trans[1], Trans[2], etc., don't intermingle index values and keep them in order -- e.g. all rules for the first transaction must appear before any for the second transaction. See below for more information.

Indexed Records in Field Descriptors

As just mentioned above, it's possible to extract data for multiple transactions for a single reservation request. This is handy for adding memos or other items to the transactions for the reservation. This is generally used only for transactions.

To create a parsing rule to do this, you must modify the field descriptor manually, e.g. after using Browse to select the field on the Edit Parsing Rule dialog. Insert an index number inside square brackets, just before the colon of the field descriptor -- for example: "Trans[0]:Tran_Amount". The index value can start at 0, and go as high as needed. If no index value is specified, [0] is assumed.

The index values must be in order in the parsing rule list, e.g. all fields for Tran[1] must appear before Tran[2] fields, [2] before [3], etc. However you can skip index numbers if you like (to leave room for inserting others later, for instance). It's also OK if data isn't extracted for all transactions, resulting in missed index numbers. For instance if it extracts fields for Trans[1] and then doesn't find any rules (or valid data to extract) for Trans[2], it can still extract data for Trans[3]. Only the two transactions found will be used. The numbers are just a way to create separate records and indicate which fields go with which record, but the numbers themselves are not important.

When you view the Online Request Details, the indexes shown for extracted data will appear a little differently -- they will have a "+" number in front, like "Transactions[+1]". These numbers may not match the index values you use in the rules -- they will increment without gaps in the numbering.

Using "After Previous Field" for Where to Look

Aside from the general order of fields mentioned above, the order of the rules don't matter if the "Where to look" for all of your rules are "Anywhere in the text" because it will start at the beginning of the request data each time. But if you use the "After previous field" option, then naturally the rules need to be in the same order that the fields to be extracted will appear in the request data. Therefore it's recommended to use the "Anywhere" option unless there's a specific requirement for getting fields in a certain order without looking for unique text to indicate the field position.

To be more specific -- as the engine goes through the rules, it keeps track of the last position it looked at (e.g. where it found the last field's data). If you select "After previous field", it starts looking from that position to satisfy this rule (e.g. to find the "before text" for the next rule). If a rule uses "Anywhere in text", the engine starts over at the beginning for that rule.

Note that sometimes every character is important for locating data. Lets say the following text has 3 values that you need to extract, where the first number is # adults, the second is # children, and the 3rd is # pets:

> **Extras: 1,2,3** (end of line)

You can do this with 3 parsing rules, each with Extract Value for the Action:

- The first rule would be a "Look Anywhere" rule, with "**Extras:**" for the before-text and "**,**" for the after-text. It would extract the value "1" which appears between the specified text (the leading space is removed). After getting that value, the text position pointer is now on the "2" (it's positioned on the character following the after-text specified in the previous rule).

- The 2nd rule would be a "Look after previous field" rule, with blank before-text (so it starts extracting immediately starting with the "2"), and after-text "**,**". So it will extract the value "2", and the pointer is left on the "3".

- Finally the 3rd rule would be another "Look after previous field" rule, with blank before-text and after-text "**\r**" (to stop at the end of the line) so it extracts the "3".

There is also a special way to position the pointer for future rules without extracting the text. This is the "Ignore Field" rule action. Specify the before-text and it will locate that text, leaving the position pointer on the next character (after the before-text it found). This could be useful in the example above if you wanted to skip the first value, for instance. The first rule would have an action of "Ignore Field", then you would insert another "Ignore Field" rule with "**,**" as the before-text. This would move the position pointer to the 2nd value ("2"), setting the stage for the next rule to extract the 2nd value.

Special Characters and Text Considerations

When entering a rule, there are certain limitations for what you can use in the before-text, after-text, compare-to and set-value-to fields (and there are some workarounds for these limitations).

- You can't enter the space character at the beginning or end of the entry fields (because leading and trailing spaces are stripped out of the dialog entry fields automatically). However if you need to have the parser actually use a space, for instance to enter a space character in the "Set value to" field that's not surrounded by other characters, you can use the hexadecimal escape sequence "**\x20**".

- You can use the **\t** and **\r** escape sequences in the before-text and after-text values to look for "tab" and "carriage return" characters respectively. For instance it's common to have "\r" for the "Text after field" setting, to tell it that the data stops at the end of the line.

- Sometimes text data includes both carriage return and line feed characters at the end of lines. All line-feed characters in the request text are removed before parsing, to make it more consistent and avoid confusion between the two characters. Therefore lines will always end in a carriage return character (**\r).** Also note that there may be more than one **\r** at the end of lines, so don't assume only one will be there when setting up parsing rules.

- When text is extracted (e.g. from between the before-text and after-text), any carriage return or tab characters are converted to spaces (because Campground Master data fields cannot contain control characters). In addition, leading and trailing spaces are removed from the parsed text before doing any comparisons -- keep this in mind when setting a "Compare to" value -- the extracted text being compared would never contain the carriage return (**\r**) or tab (**\t**) characters, and it could not start or end with a space.

- Before-text and After-text values *are* case sensitive and must be entered exactly as they will appear in the request text.

- For the Compare-to actions, the comparison is *not* case-sensitive (e.g. the compare-to text "tent" will match "TENT" in the request).

- Text in Set-value-to is naturally case sensitive (the data field will be set to exactly that text -- after any spaces are trimmed from the ends of course).

Requirements for a Valid Reservation Request

Regardless of the actual rule definitions used, a Parsing Set is "complete" as long as it contains rules that result in the following fields being extracted from a given request:

Reservation : First Night
Reservation : Last Night
Customer : Last Name

That's the minimum amount of information needed for a reservation to be created, so your parsing rules need to at least get this information from the request text. Ideally you want to get as much information out of the request as possible, though, as long as the format is reliable enough to avoid getting false information.

Note that the pseudo-field "Departure Date" or "Number of Nights" can also be used to get the Last Night value.

In addition, an **Online Request ID** must be present, either found by default or extracted using a parsing rule. The logic is as follows:

- For E-mail requests, it looks for the "Message-ID" header and will use that for the request ID by default.

- You can also set up a parsing rule to set the online request ID, which will override any extracted from the Message-ID. You may want to do this to get a specific ID from the request itself for later reference, or you may need to do it if you have to paste text to process that doesn't have the E-mail header information.

- If no request ID is found or parsed, an error will be shown. The request cannot be saved as a real reservation without an ID, but if you view the request you can enter a request ID manually (just be sure to use something unique that would never match an ID from another request.)

Default Field Values

Reservations - Several reservation fields will be set to default values if they're not parsed out of the data:

>   **Confirmation #** - uses the formatting rules specified in online setup
>   **Status** - set to "Pending" unless the Guarantee Info field is filled in, then it will be "Guaranteed"
>   **Reservation Type** - set to the default specified in Program Options
>   **Date Made** - set to the current date
>   **Time Made** - set to the current time
>   **Operator Made** - set to the current operator, or the default specified in the online setup

Transactions - If the request includes any transaction information (for instance a deposit amount), then you can also create one or more transactions for the reservation. The only value you actually need to create or extract is either the Each amount or the Total for the transaction. The rest of the fields will default as follows, if they're not explicitly set by the rules:

>   **Transaction Type** - set to "Deposit"
>   **Transaction Category** - set to the same as Transaction Type (e.g. "Deposit")
>   **Quantity** - left empty
>   **Each** - set to the same as the Total amount, or Total / Quantity if there's a quantity
>   **Total** - set to the same as the Each amount, or Each x Quantity if there's a quantity
>   **Receipt #** - set using the normal formatting for receipt #'s
>   **Description** - set to the default specified in the online setup
>   **Payment Method** - set to the default specified in the online setup
>   **Operator** - set to the current operator, or the default specified in the online setup
>   **Date, Time** and **Shift** - set to the current date, time and shift

Note: If you have parsing rules for transaction fields but the resulting Total is zero after parsing (unless it's a Memo transaction type), then the transaction will not be added to the reservation. For Memo transactions, the Description field must be non-blank for it to add the transaction.

Duplicated Fields

When making a reservation manually, some values you enter are automatically copied to matching fields in both the Reservation and Customer records. However this does not happen for online reservation parsing, so the following fields need to have duplicated rules for the associated Reservation and Customer fields if you want the data to be set in both places:

>   **# Adults**
>   **# Children**
>   **# Pets**
>   **Extra Vehicles**
>   **Extra Trailers**

Exception -- the Guarantee Info field is copied from the Reservation to the Customer automatically.

Also note that the **Discount Used** reservation field is normally copied into the next available customer Discounts field (#1, 2, or 3) when entering manual reservations. Since this complication isn't possible when parsing, just extract the reservation's Discount Used field. The next time you enter Transactions, the discount will be carried over automatically to the customer as appropriate.

In general it's OK to parse the same text multiple times, or even set a data field value multiple times. If a field is parsed out that already had a value, the new value will replace the old one unless the "Append" option is specified.

Pseudo-Fields

There are several "fake" fields that can be used to help get the data parsed into useful values. These pseudo-fields appear in the list of fields in the Select a Data Field dialog (at the top, above the normal fields). These special fields are described below, noting any special handling that can be done.

In general you can use a parsing rule to extract text from the request into a pseudo-field instead of a real data field, to handle special formats that the request might use. The engine will do further processing on that text to set the real Campground Master data fields appropriately.

"Append" option note -- In all but a few cases, the Append option in a parsing rule is ignored for pseudo-fields because of the special processing these fields already do. The special cases are the pseudo-fields for credit card number, date, and name. These allow appending because there are so many possible formats the credit card information might be sent.

Customer Pseudo-fields:

- **First and Last Name** -- Use when the whole name is in one string, like "John Smith". Assumes the last word is the Last Name, and the rest is First Name(s).
- **Last, First Name** -- Use when the name is in one string with the last name first. If a comma is not found, the first word is assumed to be the Last Name and the rest is First Name(s).
- **City, State, Zip** -- Use when the string is the whole bottom address line with all three of these. It will put them into the separate data fields.

Reservation Pseudo-fields:

- **Departure Date (Last + 1)** -- Use when the departure or check-out date is present instead of the Last Night.
- **Number of Nights** -- Use when there is no last night or departure date present, just the number of nights. Note that a rule to extract the First Night must appear prior to this one.
- **Number of sites requested** -- If the request could be for more than one site, set this field so it knows how many linked reservations must be created.
- **Unit ID from E-mail requests** -- Use for E-mail requests if the request contains a special ID, not the same as a site number (see Online Setup -- Site Data Fields).
- **Unit Type from E-mail requests** -- Use for E-mail requests if the request contains a unit type, not the same as a site type (see Online Setup -- Site Data Fields).
- **Unit ID from Reservation Friend** -- Use for Reservation Friend requests for the site name sent in their reservation data (see Online Setup -- Site Data Fields).
- **Room Name from Webervations** -- Use for Webervations parsing, to get the room name to be matched up with the Webervations Name (see Online Setup -- Site Data Fields).
- **Unit Class from Webervations** -- Use for Webervations parsing, to get the unit class to be matched up with the Webervations Class (see Online Setup -- Site Data Fields).
- **Credit Card # (Guarantee)** -- To extract the credit card number for the guarantee information (these are pseudo-fields because the credit card info is stored in the Guarantee Info fields in a special format, not as separate fields).
- **Credit Card Name (Guarantee)** -- For the credit card name.
- **Credit Card Exp Date (Guarantee)** -- For the credit card expiration date as one string. Will accept several formats, like 0705, 7/05, 07/05, 7/31/05, or 7/31/2005.
- **Credit Card Exp Month (Guarantee)** -- For just the month part of the expiration date, if it's a separate field.
- **Credit Card Exp Year (Guarantee)** -- For just the expiration year as a separate field.
- **Credit Card CVV (Guarantee)** -- For the CVV/CVC2 code on the credit card.

Transaction Pseudo-fields:

- **Credit Card #** -- (same as for reservation fields above).
- **Credit Card Name** -- (same as for reservation fields above).
- **Credit Card Exp Date** -- (same as for reservation fields above).
- **Credit Card Exp Month** -- (same as for reservation fields above).
- **Credit Card Exp Year** -- (same as for reservation fields above).
- **Credit Card CVV** -- (same as for reservation fields above).

Parsing Set Example

The best way to learn how to set up parsing rules is to do an example. Below is an example of how a reservation request might be E-mailed to you from a form submission on your web site.

E-mail Subject:
Form : Big River Reservation Request (Joe Public)

E-mail Text:
NAME=Joe Public
ADDRESS=4035 Main
ADDRESS2=
CITY=Gardiner
STATE=NY
ZIP=43558
PHONE=8884148384
EMAILADDR=joepublic@aol.com
UNIT_TYPE=Full Hookup : 50A
NIGHTS=3
ARRIVAL=03/10/2005 about 10:00 pm
EXTRA=0301020001
SPECIAL_REQUESTS=Need pet area
OTHER_NOTES=We will arrive after dark

Parsing Set

Of course to start a parsing set definition, go to Maintenance / Online Setup / Online Reservations - Parsing Sets. Then click "New parsing set definition".

Give it a Set name, for instance "Big River website", to denote where the request is from.

Enter the Identifying text -- in this case, use "Form : Big River Reservation Request" for the identifying text. Web site forms usually let you specify a subject, or at least part of it will be what you specify for the form. The key is to make this subject unique enough that the chances of receiving any other E-mail with that text in it would be very slim. In this case, the fact that the subject starts with "Form : " helps a lot in making it distinctive.

Parsing Rules

Now you can add the rules using the Add New Rule button.

Below are the essential elements to be defined in the parsing rules. Most of it should be straightforward, but notes are added where clarification may be needed. Click Save after each rule to save it and get back to the

Parsing Set dialog, then <u>Add New Rule</u> to add the next rule.

Unless otherwise noted, assume that the "<u>Append...</u>" option is *not* checked, and the "<u>Trim any extra...</u>" option *is* checked. The "<u>Convert to Mixed...</u>" and "<u>Convert to UPPER...</u>" options are set to your preference.

<u>Rule 1:</u>
          Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
          Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
          Text before field: **NAME=**
          Text after field: **\r**
          Number of characters:
          Field descriptor: **Cust:Cust_First_And_Last** (Select, "Customers" data table, "First and Last Name")

This grabs everything on the line following "NAME=" (remember that "\r" is a special escape sequence meaning the end of the line, so it will stop extracting there). The pseudo-field "First and Last Name" is used, so it converts the extracted text into the separate First Name and Last Name customer fields.

<u>Rule 2:</u>
          Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
          Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
          Text before field: **ADDRESS=**
          Text after field: **\r**
          Number of characters:
          Field descriptor: **Cust:Cust_Address_1** (Select, "Customers", "Address Line 1")

This locates the address line and grabs everything on that line after the "ADDRESS=". This might also work if the "Where to look" was set to "After previous field", but sometimes submissions from web site forms don't put fields in order so it's safest to just tell it to look anywhere in the text.

<u>Rules 3 through 8:</u>

These rules will be the same as rule 2, just changing the text before and the field descriptor to get each part of the address, phone number and E-mail address.

<u>Rule 9:</u>
          Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
          Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
          Text before field: **UNIT_TYPE=**
          Text after field: **:**
          Number of characters:
          Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Online_Email_Type** ("Reservations", "Unit type from E-mail requests")

Note that the "Text after field" entry is actually the colon character (**:**), so we're stopping before the end of the line. While this isn't typical for web forms, in this example we're assuming that the data in this line has the unit type followed by an option for whether they want 50A service. (Presumably if they didn't need 50A service, it would have been something like "Full Hookup : 30A".) So we stop at the colon for the unit type, both to ignore that part for matching the unit type field and also to prepare for getting the 50A option in the next rule.

Also note that we're using the pseudo-field "Unit type from E-mail requests". This is not the same as the Site Type used many other places in Campground Master. It's not a good idea to use the normal Site Type field because if you decide to change the wording in your Site Type pick list, the online reservation parsing wouldn't work anymore. Therefore there is a separate field for each site which specifies the "Unit type" you expect to retrieve from E-mail requests. So when you set up your web form you only need to be sure that the selections offered for this field match up with the values used in this special Site data field.

Rule 10:
>   Where to look: **After previous text**
>   Parsing Action: **Set field value if 'Compare to' matches**
>   Text before field:
>   Text after field: **\r**
>   Number of characters:
>   Compare to: **50A**
>   Set value to: **Must Have**
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Attrib_50A** (Select, "Reservations", "50A")

As mentioned above, we're expecting this option to follow the unit type, on the same line. Since we already "used" the colon character as the after-text in the previous rule, it won't see it for this rule. So we leave the Text before field blank to start extracting immediately. Then we stop at the end of the line as most other rules do. After any extra spaces are trimmed, the extracted text should be either "30A" or "50A".

The other difference in this rule is that we're not just extracting a value. Since the 50A option is a reservation preference field, it must be set to "Must Have" in order to show that preference. So we use the comparison rule and set the field only if the extracted text is "50A".

Rule 11:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field: **ARRIVAL=**
>   Text after field: **\r**
>   Number of characters: **10**
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_First_Date** (Select, "Reservations", "First Night")

We're assuming that the date in this field will always be in the form MM/DD/YYYY, and that it might have an arrival time after it but we don't care to get that part. So since we know the date will be exactly 10 characters, starting immediately after the '=' character, we tell it to extract to the end of the line but just keep the first 10 characters (the date).

Of course this would normally be a little risky since it's not often that date formats can be relied upon to be so precise, but we're just illustrating how the number of characters might be used to specify a maximum, throwing away any extra information.

Rule 12:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field: **NIGHTS=**
>   Text after field: **\r**
>   Number of characters:
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Number_Of_Nights** (Select, "Reservations", "Number of Nights")

This may seem to be just another extraction rule, but there is something special about it.

Notice that this rule and the previous one are not in the order that the respective form fields appear in the request data. Of course we can normally put a rule like this anywhere since we use "Anywhere in text". However in this case it *must* be after the rule that gets the First Night, because we're using the "Number of Nights" pseudo-field. This pseudo-field won't work unless the parsing engine already knows the starting date of the reservation, so the rules must be in this order.

Rule 13:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field: **EXTRA=**
>   Text after field:
>   Number of characters:2
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Adult** (Select, "Reservations", "# Adults")

This is an example of getting a precise number of characters, and preparing to continue with more characters in the next rule. We're assuming that the EXTRAS field actually contains a 10-character string of data in the form: AACCPPVVTT, where AA = # adults, CC = # Children, PP = # pets, VV = # extra vehicles, and TT = # extra trailers. So in this rule, we find the starting point and get 2 characters. We leave the after-text blank so it leaves the position pointer on the next character in the data we need (the first 'C' in the format).

Rule 14 through 17:
>   Where to look: **After previous field**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field:
>   Text after field:
>   Number of characters:2
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Children** through **Resv:Resv_Trailers**

The next 4 rules continue getting 2 characters for each of the other #-of fields. We're looking "After previous field" for each one, and both the before-text and after-text are blank. So all it does is get 2 characters and move the pointer up 2 characters for the next rule.

Rule 18 through 22:
>   Repeat rules 13 through 17 exactly, but for the fields **Cust:Cust_Adult** through **Cust:Cust_Trailers**

Since we also want to save the #-of information in the customer's details (so we have it for future reservations), we need to extract the same data again for the customer record. Remember to use "Anywhere in text" for the first rule to reset the pointer and look for the "EXTRA=" label again, then continue with "After previous field" for the following ones.

Rule 23:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field: **SPECIAL_REQUESTS=**
>   Text after field: **\r**
>   Number of characters:
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Notes** (Select, "Reservations", "Notes")

This is straight forward, just putting their special requests in the Notes field so we can see it when processing the reservation. But in this case we have more than one thing that we want to go in the notes, so pay attention to the next couple of rules.

Rule 24:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Set Field to a fixed value (always)**
>   Set value to: \x20\\\x20
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Notes** (Select, "Reservations", "Notes")
>   Append to any previous text for the same field: **CHECKED**
>   Trim any leading and trailing spaces from the value: **NOT CHECKED**

We're using a fixed-value field here, not to actually set the whole Notes field, but to add text on to it (because the Append option is checked). What we're doing is putting separation between any notes that might be in the special requests item above and the other notes item we'll extract next.

Also note the value we're setting it to. It contains the escape sequence for a "space" character, \x20, at the beginning and end. This will actually convert to " \\ " (note the spaces on each side of the back-slashes). Because we want to keep those spaces, we also need to disable the Trim option.

By the way, the reason we're using this odd " \\ " separator is because that's recognized by the program as a new-line when viewing the Notes. Campground Master data fields can't normally contain actual carriage-return characters (and they would be stripped out anyway), so this special sequence is used. For instance, when you go to Reservation Details you may see the \\ characters like this in the Notes line, but if you click the "..." button next to the Notes field, a multi-line window will open. In there, the lines will be separated the way we want them. This also happens when you double-click on a reservation in the Rack to show the Quick-info.

Rule 25:
>   Where to look: **Anywhere in text**
>   Parsing Action: **Extract Field value**
>   Text before field: **OTHER_NOTES=**
>   Text after field: **\r**
>   Number of characters:
>   Field descriptor: **Resv:Resv_Notes** (Select, "Reservations" Data table, "Notes")
>   Append to any previous text for the same field: **CHECKED**

Again we're basically just extracting text, but telling it to just append the extracted text to the end of the Notes field instead of replacing it. So now we'll have the results of the last 3 rules all in the single Notes field.

Testing the Rules

If you're following along and entering the rules above, you can use the Save & Test Parsing Set function to see if they've been entered right. If you're viewing this documentation online or through the Help function, you can just copy the sample request above and paste it into the test window. Otherwise you'll need to type it in. Don't worry, it will save what you type so you don't have to do it over each time you want to test it.

Online Setup - Site Data Fields

This function opens a dialog to set up fields for each site which are specific to online reservation handling. The fields are listed in a grid format, like in Raw Data tables, because it's very helpful to edit them as a group and see the overall view.

Only the online data fields that are enabled will be shown -- so if you just see an empty list, you haven't enabled any of the expected fields (through Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Sites). Of course this might not be a problem, depending on which online functions you need to use and which fields are required.

To change fields values, just edit them directly in the grid. Some values will be drop-down lists, depending on the type of field. You can also use copy/paste functions to copy a value to one or more fields.

WARNING -- any changes made here are instant and non-reversible, just like raw data tables. There is no Cancel or Undo function here.

Field Descriptions

Some basic field information is given here, but refer to the examples for more detail. Also refer to the <u>Online Reservations Setup -- Data Fields Used</u> section to see which fields you should enable.

<u>For E-mail request processing:</u>

Email Req. ID -- The site name or number you expect in E-mail requests for this site, which can be different than the Site Name for the sites. For instance, the name might be "RV Site 1", but in the E-mail requests it might be shown as "RV1". **Note:** If this field is enabled, you should use this field to identify all sites (and thus set this field's value for all sites and include it in your parsing rules) -- the "Site Name" field will not be used to automatically assign a site even if you include it in your parsing rules. If you expect all requests to include the exact Site Name of the selected site (e.g. if you're getting the site name directly from a pick list on the web form, or it's coming from Export to Web links), then don't enable this field.

E-mail Req. Site Type -- If requests will be made by the type of site rather than specific site numbers, you can set this to the expected value from the E-mail requests.

<u>For Exporting to a web vacancy grid (on your own web site):</u>

Exclude from Export to Web -- Set this to "Yes" if you want to exclude the site from the online vacancy grid. "No" and blank have the same result.

Export to Web Release Days -- Specify how many days ahead of time that the site should be removed from online availability. Leave it blank if it should always be considered available for both online and offline reservations. Enter 0 if it should never be available offline (locally), and always available for online reservations. See the section <u>Online Connections -- General</u> for more information on release days.

For Reservation Friend processing:

Res. Friend ID -- The site name or number you expect in the E-mail reservation data for this site, which can be different than the Site Name for the sites. For instance, the name might be "RV Site 1", but in the Reservation Friend data it might be shown as "RV1". Naturally these must match up with the information you set up on the Reservation Friend service. Note that this only has to be entered for the sites you make available for reservations on Reservation Friend. Leave it blank for sites not listed in their online service.

Res. Friend Release Days -- Specify how many days ahead of time that the site should be removed from online availability. This should agree with the configuration in your Reservation Friend account! Leave it blank if it should always be considered available for offline reservations (e.g. for sites not set up on Reservation Friend). Enter 0 if it should never be available offline (locally), and always available for online reservations (e.g. if it's never released from Reservation Friend even on the current day). See the section Online Connections -- General for more information on release days.

For Webervations requests and availability upload:

Webervations Name -- This is the "Room Name" from Webervations for this site. It doesn't have to be unique for each site -- for instance it could be more like a site type, if you're not setting up Webervations to be site-specific. It must of course match the room name given for the site on Webervations, but for instance you can specify on Webervations that the room "Cabin" has 20 units available. Thus you would enter "Cabin" as the Name here (and ID, below) for all 20 cabins.

Webervations ID -- This should be the same as the Webervations Name to work properly with the availability upload for Webervations.

Webervations Class -- This is the "Unit Class" from Webervations. Often this is just "Default", but if you have multiple classes set up then enter the appropriate value here.

Exclude from Webervations -- Set this to "Yes" if you want to exclude the site from Webervations availability. "No" and blank have the same result.

Webervations Release Days -- Specify how many days ahead of time that the site should be removed from online availability. Leave it blank if it should always be considered available for both online and offline reservations. Enter 0 if it should never be available offline (locally), and always available for online reservations. See the section Online Connections -- General for more information on release days.

11   Maintenance Functions

Overview

Maintenance functions, available in the <u>Maintenance</u> menu of the main menu, are functions that are typically used only occasionally to setup up the database or make certain "dangerous" changes to the database. None of the maintenance functions may be accessed by an operator with less than a Manager access level, and only the Backup and Restore functions can be used by a Manager -- the rest of the functions require Administrator access.

Back Up and Restore Database

The reasons to make backups are covered earlier in the section *Setting Up Your Campground Database*, so it's assumed that you will be doing this on a regular (**daily**) basis. Your data is too valuable to lose, so don't skip this step! Making a backup is very simple. In fact, after the first backup is made, it can be done with 2 or 3 mouse clicks. In addition, the software will remind you to do a backup if you haven't done one recently (the default is 3 days).

A backup of the database is simply an extra copy of the database file, which can be used to restore all of your data either on the original computer or on another computer with the Campground Master software installed. The copy may be compressed to save space with the ZIP option (turned on by default). Normally backups are made to a floppy disk since any computer can read the disk, and they are small, cheap, and easy to use. If you have a more sophisticated computer setup, you might make backups to other kinds of removable storage or to another computer on the network. (We recommend using removable storage, since backing up to another computer does not allow for easy rotation of daily backups or for keeping a portable copy off-site.)

Backing Up

Before making your first backup, you need to decide where you're going to back up your files. Some advanced options were mentioned above, but for this discussion we will assume that you will back up to a floppy disk, which is normally your **A:** drive.

After inserting a floppy disk in the drive, just click on the "Safe" icon on the toolbar to start. You will see a "Save As" dialog, which is the standard Windows file dialog for saving files to a specific location. From there you need to do two things -- enter a file name and select a location for the file.

The first part will actually be done for you in most cases. You should see the name of your database in the <u>File name</u> field, possibly with a **.zip** extension instead of the normal **.prk** extension. If you don't see anything in the File name field, or if you prefer to name your backups differently (for instance you could use a different name for each day), then you can change that name. You should either leave the extension the same, or enter a name with no file extension (in which case it will use the default extension of .zip or .prk). Whatever name you use here, it will be remembered and used the next time you make a backup.

Now you need to select a location. If you have backed up before, the previous location is already selected for you. If this is the first time, you will need to select it from the <u>Save In:</u> drop-down list (called <u>Look In:</u> on some computers). Assuming you want to save it to the **A:** floppy disk drive, this may be as simple as clicking on the list to open it and clicking on the A: drive selection. If you don't see A:, click on My Computer to open up that folder, then click on the same drop-down list again to select A:. If you haven't inserted a disk in A: you will get an error message, in which case you can insert a disk now and retry.

Now that you have a file name and location selected, click the <u>Save</u> button on the dialog (or <u>OK</u> on some systems). If there's a previous backup on that drive, it will show a warning that there is already a file by that name on the disk, and ask if you want to replace it. Answer <u>Yes</u> to proceed with the backup.

While the file is being backed up, the cursor will change to an hourglass (wait cursor). You can't do any other functions while the file is being backed up. Initially it should only take a few seconds. As the database grows, it will take a little longer to back up. Once the backup is finished, a "Backup Complete" message will be shown.

That's it, you've created a backup! Now the next time you back up, it can be done in 2 or 3 clicks -- click on the Safe icon, click <u>Save</u> (since the location and file name will be recalled from the first time), and click <u>Yes</u> if it asks you to confirm replacing the file.

Backing up to a CD (CD-R/W) drive

In order to back up the database directly to a writable CD, you must have CD software installed which supports direct writing to the CD by applications. Adaptec's DirectCD or HP's DLA (drive letter access) programs are a couple examples. Other programs that only allow drag-and-drop operations, (except Windows XP's built-in CD recording support), may not work. We recommend using floppy disks for backup if possible. Otherwise, you may have to back up to the hard drive and manually move the file to the CD using separate CD-burning software.

If you're using Windows XP with a CD-RW drive, then you can select the CD-RW drive as the backup location in Campground Master. The file will actually be backed up to a holding area where XP will see that it's waiting to be recorded on the CD, and then XP will prompt you to record the file. Be sure to follow the prompt from XP, or else the file will not be recorded to the CD!

You may also need to disable the Compressed option (Maintenance / Program Files / Database) when backing up to a CD. If you get an error with compression on, try it without compression. Whether this is required depends on the specifics of the CD software. If you get an error even with compression disabled, then your CD driver software doesn't support direct writing to the CD.

Backup errors and handling large files

If you get an error message saying that the disk is full, you will need to start using the Compressed option so that it takes less space **and** so that multiple disks can be used if necessary. (Also make sure you are using disks that don't have any other files on them!) This is the default option, so you should never encounter a "disk full" message unless you change the compression option.

If the database grows too large to fit on one disk when you are using the Compressed option, you will be asked to "Insert disk 2 of the set" and so forth until the backup is complete. If you're using multiple disks, make sure you have each one labeled according to disk number (disk 1 of 2, disk 2 of 2, etc.) and that you have enough disks in rotation to make a set each day. For instance, you should have a "Monday 1 of 2", "Monday 2 of 2", "Tuesday 1 of 2", and so forth. Be sure to insert the correct disk of the set each time. When you need to restore the backup, you will be asked to insert the disks by number, so the order is important.

If you get an error that the disk is write-protected, try moving the little write-protect tab in the upper corner of the disk so that it covers the hole. If that doesn't work, it may be a defective disk or a defective disk drive. Try another disk, and if that doesn't work, consult a technician.

If you get other errors, like "error writing to A:", it may be caused by a defective disk. Try another one, and discard the one that had the error if another disk works. If each disk you try gets an error, then the drive could be malfunctioning.

Automatic Backups

As an added precaution, the program automatically makes a backup at the start of each day and places it in the same location (folder) as the database file. The automatic backups include the date in the filename, and are kept for 30 days by default. Older ones are automatically deleted, and the number of days they're kept will be the same as the number of days for log files (see *Maintenance / Program Options / Database*). However, since these backups are still vulnerable to computer malfunction (hard disk failures, viruses, etc), ***this is not a substitute for making manual backups!*** This is only an extra safeguard in case you don't make regular backups.

Note that if your disk drive does not have adequate space for an automatic backup, additional old backups will be deleted until there is room. (The 3 most recent days will never be deleted.) If there is still not enough room, it will give up and not create the backup - however no error message will be shown, since it's an automatic process, so try to keep plenty of space on your hard disk.

If you need to restore from one of the automatic backups, simply use the Restore function as described below, but navigate the Open dialog to your database folder. You will see a series of files with your database name plus "_Auto_Backup_" and the date. (They will be .zip files, so be sure you're looking for the .zip file type.) Select the latest one and restore from that file.

Restoring from a Backup

We all hope it never happens, but the day may come when your computer malfunctions or some other problem requires you to restore the database from the backup copy. Hopefully you had been making daily backups so you won't lose more than a day's work. (This is also a good reason to keep copies of printed receipts for at least a day or two, in case you need to re-enter reservations.) This function can also be used to load the database that was backed up from another computer. Actually, as long as you haven't disabled the logging function, it can also apply all changes made since the last backup automatically, so you shouldn't lose anything if the files are intact.

Restoring from a backup is just as easy as making a backup, but there are more steps and warnings because it's inherently a risky function. Even with a perfect backup, you are asking the software to load a database that may be older than the one it's currently using, so you need to be sure that it's necessary.

To start a Restore, select Restore from Backup on the Maintenance menu. Remember that you must have Administrator access to use this function. After one or more warnings (depending on whether the current database is saved and whether you've done a backup from this computer), you will see a File Open dialog.

If you have done backups from this computer, it will assume you want to restore the last backup made and will fill in the file name and location accordingly -- so all you would have to do is click the Open button. If this is a new computer and you have not made a backup on it before, then you will have to navigate to the location of the backup file (as in Backing Up above), and select the backup file name from the file list. This may be the A: drive (locate it with the "Look In:" drop-down list), or in some other location.

Once the File name field has the proper name in it, you can click Open. Now it will load the backup from the disk (asking for other disks in the backup set if necessary). Once that is done, you will be informed that the pre-restore database has been saved (to a file with the time and date in the name), in case you need to revert to that database.

Now you may see a message indicating that there are changes in the logs that are not in the database -- this is normal, since you are restoring from a backup, and you should answer **YES** to the prompt so that the logged changes are restored also. (The only exception to this is if your actual purpose for restoring was to undo some drastic changes.) If all goes well, the database will be back to the way it was, with all changes intact.

Finally, a confirmation message will be shown.

If you are sure that the database you just loaded from the backup is the data you want, then you can continue as normal (you will need to log in again, since the restoration procedure automatically logs out the previous operator). If you're not sure yet, read the following section carefully.

IMPORTANT: The restore operation should be done while the original database file is opened (i.e. the current database name and location are the same as it was when it was last used normally), otherwise the program won't be able to check the log files for post-backup changes. It's also important that the database be saved to that same location after the restore is done. If the database cannot be opened from the original location for any reason, then the following procedure is recommended:

   1. Open whatever database you can (even the sample database if necessary), and restore from a backup as above -- but then immediately do a File / Save As to save the database as the original name, and the normal location. Be sure no changes are made before you do the Save -- don't even look around in the data, since that can cause changes to be logged.

   2. Close Campground Master, and re-open it. The database should be re-opened automatically (assuming you didn't use the Sample Database icon). Then you may see a message indicating that there are changes in the log -- answer YES to apply the missing changes. Now you should be fully restored.

Aborting a Restore Operation

Assuming you have just completed the Restore and done nothing else, you still have a chance to change your mind and get the previous database back. This is because the pre-restore database is saved to a unique filename. So if the restored data is not what you want, you can still get back to the database you had before the restore using File / Open. Just locate the pre-restore file (it will contain " PRE-RESTORE " in the file name, along with the date and time), which will be in the same location as the database. However, that will become your new current database when you open it -- so then you need to use File / Save As to save the data back to your normal database name and location.

Park Setup Functions

Overview

The functions under Park Setup are for editing the Park, Site, Taxes, Rates and Operator tables of the database, plus a few other things. These are primarily used when setting up the database, but of course you can use them to make changes to the sites, edit the park notes for the receipt, add or change operators, and so forth. Administrator access is required to view Operators, and also to add or delete parks and sites. You can view and edit parks and sites with Manager access, but cannot add or delete them unless you have Administrator access.

The Park, Site, and Operator dialogs works the same as the Customer Details dialog. They have navigation controls at the top to step through records, add a new record, delete a record, and print a record. See the Customer Details dialog (in the *Working with Customers* chapter) for information on the common navigation controls, and the appropriate section below for specific details.

The other dialogs (Taxes, Rates, Notice, and Confirmation text) are unique in their operation -- see the appropriate section below for details.

Parks Setup

Usually you will have only one Park record. This is used for the park info on the receipts and a couple other things. This is also where your software license authorization code is stored, which is keyed to the park information.

One reason to have more than one park record would be to show different information on receipts for different sites -- for instance, you might want to print different Additional Notes on the receipts for your RV sites than for your cabins or tent sites. You can add as many Park records as you like, using the same Authorization code for each, as long as they each have the same Name, City, State and Zip code. (The Short Name of each record should be different, as described below, so that each park can be selected on the reports.) If you need separate park records with a different name or address, contact Cottonwood Software for an additional park license.

The individual park fields are described below.

Park Name, Address, Phone Number, Email, etc.

The only critical information of these is the Park Name and address, which is used for authorization. In addition, the Park Name is used in the Sites setup for selecting a park record for the site.

This information is also used for the printed reservation and transaction receipts. The Park Name, address, all three of the phone numbers, E-mail, Web and Owners information will all be printed on the receipts in the park information box.

Short Name

This field must be filled in! The Short Name is used for selection lists when selecting a park for each site, and selecting parks for filtering (if more that one park is defined). This can be anything you want to use to identify the sites that will be grouped for this park, but should be about 10 characters or less for the best results. It could be an abbreviation of the park name, or something generic like "Campground" or "Marina".

Check In and Check Out Times

The Check In and Check Out times will be shown on reservation receipts for the customer's reference.   If you don't want to show these on the receipt for any of the sites in this park, then you need to disable these fields under Maintenance | Data Field Definitions | Park Fields. If you want it hidden from receipts only for certain sites, or if some sites have different check in/out times, e.g. for cabins vs. tents, then you need to create a separate Park record and divide the sites into two "parks" as appropriate.

The Check Out time is assumed to be the next morning, and this will be indicated on the receipts. For instance if the "Last Night" is Friday, the check-out time is assumed to be on Saturday morning. If this is not the case (e.g. for flea markets where they must leave that evening), then uncheck the box for "Check out is the next morning".

Meter Wrap-around numbers

For each meter type, enter a number corresponding to the capacity of the meter readings. This will usually be a 1 followed by the number of zeroes corresponding to how many digits the meter has -- for instance if a meter has 4 digits (0000 to 9999), enter 10000 as the wrap-around number (since it will go back to 0 instead of 10,000). Do not enter commas with the number, just the digits. These wrap-around numbers are used to

properly calculate the meter charges when the meter goes from 9900 to 0100, for instance.

Note that the meter wrap-around settings will be used for each site that is selected to be associated with this park record (see Sites Setup). Therefore if you happen to have two different types of meters, with different numbers of digits, you can accommodate that by creating a duplicate park record with everything the same except the meter wrap-around numbers (and the Short Name, which should be different so you can select the appropriate park for each site.)

Key Code

This is calculated by the software, and it can't be edited. It's your park key, which you may need to provide to Cottonwood Software when purchasing a license, before you can get an Authorization Code. (If you make changes to the park name or address, you may see the key code changing.) It's important that you do not make any changes that would alter this without contacting Cottonwood Software for a new Authorization Code.

Auth Code

This is your Authorization code for your software license. **Keep this code written down in a safe place!**

Without the proper code here, the software will be limited to either a number of days use or will not allow you to add sites to the database. This code will be created by Cottonwood Software, based on your Key Code and the license details (number of parks, sites, workstations, and product options you need). If you change this code manually, the program will check that it's a valid code and may report an error. If the code is not valid, the software will revert to Demo mode, which is limited to 100 reservations. This code should only be entered the same time you enter the initial park name and address, so that it will be a valid code.

During your setup period or if you request a full-function trial, you may be given a "trial period" code, which will let you use the software for 30 days. Once you purchase the full license, you will be given a new Authorization code to replace it, which may be entered here to upgrade the authorization levels. You may also receive a new code if you purchase upgrades or need to license the software for other optional features.

Note that the authorization code must be entered for all park records, otherwise it will revert to "demo" mode.

Notes

The Notes fields are used to add an Additional Notes section on the printed the Ticket Form of reservation and transaction receipts. You can have up to 3 notes of any length (assuming they fit on the printed page), and each of these notes will appear in a separate "box" on the receipt (it will have a border around it to separate it from the other notes).

Each note can be multiple lines, but is entered as one long line in the dialog field. If you type a long note, it will automatically wrap to multiple lines as needed on the receipt. But you can also control the formatting with the use of the "new line" escape sequence, **\n**. This way you can insert blank lines and force multiple lines where needed to format the note.

Here is a detailed example of a possible note field using multiple lines, which would be typed in one long string:

> **Please keep your campsite clean and free of clutter, for the enjoyment of all of our guests.\n\n   -- Avoid storing items under your camper.\n\n   -- Please no area mats or rugs, they kill \n   the grass for the next camper.\n\n   -- No outside clotheslines.\n\n   -- Clean up after your pets. Baggies are \n   available at the office if you need them.**

Notice the **\n** sequences and the spacing, and imagine that you were typing this on a typewriter using the carriage return each time you see a **\n**. If you see **\n\n**, that means an extra blank line will be inserted. The output on the printed receipt will look like this (including the width as it would be on the receipt):

    Please keep your campsite clean and free of clutter, for
    the enjoyment of all of our guests.

        -- Avoid storing items under your camper.

        -- Please no area mats or rugs, they kill
            the grass for the next camper

        -- No outside clotheslines.

        -- Clean up after your pets. Baggies are
            available at the office if you need them.

Sites Setup

This is where you set up all of your campground's rentable commodities -- anything that needs to be reserved on a daily (or nightly) basis. While this primarily applies to accommodations like camping sites or cabins, it can also apply to motel rooms, boat docks, storage sites, ballrooms, or even bicycles and video tapes. It's completely up to you.

You may be limited on the number of site records you can enter depending on the license you purchase. You can see the limit for your license in the View Product Authorizations dialog. You will get an error message if you try to enter more than you're authorized for.

The order of the sites in the Sites Setup dialog determines the order that the sites appear on the Rack tab view, and how they are sorted in other tab views, reports or drop-down boxes. Therefore you should plan the order to be most convenient for you, but don't worry about needing to insert records later -- you can insert sites where you need them or move them around easily.

Adding Sites

To add a new site, click the **Add new site** button. This will open the Site Details dialog for a new site, where you can enter the information for it. See the next section, Edit Site Details, for more details. Once a site is added and saved, you will return to the Sites Setup and it will be added to the end of the list.

If you need to add a site in between other sites, select the site it should appear above and click the **Insert new site** button.

Tip: If adding more than one site, click "Add Site" in the Site Details dialog instead of Save -- this adds another one immediately and skips the step of coming back into Sites Setup.

Adding many sites at once

There is a function to **Add/Insert Multiple Sites**, making it very easy to add hundreds of sites in one step. But for adding your first few sites and changing individual sites, you should use the Add new site function and enter all of the appropriate details.

Editing Sites

To edit an existing site, simply click on the site in the list to select it, and click the **Edit site details** button. That will open the Site Details dialog where you can make any changes necessary.

Tip: If you need to make common changes to many sites, for instance setting an attribute, it may be much faster to use the Raw Data Tables function. In the raw data table you can edit the fields of all sites in a grid form, copy fields to multiple sites at once, copy multiple fields at once, etc.

Copying sites

You can copy one or more sites (create duplicates) to speed things up -- however, this also duplicates the names and abbreviations of the sites, which is not desirable (a warning will be shown). After copying sites, be sure to Edit the site details and change the abbreviations and names to something unique (e.g. different site numbers).

Deleting sites

Although you can delete a site from the Site Details dialog, it won't allow you to delete any site that has already been used for a reservation. This would result in an undefined site link if you ever view a reservation for this site. It's only safe to delete a site if it has *never* been used for a reservation, for instance when you are setting up sites for the first time. If you need to "remove" a site later, you should use the Site is Inactive flag discussed below. If you do delete a site by accident, you can add it back to the correct place using the Insert new site function.

Add/Insert Multiple Sites

This special function appears in Sites Setup and on the Raw Data Table dialog for Sites. It allows quick addition of sites or cloning of a site when setting up the database.

If you want to insert sites into a specific location in the table, first select the site that you want the new ones to appear after, before entering this function. (Note that this means you can't insert them at the very beginning -- but that's easily rectified using the Move function afterwards.)

If you're just getting started, it's best to have one "template" site already set up, for instance through Sites Setup. Then you can use this function to clone the site as many times as needed, incrementing the numbers for each site.

Now you can enter the number of sites (or duplicates) to create, prefixes for the site abbreviation, name, and description, and a starting number. Note that the number will always be included in the abbreviation and name, but is optional for the description. Prefixes are optional, and don't forget to type a space character if you want a space before the number, like "Slip 1".

If you want your numbers to be 0-padded, like RV001 to RV999, then you will have to do it in multiple steps, including the 0's in the prefix. For instance, create 9 sites with a prefix of "RV00", then 90 sites with a prefix of "RV0", then the rest with a prefix of just "RV". However, since the software doesn't really care how long the site name is, there is not much need to 0-pad the names (unless it's needed for importing reservations from an old database).

Finally, there are the options to duplicate the selected site, and whether to insert the sites or add them to the end.

When all options are selected, click the <u>Go!</u> button. In a few seconds, all of the new sites will be shown. Note that there is no undo function, but it's easy to delete the sites and try again if you make a mistake.

Edit Site Details

The Site Details dialog is used to view or edit all of the individual fields for a single site. It has browsing functions to step through sites one by one, as well as adding or deleting sites.

This dialog is accessed through the main Sites Setup function (Maintenance / Park Setup / Sites), and it can also be accessed by right-clicking a site in almost any of the tab views (Rack, Arrivals, On Sites, etc.).

Site Fields

The individual site fields are described below. Note that some fields may not appear for you, for instance if the field has been disabled in your database (see *Define Data Fields*).

Abbreviation, Full Name, and Description

These fields should all describe the site, in increasing length and/or detail. Each one is used in different places to represent the site.

The Full Name must be filled in, and is used in most places where sites appear as a cell in a grid, such as Tab view reports, and in places where a full name is used like when viewing a reservation. You may want to include a word like "Site" in this name for clarity, like "Site 35" or "Lot 35", or you can be more specific like "RV 35" or "Tent 35". It should be limited to about 10 characters for the best results.

The Abbreviation is used where a shorter name would work best to save room or where "Site" would be redundant, such as in the rack "Site" header cells, the drop-down Quick-Pick list on the New Reservation dialog, and on the printed reservation receipts. Typically this is just an identification number like "35" or "C-35", but it should be unique -- don't use "35" for both RV lot 35 and boat dock number 35.

The Description is optional. If it's available, it's used in the pop-up tips whenever you move the mouse over a site name cell on the grids (either the row/column headers in the Rack or their fields in the other Tab views. If no description is available, then the Full Name is used. While this can be as long as you like, it works best when 20 or fewer characters are used. This is just so it doesn't obscure too much of the screen when it pops up. Examples: "Site 35 - 30A/W/S", "Site 35 - Maple St.". The use of this field depends on what helpful information you would like to see when you move the mouse over a site's cell.

Park Selection

This is a drop-down list with a list of the defined Park records (usually only one selection). You should select one of the parks for the site even if there is only one park defined, since it's used to determine which park's information is printed on the reservation receipts. See the *Parks Setup Dialog* section for more information.

Note: If you don't see anything in the park selection list (e.g. when you click the down-arrow to show the list), that means the "Short Name" field of the Park record(s) has not been filled in. Go back to Park Setup to fill this in, then you can select it from the list.

The park selection is important, especially if you have more than one Park set up, as it's used to get various information from the proper park record for reservation and transaction handling. This includes the check in/out times, meter wrap-around numbers, and the address for receipts and envelopes. It can also be used for report filtering.

Confirmation Text

This option is disabled by default since most parks won't need it. When this is enabled (through Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Site Fields), you can set the bottom text of confirmation letters to be different for each site. If the text is blank, then the default text will be used (set through Maintenance / Park Setup / Confirmation letter text & options). If there is any text in this field, then the default bottom text will be ignored and this text will be used, for this site only.

Host Confirmation Text and Host Address

These are special fields that are only used for certain circumstances -- in particular, if you're renting guest houses where the guest's host needs a separate confirmation letter. These options are disabled by default since most parks won't need it. When this is enabled (through Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Site Fields), you can set the bottom text of the special host confirmation letter and the host's mailing address for the letter.

Address lines

You can fill in these if you want the receipts to show the message "Have visitor mail sent to:", and the 2 lines of address information. Only 2 lines are available, so it's suggested to use one line for the street and lot number, and the other for the city/state/zip. Since these fields are only used for printing purposes, they are optional.

Phone numbers

As with the address lines, these are optional and only used to print "Your phone number(s):" on the receipts. You can enter 1 or 2 phone numbers, and these would typically only be used if the site has a fixed phone number, such as for instant-phone sites.

Site Front/Rear/Left/Right

These fields allow you to indicate which site is physically in front of, in back of, and to the right or left of this site. They are not used in any particular way other than for reference, since they only appear on this dialog, so they are not required. (In future versions they will allow support for functions like automatic selection a number of adjacent sites or to assist in making "buddy" or group reservations.)

Since each one of these is a drop-down list of all sites defined, one obvious problem is that you can't fill in this field until all of the sites are defined. So you would need to go back through the sites after setting them up to set these fields.

Site Class and Site Type

These are pick-list selections, which you can define. They are attributes used in the Site Preferences selection when making a reservation, so you can set them according to what would help select appropriate sites. They are covered in more detail in the *Pick Lists* section. In addition, Site Type is used in nearly every filtering or selection process, so it is the most important field for site categorization.

More Site Attributes

This button opens the Site Attributes dialog, which is a list of attribute fields (including some of those above). In general, these attributes are used to filter out acceptable sites for a reservation, using the Site Preferences function on the New Reservation dialog. The site attributes here will correspond to the site preferences for a reservation.

Any attributes that are set will also show up in the Quick-Info window (double-click on a site name in tab views), so they can provide useful information to a customer when making a reservation.

The initial database will have many typical attributes by default. You will want to disable any that don't apply to your campground, and may want to rename a few to something more applicable. (This is done through *Define Data Fields.*) The number and the detail of these selections will depend on your campground -- a large diversified RV resort may have sites with many different attributes to choose from, while a small campground with mostly similar sites may only have a few. If you are extremely familiar with your park and each site's peculiarities, you may actually never use site attributes/preferences when choosing a site for a customer.

There are several different types of site attributes, and setting them in the Site Attributes is a little different for each one. In general, if you plan to use the Site Preferences dialog to select sites, you should set these fields appropriately for every site. If you leave an attribute blank, then the site may be assumed to be a match anyway (because the software doesn't know if it's a match or not). To enter any attribute, click on the right-hand cell next to the name and type the value, or double-click on the cell to drop down a pick list. If you're editing several in a row, you can use **Tab** after each one to step to the next one.

Pick-Lists -- These are simple drop-down lists, including the Site Type, Site Class, etc. Just select the appropriate selection for each site. If you leave it blank, the site will match to any request for that attribute. Note that some of these are duplications of the fields on the Site Setup dialog, and setting them here will also be reflected in the Site Setup dialog.

Sizes -- Some attributes are sizes, such as maximum rig length. Sizes are assumed to be measured in feet. You should put an appropriate size here, so that any request for that size *or smaller* will be a match. Just type in a number, no punctuation or other characters (for instance, type **45**, not **45 feet**). If you leave it blank, any size request will be considered a match.

Yes/No attributes -- These are fields that are either true or false, like Has Water, Has Sewer, etc. Their value can be either Yes or No, which can be chosen from the drop-down list. Alternatively, you can just click the field and press the **Y** or **N** key. A blank attribute will be treated the same as No.

Distances and Ratings -- These attributes are "ratings", and have a value of 1 to 5. Either way, a 1 means "low" (or "far") and a 5 means "high" (or "close"). For instance, Distance to Pool would be 5 for the closest sites and 1 for the farthest sites. View Rating would be 5 for a great view, 1 for a poor view. If the customer requests "Must Have" for one of these attributes, they will currently be a match as long as the value is 3 or above, or if it is blank (meaning not applicable or unknown). If they request "Must Not Have" then it will be a match if the score is 3 or lower. (Thus a rating of 3 will always be a match.) Future versions of the software will generate scores based on the how well the values match, and allow selection by how well a site score compares with the requests.

Min Stay and Max Stay

These represent the lower and upper limits on the number of nights allowed for a site. For instance, if you have sites where you only allow short-term stays, you can enter a 30-day maximum. Likewise, you can enter minimum stays for sites that are limited to extended stays. Only enter the number of days here without text, e.g. just enter "30" for 30 days or a month, not "30 days" or "1 month".

These limits are used on the New Reservation dialog when Show Available is selected. Any sites that are not allowed for the number of nights of the reservation will not be shown in the mini-rack when Show Available is checked.

Schedule

This field is only used for selecting an intra-day schedule, e.g. for hourly rental "sites" like canoes and tours. it should be left blank for normal daily-rental sites. See Schedules Setup for details.

Don't show check in/out times on receipts

If you prefer not to show check in and check out times on the receipt for this site, for instance if it's a shelter or pavilion where this doesn't apply, then you can set this option to skip printing that information.

Electric Meter, Gas Meter and Water Meter fields

If these are enabled, you will see fields for the Reading and the Date, and a button to View the reservation that the meter was last read by. The reservation button will be disabled if the last reading was entered manually (on this dialog) rather than entered as a reservation transaction. The date will be disabled if no reading has been entered (which typically means that this site does not have a meter).

Assuming this site supports meter(s), you will first set up the site by entering the current reading (or the last reading that has been charged for). The date will automatically change to today's date when a value is entered, but you can override that if needed. If a meter is brand new and has a "0" reading, you should still enter a 0 in the Reading field so that the site is flagged as having a meter.

There is no way to select a reservation for the reading other than going to that reservation and entering a transaction for the meter reading. This is the way it should be done whenever a reservation is paying for the metered electricity, gas or water. Otherwise the reservation link will be cleared. Also note that if it's important that you have the reservation information when first entering the meter readings, this could be done by entering it as a transaction for the reservation (you can delete the charge afterwards but the site will remain updated).

Season Dates Available

This field is used to specify the dates that a site is normally available. This information is used for showing what sites are available for a given date and also can be used to generate more accurate reporting. While it's possible to create a reservation that covers dates that are "out of season", you would be warned before doing so. These dates will also show up on the Quick-Info window for sites (seen when double-clicking on a site name in the tab views), and any sites not available due to the season dates (or the special dates below) will be shown in a different color on the Rack (typically gray)

Dates in this field and the other two Special Dates fields can be entered as single dates or as date ranges. You can also enter dates without the year if you want to specify dates that apply the same to every year, but this only applies to the Season Dates, not the Special Dates. If you leave this field blank, it means that the

site is available all year long (so there's no need to enter **1/1 to 12/31**, and in fact that could slow the software down slightly).

Note that the dates in these fields will be entered in the "regional" format according to your computer's settings -- for instance, month/day for U.S., and day/month for Canadian, etc. U.S. format is used in the examples.

There is no limit to the number of dates or date ranges you can enter, and the field will scroll as needed. Separate each date range with a comma. A space after the comma is optional (it will be inserted automatically when displayed). The format of a date is fairly flexible as long as if follows the month/day/year convention. Each range should include two dates separated by the word "to". Here are some examples of valid range entries:

> **1/1 to 9/30, 11/1 to 12/31**   (note there are no years, so it applies to every year)
> **1/2/2002 to 4/3/02**   (years can be 2 or 4 digits)
> **10-5-01, 10-7-01 to 12-31-01** (single dates can be entered, and you can use the dash in a date)

Regardless of the date format you use, it will be changed to a common format (mm/dd/yyyy) after you save the information. If you make a mistake in an entry, it will warn you when you click <u>Save</u> and ask you to fix it.

While you could clear out old date ranges once that year has passed, you may want to leave them so that reporting is still accurate for past years.

Wrap-around seasons -- If the range you want to enter "wraps around" the end of the year, such as December to February, it must be entered in two segments if you don't include the year in the dates. So instead for a season of 12/1 to 2/28, enter it as **12/1 to 12/31, 1/1 to 2/28**.

Special Dates Available

Special Dates Available take precedence over season dates in determining if a site is available. Even if you have specific seasons, there may be times when you want to make some sites available out of season. You could just adjust the Season Dates if you enter the dates for each year separately, but if you use the same Season Dates every year (entered without years, like **3/1 to 9/30**) then you need to enter any exceptions in this field.

The Special Dates Available field follows the same formatting as Season Dates, with the exception that they should always have a year in them. (Otherwise you would be better off adjusting the Season Dates.) They will also show up in the Quick-Info window for sites. It's OK to have dates here that are considered available by the seasons anyway, but it would add work for the software so it's best to avoid overlapping dates. Note that dates can also be made available from the <u>Make Site Available</u> function on the Rack view right-click menu. This field will change accordingly with the added date(s).

Special Dates Unavailable

This is the highest priority of the date fields. If a date is included here, the site will be considered unavailable this date even if the same date is in both of the Dates Available lists above. Use this to make a site unavailable at any time, such as for maintenance. Dates in this list should always have years in them. They will show up in the Quick-Info window for sites, and will show up as a different color on the Rack. Note that dates can also be made unavailable from the <u>Make Site Available</u> function on the Rack view right-click menu. This field will change accordingly with the added date(s).

Days of the Week Available

If these fields are enabled, it allows you to indicate which days of the week the site is available on. (For speed reasons, don't enable these fields unless it's necessary.) The days of the week can be overridden by Special Dates Available or Special Dates Unavailable.

Site is Inactive (disabled)

This flag can be set when you want to completely eliminate a site from being used. This will eliminate it from the Rack, the Quick-Pick drop-down list for New Reservations, and the Occupancy Report. However, any existing past or future reservations with this site will still show up in other historical reports.

This is useful if you have eliminated sites from the campground for an undetermined time, or forever. It's better to set this than to actually delete the site from the database, because it will still be used in reports and reservation histories.

Notes

Notes will show up in the Quick-Info window for sites (double-click on a site name in the tab views), so for instance you could check the notes easily before making a reservation. This is a good place to put warnings or special features of a site, like "gets flooded easily" or "great site for bird-watchers". The notes will also show up as a pop-up tip if the mouse is over the site on a date that the site is unavailable, so you can put information there like "No water service" for sites down for maintenance. While the Notes can't be used for automated site selection, it might be a nice touch to put things here that you want to mention to customers on the phone when they're making a reservation.

Notes will be shown as a single line here, but you can enter multiple line notes as long as you like by clicking the "..." button at the end of the notes entry field. This will open a separate Notes dialog for entering the notes (covered in the *Working with Reservations* section). Any current notes will of course be shown, and the cursor placed at the end so you can begin entering notes immediately. When multi-line notes are displayed as a single line, for instance on the Site Details dialog or in lists, each line break will be shown as a double-backslash (" \\ ").

Taxes Setup

The Taxes setup is a simple dialog showing entry for 5 tax rates. For each rate, simply select a Transaction Category to use for it (each tax rate ***must*** have its own transaction category), enter the rate, and enter a description if desired (optional, it is only seen on this dialog). Tax rates defined here are used for Rates, and also for manually entering taxes on Transaction dialogs.

By default, you may see 1 or 2 tax rates already defined when you set up your database. Feel free to change these. To delete a tax rate, simply change its category to be blank. Then it will no longer show up wherever tax rates are used.

If you don't have a category set up for each tax rate you need to define, go to the Pick Lists and add appropriate Transaction Categories first. The order or position of the categories in the Transaction Categories pick list doesn't matter. These categories will allow you to create reports showing the amount of each tax collected, and will also allow the Transactions dialog to correctly calculate the tax.

Note that the tax rate is a multiplier, not a percentage. Thus, 6.25% should be entered as **.0625**. Any time the tax rate changes, just come back here to change the rate.

The "Default?" field in the tax definitions indicates which rate(s) will be selected by default when adding manual charges. This usually applies only to counter sales or other non-standard charges since Rates will be defined for site rentals, so Sales Tax rates are normally selected as a default. Note that this doesn't automatically determine the tax used, it simply saves time when adding charges by pre-selecting the designated tax rates.

Important -- once you set up Rates, never change the position of these tax categories. This is because the Rates are defined as being taxable by tax rate number (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5), so if you switch them around then you will have to change every Rate definition. This will also affect Point of Sale transactions and inventory items, so it's best to just never change the positions.

Rates Setup

Overview

Rates are basically a shortcut way of entering multiple transactions with pre-defined categories, descriptions, and dollar amounts (multipled by the appropriate quantities). Taxes can be automatically applied, and you can specify what kind of quantity multipliers will be needed -- a number of day/weeks/months, or number of sites, or a variable quantity such as number of gallons. The primary use for rates is for site rental rates and add-on charges, but they can also be used for electric, gas and water meter support, merchandise, credits, and anything else for which you want to "memorize" transactions.

Rates Setup Dialog

Start setting up rates by opening the Rates Setup dialog (Maintenance | Park Setup | Rates). This will list any rates already defined (if there are any), with their Rate Type, Rate Code, Rate Name, and a value for Each item. From here you will add or edit rates, delete obsolete rates, and move rates in the list. Moving rates in the list is important because the order that they appear here will be the same order they appear when they are selected when entering transactions. Therefore you may want to put them in a logical order, or at least put the most-used rates at the top. The order is also very important if automatic rates calculation is used (this is discussed later).

The Rates Setup dialog starts by showing All Rate Types (all rates defined), but you can select any of the other types to narrow down the list. If you select a specific type here, then that type will be assumed when you add or insert a new rate definition (but the type can be changed later). You can also Print the shown list at any time.

The basic procedure for defining a Rate is to select a rate type, click New or Insert, and then enter the details of the rate definition including the applicable site type, discount, taxes, dates, and each of the transactions (charges, etc.) that make up that rate. Insert is the same as New, except that the rate will be inserted in the list at the current selection point, rather than added to the end of the list. You can edit any of the existing rates by clicking on the rate in the list and selecting Edit rate definition, or you can double-click on the rate in the list.

Warning -- Once a rate is edited or deleted, there is no way to Cancel the operation -- the changes are permanent once you leave the Edit Rate dialog and come back to the Set Up Rates dialog. (Moving rates is also "permanent" since there is no Cancel button, but you can always move them back.)

You can Move, Delete, or Copy one or more rates by selecting the rates in the list (Ctrl-click or Shift-click will select multiple rates), and then click the appropriate button. Copying rates is very handy if you have groups of rates that are similar but have slight variations, such as discounts or season dates.

Examples!

The following detailed description of rates definitions can get pretty technical, so if you want to just start setting things up then skip to the Rates Setup Examples section below for step-by-step tutorials.

Rate Types

There are several different rate types. While these types cannot be changed, you can have as many different rates of each type as you like. Note that the Rate Type for each rate can be changed later, so you can move them to a different category easily.

Rental Rate -- This is for your basic site rates for daily, weekly, and so on for each Site Type you've defined. Of course if you have sites set up for things like craft halls, bicycles, etc., then those rental rates would also go here. You will likely define separate rental rates for each discount (none, Good Sam, FMCA, etc.), and you can also define the dates that each rate applies to. If you have different rate possibilities for one site type, for instance 30A and 50A service, you can either define these as two separate rental rates or define one base rate with a 50A add-on. The choice may depend on how many different rates you will have (to keep the lists short), or how you want it to appear on the receipts (as one rate charge or as two charges; one for base and one for the add-on).

Add-On -- This is for any extra charges on top of base rental rates, such as for 50A electric, phone, extra people or vehicles, and so on. However if your rate structure is very simple, you may elect to put the add-ons in the Rental Rate section so that they are all listed together, or perhaps just set up separate rental rates for with and without the add-on.

Day Fee -- This was originally for Day Pass reservations, but is now largely obsolete since Day Passes are handled as Rental Rates. This type can be used for other rates if you like. Examples might be golf course fees and tours. Note that rates of this type will NOT be included in auto-rates, so this type should not be used for Day Pass reservations if you want the charges for day passes to be added automatically.

Electric Meter, Gas Meter and **Water Meter** -- These are special rate types for meter readings. They are special types because when they are used, a dialog will open up to enter the new reading -- the site information is updated automatically and it will put the meter readings in the transaction descriptions. When defining the transactions for these types, a suggested item description for the charge is something like "Metered kwh:", so it comes out on the receipt like "Metered kwh: (1000-800)". Note that these rate types will always appear in the list when setting up rates, but they will not appear when selecting rates for transactions unless you have sites set up with the appropriate meter type(s) enabled.

Credit -- You can use this rate type for any standard credits that you apply, such as coupons, rain-out credits, etc. You don't need to use this for discounts like Good Sam, since you can define rental rates with the discounts included. You probably also won't use this for refunds, since those can be handled by selecting the appropriate rental rate and applying it as a negative charge.

Merchandise -- This rate type can be used for any non-rental merchandise, such as propane, RV supplies, gift shop items, and so forth.

Miscellaneous -- This is for "anything else" for which you want to memorize transactions. Typical uses would be for standard deposit transactions, cancellation fees, membership cards, tour packages, etc.

Keep in mind that the Rental Rate and Add-On types will be the default rates shown when selecting rates for a transaction, so any rates defined as Rental Rates and Add-Ons will be the quickest to select (any others will require two extra clicks to select the appropriate type from the list). Also, the Merchandise rate type will be automatically shown when selecting rates for an Unbound transaction or Customer transaction.

Edit Rate Definition Dialog

When you select New, Insert, or Edit from Rates Setup, the Edit Rate Definition dialog will appear. This is where you define all of the details of the rate.

Make sure that the desired Rate Type is selected (this can be changed any time), and enter a Rate Code and Description. The Rate Code is primarily used to select rates quickly with the keyboard, so it is optional but should be short and unique for each rate. (In future software versions it may also be used for reports.) The Description is shown in the rate selection list, so you should make it simple but also descriptive enough for easy recognition. If this rate is for a discount, for instance, you should indicate that in the description so the correct rate is chosen.

Rate Transactions

Next is the Transaction Template section. This operates just like the New Transactions dialog, except that no quantities are entered here, and instead of transaction entry dialogs opening you will use the grid-entry method to enter the data. Add each transaction that you want to appear for this rate, and enter an Each amount (how much for each day, or week, or item, etc.). The Each amount will later be multiplied appropriately.

Typically you will simply enter a Charge transaction here, with the appropriate category, description, quantity (optional) and amount. Note that in some cases the description will be modified later. For instance if the charge is for multiple sites, it may add "(5 days x 2 sites)" to the description. Electric, gas and water meter charges also have their descriptions altered (see the Rate Types explanation above).

You can also add appropriate discounts here. For instance, it's recommended that for a Good Sam rate of $18, you add a Charge for the standard rate of $20, and then add a Discount of $2. This will be more descriptive on the receipt and also allow you to generate reports about the discounts.

Notes on Quantity -- this field should almost always be left blank (which assumes a quantity of 1, multiplied by whatever is necessary like # of days, weeks, etc. as described below). The primary purpose of this field is to have an item that is sold as a bundle, where you want a total quantity to show on the receipts. For instance if it's for a box of 25 candy bars for $10 instead of single candy bar (perhaps sold at a discount), then you could put 25 in the quantity and the unit price (e.g. $0.40) in the Each field.

The other use for the quantity field is for manually adding specific tax amounts (see below).

Taxes

Important -- Although you can add Tax transactions manually, it's recommended that you use the Auto-add tax check boxes instead. Otherwise you will have to edit every rate definition any time the tax rates change.

Assuming you don't add the tax manually (see below), simply check the appropriate Auto-add tax boxes. There is one box for each of the 5 possible Tax Rate definitions, but only those that are active according to Taxes Setup will be enabled (and they will show the selected category name for the tax). When you check these boxes, the With Tax amount is automatically calculated.

One exception to using the auto-add option would be for special cases where the tax does not apply to the total charges less discounts. For instance, if you add a Discount to the rate as mentioned above, the Discount transaction would be taken into account for taxes. Therefore you would have to add the tax as a separate transaction and not use the auto-add tax feature if the Discount should not reduce the tax (however in most cases the discount would reduce the tax due, so the auto-tax option should be used).

Another exception would be if you your "rounded" include tax, such that exact calculations are difficult

without rounding problems. For instance, if your daily rate is $23.00 but that already includes a 10% tax (roughly. $20.9091 + $2.09091 tax), then it may be easiest to enter charge and tax transactions separately so it always comes out exactly $23.00 per day.

When adding Tax transactions manually, it's a good idea to use the Quantity field -- which for taxes is actually the amount taxed. This results in more accurate tax reporting, as well as a meaningful note on receipts. So for the example above, the Charge for the rate would have an Each value of $20.9091. Then you would enter a Tax transaction with a Qty of 20.9091 (the amount taxed) and an Each of $0.10 (which means 10%). This rounds out to $23.00 no matter how many days are added, and the amount taxed will also be accurate.

Multipliers and Filtering

This is the most important part of the setup, especially for auto-rates.

The rest of the dialog entries are used to "qualify" a rate. This determines whether the rate definition applies to any given reservation, so it's important to get this set up properly. Otherwise, the rate may not appear in the Select Rates list, or too many rates will show up that don't all really apply to the reservation. Likewise, it's essential that the correct filtering is used for auto-rates, so the program can automatically figure out which rate to apply to each reservation.

Generally the filtering only applies to Rental Rate and Add-On rate types. However if this is a rate for any kind of merchandise or other item that may have more than one quantity *other than periods or sites*, make sure that Ask for other quantity is checked. That way a Qty entry field will appear when you select this rate. But you should **not** check this option for Rental Rates in most cases.

Rate is per... and Multiply-by options

To have a rate multiplied by the number of days, weeks, etc. in the reservation, fill in the Rate is per field and select a period from the (# of) drop-down list (Days, Weeks, Months, or Years). Also be sure to check the Multiply by # of periods check box for any per-period type of rate.

Note that if you've set up any "schedules" for intra-day reservations, for instance hourly reservations, those schedule names will be added to the Rate is per list. If the rate is for one of those scheduled sites, select the appropriate schedule name instead of Day, etc. When a shcedule is selected, an additional Periods button and field will be shown where you can select specific periods that the rate will apply to.

For most rental rates you will also want to check the box for Multiply by the # of sites. This is important when using linked reservations (e.g. if they reserve more than one site for the same time period).

Resv Types

You will need to select one or more Reservation Types for which the rate applies. Click the Resv Types button to open a list of reservation types, and select any that are applicable. For instance, you may have different rates for Monthly reservations than your Normal reservations. Typically you may not have any rates that apply to Free Stay types, except perhaps utility (meter) rates. Guest reservations might have rates defined that are essentially an extra vehicle charge, and Day Pass reservations may have a day-use rate defined.

Site Types, Site Classes, or Sites

If this rate only applies to certain Site Types, click the Site Types button and select the applicable types from the list that appears. If no site type is selected, the rate will show up for reservations of any site type (assuming other filters don't exclude it). If you select one or more site types here, then that rate will only show up when a reservation is for one of those site types (or has a synchronized reservation of that type).

Likewise, you can have a rate apply to specific Site Classes, using the Site Classes button, or even one or more specific sites using the Sites button. However you don't need to set all three (types, classes, and sites) -- usually only one of these selections is enough to sufficiently qualify the rate. For instance if you select "Normal RV" fo rthe Site Type, there's no need to select "RV's" for the site class because it's redundant -- all "Normal RV" sites will have an "RV's" class anyway, so there's no need to make the rate check this too.

Discounts

If you offer discounts, such as Senior discounts or Good Sam membership discounts, then you will need to set up multiple rate definitions -- one "normal" rate that applies to no dicounts, and a separate rate definition for each discount category (or at least one for each different discount amount). Filter each rate definition for the appropriate discount by either selecting one or more discounts from the Discounts list, or by checking the Only applies if no discount used check box. As with Site Type, this will determine whether the rate will appear in the rate selection list for a given reservation.

Note that if a rate applies to more than one discount, you may need to set it up so that the appropriate discount shows in the charges after the rates is applied. To do this, blank out the Item Description for any Discount transaction entries. It will then be filled in with the current discount selected on the Transactions dialog.

Ask for other quantity

The Ask for other quantity check box can be checked for any rate, which will allow a separate quantity entry field to appear when the rate is selected. Generally this is not used for rental rates, but it can be used for Add-On rates like extra people or vehicles, and for any other kind of rate.

Exclude from auto-rates

If you're using the auto-rates functionality, all Rental Rates and Add-On rates will be used in the auto-calculations unless individually excluded. To exclude a rate from auto-rates calculations (e.g. for a manually added charge), check the Exclude from auto-rates calculations option.

Meter Reading Rates

The Ask for meter reading check box should be selected for any meter-reading rates where it will be multiplied by the metered amount (e.g. kwh for electric meters.) This is used as a flag for the special meter-entry dialog. If this option is selected, a Meter Allowance field will also appear. If your rental rates include a certain amount of electricity, water, or gas and then you charge for excess, then enter the allowance here. This will adjust meter charges accordingly -- the actual meter readings will show on the receipt, but the charge will only include units above the allowance.

For any of the Meter rate types, you can also enter values for Applies if >= units and Applies if <= units. This allows different meter rates to be used for different amounts of usage, such as for tiered meter rates.

Applies if ... days

You can set up the rate to apply only if the reservation is longer or shorter than a given number of days, by setting the Applies if >= days and Applies if <= days fields. For instance, there's no reason to show monthly rates if the reservation is less than 20 days or so. In this case, you would want to base the days on how many days it would take for the monthly rate to be more economical than the weekly rate, for instance. This could also be used for "3-day special" rates, etc., to show the rate only if they are staying more than 3 days.

Be careful about setting the maximum days, however. It may seem appropriate to set the daily rate to only show if they're staying less than 7 days, but then if they stay 10 days you would not be able to apply the daily rate to the remaining days. This should only be done in special circumstances, for instance if you have 2 different daily rates -- one for short-term stays and another for pro-rating long-term residents.

Applies if reservation field...

The Applies if reservation field... selection permits a great deal of control over when a rate is used. This specifies that the rate applies to a particular "preference" setting in the reservation or one of the "# of" or value fields such as number of adults, extra vehicles, or rig length. This option is most often used for add-on rates, such as for adding $1.00 per extra person, but can also be used to indicate a special rate if they need 50A service, for instance.

To use this option, select a reservation field from the list. If the field is an attirbute/preference field, such as "50A", then you can specify whether the rate will apply only if that preference is "true" (set to "Must Have") for the reservation, or whether it's "False" (not set or set to "Must Not Have" are both considered false in this case). Therefore you can set up two separate rates that are mutually exclusive, one for the True case and one for the False case of the preference field.

If the field is a numeric value, additional settings will appear that need to be entered. You will first enter a value for "is >=" to indicate when the rate applies. For instance, if you charge for any adults *above* 2, then set this value to 3. Next you can specify that the rate is "Per each more than", which means that it will be multiplied by the value minus some number. For instance, set this value to 2 in the previous example to charge for every adult above 2 adults. Another example would be a charge for all extra vehicles -- set "is >=" to 1, and "Per each more than" to 0.

Rate Dates

You can define the dates for which any rate is applicable. This will be used whenever selecting a rate for a reservation, and will only show the rates that are applicable on at least one day of the reservation. For instance, if a reservation includes a holiday, you will see both the normal rate and the holiday rate in the selection list. Likewise, when you select the holiday rate, the quantity that appears for the number of days will be just the number of days that the reservation date occurs on the rate's applicable dates.

For example, if the reservation is for 5 days and includes 3 holiday days (e.g. for a holiday weekend rate), then the holiday rate will be multiplied by 3 days and the normal rate will be multiplied by 2 days (assuming the rate's dates are defined to me mutually exclusive). Although you will have to select both rates, the numbers will be handled for you automatically.

Defining dates for a Rate definition is just like defining dates that a Site is available.

Season Dates Applicable

This field is used to specify the dates for which the rate is applicable. Dates in this field and the other two Special Dates fields can be entered as single dates or as date ranges. You can also enter dates without the year if you want to specify dates that apply the same to every year, but this only applies to the Season Dates, not the Special Dates. If you leave this field blank, it means that the site is available all year long (so there's no need to enter **1/1 to 12/31**).

Note that the dates in these fields will be entered in the "regional" format according to your computer's settings -- for instance, month/day for U.S., and day/month for Canadian, etc. U.S. format is used in the examples.

There is no limit to the number of dates or date ranges you can enter, and the field will scroll as needed. Separate each date range with a comma. A space after the comma is optional (it will be inserted automatically when displayed). The format of a date is fairly flexible as long as if follows the month/day/year convention. Each range should include two dates separated by the word "to". Here are some examples of valid range entries:

> **1/1 to 9/30, 11/1 to 12/31**   (note there are no years, so it applies to every year)
> **1/2/2002 to 4/3/02**   (years can be 2 or 4 digits)
> **10-5-01, 10-7-01 to 12-31-01** (single dates can be entered, and you can use the dash in a date)

Regardless of the date format you use, it will be changed to a common format (like mm/dd/yyyy) after you save the information. If you make a mistake in an entry, it will warn you when you click <u>Save</u> and ask you to fix it.

You can clear out old date ranges once that year has passed (and add new ones for upcoming years). Unlike the dates for Sites, there is no need to keep old dates in the lists since you probably won't be adding transactions to old reservations.

Wrap-around seasons -- If the range you want to enter "wraps around" the end of the year, such as December to February, it must be entered in two segments if you don't include the year in the dates. So instead for a season of 12/1 to 2/28, enter it as **12/1 to 12/31, 1/1 to 2/28**.

Important -- When defining rates for different seasons, make sure that there are no gaps or else there may be times when no rates appear (or they don't multiply by the correct number of dates). Likewise it's a good idea to avoid overlapping. Therefore if you have a special holiday rate with a Season Date of **7/4**, then your normal rate definition should have **7/4** in its <u>Special Dates Not Applicable</u> Field to exclude that date from the normal rate.

Special Dates Applicable

Special Dates Applicable take precedence over season dates in determining if a site is available. Even if you have specific seasons, there may be times when you want to make some rates available out of season. You could just adjust the Season Dates if you enter the dates for each year separately, but if you use the same Season Dates every year (entered without years, like **3/1 to 9/30**) then you need to enter any exceptions in this field.

The Special Dates Available field follows the same formatting as Season Dates, with the exception that they should always have a year in them. (Otherwise you would be better off adjusting the Season Dates.) It's OK to have dates here that are considered applicable by the season dates anyway, but it would add work for the software so it's best to avoid overlapping dates.

Note -- Since this is an *exception* list, you can't just put the normally applicable dates here -- use the Season Dates field for the normal range. The Special Dates Available list simply overrides "out of season" dates to

be applicable.

Special Dates Not Applicable

This is the highest priority of the date fields. If a date is included here, the rate will be considered not applicable on this date even if the same date is in both of the Dates Applicable lists above. Dates in this list should always have years in them.

Days of the Week Applicable

These checkboxes allow you to indicate which days of the week the rate is applicable on, which is handy for specifying weekday / weekend rates. Note that the days of the week selected can be overridden by Special Dates Applicable or Special Dates Not Applicable, so take care in specifying special dates in these cases.

If you don't have any sites that are available based on the day of the week, then you should disable these fields (see *Define Data Fields*). This will improve the speed of the program.

Notes

The Notes field is just for your own notes, perhaps an explanation of why a rate is set up the way it is. The Notes are never seen by the customer or by an operator selecting a rate. The notes can be any length.

Auto-Rates Setup

Auto-rates calculation can be very powerful, but some care is needed to set it up properly. It can completely alleviate the need to use the "Select Rates" or "Charge" functions except for special cases, and can help eliminate errors in selecting appropriate rates. Auto-rates functionality is based on your Rates definitions, so it's important to set up your rates properly to avoid multiple or inappropriate rate calculations.

Auto-rates can be used to fully automate charges (by automatically applying them upon reservation creation or check-in), or for semi-automatic functionality using the "Auto-Calculate Rate Charges" button on the Transactions or Select Rates dialog.

Basic Auto-Rates Configuration

For basic auto-rates configuration, see Maintenance | Program Options | Auto-Rates. Here you enable/disable the auto-rates functionality, specify whether it attempts to find "better" rates than strict rate selection (e.g. select the weekly rate if they stay 6 days, if that's cheaper), define how re-calculated rates are applied, and define when auto-rates are applied and re-calculated.

The recommended setup is to configure it to auto-calculate rates on check-in, so charges don't have to be changed or backed out when the reservation is changed before check-in or cancelled. This also helps with transaction reports, so charges are reported on the same day that the payment is received for them.

You should also enable auto-calculation for the Check Rates and Quote/Confirmation functions. These functions can be used to tell the customer what the total will be without actually adding the charges to the reservation, so there is really no need to add charges before the reservation is checked in.

Rates Definition Rules

Proper definition and arrangement of the rates is essential for auto-rates to work correctly.

There are several rules that need to be followed when defining rates so that they work properly with auto-rates. The main thing to keep in mind is that the rates will be applied top-down (according to the list in Rates Setup) until the reservation is "covered". All of the rate filtering is used, and it won't apply a rate that would cover dates that aren't in the reservation or have been covered by a previously applied rate. (Exception -- if you set it up to apply to longer periods to find a better rate, it will apply rates assuming the reservation is longer than it really is to see if a cheaper rate would apply.)

Auto-rates can also be set up for add-ons like 50A electric, pull-through, extra adults, vehicles, and so forth. This is done using the "Applies if field..." selection in the rates definition.

The two most common causes of rates not working properly are the **order in the list** and the "**Applies only to**" filtering in the rate definitions. Please pay attention to these items. If they order isn't correct in the Rates Setup list, it could apply the wrong rate. If the filtering isn't correct, it might not apply any rate, or will apply the wrong one. It's common to set up the filtering to exclude too much, for instance setting a Discount when the rate should apply to non-discounted reservations, or using the "Applies if <= _____ days" setting when it really shouldn't be used.

Here are the basic rules:

- Rates will be applied top-down (see above). When adding a rate, think about whether it should take precedence over any rates listed above it (e.g. weekly vs. daily).
- Only Rental Rates and Add-On rate types will be used for auto-calculations.
- Put longer-term rates above shorter-term (e.g. so a weekly rate is applied instead of a daily rate for 7 days).
- Try to make rates mutually exclusive, so for instance only one daily rate would apply for any given site, discount, and date. If this is not practical, make sure all qualified rates are above the generic (default) rates so they get applied first if appropriate.
- Put discount rates above non-discount (if they aren't completely mutually exclusive by the definitions), so that the normal rate only gets used if none of the discounts apply.
- For monthly pro-rate daily rates, make sure the >= days is set properly to avoid applying pro-rates to reservations less than a month long. (Also be sure to set <= for non-pro-rate daily rates, or make sure the pro-rate rates are above the normal daily rates).
- If you pro-rate by the actual number of days in the month, have separate pro-rate rates (for 28, 29, 30 and 31 days) with season dates set appropriately.
- If a rate shouldn't be used for auto-rates (including monthly billing) , set the "Exclude from auto-rate calculations" flag.

Warning -- reservations without a site assigned will probably use the first rate definition by default (since no site type/class is available for filtering). Obviously the reservation can't be checked in until a site is assigned, but this will affect the Quote/Confirmation, as well as if the Auto-calculate function is used on the Transactions dialog. If unassigned reservations are "allowed" for your park, it may be a good idea to have "dummy" rate at the top that could not apply to any normal reservations. Make it something like $.01 per day, and apply to a site type/class combination that's normally impossible (e.g. an "rv" site type and "boat" site class).

For further information on using auto-rates, see the Auto-Rates section in *Working with Transactions*.

Rate Setup Examples

Here are some step-by-step examples to get you started setting up your own rates. For technical details refer to the previous sections.

The examples below assume you still have the default pick lists, as seen in the demo or a new database -- naturally if you've changed the pick lists for Transaction Categories, Site Types, or Discounts, or if you've changed the available Reservation Attributes, then your choices may be different. Actually we recommend changing those Pick Lists to reflect your needs -- so do that first before setting up your rates. In particular, check the Transaction Categories pick list to see if it covers all of the things you need (e.g. you may want separate categories for RV rent vs. Cabin rent, or you may need to add a Seasonal category, etc.)

For each example, it's assumed that you're already in Maintenance / Park Setup / Rates.

Basic Daily Rate

To set up a $20.00 per day rate for Normal RV sites:

1. Click New rate definition.

2. Enter "Basic daily rate, Normal RV" in the Description field.

3. Click the Charge button.

4. Select (click on) "Daily Rate" from the drop-down category list.

5. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Normal RV, daily"). You can just start typing to replace it entirely, or press F2 to enter editing mode. The Item Description is what will show on the customer's receipt.

6. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

7. Enter the daily amount, not including taxes, for instance "20". No dollar sign or decimals are needed (assuming it's a round dollar amount)

8. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

9. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.

10. Select "Days" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).

11. Verify that the Resv Types shown is "Normal, Group, Monthly" and that the boxes are checked by Multiply by # periods and Multiply by # sites. These are the defaults and will probably be correct unless you have special cases.

12. Click the Site Types button, select "Normal RV" from the list, and click OK.

13. Click the Save button -- you're done with your first rate!

This shows how to set up a rate for a single site type, "Normal RV". You probably need to set up separate rate definitions for each of your site types, or at least each group of site types for which you charge one rate (if you charge the same for 2 or more types, then simply include all of those types in step 12 above). Repeat each of the steps above for each of your site types or rate groupings (likewise for other rates below) . This can quickly turn into a large list of rates, but that's normal. It's tedious, but not difficult -- especially using the Copy function as described below.

Weekly and Monthly Rates

To set up a weekly rate of $120 (for instance if they get the 7th day free, you would simply charge them for 6 days on a weekly stay):

1. Make sure the daily rate added above is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s). This will make a duplicate rate definition so we don't have to do everything over again.

2. Select the new copy (click to highlight it), then click Edit rate definition. (Or you can just double-click on it to edit it.)

3. Change the Description field to "Basic weekly rate, Normal RV".

4. Select (click on) "Daily Rate" under the Category for the charge, then click on the drop-down arrow and select "Weekly Rate".

5. Press the Tab key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Normal RV, weekly").

6. Press the Tab key twice to get to the Each field.

7. Enter the weekly amount, not including taxes, for instance "120". No dollar sign or decimals are needed (assuming it's a round dollar amount)

8. Press the Tab key to accept the amount.

9. Select "Weeks" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).

10. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.

11. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button so that it's above the daily rate. This is important so the weekly rate takes precedence over the daily rate. If they stay extra days, it will use the daily rate for the additional days.

To set up a monthly rate, follow the same steps above, substituting the appropriate descriptions, category, and amount, and select "Monthly" in the Rate is per... field. Or if you charge per 30 days instead of calendar months, enter it as Rate is per "30" (# of) "Days".

Then in the last step, move it twice so it's above the weekly rate. Again, the monthly rate will be used first, then the weekly for extra weeks, and/or the daily rate for extra days.

Monthly Pro-rate

If you pro-rate the days when they stay a month or more, then you wouldn't want it to use the weekly and daily rates as mentioned above. So to add a fixed amount per day when they stay 1 month (we'll assume 30 days) or more:

  1. Make sure the Basic daily rate is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s).

  2. Select the new copy (click to highlight it), then click Edit rate definition. (Or you can just double-click on it to edit it.)

  3. Change the Description field to "Daily pro-rate, Normal RV".

  4. Select (click on) the Item Description field, and change it to "Normal RV, daily pro-rate").

  5. Press the Tab key twice to get to the Each field, and enter the amount (e.g. "10").

  6. Press the Tab key to accept the amount.

  7. Enter "31" in the Applies if >= .... Days field. This will force this rate to be skipped unless they're staying more than 30 days (see below).

  8. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.

  9. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button until it's above the weekly rate but below the Monthly rate. This is important so the monthly rate takes precedence, and if they stay extra days it will use this rate for the additional days instead of the normal weekly or daily rate.

Note that we're using 30 days as the definition of a month here, so technically this would only work correctly if you defined your monthly rate to always be for 30 days instead of a calendar month. It would also work OK for calendar months as long as you still want to charge a fixed amount per day for extra days (regardless of the length of the month), except for February, because it will skip this rate if they stay 29 days (Feb 1st to March 1st).

If you use calendar months for your monthly rate, then you will need to set up a separate pro-rate rate for February. You would duplicate this rate, change the Applies-if days to 29, and enter "3/1 to 3/30" in the Season dates applicable field. Why enter March dates? Because if they stayed the full month of February, the extra days would be in March so this rate must apply to those days, not the February days. Note that if they stay the full month of March, it would apply the monthly rate for March anyway.

Add-on for 50A service

To set up a $2.00 per day extra charge for all RV sites (not just Normal RV):

  1. Click New rate definition.

  2. Select "Add-On" in the Rate Type field.

  3. Enter "Add-on for 50A" in the Description field.

  4. Click the Charge button.

  5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list. (You might want to add a more appropriate category for this, which would be done in Maintenance / Pick Lists / Transaction Categories).

  6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "50A service,

daily").

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

8. Enter the daily amount, not including taxes, for instance "2".

9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.

11. Select "Days" from the drop-down list after Rate is per 1 (# of).

12. Verify that the Resv Types shown is "Normal, Group, Monthly" and that the boxes are checked by Multiply by # periods and Multiply by # sites.

13. Click the Site Classes button, select "RV's" form the list, and click OK. Note we're simply selecting the RV site class, not a site type. You could have selected multiple Site Types if you preferred.

14. Select "50A" from the Applies if reservation field drop-down list. Additional fields will appear, and in this case we just keep the default "True" selection.

15. Click the Save button.

The key items in this rate are the fact that it's an Add-on (so it can be added to the rental rate), and the 50A selection so the program knows that it only applies if you've selected that option on the reservation.

Add-on for Extra Adults

To set up an add-on charge of $3 per extra adult after the first 2 adults:

This will be another add-on rate, so follow the first 13 steps from the add-on rate above (with appropriate changes in the description, category) and for the Each amount enter the $3 amount per extra adult. You might select different Site Classes also, for instance if the additional adults charge also counts for cabins and tents.

In step 14, select "# Adults" for the Applies if reservation field. Since this is a numeric field, different options will appear. Enter "3" for is >= entry, check the Per each more than box, and enter "2" after that. Thus if they have 3 or more adults, it will charge $3 for each one except for the first 2.

You can repeat this for extra children, but it gets complicated if you allow for instance 4 people regardless of whether they're adult or children. It can't combine # adults and children to decide whether to add the rate. One way to handle this is to always count "extras" as adults, and assume children are never charged for (don't create a rate for children). Thus if they have 1 adult and 4 children, where you should really charge for 1 extra person, then enter it in the reservation as 3 adults and 2 children so it catches the extra "adult" charge. Another option is to simply disable the "# Children" field for customers and reservations, and change "# Adults" to "# People". Just enter total persons for the reservation, and make the rate apply to 5 or more people, per each more than 4.

Discount for Good Sam

If you give discounts for organizations like Good Sam, you need to set up completely separate rate definitions that apply to the selected discounts. So first you need to make sure the discounts you accept are in the Discounts Pick List (Maintenance / Pick Lists / Discounts).

There are a couple ways you can set up discount rates, depending on how you want the customer's receipt to show it -- either as a separate line item showing the discount amount, or simply as a reduced amount for the basic charge. We recommend separate line items, not only for the customer's benefit, but because this also allows you to see the discounts on transaction reports.

For now we'll assume that the Good Sam discount only applies to the daily rate (since a discount is already built into weekly and monthly rates).

To set up a Good Sam rate of 10% off:

   1. Make sure the basic daily rate is selected, and click Copy Selected Rate(s).

   2. Select the new copy, then click Edit rate definition.

   3. Change the Description field to "Good Sam daily rate, Normal RV".

   4. Click the Discount button (the one next to Charge), to add a discount transaction.

   5. Select "Daily Rate" from the drop-down category list. You could leave this as "Discount", or you could set up a specific category, but in this case assume we want to include it in the Daily Rate category for accounting reasons (it will simply reduce the total income shown for the Daily Rate category). We'll still be able to get a report showing the discount amounts if we want, because the Type is Discount.

   6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Good Sam 10% discount").

   7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

   8. Enter the daily amount of discount, not including taxes. We can't enter a percentage, but we know the amount will be $2 because we know the normal rate is $20, so just enter "2".

   9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

   10. Click the Discounts button (the one below Sites), select "Good Sam" from the list, and click OK.

   11. Everything else is the same, so click the Save button.

   12. This rate should still be highlighted in the rates list, so click the Move Up button so that it's above the Basic daily rate, but below the basic weekly rate. This is important so the weekly rate takes precedence over the discounted daily rate, but the discount rate will be applied if you select Good Sam as the discount used for the reservation. Otherwise it will skip this one and use the basic daily rate.

If you offer more than one type of discount, you would repeat the above process for each discount you offer. You would also repeat this for any Add-on rates that the discount should apply to -- so you might end up with many copies of daily rates and add-on rates, one for each type of discount.

However there's a shortcut if you offer the same amount of discount, e.g. 10%, for several different organizations. Make the following changes in the steps to make one rate apply to multiple discount types:

   In step 6, make the item description "Discount". When the program sees that the description is the same as the Type, it will add the discount type on the receipts and it will show up like "Discount : Good Sam".

In step 10, select as many different discount types as needed (hold the **Ctrl** key down when clicking to select more than one).

Now you have one rate that will apply to multiple discounts.

Weekend vs. Weekday Rates

Setting up separate rates for weekdays and weekends is very simple. It's just a matter of setting up two separate daily rates and selecting the appropriate days of the week for each one. Of course this could be expanded to a separate rate for each day of the week if needed.

First you need to make sure the Rates fields for the days of the week are all enabled. If you don't see the checkboxes for them at the bottom of the window when you edit a rate, they've been disabled -- go to Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Rate Fields, and enable the "Unavailable.." fields for the days of the week.

When you set up the daily rate for weekdays, just remove the check marks from the days of the week that the rate should not apply to. Keep in mind that these are actually "nights", not "days" -- so if the weekday rate should apply to Sunday night through Thursday night, uncheck the Fri and Sat boxes.

Copy that rate, edit it to change the descriptions and amount accordingly for weekends, and now uncheck all boxes except Fri and Sat.

Since they're mutually exclusive (they can't both apply to the same day of the week since they have different days checked), the order in the list with respect to each other won't matter. Make sure you don't have a third basic daily rate still in the list -- it shouldn't be needed since these two cover all days of the week, and it could cause confusion.

Naturally if you also have discount rates, this will have to be repeated for each discounted daily rate.

Special Season or Holiday Rates

Creating special rates for holidays, peak seasons, etc. is similar to defining weekend/weekday rates. You'll need to duplicate each rate that will be different for the special dates, and enter the appropriate dates for which each one applies to.

This is usually done with the Season Dates Applicable field and the Special Dates Not Applic. field. While the Special Dates Applicable field can be used in some cases, you should ignore this one for now.

As a simple case, lets say that you have a special rate for July 3rd and 4th:

   1. Duplicate the Basic daily rate (using Copy Selected Rate(s)).

   2. Edit the new one, and change its descriptions as appropriate to indicate "July 4th rate", and of course change the Each amount.

   3. In the Season Dates Applicable field, enter "7/3 to 7/4". Note that the year isn't needed since it's the same days every year. (If you have special cases like long weekends where you need to include an extra day, then you would have to include the year for those cases.)

   4. Click Save.

   5. Move that rate above the normal rate (Basic daily rate), so it will apply first if the reservation is on those dates. Note that it will only apply to those two days, and the regular rate will be used for the remainder of the days if the reservation is longer.

That's basically it. You can repeat as needed for other dates -- or if all holidays are the same rate, just include all of the holiday dates in the Season Dates Applicable field, separated by commas. For instance: "7/3 to 7/4, 5/28/05 to 5/30/05, 12/24" to include Memorial weekend in 2005 only, and Christmas Eve every year.

Naturally for any year-specific dates, you'll need to remember to adjust the dates every year. Be sure to leave in the old dates for awhile just in case you still have active reservations covering those dates, to prevent it from recalculating them incorrectly.

We mentioned the Special Dates Not Applic field but we didn't use it yet. Technically the right way to do it would be to also enter those same dates into the Special Dates Not Applic field in the Basic daily rate, to keep the normal rate from applying on the holidays. However if you make sure the holiday rate is above the normal rate so it will always be applied first, then you could skip this step. This reduces the maintenance needed each year, and also speeds things up a tiny bit.

Creating seasonal rates works basically the same way, simply with a larger date range. This often applies to monthly and weekly rates as well, so you would have to make seasonal copies of those rates also.

One thing to watch out for when entering seasonal dates is the end-of-year wraparound. If you don't include the year in the date range, it won't understand that "10/1 to 3/31" is supposed to wrap around the end of the year (and in fact it will think you entered it wrong, automatically changing it to "3/31 to 10/1"). So if a season wraps around the end of the year, enter it as two parts like "10/1 to 12/31, 1/1 to 3/31".

Special Reservation Types

So far the examples assume that all of your reservations are just general reservations ("Normal"), or variations on those that don't really affect the rate you charge ("Monthly" or "Group"). The Resv Types selection in the example rates has always been left with these defaults. You could change the monthly and pro-rated rates to only apply to "Monthly" reservation types if you prefer, to help keep things separate. Of course you would need to remember to set the reservation type appropriately for the reservations themselves.

You might also have special types of reservations like Seasonal that need separate rates, or special cases that have no other easy way to qualify the rate it should use like a "Grandfathered" rate for certain people, or a special rate for "Online" reservations. It's often best to create special Reservation Types for these (see the Pick Lists), which not only lets you specify appropriate rates but also allows more detailed reporting.

Once you've created the special Reservation Types needed, you can define rates that apply to only those reservation types. This is simply a matter of selecting the appropriate Resv Types in the rate definition.

Be sure to check all of your rates to make sure there's no missing Resv Types that should be selected, or accidental overlap (rates applying to reservation types that it shouldn't) -- and remember that if the Resv Types selection is blank, the rate will apply to ALL reservation types.

Rates for Fixed Fees

If you have a fixed fee that should reservations regardless of the length of stay, then you can do it as an add-on rate. This can be used for things like a reservation fee, a key deposit, or other one-time charge. It doesn't necessarily have to apply to everyone (you can qualify a key deposit to just cabins, for instance), just modify the steps below if needed to make it apply to the appropriate cases.

To set up a $5.00 fixed fee that applies to all stays:

1. Click <u>New rate definition</u>.

2. Select "Add-On" in the <u>Rate Type</u> field.

3. Enter "Fixed reservation fee" (or whatever it is) in the <u>Description</u> field.

4. Click the <u>Charge</u> button.

5. Select (click on) "Misc Extras" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).

6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the <u>Item Description</u> field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Service charge").

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the <u>Each</u> field (no Qty is necessary).

8. Enter the amount, not including taxes, for instance "5".

9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under <u>Auto-add tax</u>, if they apply.

11. Remove the checkboxes for <u>Multiply by # periods,</u> <u>Multiply by # sites</u>, and <u>Ask for other quantity</u>. Of course it this should apply multiple times for multiple sites, leave that box checked.

12. Select any <u>Resv Types</u>, <u>Site Types</u>, etc. that this charge should apply to. if it applies to everything, make sure these selections are cleared out.

13. Click the <u>Save</u> button.

That's it -- this rate will be added to all reservations matching the selected Applies-only-to criteria.

Merchandise Rates

If you have the Point of Sale option, you probably won't want to enter merchandise here. Otherwise, you can set up any number of rates that are actually merchandise items. This saves time when entering sales of fixed-cost items like RV supplies and dump services, or fixed-rate things like propane.

Once you have Merchandise rates set up, all rates with this type will be shown in Select Rates when you choose the "Merchandise" rate type at the top of that dialog. In addition, when you open Unbound Transactions, for instance by clicking the cash register icon in the toolbar, it will show all merchandise rates by default. This makes it easy to pick the selected rate end enter a quantity.

Setting up a merchandise rate is similar to setting up a fixed fee rate. To add Propane as a merchandise item at $1.299 per gallon:

1. Click <u>New rate definition</u>.

2. Select "Merchandise" in the <u>Rate Type</u> field.

3. Enter "Propane" in the <u>Description</u> field.

4. Click the <u>Charge</u> button.

5. Select (click on) "Propane" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).

6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Propane per gallon").

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

8. Enter the amount per unit, not including taxes, for instance "1.299". Notice that you can include the fractional cents as added decimal places. It will show up to 4 places in the dialog, but the number will actually be stored and used for calculations exactly as you enter it.

9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.

11. Click the Save button.

This is a simple example but should cover most merchandise issues.

Electric Meter Rates (also Water and Gas Meters)

Rates for meters are handled in a special way by Campground Master. They are used automatically when entering batch meter readings, and if you select a meter rate from Select Rates, it knows to ask for a reading. There are also some special parameters for meter readings so that you can handle things like tiered electricity rates or exclude a certain minimum amount that's included in their rent.

One key thing to know about meter rates is that when it's applying the rates automatically, it can apply one or two rates. One must be a variable rate, which is multiplied by the number of units used. The other one, if present, must be a fixed rate that's not multiplied (for instance a base service charge). If more than these two rates are found that apply to a given reservation, or if no variable rate is found that applies, it will show an error message.

As with rental and add-on rates, you can use any of the "applies-only-to" qualifying fields to create separate rates for different seasons, different reservation or site types, and so forth. You would create multiple sets of rates to handle each situation as needed, just like for rental rates.

This first example is the simplest case -- a single per-kwH rate for electric use, with no special filtering:

1. Click New rate definition.

2. Select "Electric Meter" in the Rate Type field.

3. Enter "Electric meter" in the Description field.

4. Click the Charge button.

5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).

6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Metered electric"). Keep in mind that the current and previous readings will automatically be added to this description on their receipt, for instance "Metered electric (2500-2200)".

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

---

8. Enter the amount per unit, not including taxes, for instance ".0623". Notice that you can include the fractional cents as added decimal places. It will show up to 4 places in the dialog, but the number will actually be stored and used for calculations exactly as you enter it.

9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.

11. Notice that the box Ask for meter reading will be checked automatically, and some other entry fields will appear. In this simple case, leave these as they are. (As a simple variation, you could enter "100" in the Meter allowance field if the customer gets the first 100 units for free and should be charged for the remainder of his usage, if any.)

12. Click the Save button.

Now if you go into a reservation's transactions, click Select Rates, and select "Electric Meter" for the rate type, this rate will appear. If you click this rate and Add, a window will appear showing the previous meter reading and asking for the new reading. Simply enter the new reading and it will do the rest, including updating the last reading the in the Site Details.

Electric Meter - Base Charges

Sometimes a base service charge must be added every time the meter is read. This would be in addition to the per-unit charge, so you need to add a separate rate for it. So after adding the meter rate above, add another rate, let's say for a $4.50 service charge:

1. Click New rate definition.

2. Select "Electric Meter" in the Rate Type field.

3. Enter "Electric meter service charge" in the Description field.

4. Click the Charge button.

5. Select (click on) "Electricity" from the drop-down category list (or whatever category you might have added for this).

6. Press the **Tab** key to change to the Item Description field, and change it if you want (e.g. "Meter reading charge").

7. Press the **Tab** key twice to get to the Each field (no Qty is necessary).

8. Enter the amount of the charge, not including taxes, for instance "4.5".

9. Press the **Tab** key to accept the amount.

10. Check the boxes for one or more taxes under Auto-add tax, if they apply.

11. Remove the check in the Ask for meter reading box. This must be removed to indicate that it's a base rate, not a per-unit rate. If you don't do this, you'll get an error because multiple per-unit rates exist. Two other fields will still be shown below this because it's a meter rate, but leave those blank in this case.

12. Click the Save button.

Now when you meter charges, this rate will be added in addition to the per-unit charges. This will happen each time you enter a meter reading, no matter what the actual usage is or how often you do it.

As an additional note, remember that you're not limited to one transaction in a rate definition. For instance if you need to indicate more than one base charge like a service fee and separate meter reading fee, you can't create two separate base rates so just add the two Charge transactions into the one base rate.

Electric Meter - Tiered Rates

This is where it can get a little complicated, primarily in figuring out the amounts to enter for the rate charges. Remember that only one per-unit and one base rate can apply for any set of conditions -- this is solved by using the extra fields for Applies if >= ... units and Applies if <= ... units, which were ignored in the simple examples above.

The general process is to create a pair of rates for each range of units that define a different electricity rate. (If there is no base charge then the lowest range will only need the per-unit rate, but that's the only exception.) So we need one per-unit rate and one base rate for each range, and set the applies-if parameters accordingly for each pair of rates so that only one pair applies for any given meter reading.

As an example, lets say the rate is $.06 for the first 200 units, $.07 for 201 to 400 units, and $.08 for any usage above 400. In addition, there's a service charge of $10.00 per month (presumably the same as per reading). The per-unit portion of the rates in each range is simple enough, but you need to figure out how much the fixed, or base, part should be for each range.

- For 200 and under, the base is just the $10.00 service charge.

- For 201 to 400, we need to add the total amount for the first 200 units of usage (because the per-unit rate will only calculate the $.07 per unit above 200 units). So $.06 x 200 = $12, plus the $10 service charge = $22.

- Likewise for 401 and above, we need the total amount for the first 400 units. This would be the $22 above (which includes the first 200 units), plus $.07 x 200 = $14 for the next 200 units (201 to 400), for a base charge of $36.

Now we're ready to create the rate definitions. Rather than go through each step for every rate, we'll just show a table below with the appropriate entries for each rate. Hopefully by now you know the basic mechanics of adding rates.

Rate 1: **Base rate, up to 200 units**
        Each amount: **$10.00** (service charge)
        Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**
        Meter allowance field: (blank)
        Applies if >= field: (blank)
        Applies if <= field: **200**

Rate 2: **Per-unit rate, up to 200 units**
        Each amount: **$.06**
        Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**
        Meter allowance field: (blank)
        Applies if >= field: (blank)
        Applies if <= field: **200**

Rate 3: **Base rate, 201 to 400 units**
        Each amount: **$22.00** (service charge + 200 units)
        Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**
        Meter allowance field: (blank, doesn't matter)
        Applies if >= field: **201**
        Applies if <= field: **400**

Rate 4: **Per-unit rate, 201 to 400 units**
> Each amount: **$.07**
> Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**
> Meter allowance field: **200**
> Applies if >= field: **201**
> Applies if <= field: **400**

Rate 5: **Base rate, 401 units and up**
> Each amount: **$36.00** (service charge + 400 units)
> Ask for meter reading checkbox: **NOT checked**
> Meter allowance field: (blank, doesn't matter)
> Applies if >= field: **401**
> Applies if <= field: (blank, no upper limit)

Rate 6: **Per-unit rate, 401 units and up**
> Each amount: **$.08**
> Ask for meter reading checkbox: **CHECKED**
> Meter allowance field: **400**
> Applies if >= field: **401**
> Applies if <= field: (blank, no upper limit)

Notice that the Applies-if fields define the 3 pairs of rates. Make sure they are mutually exclusive to separate each pair -- for instance don't put 400 in rates 5 and 6, or else two sets of rates would apply to exactly 400 units.

Operator Setup

The Operator Setup dialog can only be viewed by an operator with Administrator access, because all operator passwords are visible here. This is where an administrator will set up all operator logins for the software. Note that since the operator table is stored with the database, operators will be backed up and restored with it. This is necessary because the operator information is logged with every reservation and transaction. If you start a new database, you will need to set up new operators for it.

To add additional operators, simply click Add New. A new, blank record will be shown and you can enter the details. To continue adding more operators, just click Add New again.

To review operators already in the system, use the Next and Previous buttons to browse through the operator records.

There must always be at least one operator defined with Administrator access. (Otherwise you could never access critical functions, or add an operator that could.) Therefore, if a database is loaded that does not have an Administrator operator, you will see a warning and it will automatically set one of the operators to Administrator (it will tell you which one). A new Administrator operator will be added if no operators exist.

By default, the database will start with one operator, with Administrator access. The login parameters for this operator will be:
> Login: **Administrator**
> Password: **Password**

Obviously this is not a secure situation -- besides being too obvious, anyone with access to this manual (or the software's Help function) can find out how to get in to the system. Therefore you should immediately change this operator information. At the very least, change the password to something not easily guessed.

Also, you should assign the Administrator access level very sparingly. While it would be convenient to make yourself (or everyone) an administrator, it opens up the possibilities of making disastrous changes by mistake. We recommend having one or two administrator logins assigned, and make them *in addition* to the logins you use on a daily basis. The campground managers should have Manager access for daily use, and any other users should have Reservations or Clerk access as appropriate.

Always keep your Administrator login(s) recorded and in a secure place where you can remember where to find it. It might be months before you need to use it, so relying on your memory for the password is not a good idea. If you forget the administrator login, it is possible for Cottonwood Software to retrieve it, given a copy of the database file. However it is a hassle (and possible support expense) that you'll want to avoid.

Automatic Login

If you are the only person that will ever use the program, you may want to set it up to automatically log in with your operator name when the program starts. You will have to decide whether it's worth the risk (e.g. if anyone else has access to the computer, they would have complete access to the database), but this option is provided for convenience.

To set up automatic login, you will need to add two parameters to the "command line" of a shortcut icon to the program. To do this, right-click on the Campground Master icon on your desktop (or wherever you start the program from), then click on the Shortcut tab. The Target edit box should contain the full path of the CampgroundMaster.exe file, which is the command line. Go to the end of the line and add the following text, replacing **[login]** and **[password]** with your appropriate login and password:

```
/Operator=[login] /Password=[password]
```

Note the capitalization of Operator and Password, the direction of the slashes, and **make sure there is a space before each slash**, including the first one. For example, to log in with the default administrator and password, add this to the command line:

```
/Operator=Administrator /Password=Password
```

Deleting Operators

If necessary, you may delete operators from the system. It won't cause a problem in the database since the actual operator code, rather than a link to the record, is stored in reservations and transactions. However, you probably won't want to delete operators once they are used because you can show Transaction reports based on operator, and operators can only be selected for reports if they are still in the database. If you need to "lock out" an operator, you can either change the operator's password or change the access level to Guest, which would prevent the operator from making any changes to the data.

Operator Code

The Operator Code is the text that will be shown anywhere in the system when referring to the operator (e.g. in reservation and transaction dialogs, report filtering, and the program caption when the operator is logged in).   This should be a fairly short word, typically the operator's first or last name. Make **sure** it is unique (and easy to recognize), since it's used to identify this operator. No two operators should have the same operator code. This code should never be changed once it is in use, since that would have the same problems as deleting the operator (see above).

Operator Login

The Operator Login is the operator's ID used when logging in. It's never seen anywhere else in the system, so it can be whatever the operator prefers. It can be the same as the Operator Code, or it can be different. Login names are not case sensitive, so for instance "Walter" is the same as "waltzer" or "WALTER". This may be changed at any time without any affect on the program or database.

Login names must be unique. Don't use the same login for more than one operator, because it will only see the first one with a given login name when checking the password.

Password

The Password is used by the operator when logging in. Like the Login name, it can be anything the operator wants, and is not case sensitive. It does not have to be unique -- any number of operators can have the same password. Of course this should not be done on purpose -- it's best for each operator to have a unique password, but if two people choose the same password it will not be a problem.

Access Level

This defines the operator's key to the system. There are five different access levels, with increasing access to program functions. They are checked for many different functions, most of which are covered separately with the function descriptions elsewhere in the manual. The access level required for many program functions can also be changed if needed -- see Access Levels Setup. Here are then general descriptions of the levels:

Guest -- minimal access, can only view the Rack. Cannot make any data changes or save the database (thus cannot make a backup or save a copy somewhere else). Essentially the same as nobody logged in.

Clerk -- has access to transactions and functions suitable for a point-of-sale or to accept payment for reservations, but cannot make or change reservations, perform any maintenance functions, or make program option changes.

Registrations -- Can access any reservation functions and reports, and can backup the database, but cannot restore the database perform other maintenance functions, and cannot change old transactions.

Manager -- Can access all report and option functions, plus restore the database, edit or delete old transactions, and edit Site details, but cannot access other maintenance functions.

Administrator -- can do anything.

Notes

The Notes field is only seen on Operator Setup dialog, so it can be used for any notes the administrator wants to make about an operator. Like other notes fields, it can be any length and format. Typical notes might be phone numbers or other contact information (in case a question arises), and information about temporary operators (like work campers) that might be of interest years from now by new campground managers (or auditors).

Access Levels Setup

The Access Levels setup dialog (Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels) can only be viewed by an operator with Administrator access. This is where an administrator will set up the minimum access level required for various program functions.

Each configurable program function will be listed along with its default access level and current (overridden) access level, if any. The current level for each function will be blank as long as it's still the default level, and will only change if you edit the function's level.

Note that the access level for most maintenance functions require Administrator access and cannot be changed, most reservation-editing functions are fixed at the Reservations level, and basic functions like unbound/customer transaction entry and customer editing is fixed at the Clerk level. The configurable functions are the ones that you may want to decide whether you want to make them available to Reservation, Manager, or Administrator levels depending on your situation.

Editing Access Levels

To change the minimum access level required to perform a function, click on a function to highlight it and click <u>Edit access level</u> (or you can simply double-click on the function name). A new dialog will appear to **Add/edit Access Level Override**. This shows the function name and default level -- just select the <u>New Minimum Access Level</u> from the drop-down list.

Note that if you change the level back to its default, it will show that in both the Default and the Current level. That's OK, it just means that it has been overridden before but is currently back to the default. (The only way to clear these out is by using the Raw Data Tables function.)

Maps Setup

Overview

Campground Master supports a park map view so that you can see site status and manipulate reservations directly on the map. The only technical requirement for this is a digitized map file in a specific format. Starting with this map file, you can specify the location of each site (and size/shape), and Campground Master will do the rest. The "editing" capabilities for layout out the sites are very basic, but they do allow you to control the layout and the editing requires no knowledge of computer graphics or programming.

Maps Setup Dialog

To start setting up a map (or to edit the map later), start from Maintenance / Park Setup / Maps. This will open the Set Up Maps dialog, which simply shows a list of current maps defined (if any), and buttons to add, edit, delete, and move maps around the list. Any number of maps can be defined, and this list corresponds with the list of maps available (from the drop-down list) on the Map tab view. The order in the list here determines the order in the drop-down list, and the first map in the list will be shown by default unless a different default is selected on the Map Options (from the tab view controls). The only information shown in this dialog is the map name (as it will appear in the list) and the filename of the map image.

The main reason that you might have multiple maps is that the visible area of each map is limited in the tab view (and it cannot be scrolled). Therefore if your park is too large to show in one view without making the sites unreasonably small, you would want to split your park into different sections and show each section on a separate map view. You might also have multiple maps for the same area if there is a significant change in the use for that area in different seasons or for special events.

Click Underline New map entry or Insert map entry to define a new Map, which will open the Edit Map Dialog. This is where you will select a map file to use as the background and define the site locations. Insert is the same as New, except that the map will be inserted in the list at the current selection point, rather than added to the end of the list.

Note: A map image cannot be created from scratch in Campground Master -- you must have a bitmap (.bmp) file to start with, which Campground Master will use as a background for the site indicators you add here. See the next section, Edit Map Dialog, for more details.

You can edit any already listed by clicking on the map in the list and selecting Edit map entry (or you can double-click on the map in the list). You can also Move or Delete one or more maps by selecting the map(s) in the list (Ctrl-click or Shift-click will select multiple maps), and then click the appropriate button. Note that if you delete a map, all of its elements are also deleted automatically.

Warning -- All changes to maps are permanent -- there is no way to cancel the operation.   (Moving maps in the list is also "permanent" since there is no Cancel button, but you can always move them back.) Making a backup is recommended before any significant changes are made to a map.

As with all tables, the list of maps can also be Printed or Exported to a text file.

Edit Map Dialog

When you select New, Insert, or Edit from Set Up Maps, the Edit Map dialog will appear. This is where you select the map name and image file, and position all of the site status elements.

This dialog only has a two entry fields -- Map name and Image File. The dialog will automatically be sized to match the program main window, and rest of the dialog is used to show the map and edit the site locations.

Map Name

If this is a new map, enter a name for the map (the way you want it to appear in the list of maps on the Map tab view). This should be limited to the size of the entry box to avoid truncation. If editing a map, you can change the name as needed. Each map should have a unique name for identification.

Image File

This is the file name of the map image. No path should be entered, only the file name. All map images must reside in the same folder as the database (and must be present on each computer if using the program on multiple computers or a network). A Browse function is available for convenience in selecting a file instead of typing in the name. If the map image is currently in a different folder than your database, you will be given the option to copy it into the correct location automatically.

Important: The map image is *not* included in backups of the database, so be sure you have a copy of all image files in a safe place!

Image File Format

The image file must be in a specific format for Campground Master to read it:

> Windows Bitmap (.BMP) with RGB encoding, in either 16 or 256 colors

If the image is not in this format, an error will be shown when attempting to load the image. Note that an RLE-encoded (run length encoded) bitmap cannot be used, it must be RGB encoded. If your image is not in this format, use an image editing program to change the format, such as the Windows "Paint" program. When saving the file, be sure to change the File Type to "256 color Windows BMP" (wording depends on the specific application, but look for "256" and "BMP" or "bitmap").

The image size is also important, since it must fit in the tab view window. Note that the area of the Edit Map dialog is the maximum that can be shown with the current program window size, but that assumes that the Toolbar and Status Bar are both turned off. Since you most likely turn the Toolbar and Status Bar on, the viewable image will probably be shorter than the Edit Map dialog window allows (so there will be a grey area below the map image while editing).

The chart below shows typical image sizes for various display resolutions. Note that if you're on a network, keep in mind the *smallest* display resolution of all of your workstations. These sizes assume that the toolbar and status bar are both on, and that the Windows Taskbar is visible at the top or bottom of the screen. Also, the window settings can affect how much area is actually visible (font size, border widths, etc.). So before going too far with map editing, be sure to check the Map tab view and make sure the map is sized appropriately (make sure you can see all of the map).

Resolution	Map Image Size
640 x 480	630 x 290
800 x 600	790 x 410
1024 x 768	1014 x 578
1280 x 1024	1270 x 834

Scanning maps or photos

If you already have a map in hard-copy format (or even an aerial photo), you can use a scanner and

appropriate software to digitize that image for use in Campground Master. You will probably want to scan it at a higher resolution for clarity, then use a good image editing software package to clean up, trim and resize the image as needed. Don't forget to save the image file in the correct format (see above).

Other image considerations

Try to avoid using an image with colors close to the site status colors (the bright yellow, green, red, etc.), to avoid confusion. The best map image would have a light (but not white) background, light colors for features like trees, buildings, etc., and black or dark colors for site borders. A white background is actually not recommended since the default "available" site status is white -- if the background is white, it's not as easy to notice available sites. However if a white background is all that's available, the status color for an available site could be changed to something else -- perhaps a very light blue color.

Whether the image already has site numbers on it, or whether the sites already have some shading or color indication of the type of site, may determine the kind of status indicators that are suitable -- conversely, you may decide to use an image with or without site numbers or shading based on the type of indicators you prefer to use. This is all very subjective, and Campground Master offers different indicator choices so that just about any type of map can be used. Most likely you will want to experiment with the different possibilities before setting up the entire map.

If you intend to use the "Fill" indicator type (nice for odd-shaped sites, but slower to display), there are a couple very important prerequisites -- the Fill indicator will flood-fill an area that is *exactly* the same color as the starting point of the fill indicator. This not only means that the boundaries of the site must be complete and in a different color than the interior (e.g. a complete rectangle), but it also means that a *solid* color must be used for the interior. If you are scanning an image from a hard copy, this is rarely the case due to minor color variations, and photo editing software may need to be used to clean up the image.

If your park is large, you will probably need to split the map up into separate map pages. The map page can be changed with the controls on the map display and with page up/down keys, but you can also put "hotspots" on the images to change maps with a mouse click -- this is especially handy for an overview map, where clicking on a section can switch to another map showing that section in detail (see below).

Element Types

There are two basic types of elements -- Site Indicators and Hotspots.

Site indicators are placed on the map to show the status of each site. This can be on top of a site on the map image, next to it, or anywhere you like, and can be any size needed. There are three types to choose from -- Rectangles, Circles, or Fills (which automatically become the shape of the object you place it in. You could even start with a blank map and just arrange the site indicators to create the layout of your park (of course it's nicer to show roads and landmarks as points of reference, but that's entirely up to you.) Site indicators are interactive in the Map View. Besides changing color to indicate the status of the site, they will show the occupant or site name when the mouse is over them, and also have double-click and right-click menu functions very similar to the Rack.

Hotspots are invisible on the map, but perform a function when the user clicks on that area -- in this case, it will switch to a specified map. Of course these are only useful if you have more than one map image. A hotspot can be any size, but can only be a rectangle. Hotspots are used to make "buttons" on a map that will change map pages. The actual buttons need to be part of the map image and you define the area of the button with a Change-Map Hotspot, so you can make the buttons look like anything you want. You can also set up one page to be an overview of the whole park, and set up "hotspots" such that when a section of the overview is clicked on, it switches to the zoomed-in map for that section with the actual site status indicators (and you can add "Overview" buttons on the zoomed-in sections to make it easy to get back to the overview).

Adding and Editing Map Elements

Once you have the map image loaded, you can add and edit the "elements" that will appear on the map. An element is basically an object that indicates the status of a site, or a clickable hotspot to change maps. You can place any number of elements on a map, and more than one element can indicate the same site if necessary, either on the same map or separate maps.

All of the Element functions are accessed through the right-click menu. When you right-click anywhere on the map image, a right-click menu will appear with appropriate choices -- either to edit/delete an existing element or to add a new element. Note that the exact point you click on will be used for placing site elements, so careful clicking will avoid having to edit the element later. Also note that the point you click on means something different for each type of indicator (described later).

When you're done adding elements (or want to check the map in the real tab view at any time), click Close on the Edit Map and Set Up Maps dialogs. All changes are saved automatically.

Adding Elements

To add an Element, you must right-click on an area of the map that doesn't already have an Element (they shouldn't overlap). Then select one of the "Add" options for a site indicator or other element.

An appropriate Add/Edit Element dialog will appear, where you can specify the details like which site the indicator should show, the size and position, and text if needed. (See the section below for details on this dialog.) Click Save, and you will immediately see the indicator appear on the map. While you're in this setup mode, the color of site indicators will be green, similar to the "site occupied" indicator, regardless of the current status of the site. (This color can be changed through the Maps Color Key.) Hotspot elements will simply be a black border (since they are normally invisible).

Double-click to add more of the same element

Once you have added one site indicator, you can use double-click as a shortcut to add more. Just double-click the left mouse button to add the same type of indicator as the previous one. The next site in the list will be selected automatically, and the size will be the same. So in many cases, all you have to do is click Save on the Add dialog and go on to the next one. The Save button is the default button on the Add dialog, so you could also just press the **Enter** key -- use two hands, one on the mouse and one on the Enter key, for quickly adding many sites.   Just be sure to start with the "first" site and go in the order they appear in the site selection list (which is the same order as on the Rack).

Note that other than for this convenience of adding many in a row, there is no need to add site indicator elements in any particular order.

Editing Elements

To edit an existing element, for instance to adjust the position of an element just added, right-click on the element and select "Edit Element". You can also double-click on an element to edit it. The same Add/Edit dialog will appear and you can change the X and Y values to adjust the position. You can also change the size or the text. (Click near the "center" of the element for the best results -- if you click near the edge, it may not know that you're trying to select that element.) If you're adjusting the position, keep in mind that the X and Y values are in pixels (screen dots), and 0,0 is in the upper left corner (rather than the lower left as in traditional math class graphs). So for instance you need to increase the Y value to move an element down.

Note that there is no way to change the element type, so for instance if you want to change from a circle to a rectangle then you must delete the circle element and add a new rectangle one.

Deleting Elements

As with editing, just right-click on an existing element and select Delete element. A confirmation prompt will be shown, which is the only chance to change your mind -- once an element is deleted, it cannot be recovered and would have to be added again if you make a mistake. Note that if you want to completely delete a map, there is no need to delete its elements first -- just use Delete Map from the Maps Setup Dialog.

X, Y Positions

An mentioned earlier, the "position" of an element means different things for each element:

- **Site Indicator Rectangle** -- the position is the upper left corner of the element.
- **Site Indicator Circle** -- the position is the center of the circle.
- **Site Indicator Fill** -- the position is the "start" position of the flood-fill operation, and also the center of an imaginary rectangle for detecting mouse clicks (the rectangle size is determined by the Height and Width values).
- **Hotspot** -- the position is the upper left corner of the element.

Since there is no drag-and-drop support for map editing, you must use the Edit function to change an element's position manually.

Element Borders

Rectangle and circle site indicators will have a border that can be a different color than the interior of the indicator. The colors are configured through the Color Key. If you choose to show text in the indicator, the text will also use the same color as the border (therefore if you want text to show up, the border will also have to be visible).

Fill indicators have no border (since the shape can be irregular), but they can have text.

Hotspot elements have no border since they are normally invisible, but will have a black border when editing so you can properly set its size and position over the image.

Element Text

Any of the site indicator elements can have text added to the indicator by the program. The text can be specified for each element -- you can default the text to the site's abbreviation for convenience when adding elements, but keep in mind that once the element is added the text won't change automatically if the site abbreviation is changed. Whether you use text on the elements is up to you -- obviously if the sites are already numbered on the map (and the indicator doesn't cover that number up), there is no reason to add the number on the indicator. Also, the site indicators may be too small on the map for the text to fit (since only one size of text can be used.), in which case the map graphic should include the site numbers.

If text is used, the text will be positioned in the center of the indicator. For rectangles and circles, the center is visually obvious. For fill elements, the center is determined by the position chosen for the element. In many cases this allows you to adjust the text position of a fill element for the best position within the area being filled. Also note that the text will be limited to the "size" of the element -- if the text is too large for the size, it will be cropped. For circle elements, the "size" assumes it's a square so the text can appear slightly outside the actual circle. For fill elements, the Height and Width of the element is used for the size of the text area.

Change-Map Hotspot Map Name

The target map name must be set for hotspot elements to change maps. Note that this must be the "Map name" you give a map, not its image file name. It must also match exactly, including case ("Map" is not the same as "map").   This also means that if you change the name of a map, any associated hotspots must also be changed.

Raw Data Tables

The raw data tables for the maps and map elements can be viewed and edited (see Maintenance / Raw Data Tables), but as always please use extreme care when doing this. The primary reason to use the raw data tables would be to make some adjustment to a large number of elements at once, such as slight adjustments to positions or sizes, or perhaps to change the text for all of them.

Add/Edit Site Indicator Dialog

This dialog is used when you Add or Edit a site indicator element from the Edit Map dialog. All of the details of an element can be entered or changed here, except for the element type and which map it appears on.

Default values when adding an element

The Site list is used to select which site this indicator will show status for. If you're adding a site, the "next" site will automatically be selected (the one after the previously added or edited element), making it easy to add multiple sites in a row.

The X and Y position coordinates will default to the position where you clicked the mouse button, but can be changed here if needed.

The Height and Width will default to the same values as the last element edited or added. (Height and Width will not be shown for Circle elements.)

The Diameter will only be shown for Circle elements, and will default to the same value as the last element edited or added.

The Text will be blank unless the Default to site abbreviation box was checked for the previous element, in which case it will default to the selected site's abbreviation (and will change if a different site is selected). Note however that once the element is added, the text won't automatically change if the site's actual abbreviation is changed.

Add/Edit Hotspot Dialog

This dialog is used when you Add or Edit a hotspot element from the Edit Map dialog. All of the details of a hotspot element can be entered or changed here, except for the element type and which map it appears on.

Default values when adding an element

The X and Y position coordinates will default to the position where you clicked the mouse button, but can be changed here if needed.

The Height and Width will default to the same values as the last element edited or added. These dictate the

area of the map that will be sensitive to the mouse click for the hotspot action.

The <u>Change to map named</u> field will be blank to begin with, and must be set to the map name you want to change to when the hotspot is clicked. This must be an exact match, case-sensitive.

<u>Schedules</u>

Schedules are used for intra-day reservations, for instance hourly rentals, tours, etc. There are several steps required to set up Campground Master to handle reservation "schedules", which are detailed below.

There are three rules you need to keep in mind when setting up schedules:
1. Never select the same Reservation Type for more than one Schedule. (But one schedule can be used for more than one reservation type.)
2. Make sure the "Base type" for any Reservation Types for schedules are set to "Hourly".
3. Make sure all sites of the same Site Type are in the same Schedule. (But one schedule can be used for more than one site type.)

Schedule Setup Procedure

First you need to enable some data fields (these are disabled by default to save database space, since most users don't need them).

<u>Enable the Period fields for Reservations:</u>
1. Go to Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Reservation Fields.
2. Change each of the 5 period fields from Disabled to Enabled ("Resv_First_Period" through "Resv_Charged_Thru_Period").

<u>Enable the Schedule field for Sites:</u>
1. Go to Maintenance / Data Field Definitions / Site Fields.
2. Change the "Site_Schedule" field from Disabled to Enabled.

<u>Set up one or more Reservation Types to use for scheduled reservations:</u>
1. Go to Maintenance / Pick Lists / Reservation Types.
2. Check "Allow editing of fields".
3. Click "New Record".
4. Enter the information for this reservation type. Example:

> Abbr: **Tour**
> Normal Text: **Tours**
> Base Type: **Hourly** (required)
> Enabled: **Yes**

5. Repeat for any other types needed, Close when finished.

<u>Add one or more Site Types for your scheduled sites.</u>
(While this isn't technically essential, it allows you to view schedule sites of this type on the Rack, by selecting that site type.)
1. Go to Maintenance / Pick Lists / Site Types.
2. Check "Allow editing of fields".
3. Click "New Record".
4. Enter appropriate site type info (the Normal Text field is the most important, as that will appear in the drop-down pick-lists).
5. Repeat for any other site types. Again, you can have more than one site type for a particular kind of schedule (e.g. you could have different tour types all using the same tour schedule, or you might have canoes, kayaks, etc. all on an hourly schedule), but set up at least one site type for each schedule.

Add one or more Schedule definitions:
1. Go to Maintenance / Park Setup / Schedules.
2. Click "New schedule definition".
3. Enter a name for it, which will primarily be used in a pick list so it should be fairly short. Example: "Wild tour"
4. Enter a Periods name, which will be used in various places where "days" or "nights" might be used such as rates definitions. For example, "Tours".
5. If most of the reservations for this kind of schedule last a certain length of time (periods) you can set a default # periods and block-to periods. Otherwise leave those fields blank.
6. Click "Resv Types" and select the type or types of reservations (as defined above) which can be used for this schedule.
7. For auto-rates, you can also specify extra periods to check. For instance if you have a 6-hour rate that's cheaper than 5 individual hours, you can set this to 2 or 3 so they're not charged too much for shorter reservations.
8. Add one or more Periods:
   a. Click Add New Period.
   b. Enter a Period name, which is used on the Rack, reports, etc. Keep it short!. Examples: 10AM, 8-10am, Eve., etc.
   c. Enter a Start time for this period. The primary use for this is so the New Reservation dialog can guess what the "current" period is.
   d. Optionally enter the # of minutes in the period. This is primarily for convenience, so it will automatically set the start time for the next period you enter.
   e. Optionally enter the "End text", which will be shown on receipts in place of a check-out time. Example: "Due back by 10PM", "through 2:59pm", etc.
   f. Repeat for any other periods in the day. Remember there's no need to cover all 24 hours, just the periods for which you need to make reservations.

Note: Schedule periods are assumed to never "overlap", just like days. In other words if you define an 8AM period and a 9AM period but enter 120 for their # minutes, the 120 minutes is essentially ignored. To make a 2-hour reservation on a schedule with periods each hour, and assuming that this is for a resource that must be returned before it can be used again (like a canoe), you would make the reservation for 2 periods (e.g. the 8AM and 9AM periods). On the other hand if you have a tour every 3 hours, where there is no problem with conflicts because it's not using a unique resource, then you would make the periods 3 hours apart.

Add the Sites for scheduled reservations:
1. Go to Maintenance / Park Setup / Sites
2. Click Add New
3. Enter the site details, and in particular be sure to select the appropriate Schedule form the drop-down list. Also be sure to select an appropriate Site Type.

At this point you should be able to see your schedules on the Rack -- just select the Site Type used for the scheduled sites, and those sites will be shown and the scheduled periods will show in addition to the dates in the column headers. There will be a column for each period defined in the schedule.

Rates for Scheduled Periods

Setting up rates for scheduled reservations is basically the same as for daily, weekly, or monthly rates.

There is one particular key to making a rate for scheduled periods -- in the drop-down for "Rate is per ___ (# of)", which normally shows Days, Weeks, Months and Years, you will see your schedule selections appear. The "Periods name" for each of your schedules will be added to the list. Once you select one of these new period names (e.g. "Tours"), then the rate is considered a scheduled-period rate instead of a daily rate.

In addition, you'll see a new field appear below the Discounts button/list, for Periods. This can be used to select which period or periods this rate applies to. Thus you can specify a different rate for each tour time, or different rates for morning vs. evening rentals, etc.

Likewise, instead of applying a rate to a range of days (Applies if >= ___ Days), it will apply to a range of periods (e.g. Applies if >= ___ Tours).

Auto-rates for periods work just like they do for daily rates. The only real difference is the setting for the number of extra Periods to check (which you specify for each schedule separately as mentioned above), instead of using the global setting for the number of extra Days to check.

Reminder -- All calculations for the number of periods is based on the list of periods you've defined, NOT on the number of hours or minutes. This includes rates calculations. For instance if you've defined hourly rates only for 8AM to 6PM, and someone rents for 6PM to 8AM the next day, then that's only 2 periods (the last period of the first day and the first period of the second day). This is where you might need to define a special rate for that 6PM period, to cover overnight rentals (or better yet, add a special "Overnight" period to the schedule to cover all of the time in between days).

Notice Messages, Confirmation Letter and Window Tag text

These setup dialogs allow you to edit the text used for certain sections of receipts. Each different type of receipt has different text that can be set up.

Ticket Form

The Notice text for the Ticket Form should remain approximately the same size as the default text, so it fits in the designated area of the receipt.

Reminder -- the Additional Notes section of the Ticket Form receipts is set up in the Parks Setup for each park record (so each park's receipts can have a different set of notes).

Invoices, Receipts, and Statements

These can have any amount of Notice text at the bottom, in addition to a guest signature after the notice. The amount of space allocated for the notice is also selected, so it can start any number of inches above the bottom (this can also be a decimal number, like 2.5).

Confirmation Letter

The Confirmation letter 'Above Transactions' text may be just about any length (allowing space for transactions, etc. below it of course). You can also add line breaks, blank lines, etc. using the Enter key just like typing a letter. The Notice text is set up similar to the text for Invoices, etc., with an optional signature line. You can also set the font size for the bottom text, so it can be made to blend in with the top portion better if you wish.

There is also an option to show only the deposit paid and balance due on the confirmation letters. This is useful if you want to show a lot of text, since it takes much less room than the full transactions table. It may also be considered a "neater" format. In addition, when using this option you can show how many adults and children the rate is based on (since the transactions detail information is not shown, this might be important).

Window Tag

The Window Tag bottom text can be as large as needed, with the limitation being the size of half of the page. Unlike other receipts, you don't specify a starting position -- it always starts slightly below half the page height (e.g. it assumes you will fold the page in half for use as a window tag). If you don't need text on the bottom of the window tag, just clear out the entire edit box

3" Receipt Printer bottom text

The bottom text for this can be any length needed, and simply starts 1 line below the end of the receipt. All text will be centered, and is generally limited to 40 characters per line, but will automatically wrap around. Note that you might need to add additional blank lines below the text so that the paper scrolls out enough to tear off the receipt. You can force a new line or insert blank lines as needed using the **Enter** key.

If you want to send special control codes to your printer, for instance to activate the paper cutter, you can add those here. (This usually only works if you're using the Direct to Port printing option and not going through a driver, depending on your printer.) To send special codes, enter them as hexadecimal values preceded by "**\X**" -- like **\X07** to send the ASCII "BEL" character. Be sure to use the backslash character (\ ), not the forward slash (/).

Credit Card Slip bottom text

The bottom text for this can be any length needed, and simply starts 1 line below the signature line. Formatting is the same as for the 3" receipt printer bottom text.

Pick Lists

Pick Lists are the tables of values used to make data entry quicker. In addition, they are useful in limiting possible values for certain fields so that data integrity is assured, and so that meaningful categorized reports can be generated. The pick lists for site attributes also help categorize sites to make site selection easier.

A new database is initialized with populated pick lists that serve as a guide. While some of the entries may be useful, you will likely want to remove and change some, and add some of your own. This is done easily with the dialogs. A pick list may be any length, but use discretion when filling them -- long lists are more difficult to choose from, and can cause problems displaying the list in a drop-down box if your screen is too small.

The order of the items in each pick list is important -- this is the order in which they will always appear in the drop-down lists or other selection lists. Besides making the order logical to the operator, you will want to pay attention to the first letters of the items, because those can be used to quickly select the items. You can try to make each first letter unique, but if that results in confusing names then the next best would be to put the most-used items toward the top. Or instance, if you have "Tent" and "Trailer" in the Rig Types list in that order, pressing **T** will select Tent, and pressing **T** again will select Trailer. If you use Trailer much more that Tent, you might want to switch the order so that Trailer comes up first. (Or in this case you can just remember that **TT** means Travel Trailer, a convenient coincidence since TT is often an abbreviation for Travel Trailer.)

Note: If you already use QuickBooks and plan to export transactions to QuickBooks, you may want to base your setup of Transaction Categories and Payment Methods according to your QuickBooks accounts, to make the transactions in Campground Master map easily to your existing accounting system.

Changing Pick Lists

You can add pick list items any time you like. So if you add cabins to your campground, you can easily add a Site Class and/or Site Type for cabins. You can even insert it into the list anywhere you like, since the order of the lists don't matter to the database -- it won't cause problems with existing records. The Index field is the important part (that's how the pick list items are referenced), and you will see that when you move pick list items around in the list, their Index stays with them. When you add or insert a new item, a new unique Index will be generated for it automatically.

IMPORTANT! Once the pick-list is in use you should **never** change the names of pick list items to something that has a different meaning, and you should never delete a pick-list item that might be in use. (Note that when a pick list item is deleted, its Index is discarded and cannot be re-used, so there is no way to get it back short of restoring the database from a backup!) Of course if you're **sure** that an item has never been used in a database record, then it would be safe to delete or change it. If you stop having a need for one of the items (for instance if you no longer accept one of the payment types), the best thing to do is to just move it to the bottom of the list. It will still be available for reporting, but will be out of the way.

On the other hand, you are free to change the text for any pick list item. As long as it still represents the same thing, it won't cause any harm. The new name will be shown in any existing records that used the pick list item automatically (because the Index field is unchanged), so feel free to make changes like "highway sign" to "road sign" or "billboard". But don't make changes like "Visa" to "Discover" -- use the Move Up and Move Down functions instead, if you just need to change their position.

Pick List Dialog Functions

Each of the Pick List editing dialogs consists of a grid with the pick list table and some controls at the top. The controls are detailed below.

<u>**Warning!**</u> -- All changes made in this dialog are permanent and immediate, there is no way to cancel them!

> **Allow Editing of Fields** -- This is simply a safeguard against accidental changes. By default, all of the dialog's controls except <u>Print</u> and <u>Close</u> will be disabled, but you can look around the table. If you plan to make changes, check this box so that the controls are enabled and you can make changes in the grid. Note: leading and trailing blank spaces will be automatically trimmed from all entries after editing.

> **New Record** -- This will add a new pick list item to the bottom of the list and move the cursor to it, ready for typing.

> **Insert Record** -- This is used to insert a new item in the list somewhere other than the bottom. First click on the item in the grid that you want the new item to be **in front of**. Click Insert, and a new pick list item will be added at that point, moving the others down.

> **Move Up** and **Move Down** -- Use these to move items in the list to new positions. Just click on the item to move, then click the Move Up or Move Down button.

> **Print List** -- This will print the pick list grid. It uses all of the same print options as used for the other grids (tab views, etc.).

> **Delete Selected Record(s)** -- This will delete (permanently!) any of the items selected in the grid. Just select one of more items (using **Shift**-Click to select a range or **Ctrl**-click to select multiple items), and click the Delete button.

> **Close** -- closes the dialog. Since all changes were already made immediately, there is no Cancel option.

The Grid -- This is the list of pick list records (items). If editing is enabled, you can edit any text (except the Index field) by clicking on the cell and typing (which will replace the existing text with what you type), or by double-clicking on the cell to enter edit mode (where you can edit the text without deleting it). Note that while you are in a cell, you can abort the changes by pressing the Esc key. Once you leave the cell, however, the changes are permanent. Any cells that have been changed will be shown with a light yellow background.

You may notice that the grid can't be sorted by a column the way most other grids can. This is because the order of the items is important, and sorting (even temporarily) could cause confusion when adding items to the list.

Pick List Fields

Index -- This is the software-generated unique identifier for an item. It cannot be edited.

Abbr. (4) -- This is a short version of an item name (4 characters recommended). It's used in a few places where space is short, such as the Requests column on the Arrivals tab and the Type column for sites on the Rack.

Normal Text -- This is the text normally displayed in drop-down lists and the fields on dialogs and reports. It should be limited to about 10 or 12 characters so that it fits in the drop-down lists without being truncated.

Long (40 characters) -- This can be a longer version of the text, but is not currently used by the software.

Description (80 characters) -- This can be a long description, but is not currently used by the software.

Base Type -- This is used in the Reservation Types and Payment Methods pick lists only. See below for details.

Enabled -- This is used in the Reservation Types pick list only. See below for details.

Ref Needed, Qty Needed, Fixed Each, and Each -- These are used in the Payment Methods pick lists only. See below for details.

Rig Types Pick List

This is used for the customer's Rig Type field. You can define them to be generic (RV, tent, boat), or you can be more specific (Fifth wheel, class A, diesel, etc.). It all depends on how specific you want your records to be or what information is helpful to you for making reservations. You may want to include a "none" value to be used for guests or if you have cabins, etc. where there is no rig needed. Future software versions may support rig type categorization or filtering for reports, so keep that in mind as well.

Site Types Pick List

This is the most important of the site attributes, since it's used on nearly every report for filtering sites and is also used as the basic criteria for selecting appropriate sites. The design of this list can vary greatly for different campgrounds. Selections can be as generic or specific as you like, but keep in mind that the longer the list is, the more awkward it will be to use. Design a list that will be useful for filtering and provide useful reporting categories, and that would work well in the tab views where you can select only one site type.

Remember that there are a number of site attributes than can be used to narrow down a search, so you don't need to have separate Site Types for every combination of 30A/50A, pull-through, sewer, pad type, etc. On the other hand, if all of your sites are basically the same except that some are pull-through and some are not, and perhaps some of the non-pull-through sites have only 30A, then that's only 3 different combinations and would be very manageable as 3 Site Type selections. But if you have more than 5 combinations of site features, then it may not make sense to use each combination as a different Site Type.

Site Class Pick List

Site Class is a site attribute that can be used for selecting a site (in a reservation's site preferences). It's intended to be a fairly generic selection of the type of accommodation needed, such as an RV site, tent, cabin, boat, pavilion, etc. The Site Type attribute would be used for more specific selection, so Site Class can be used when the site type is not critical. Just define site classes for the types of accommodations or other rentals you will be defining sites for.

Pad Types Pick List

This is a site attribute that can be used for selecting a site (in a reservation's site preferences). Pad Type selections would typically refer to the type of material that an RV parking space uses, such as grass, gravel, concrete, etc. Pad types usually refer to RV sites, but you could also include useful selections for cabins (bed type?) or other types if needed.

Site Facing Pick List

This is a site attribute that can be used when making a reservation (site preferences), if the customer has a preference for which way a site faces. It is initialized with common directions (North, West, Southeast, etc.), but it could be used it for something more descriptive, replacing the directions with something like "Lakefront", "Pool", "Golf", and "Playground". (There are other attribute fields in the Site table that could handle this as well, but if direction is not a concern then this may be a better way to handle other attributes.)

Discounts Pick List

This list is used for the Discount-Used field of charge-type transactions, to indicate what discount was used in the calculations (and of course for the Discount transactions themselves). Just include an entry for each type of club discount you accept, plus anything else applicable like Seniors, Students, and perhaps one for Other (you never know when you might give a discount just because the poor guy looks like he's had a bad day).

Payment Methods Pick List

This list is used for the pay method in any payment-type transactions. Simply include the different types of payment that you accept, to the extent that they are useful for reporting or keeping track of how a bill was paid. You can include anything from credit cards to green stamps if it helps. It's usually a good idea to include the different types of credit cards (Visa, Discover, etc.) rather than one "credit card" field, for the sake of reporting. If you take multiple currencies, you might even want to distinguish between U.S. and Canadian cash, for instance.

In addition to the name and description fields, there are 4 special fields that should be set according to the payment type. The Base Type field, Ref Needed field, Qty Needed field, and Fixed Each field help determine what additional information is needed for each payment method when entering the payments. For instance, if "Credit Card" is selected for the Base Type, then the credit card entry fields will be enabled. If Qty Needed is set to "Yes", then the Qty field will be enabled. This is useful for coupons or other payments

that have specific values. In addition, you can set the Fixed Each field and specify an Each value for the payment method, in which case only a Qty is needed when entering the payments. This is useful for membership coupons with fixed values, for instance.

How Heard Pick List

This list is used in the reservation records, and is simply to indicate how the customer heard about the campground, or if they are returning customer. It's used primarily for tracking advertising results, in the How Heard Report.   This list can get fairly long if you include every possibility, but if that's the information you need then you should let it be long and specific. If you don't do any advertising and only want to know whether they are a return visitor or not, you can use it for that too.

One unique feature of this list is that there should *always* be an item with "Return visit" as its Name text. It doesn't matter where it is in the list or even what Index it has, it just needs to have that exact text (without the quotes of course). This will allow the "Return Visit" item to be selected automatically for a reservation when you select an existing customer from the customer database.   It won't break anything if you don't have that selection, but you would lose that bit of automation -- the How-heard field would just need to be selected manually.

Transaction Categories Pick List

This list is used for the Category field of most transactions. It should include various categories for the types of charges, plus any categories you need for Expense and Misc. Income. You may want to keep these from overlapping each other or the charges categories, so they can all appear as separate ledger categories.

Note that there are some hidden transaction categories with "Reserved" names, matching each of the internal transaction types (Discount, Payment, Refund, etc.). These won't be shown, but if you try to add a type with the same name then you will get an error message.

Estimated Arrival Times (ETA) Pick List

This list is for easy selection of an arrival time for reservations. Unlike other pick list selections, the ETA is actually a free-form entry field. The list defined here is just "suggested" values, allowing selection with the mouse instead of typing it. This list can contain whatever needed, including generic entries like "Early", "Late", or "Unknown". The default selection (when making a new reservation) is defined in the Program Options.

Reservation Types Pick List

Each reservation must have a Reservation Type, which is selected when making the reservation. Originally these types were fixed, but now you can rename them and add additional types as needed. This is a very special list, because each type must be associated with a Base Type. The Base Type is used by the program in various places so it knows how to handle each reservation type, and how it will be color-coded on the Rack and other views. For instance, Monthly types are handled differently for auto-rate calculation and monthly billing, Guest types are only used for adding people to an existing reservation, etc. For a detailed explanation of the different types, see Working with Reservations.

By default, this list has one type defined for each Base Type. If you don't need a type, you can delete it from the list or set the "Enabled" field to "No" to disable it. If it's disabled, it won't show in the drop-down selection lists for new reservations. However it will still appear in filtering lists and reports. If you've ever used the reservation type, or plan to use it in the future, you should not delete it -- just disable it. However if you have never made reservations for a particular type, it's safe to delete it.

While base types can be useful for rates selection and reporting, be careful in defining too many types. For instance, you could define a Daily and a Weekly type to help with rates selection. However this could cause confusion if the person stayed longer than expected (say 8 days instead of 5). While you can change types later, it adds an extra step to remember. A more appropriate use for additional types might be to add a "Seasonal" type that acts like Monthly but has a different rate schedule. Or perhaps adding a "Drive-through" type that's similar to a Day Pass but has a different rate charge.

Inventory Item Classes Pick List

This pick list is only present if the P.O.S. option is enabled. See the P.O.S. Setup section for details.

Define Data Fields

The Campground Master database allows flexibility in what information is stored, both for future expansion and to minimize the amount of "useless" information presented. The Define Data Fields section of the Maintenance menu allows many of the pre-defined data fields to be disabled or enabled to fit the customer's needs. Some of them can also be redefined for further customization (particularly the Attribute fields for site attribute/preferences).

Obviously this is dangerous and should only be attempted by software experts. An Administrator access level is required to access these lists. The information below is presented for reference, but no changes should be attempted without consulting with Cottonwood Software first.

Each of the Data Fields dialogs looks the same. They are simply grids with buttons for Print List and Close. Unlike the Raw Data Table and Pick List dialogs, there is no "Allow Editing" safeguard -- all changes are immediate!

Each data field definition consists of the following elements (treated like fields in a record or pick list):

> **Field ID** -- This is not editable, and is the way the field is identified internally to the software.
> **Status** -- This is either "Fixed", "Enabled", or "Disabled" (see below).
> **Abbr.** -- A 4-character abbreviation for the field, for when a short header is needed.
> **Normal Header** -- The name of the field as usually seen in the program, such as for column headers.
> **Long Name** -- A longer name for the field, only used for Attribute fields.
> **Description** -- A longer description for the field, not currently used.

The main item of interest is the Status. If it's "Fixed", that means the field is enabled permanently and cannot be changed. Many fields are set this way by default because the program logic depends on them. If the status is "Enabled", then the field will be visible and usable by the software, and if it's "Disabled" then the field will be ignored by the software. A disabled field will not show up on the Raw Data Table dialogs or on data entry dialogs.

You may want to disable fields that you're not interested in. In most cases, disabling a field will remove its field from dialogs (resulting in less clutter and faster data entry). In a few cases, it will affect the logic of the program. There may be cases where the affects are unpredictable and potentially even cause the program to abort, which is why these should not be changed without the proper expertise.

Fields that are safe to disable include most of the attribute fields (but not the Site Type), customer discount fields (Good Sam, etc.), the vehicle information in customer records, and the number of adults, children, etc. in customers and reservations. You can also disable the reservation flags for Guaranteed, Confirmed, Don't Move, and the Estimated Arrival Time.

Some fields are Disabled by default. This is because some fields are not needed by most campgrounds but can be enabled if needed. This includes many of the less common attribute fields, some features like metered water, etc. You can change the status to Enabled if you need them.

One Final Warning -- all changes to the data field tables are instant and permanent! It is easy to undo status changes between enabled to disabled, but avoid using Fixed status and be careful about changing field text!

P.O.S. Note: If the P.O.S. option is enabled, then there will be additional field for the inventory and vendor records, etc. See the P.O.S. Setup section for details on those.

Defining Attribute Fields

This is one area of field definition where it is safe and encouraged to set them up to meet your campground's needs. But there are several rules to follow.

The most important rule is that this applies only to fields that have a Field ID starting with **Attrib_**. These fields are recognized by the software to be attribute fields, and will show up in both the Site Preferences list from New Reservation dialogs and the Site Attributes list from the Site Setup dialog. The same Field ID's are used in both the Sites table and the Reservations table, although the reservation fields would more appropriately be called "preferences" rather than "Attributes".

The next rule is to make sure that the Attribute fields in the Site data fields table matches the Attribute fields in the Reservation data fields table. This means that the same ones must be enabled in each table, and that they should have compatible names (the Normal Header text). We say "compatible" names because they don't have to be exactly the same text, but should make sense as an attribute/preference pair. For instance, you may have a site attribute of "Has Patio" and a corresponding reservation attribute (i.e. preference) of "Needs Patio".

Now that you know the rules, here's what you can do. You can disable any of the attributes that don't apply to your campground, to shorten the list of options for the operator to choose from. You can also change the text for any of them to make them more applicable, within reason. You should *not* change the Site Type field or Site Class field. Also be aware that if you change the ones that appear in the dialogs separately, like the Site Facing, Pad Width, etc. that appear on the Site Setup dialog, the dialog text for the field name will not change, so it could be confusing. The names and text definitions of the others can be changed as needed.

The **Abbr.** text is used in the Requests column of the tab views.
The **Normal Header** text is used in the Preferences and Attributes dialogs when selecting them.
The **Long Name** text is be used in the Quick Info windows for the site and reservation.
The **Description** is not currently used, so you can put notes there.

What you *can't* do is change any of the field types. Therefore you should know the field type before changing what it's used for. There are several fields of each type (size fields, yes/no fields, and ratings fields) so that you should be able to find enough to suit your needs. You could even modify the pick-list fields normally used for Site Facing and Pad Type if you need different pick-list attributes, such as "bed type" instead of pad type.

Customizable Reservation and Customer Fields

Some of the customer and reservation fields can be renamed if needed for special data entry. The new name should be put in the "Normal Header" column, and the new name will be used wherever that field appears on data entry dialogs, report headers, and receipts.

Note that the functionality of the fields does not change, so the customizability is somewhat limited. For instance, a Phone number field will still act like a phone number (e.g. for searching, formatting, sorting, etc.), but you can make changes like renaming "Phone 2" to "Cell Phone". Likewise, the "# Adults" field will still be a numeric field and still gets auto-copied from customer records to reservation records, but you may prefer to rename it to "# Over 18", or you could use it for another purpose like "Meals per day".

The following customer fields can be renamed: Cust_Phone_1, Cust_Phone_2, Cust_Phone_3, Cust_Adults, Cust_Children, Cust_Pets, Cust_Pets_Desc, Cust_Vehicles, Cust_Trailers, Cust_Emergency, Cust_Rigtype, Cust_Rig_Length, Cust_Rig_Model, Cust_Rig_Color, Cust_Rig_License, all of the Cust_Car_Model/Color/License fields, and Cust_Drivers_License.

The following reservation fields can be renamed: Resv_Adult, Resv_Children, Resv_Pets, Resv_Vehicles, Resv_Trailers, Resv_First_Date, Resv_First_Night.

Since some of the fields are auto-copied between customer and reservation (e.g. Resv_Adult and Cust_Adults), the corresponding fields should both be renamed accordingly.

Shift Functionality

If you need to enable the functionality for Shift reporting (for instance if you have 2 or 3 shifts per day and need reporting based on shifts, rather than days), then you need to enable two specific fields.

- In the <u>Parks</u> field definitions, enable the **Park_Shift** field.

- In the <u>Transactions</u> field definitions, enable the **Tran_Shift** field.

With these enabled, the Shift Change and Shift Report functions will be available on the Maintenance menu, and the Shift filtering and summarizing options will be present in the Transaction tab view filter and options.

Receipt # Field

There is a receipt/invoice number field in the Transactions table, which is set according to the formatting specification in Program Options. This can also be printed on receipts, and is especially useful for point-of-sale receipts. By default, this field (**Tran_Invoice)** has "Receipt #" for the Normal Header. However you can change this to anything you want (like "Invoice #", "Reference", etc.), and the text will be changed accordingly anywhere it appears in the program.

Program Options

Overview

These settings, found under the <u>Maintenance</u> menu, allow customization of may aspects of the program. These settings are stored in the database so the functionality will be consistent wherever the database is used. If you're using the networking version, these options are global -- all workstations will use the same options, and changes are automatically made on every workstation.

Manager access is required to view or change these options.

P.O.S. Note: If the P.O.S. option is enabled, then there will be an additional tab on this dialog. See the P.O.S. Setup section for details on those settings.

Format Options

Confirmation # Format -- This selection allows you to specify how the confirmation number is created from the reservation record ID. You can change this any time, but it will not affect reservations made previously -- it will only affect new reservations. The format is entered as text with a number of optional "tags" that will be replaced accordingly. Any text that is not recognized as a tag will be included verbatim. The default and most common format simply includes the internal reservation record ID and the workstation ID. Each tag can also specify a minimum number of digits and whether it's padded with 0's. Specifications and examples appear below. Note that upper/lower case does matter, since some tags have a different meaning depending on the case.

Tag	Meaning
<W>	Workstation ID (will always be 0 if networking not used)
<R>	Reservation Record ID, excluding workstation prefix
<WR>	Complete Reservation Record ID, with workstation ID prefix
<S>	Shift number (e.g. if Shifts are enabled)
<M>	Month (current date)
<D>	Day
<Y>	Year
<J>	Julian date (day of the year)
<H>	Hour, in 24-hour format (00 to 23)
<h>	Hour, in 12-hour format (01 to 12)
<m>	Minutes
<s>	Seconds
<a>	AM/PM (or A/P if only one digit specified like <a:1>)

Modifiers:

:digits	Minimum number of digits, e.g. <W:2>
:#digits	Maximum number of digits (truncate the left-most digits if necessary), e.g. <R:#3>
	To truncate the right-most digits, use **:#-digits**, like <Y:#-2>
:0digits	Fill any extra characters with 0's instead of spaces, put a 0 before the number of digits
:-digits	Left-justify the tag contents, include a minus sign (-) after the colon (or after #, if used).
	Note that 0-filling cannot be done if left-justified is also specified

Examples:

Format:	Result:	
R<W><R>	R1345	Workstation 1, record 345 (record ID actually #0100000345)
R<W><R:5>	R1 345	Same as above, 5 digits minimum (note the spaces)
R<W><R:05>	R100345	Same as above, with 0-padding specified
R<WR>	R100000345	Save as above, but the complete raw record ID is used
<Y>D<J>R<R>	2004D40R345	Feb 9th, 2004 (Julian day 40), record ID 345
<Y:#2>D<J>R<R>	04D40R345	Same as above, but 2 digit year specified

Note -- It's important that you make sure that each reservation has a unique confirmation number. For instance, don't just rely on the <R> tag if you have multiple workstations, since each workstation could potentially have the same workstation-stripped record ID (the <R> tag excludes the workstation portion of the complete record ID). Use <WR> or a combination of <W> and <R>. Potentially you could use a date and time combination, but even this has potential for duplicates if multiple workstations are present.

Receipt # format -- This is used for the Receipt # field for each transaction, and follows the same formatting rules as the Confirmation # except that the Transaction record ID is used instead of the Reservation record ID.

Date Format -- There are several date formats to choose from, which will be used most places that a date appears on a report or printed receipt. Selections include several variations of both m/d/y and d/m/y formats, with or without the weekday. Note that the computer's regional settings (for instance U.S. or Canada) will automatically affect the date-picker controls, but will not affect this setting. This setting must be changed manually.

Currency Symbol -- You can enter the currency prefix symbol here, if '$' isn't appropriate. It can be up to 3 characters, so you can use US$, CD$, etc. if necessary (but be aware that these do make prices look more cluttered, especially on receipts.)

Show "Prov" and "P.Code" instead of "State" and "Zip" -- For users outside the United States, check this option to use the Province and Postal Code everywhere in the program that State and Zip code would otherwise appear.

Show discounts, payments, and other credits as negative in the "Total" column of transactions -- Check this to see a more "natural-looking" credit in the Totals column, e.g. to show a payment as a negative number (subtracting from the charges) instead of showing everything as a positive number.

Automatically format customer information to mixed-case (e.g. "smith" becomes "Smith") -- Check this option to let Campground Master auto-capitalize name and address field entries. It will generally capitalize the first letter of each word, but it knows a few common exceptions to the rule (e.g. McDonald, PO Box, etc.). The text won't be capitalized as you type, but will auto-format when it's saved.

Tabbed list view options (Arrivals, Departures, etc.) -- These options affect the appearance of several of the tab views -- Arrivals, Departures, On Site, Unassigned, Non-Reserved, and Payments Due.

Show a "Total" row -- This enables the extra row at the bottom of the view, showing the total number of entries (reservations, transactions, etc), plus totals for any appropriate columns such as number of adults, extra vehicles, or balance due.

Show reservations not assigned to a site even if a Site Type is selected -- Used for the views that have a Site Type selection (all except the Unassigned and Non-Reserved views). When this is not enabled, the list will show only entries for the specified site type selected in the drop-down list (unless of course All Site Types is selected). When this is enabled, it will show entries for the selected site type plus those for any with unassigned sites. Use this option if you prefer to think in terms of "it might end up as any type, so show it with all types". For example, if you want to show all Arrivals that "are" or "might be" for the selected site type.

Show grid lines by default (must restart to take effect) -- This is the default, so all grid views show the grid lines. If you prefer not to see lines in the grids for a cleaner look, then you can turn this option off. It will not immediately turn grid lines on or off, but will take effect the next time the program is started. You can manually turn off the grid lines on each grid (except the Rack view) using the **Grid Lines** option on the right-click context menu.

Function Options

Customer toolbar icon invokes "Find Customer" instead of "Add New Customer" -- If you find that you often use the Find function after clicking the toolbar to add a new customer (a good practice to avoid duplicates), you can set this option so the Find Customer dialog opens immediately. If the customer is not found, clicking "Cancel / Add New" on the Find dialog will take you back to Add New Customer so it can be added.

"Find Customer" defaults to showing all customers when not starting with a partial name -- If your customer database is small, you may decide that it's easier to just scroll through the complete list of customers rather than having to enter a name first. You can enable this option so that the Find Customer list starts with all customers instead of being blank -- but be aware that this could be slow if your database is large. Only the most important fields are shown initially to make it faster (name, city, state, and notes), but after making any filter changes the fields shown will change according to the filter type. For instance if you do want to see all of the fields for all customers then you can check and then uncheck the Filter By box to refresh the list.

Cash-register toolbar icon invokes "Unbound Transactions" instead of general Transactions -- This is enabled by default so that the cash register icon is just used for counter sales, like a point-of-sale system. If you don't do counter sales, then disable this option. You can then either have it go directly to Reservation Transactions (see below), or to the generic Add a New Transaction dialog (which lets you first search for a customer or reservation).

P.O.S. Note: If the P.O.S. option is enabled, then this setting will show "Point of Sale" instead of "Unbound Transactions". The Point of Sale dialog will be used instead of Unbound Transactions.

Cash-register toolbar icon invokes "Reservation Transactions" -- If you often need to enter transactions for reservations, enable this option so the cash register first opens the Find Reservation dialog, and then opens the New Transaction dialog for the selected reservation. The "Unbound Transaction" option above must be disabled before this option can be selected.

Include a "Print Window Tag" button on the Transactions dialog -- This option adds a button to Transactions so that a window tag can be printed in a single click, rather than selecting it from the drop-down list each time.

Show a "Change Due" message when printing new receipts and change is due -- Enable this to show a pop-up message showing how much change is due. This is shown immediately after the receipt is printed, so you can be making change while the receipt prints. Note that it will only be shown if "new" payment or deposit transactions are made with an amount tendered entered.

Automatically set Paid-Thru date when a reservation is paid in full (skip the warning prompt) -- This saves the step of setting paid-through whenever a reservation is paid in full, on the Transactions dialog. If this option is not selected, a warning prompt will be shown if it appears that the paid-thru date should be set.

Automatically Guarantee a reservation when a deposit is made (or transferred in) -- with this option set, a reservation will be changed from Pending (or Confirmed) to Guaranteed status automatically if a Deposit is added to a reservation, or if a deposit is transferred into the reservation. This simply saves a couple steps, so you can go straight to the Transactions and enter the deposit instead of using the Guarantee function or checking the Guaranteed box on the Reservation Details.

Don't allow a reservation to be checked out if it has a balance -- While the Transaction dialog will always open when checking out a reservation with a balance, this option enforces the rule so that if the reservation isn't paid in full, then it can't be changed to checked-out status.

Don't allow reservations to be made without a site assigned -- If you don't use the unassigned

reservations functionality at all, then select this option to make sure no reservations are made without a site assignment. (If this option is not selected, there is still the option in the Prompts Options section to show a warning if no site is assigned.)

"Show Available Only" shows open & available sites plus... -- The options in this box allow you to fine-tune what is defined as "available" for the purpose of the "Available Only" check box on the Rack View, as described below…

> **Off-season and special dates unavailable** -- Set this option if you want to consider sites available even if the site's "season dates" or "special unavailable dates" indicate that it shouldn't be available. This might be useful if you have sites that aren't normally used off-season, but you would use if necessary for an extra-large crowd.

> **Blocked reservation dates** -- Set this option to include sites even if the dates are blocked by an existing reservation. Since the purpose of reservation "blocking" is to indicate that the customer might stay longer than his initial reservation but isn't sure, this would let you know that a site might be available if the customer does decide to leave. If that's the only "available" site for a new reservation, you could then ask the current customer to make a decision so you can book the new customer if possible.

> **Un-Confirmed reservations** -- Set this option to show sites with pending reservations as still available unless the reservation is "Confirmed". This is useful if you have a strict confirmation policy, so that you can cancel an unconfirmed reservation if a new customer needs the site and the confirmation is overdue.

> **Un-Guaranteed reservations** -- Similar to Un-Confirmed above, set this to show sites as still being available as long as the customer has not "Guaranteed" a reservation (for instance with a credit card).

Prompt Options

Warn when no site is selected for a new reservation -- When this is set, the user will be warned when making a New Reservation and a site has not been selected. If you commonly make reservations without assigning a site until they arrive, then you may want to turn off this prompt. Note that this option is irrelevant if the unassigned reservations are not allowed (see the Functions Options section).

Warn when a reservation is made on an "unavailable" date for a site -- Normally, the program will show a warning prompt if a reservation is made that covers a date that is marked as unavailable for the site. You can disable this warning if your reservations commonly cover unavailable dates. One example of this would be making a full month reservation for a site that's normally only available weekends, to avoid making 4 separate weekend reservations.

Warn when checking in on a site where the previous reservation is not checked out -- If you need to be strict about using the check-out process in Campground Master, for instance in a motel type of situation, then select this option. When a Check In is attempted, it will check the previous reservation on the same site (no matter how far back it was supposed to be checked out). If it hasn't been checked out yet, then a warning will be shown along with the option to abort the check-in. If desired, you can also set an Access Level for which checking out the previous reservation is required, in which case it will show an error instead of just a warning, and will not allow the check-in.

Ask for confirmations for simple reservation changes and actions -- If you're sure-fingered enough to not require prompts for every right-click action on the Rack, etc., then you can turn off these prompts to save time.

Ask if staying the same number of nights when the start date is changed on the Rack -- This prompt is enabled by default, and will appear any time the start date (First Night) is changed as a result of an action on the Rack. This will apply to changing the start date directly with the Advance Next Reservation and This is New Start Date functions, but can also be as a result of a Check In function if the reservation does not already start today. The prompt will ask if the customer is still staying the same number of nights, and if answered "Yes", it adjusts the ending reservation date automatically. If this is usually the case, it will save the added step of adjusting the end date manually. If this is not often the case, you may choose to disable this prompt.

Open a Transaction dialog when... -- This selection allows you to specify the circumstances in which you want the New Transactions dialog to automatically appear. Your choices here will probably depend on whether you enter charges before a reservation is checked in, and whether you prefer to review charges any time a change is made. Most of these options are self-explanatory, so they won't be detailed here.

One option of special mention is the **... and automatically go to "Select Rates"** option for checking in. When enabled, this will typically save one additional step when checking in reservations by immediately prompting for the rate selection. If you don't normally use Select Rates when checking in a reservation (for instance if you add the charges ahead of time), then you may disable this option.

Prompt for details when entering transactions (instead of entering them in the grid) -- This option enables a whole set of transaction-entry dialogs. The "old" method was to enter transaction details (qty, description, amount, etc.) directly in the transaction grid. These new entry dialogs are more user-friendly and allow entry of more details. However they do typically require an extra click or key press. If you just prefer the old way of entering the details in the grid, you can disable these new dialogs.

Include a Pay Method selection list on Transactions dialog -- Enable this to include a drop-down payment method selection on Transactions (this is redundant if the Prompt for Details option above is selected.)

Warn that transactions should go on the master -- For linked reservations, transactions should almost always be entered on the "linked transaction master" reservation. When this option is not checked, then they will always be placed there automatically. If you check this option, you will be able to put transactions on other linked reservations, but it will warn you each time. Also note that if this option is not checked, then the "handle synchronized reservations separately" options in Monthly Billing and the Meter List reports will not be available.

Reservation Options

Quick-select preferences/add-ons -- You can select up to 5 "Attribute" fields to show as checkboxes on the New Reservation dialog. This enables quick selection of add-ons, particularly useful for features that have added charges (Add-On rates). If less then 5 are selected, you should use the top-most entries, rather than leaving blanks in between selections.

Default ETA -- You can select one of the selections from the Estimated Arrival Times pick-list as the default for new reservations, or you can select the blank entry if you want it blank by default.

Default type -- If most of your reservations will be a type other than Normal, you can set the default reservation type here.

Default starting date -- This affects the Rack, Map, and New Reservations. Normally you would leave this as some past date, and make sure the next option, to ignore the default date, is checked. However if you're making reservations for the next season, then you can set this to your season starting date to save time scrolling the Rack each time.

Ignore default start date once it's in the past -- Normally you would leave this checked, however if you are

trying to work on past reservations then you can set the default start date to a past date and uncheck this, so the rack starts in the past.

Default # days for new reservations -- If your typical reservation is for a specific number of days, for instance if you primarily rent 3-day weekend packages, then you can change this value. Any reservations started fresh, e.g. by double-clicking the Rack or Map, or from the New Reservation icon or menu function, will default to this number of days (nights). Note that this will be ignored in the special case of setting a date range on the Rack with Available only checked (see the option below).

Automatically Find Customer after Last Name is entered on New Reservations -- This enables a quick-find function when entering the customer name when making New Reservations. A small version of the Find Customer dialog will open automatically after the Last Name is entered, allowing quick selection of a previous customer. Without this enabled, the Find Customer button must be used to find existing customers.

Start New Reservations with "Show Available" checked -- This option only affects the "New Reservation" dialog. When set, the "Show Available" option will default to being checked (on) by default in the New Reservation dialog, so only the available sites will be shown.

Start New Reservations with "Use Preferences" checked -- This option only affects the "New Reservation" dialog. When set, the "Use Preferences" option will default to being checked (on) by default in the New Reservation dialog, so only the sites with the specified preferences will be shown. Uncheck this if you want to ignore preferences at first.

Show Quick-Pick site list on the New Reservations dialog -- By default, a Quick-Pick site list appears on the New Reservation dialog so that a site can be selected from a list instead of from the mini-rack view. However this can be cumbersome if your park has many sites, so you may choose to disable this feature and take the list off of the dialog.

Use date selections from the Rack (when double-clicking), if 'Available Only' is checked -- This option is enabled by default, so you can use the main Rack view to check site availability for selected dates and choose a site. If this sometimes results in the wrong assumption about reservation dates, it can be disabled. For instance, if you like to use the Rack to select sites that will be available for several days longer than the reservation, then this could result in the wrong dates being assumed for the new reservation.

Enable automatic multiple-site selection -- When this is enabled, a "Qty" field will eb added to the New Reservation dialog. This can be used to have it automatically select and add a number of sites, instead of selecting each one individually.

Keep the Rack and Map views on the same date when switching between them -- When this is enabled, the Rack and Map views will be kept in sync as far as the From and To dates selected. If this option is not enabled, then changing the date on one view will not change dates in the other view.

Make checked-out sites immediately available for new reservations (remove from Rack) -- When this is selected, checked-out reservations are removed from the Rack (and treated as an available site) instead of showing in a dark grey color. This is not generally recommended (it's often handy to see what sites have been recently vacated and who was there), you may need to set this option if you commonly have people check out the same day they arrive and you want to make that site available for someone ele arriving later that day.

Allow Guest reservations to be checked in before the host (and checked out after the host) -- Normally you would want the person with the main reservation, or host, to arrive before any of his guests (Guest reservations on the same site). Therefore this option is not enabled by default. However if you handle Guest reservations in such a way that the guests may arrive before the host (and likewise if the guests may leave after the host), then enable this option so they can be checked in or out in any order.

Auto-Rates Options

Enable Auto-Rates functions (calculation buttons) on Transactions and Select Rates dialogs -- This is the primary enabler of auto-rates, since it enables the auto-rate calculation buttons (which are used for manually adding the auto-calculated rate charges). However, if the "Automatically..." functions are enabled (below), the rates will be added automatically even if these buttons for manual adding the charges are disabled.

Auto-calculate when the "Check Rates" or "Quote/Confirmation" functions are used -- When selected, auto-rates will be used to automatically calculate the temporary charges shown in these functions. This is a "safe" way to test your auto-rates setup, since the charges won't actually be saved.

Calculate for longer periods to find "best" rate -- When selected, this will not only calculate the charges for the reservation's actual days, but will also calculate for additional days, one at a time, up to the maximum (below). It will then select the number of days that produced the lowest rate. This is used to give the customer a "better" rate, for instance if your weekly rate is better than the normal rate for 6 days.

Maximum extra days to check --   If you enable calculation for longer periods, this defines how many extra days to check. Don't set the number of days any longer than necessary, since it can take time to check each possible length of stay for the best rate. For instance, if your monthly rate is equivalent to 3 weeks and 2 days (23 days), then only check 8 extra days to cover a 31-day month. If you don't have monthly rates, then this probably only needs to be set to 2 extra days (e.g. if the weekly rate is cheaper than the 5-day rate).

When recalculating auto-charges... -- This gives you 3 different options for how charge transactions are handled when auto-calculation is done after auto-rates are already present (whether it's done manually with the buttons, or as a result if automatic re-calculations). Note that none of these will affect manual charges or payments added -- the only affect auto-charges.

> **Credit & add only charges that have changed, as needed (recommended)** -- This will check each of the "new" charges against the previously added auto-charges, and will only add the necessary transactions to reflect the new charges. It will leave any previous auto-rates intact. This may result in both positive and negative entries to make the adjustments, but won't duplicate entries. For instance, if a charge for 4 days is present and a new day is added, a charge for 1 day will be added). If the days aren't changed but an additional vehicle is added, then only the charge for the additional vehicle will be added.

> **Add credits (negative charges) for all old auto-charges and add all new charges** -- This will leave the original auto-charges alone, but will add negative charges for every previous auto-charge, then add the complete set of new charges. This results in more transactions, and can make the receipts either more or less confusing depending on the situation

> **Remove all old auto-charges and add new ones (will cause daily balances to change!)** -- This results in the "cleanest" receipts, but cannot be done if you depend on daily transaction balancing. It also does not leave a trail of original charges and changes -- it simply removes all old auto-charges and starts over.

Automatically add auto-charges when a reservation is... (**Created** or **Checked In**) -- If this option is selected, charges will be added automatically as soon as the reservation is created or checked in, as desired. The recommended option is to add them when the reservation is checked in. They will be added before the transaction dialog is opened, so the amount due will be instantly presented.

Also add auto-charges to day passes when they are created -- Since day pass reservations are never checked in, you must enable this option to have charges added to day pass reservations immediately. However if you select the "Created" option above, this is not necessary.

Automatically recalculate charges whenever reservation details are changed, as appropriate -- This option will help prevent charges from being forgotten if reservation changes are made (e.g. adding extra people, changing dates, adding options, etc.), but it can also be a little dangerous and can result in a lot of charges being added and deleted back and forth if reservations are tinkered with. It's recommended to try enabling this option to see how it works for you, and disable it if it becomes an annoyance. If this option is disabled, you must remember to go to Transactions and click the Auto-calculate button whenever changes are made.

Assume no auto-charges apply for cancelled reservations -- If you add auto-charges when the reservation is created, and you give refunds for cancelled reservations (at least for the rent), then select this option. Any auto-charges present when a reservation is cancelled will be undone when it auto-calculates. This avoids having to manually remove or credit all of the auto-charges. You can still add a cancellation fee or other manual charges if needed.

Zip Codes

The automatic zip-code lookup functionality in Campground Master helps speed customer data input. This will be enabled for both U.S. and Canada zip codes. If your customers are rarely from these countries, you can disable one or both of the lookup functions.

Enable Zip-code lookup for the U.S. -- You can disable this if needed, so it won't attempt to do a lookup when an zip code is entered.

  Fill in the "Country" with -- If you want the country to be filled in for U.S. addresses, enter the desired text here (e.g. "United States" or "US").

Enable Postal-code lookup for Canada -- You can disable this if needed, so it won't attempt to do a lookup when a Canadian postal code is entered.

  Fill in the "Country" with -- If you want the country to be filled in for Canadian addresses, enter the desired text here.

Use UPPER case city names -- Check this box if you want the city names to be entered as all upper case letters.

Data loaded -- This simply shows the number of zip/postal codes it knows, to confirm that the correct code data has been loaded. Note that this data comes from the file "zipcodes.bin", which must be located in the same folder as the Campground Master executable file. The data is loaded into memory when the program is started. If you do not want any automatic lookup functionality, this file can be deleted to minimize the amount of RAM used.

Monthlies Options

These options make it easy to automatically set the length of monthly reservations, and the amount initially charged. They only affect reservations with the Monthly reservation type.

There are 3 different settings allowing automatic date setting, based on the start date of the reservation, to a specified number of months, or to the end the month any number of months away, or the end of a year. These automatic settings can also be disable by selecting the "none" options.

Automatically extend reservation -- This setting determines the automatic Last Night of a new reservation when the Monthly reservation type is selected on the New Reservation dialog, if (and only if) the reservation's Last Night has not yet been selected manually or by entering a number of nights. For instance to make all

monthly reservations for at least 5 months, select "by exactly one month", and enter 4 in "and then add another ___ months".

Also Block the site for the reservation -- This works similar to the setting above, but instead of setting the Last Night, it sets the Block date. For instance, you may want to make the actual reservation for only a few months, but keep the site blocked for several years.

Limit the initial number of days charged to -- This is used when selecting rates for a monthly reservation. This is normally only the initial charges, since the Monthly Billing will likely be used for subsequent months. Only a few options are available here -- charge for exactly one month, to the end of the month, or to the end of next month. This setting will depend on whether you force billings on the first of the month, and whether you require at least a month's rent up front.

The combination of these settings depends partially on your monthly billing procedures (exact-month or end-of-month), but in general there are a couple different recommended ways of doing monthly reservations.

One way is to only "reserve" the site for one month at a time, but block it initially for an extended period (this can be several years if you like, or just a few months, depending on the typical length of stay). Then when monthly billing is done, extend each reservation by an additional month (this is a one-click function on the Monthly Billing dialog). This may work best if your monthlies are typically short-term (less than a year), and are billed on their month-anniversary date instead of the first day of the month.

Another good way is to go ahead and make the reservation extend out to the end of next year. Then at the end of this year, when you do the monthly billing go ahead and extend them all another year (keeping the site reserved for at least 1 year in advance). This works best for billing on the 1st of each month (presumably the first partial month is pro-rated), where your tenants are likely to stay at least a year at a time.

Database Options

This portion of the Program Options dialog will only be available if you're logged in with an Administrator access level.

Current database path -- This shows the complete disk and directory path of the currently open database. The database name itself isn't shown, but you can see the database name in the program's caption bar. This field is not editable -- to open a different database, use the File / Open function from the main menu.

Auto-open database file and path -- This shows the complete path and the file name of the default database, which opens automatically every time the program starts (unless another file is specified in the command line of the shortcut icon, as in the case of the Demo icons). This is generally set when the New Database function is done to start a new one, or the first time a File / Save As is done with a name other than "demo". The only way to change the auto-open database is to open the desired database and click the "Change" button below this field.

Change the Auto-open database to the Current database -- This button will change the setting above, so the currently open database will be used as the default from now on. This should only be done if you're sure that the current database is what you want all future changes to go to.

Automatically save the database after each action -- This option is enabled by default, so that the database is saved to the computer's hard disk after every action -- for instance, after every new reservation, check-in, transaction, or anything else that changes the database. Note that it's saved after every main dialog is closed, not while working in the dialog. While it's preferred to leave this enabled to avoid data loss in the case of a malfunction or power loss, you may need to turn it off if it causes a noticeable delay due to a slow computer or large database. You may also wish to disable this option if you are experimenting or making changes that you're not sure you want to keep, so you could reload the previous database without saving the new changes.

Compress the database backups to a ZIP file -- This option is enabled by default, so database backups take less space on a floppy disk. This results in the backup database being compressed using the common ZIP file format, which will take one fourth the disk space or less. (Don't confuse this with ZIP brand disks by Iomega.) This also allows the backup to be made to multiple disks if it's too large to fit on one disk (disk spanning is only possible with this option enabled). The built-in Restore function can read these ZIP files directly, and any commercial file compression utility, such as WinZIP, can extract the database from the ZIP file.   While there is no real advantage to turning this option off, there may be rare cases where a ZIP file cannot be created (usually due to a Windows configuration problem, an error message appears when making a backup in this case), so you can turn this off if needed.

Remind me to back up the database every ... days -- When the program is closed, it will remind you to back up the database if you haven't done a manual backup in so many days. By default this is 3, and we recommend no longer than that. But if you have an automated backup system in place for the entire system, you may decide to turn this reminder off (set it to 0) or make it longer as needed. Note that this is 24-hour periods, so if you set it to 1 day then it will remind you every day when you shut down, unless it has been less than 24 hours since the previous backup.

History logging enabled -- This option is enabled by default, and makes the program write out a log of every change made to the database. This is required for proper functioning if you are networking multiple computers, and can also be helpful if you aren't using the auto-save option above (to restore changes lost due to a power outage, for instance). If you are not using networking and you do enable the auto-save function, then history logging is not necessary, but it could still be helpful for tracking down problems (for instance, to determine if a reservation was deleted by accident). While the log is in text format, it's not necessarily easy to interpret without some technical knowledge. Contact Cottonwood Software if assistance is needed.

Lock/Unlock logging enabled -- This is not required for any functionality and is only useful for diagnosing network problems. Since it increases log size and delays, it should not normally be enabled.

Check history logs for unsaved changes after loading the database -- This option can be used to automatically restore changes "lost" due to computer crashes or power outages. (However it can also cause a significant delay when starting the program, so you may want to only use it in emergency cases.) This will check to see if any changes have been logged (assuming history logging was enabled) since the database file was saved. If it detects that some unsaved changes exist, you will be prompted to re-apply them. This can be extremely helpful in the even that you must restore the database from a backup after a computer crash -- assuming the log files are intact, it will be able to automatically re-apply all changes made since the backup was made.

Automatically delete logs after ... days (0 to 999 days) -- Depending on your disk space, you may want to have the program automatically delete the oldest history logs automatically. This also applies to the automatic database backup files that are created each day. The size of the log files depends on the amount of activity each day, but generally a 30-day history is only a few megabytes. You should keep at least 7 days of logs available in case a restore is needed. You can also set this value to 0 to completely disable log deletion -- however, the automatic database backups will never be deleted in less than 7 days unless the hard disk is getting full.

Printing Options

Overview

These settings, found both under the <u>File</u> menu and under the <u>Maintenance</u> menu, allow customization of the way things print. Note that these settings are workstation-specific -- that is, if you are using multiple workstations on the network, changing the printer settings on one workstation will not affect the printer settings on other workstations.

Before printing receipts, you should go to File / Printer Setup to configure the appropriate printer (especially if using a 3" roll paper receipt printer). See the chapter "*Setting up your Campground Database*" for details.

P.O.S. Note: If the P.O.S. option is enabled, then there will be additional tabs on this dialog. See the P.O.S. Setup section for details on those settings.

Reports Settings

These options apply to any of the grid-type reports -- tab views, single records, and any other "reports".

<u>Zoom percent (100 = normal)</u> -- This affects any of the grid reports, as long as the <u>Fit Output to Page</u> option is *not* set. With the 100 percent value, the printed grid will be approximately the same physical size as on the computer screen. You can adjust this value to suit your preferences. Set it to a smaller value, for instance 80 percent, to fit more on a page. If you want a larger printout, perhaps for posting the day's arrivals on a bulletin board, set it to a larger value like 125.

<u>Always preview reports before printing</u> -- When this option is set, you will get the chance to preview the printout before actually printing a report, even if you don't select **Print Preview** from the File menu. In fact, for reports that are printed from **Print** buttons in dialogs rather than the main menu or toolbar button, this option is the only way to get a preview. It's highly recommended that you leave this option turned on so that you don't accidentally print reports in a tiny font or that will span many pages due to an improper <u>Fit Output to Page</u> setting. Note that this option only applies to reports and other grid-type printing, not to receipts & invoices, mailing labels, envelopes, etc. For those, see the Always Preview Receipts option below.

<u>Show printer setup dialog when printing reports</u> -- by default, a dialog will appear every time you print with options for printer selection, layout, number of copies, etc. This requires an extra step to "OK" this dialog each time. By checking this option, that dialog is skipped so there's one less mouse click required. It will use the default settings from Printer Setup for reports. A small "Printing" message will appear momentarily just to let you know that it's printing, since there may not be any other indication if you're not near the printer.

<u>Print Black & White</u> -- When this is selected, all grid reports are simply black text, optionally with grid lines (according to the Grid Lines option described later). When not selected, the grids will use the exact colors as seen on the display, including the gray headers and the color-coded reservation status. Black & White will result in more readable reports on non-color printers like laser printers, and also helps save ink and can speed up report output on color printers. It's common to want some reports printed in black & White and others in color, so this option is also available under **File** in the main menu for easy access.

Fit Output to Page Horizontally -- When this is selected, the font size in reports will be shrunk or enlarged, as needed, so that they fit the width of the page. (The reports can still take multiple pages if it's longer than the page vertically, even with the horizontally-fit font.) This can result in some very small text (or very large text in some cases if the "Allow stretching" option is selected), but will save paper and make some reports easier to manage. When *not* selected, a fixed font size will be used (see Zoom percent below) no matter how large the report will be, which could cause the report to span many pages horizontally and/or vertically. It is common to want some reports printed with this option set and others without it, so this option is also available under **File** in the main menu.

> **Allow stretching to the full width** -- When this is selected along with Fit Output to Page Horizontally, the font of any grid-report will be enlarged so that the report fills the entire width of the page if necessary. This is not normally desired, but might be useful to print out extra-large text for posting vacancies in a window, for instance.

When printing single records...

> **Skip blank fields** (when printing single records) -- When using the Print button from dialogs such as Reservation Details, Site Details, and Customer Details, this option will shorten the output so that it only shows fields that are filled in. This will usually result in a printout that will fit on a single page.

> **Use a grid format** (when printing single records) - When using the Print button from dialogs such as Reservation Details, Site Details, and Customer Details, this option will make the printout be in a grid. When turned off, the printouts will be in columnar text format, which is faster and uses less ink.

Receipts Settings

These options apply to the various types of receipts and other "forms".

Reservation Receipt default format -- Select the receipt format you will use most often. You can select the format any time you print a receipt (without coming back here), but setting the most common one here will save steps later. See the section Working with Transactions for details on each format.

Quote/Confirmation default format -- Select the receipt format to use when printing from the Quote/Confirmation function on the Reservation Details dialog. This is typically the Confirmation Letter.

Unbound receipt default format -- Select the receipt format to use when printing a receipt for Unbound Transactions. This is typically for merchandise sales, so the Quick Receipt is the initial default.

Copies (separate entries for each default format above) -- If you usually print duplicate receipts, you can change this to **2** so that you don't have to change the number of copies every time you print a receipt. (You can still change the number of copies on the print dialog when printing -- this just determines the default number.). Note that this does not affect the batch receipt printing or monthly billing.

Always Preview Receipts Before Printing -- When this option is set, you will get the chance to preview the printout before actually printing a receipt. (This option is the only way to get a preview for receipts.)

Show printer setup dialog when printing receipts -- When checked, a dialog will appear every time you print with options for printer selection, layout, number of copies, etc. This requires an extra step to "OK" this dialog each time. By unchecking this option, that dialog is skipped so there's one less mouse click required. It will use the default settings from Printer Setup for the selected receipt type and the number of copies selected above. A small "Printing" message will appear momentarily just to let you know that it's printing, since there may not be any other indication if you're not near the printer.

Show transaction category for charges (eg: "Gift shop : " prefix before description) -- Charge transactions always have a transaction category and a description. Generally the description is enough to show on the receipts (and the description defaults to the same as the category when entering transactions), so this option is disabled by default. If you want to make sure the category is also printed on receipts (if not included in the description already), enable this option.

Show tax details on receipts -- by default, each line for sales tax or other tax category will show the amount taxed and the percentage rate, like ($20.00 @ 8.25%). If you prefer not to have that information printed on the receipt (for instance to keep customers from noticing the actual tax rate), you can disable this option.

Combine taxes of the same kind into a single line on receipts -- When entering transactions, taxes are usually added automatically. This can result in multiple Tax transactions of the same kind, especially when entering counter sales. This option, which is enabled by default, will combine all taxes of the same type into one line (total) on the receipt. Different tax types, for instance Sales Tax and Hotel Tax, will still be on separate lines. If you need to see each tax entry separately, then turn this option off.

Show separate charges for each synchronized site on receipts by default -- This simply determines whether the "Use separate entries for each site" option is checked by default when selecting rates. It can be changed when selecting rates, so this option just determines the default setting. See *Selecting Rates* for more details.

Use the site "Name" on reservation receipts -- (checked by default) Normally the full site name is used on receipts, but if you prefer the short Abbreviation (from Site Details), then uncheck this option.

Use the site "Type" on confirmations instead of the site name -- If you prefer not to guarantee specific sites when confirming reservations, select this option to show only the site type, not the name. This only affects the Confirmation Letter receipt format. Note that if you have the "Show separate charges..." option set above, this option will also remove the site names from the charge detail descriptions, *if* the confirmation is printed from the Quote/Confirmation function on Reservation Details (but a separate charge will still be shown for each site).

Show all linked sites on receipts -- For reservations that are linked to other synchronized or sub-member reservations, the transactions on a receipt generally apply to more than one site. With this option selected, the sites for the other reservations are listed at the bottom of the receipt. If the other reservations are for different dates or times, then the dates and/or times are also shown. This option is usually desired, but it can be disabled if this adds too much clutter to receipts.

Show quantity details in descriptions -- When a charge is for multiple sites, or involves a quantity like extra adults, detail is added to the description like "(3 x 4 sites)" or "(3 x 2)". While this is helpful, it can also result in extra transactions and confusion when quantities are changed and auto-rates are used. For a cleaner receipt, disable this option.

Show Receipt # on receipts -- If this is checked, one or more receipt numbers will appear on receipts. Note that the receipt numbers are not terribly meaningful for reservation receipts (they are designed for point-of-sale receipts), but you can include them for reference. Each receipt number, if there is more than one, will appear on a separate line. This could significantly reduce the amount of space available for printing the transactions. Also note that "Receipt #" is the default name of this field, but if you prefer "Invoice #" or some other name, you can change this by editing the name (Normal header) of this field under *Define Data Fields / Transaction Fields*.

Show the current date on all receipts -- This option will put the date on each receipt (when it's printed), either in the upper right or lower right corner depending on the format.

3" Receipt printer fixed-pitch font -- If you are using a receipt printer, this should be set to the name of the printer's "native" fixed-pitch font, generally a font that is used for 40-column text output. This is used if the receipt format "3" Receipt Printer, fixed-pitch font" is used for printing transaction receipts. You will need to find the name of the font from the printer's manual or programming guide. This font often refers to "cpi" (characters per inch), like "ANK 15cpi" or "21cpi". If you don't know the name, try "Courier New" to select the Windows fixed-pitch font. This may also work with your printer.

Size -- This is the font size to be used with the selected 3" printer font. In some cases this needs to be adjusted to get 40 columns to fit on the printer.

Columns -- This is only used with the fixed-pitch font receipt format for 3" receipt printers, and specifies how many columns are available on the printer. Most receipt printers support 40 columns, but some can use a smaller font for more columns. If one letter is getting cut off, try 39 columns.

3" Receipt printer proportional font -- If you are using a receipt printer but prefer a fancier non-fixed-pitch font, this can be set to the name of a proportional font that the printer supports. For some printers, e.g. the STAR SP300 or SP500, this can be any Windows font like Arial or Times New Roman.

Park shown on non-reservation receipts -- If you have multiple park records set up with different name and/or address information, the first one is used by default for transaction receipts with no site/reservation involved, because it can't determine which park the transactions apply to. The first park record may not be appropriate in all cases, especially if you're using multiple networked workstations where each park has its own workstation. On each workstation, you can select the appropriate park record to be used for unbound transactions. Note that this also applies to printing envelope return addresses.

Credit Card Settings

These options apply when a credit card payment or refund is entered.

Show credit card information on receipts -- This option will show the credit card number (masked with X's except for the last 4 digits), expiration date, etc. on the receipts if the last payment (or refund) was made with a credit card and the information was entered.

...only on 3" receipt printer formats -- Set this to designate that the credit card information is only included on 3" receipt printer receipts, for instance if you don't want it to appear on the ticket form, confirmation letters, etc., but want it to show on the cash-register type receipts.

Include credit card signature line -- If you're showing the credit card information, you can also opt to include a signature line on every receipt that has the credit card information. This is typically only enabled if you're doing the credit card processing through Campground Master (otherwise your credit card machine prints the appropriate signature ticket), and even with Campground Master doing the processing, you may prefer the auto-print option below.

...only if authorization is processed --Set this option to only show the signature line if Campground Master actually does the processing.

Automatically print a credit card signature slip when credit card payment is entered -- This is the preferred option if Campground Master is doing the credit card processing. This will print a slip for the customer to sign as soon as the Enter Payment dialog is closed, so it's faster than you printing it manually.

...only if authorization is processed -- Set this option to only auto-print the signature slip if Campground Master actually does the processing.

Credit card slip format -- There is a special "Credit Card Slip" format that's normally used, designed for 3"

receipt printers. This prints the minimal necessary information, with only the payment transaction instead of all transactions. (Note that this format always goes to the printer set up as the "Receipt Printer", but it doesn't have to be a special printer -- you can make a normal printer simulate a 3" printer by selecting a paper size like a 4x6 index card, for instance.) If you prefer to print one of the other formats, with complete information instead of the summary, you can select that here.

Offsets Settings

Printer Offsets -- You can fine-tune the printer offsets for printing forms that require precise positioning such as mailing labels. The Top and Left numbers represent the closest point to the edge that the printer can print. If you find labels printing too close to the top (or left), you will need to *decrease* the offset to compensate.

Print the park's return address on envelopes -- If this is set, the return address will be printed in the upper left corner of the envelope. (Leave this off if your envelopes have your address pre-printed.)

Return address position for Envelopes -- Set the offset from the edge of the envelope where you want the return address to appear.

Address position for Envelopes -- Set the offset from the edge of the envelope where you want the "to" address to appear.

Address position for Letters and Invoices -- Set the offset from the edge of the page where you want the address to appear for full-page invoices and confirmation letters. This is important if you use window envelopes. Otherwise, you can set them closer to the top of the page to save space for more transactions.

Network Functions

Overview

This Network section only applies if you have purchased a license for networking more than one workstation. You can use the View | Product Authorizations function to see how many workstations your license authorizes you to network. If the number is 1, then you are not authorized for networking.

Network setup parameters and options can be found under Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup, while some diagnostic and administrative functions can be found under Maintenance | Network Functions. These are explained in more detail below.

Networking allows Campground Master to run on 2 or more connected computers (workstations). While you can install and run Campground Master on a network (or even on more than one computer) without a networking license, you cannot access the same database at the same time without losing data. The networking functionality is required for the different workstations to communicate their changes to each other and stay synchronized.

Note that the sample database ("demo") is not authorized for networking, thus it is safe to load at any workstation and will not affect others. If you are evaluating the software or want to try the networking before purchasing the upgrade, you may request a free 30-day trial license enabled for networking.

Setting up for a Network

Setting up Campground Master for networking is very simple, as long as your network meets the requirements. Network setup parameters and options can be found in the menu: Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!

DO **NOT** "SHARE" THE DATABASE FILE BETWEEN MULTIPLE INSTANCES OF THE SOFTWARE. **THIS WILL RESULT IN A CORRUPTED DATABASE!**

Campground Master uses TCP/IP communications to copy all data between computers in real time, rather than sharing the database file itself.

Because most computer administrators expect networking to be accomplished through a shared database file, it may take some effort to get past this assumption. Do **not** attempt to network multiple computers by loading the database through a mapped or shared drive, or in any way open or save the database through file sharing on the network. Please read through this entire networking section before attempting to set up networking for Campground Master. It's a very simple process, but must be done correctly.

Every computer running Campground Master must have its own copy of the database, on its own hard drive or other non-shared location. Never under any circumstances open a database file from more than one instance of Campground Master at the same time. If you're not sure how this will work, please read the section *How Networking Works.*

Networking Requirements:

- Every workstation or terminal must have its own place to save the database (e.g. its own hard drive) -- do not share the database file with other terminals.

- TCP/IP network -- the workstations must be connected via TCP/IP (which can also be through the Internet). We recommend using a switch (or router), rather than a hub, since a switch results in much less load on the computers. Some installations have reported communications problems when using a simple hub.

- Winsock 2 -- the system must support Winsock 2, which has been part of Windows since Windows 98. If you are running Windows 95, you may need to install Winsock 2 in order for the program to run (you will get an error message when starting the program if Winsock 2 is not installed). This can be downloaded from the following Microsoft web site: http://www.microsoft.com/windows95/downloads/contents/wuadmintools/s_wunetworkingtools/w95sockets2/default.asp

- A known IP address for the master workstation -- The master workstation must have a known IP address that can be accessed by the other workstations, so setting a static address is best. If you will be using the internet, there should be a static IP address visible to the internet (to avoid setup changes every time you connect).

- An unblocked port -- you can use any TCP/IP port number you wish, just make sure it's not blocked by any security software or routers in the system. We recommend a port in the 6000 to 12000 range, to minimize the potential conflicts with other software.

Master (Server) workstation:

You don't need a separate computer for a server. Any of the workstations can be used as the "master" workstation. This workstation will automatically operate as the Server for the Campground Master network, and all other workstations will operate as Clients. (Internally, they actually run different code depending on whether they are a server or a client.)

Since the master workstation will not have to request locks from other workstations and will operate "offline" automatically if the other workstations are disconnected, you may want the most-used workstation to be the master. It should also be the fastest computer, since it has to do more work (routing all of the changes from each workstation to all other workstations).

Alternatively, you may decide that the master should be a "protected" computer separate from the reservation center, since it's the most important computer to keep running and should have the most reliable network connection. The decision will depend on your environment and whether speed is an issue. Since the master designation can be changed any time through the settings, you can always change it later.

Except for a few maintenance functions that can only be done on the master workstation, all workstations have equal abilities. Only the master workstation can perform the New database function and edit Field Definitions. Also, while any workstation can edit Raw Data Tables and Pick Lists, these should be done on the master workstation whenever possible due to the number of records that need to be locked.

Setup Procedure:

1. Install the Campground Master software on each workstation, and decide which one will be the master.

2. Disable all firewalls and other security software on each computer (they can be re-enabled with proper "exception" configurations once you get the network operational). Some typical programs that can block TCP/IP networking are Windows XP's firewall or Security Center, Norton's Antivirus with Internet Worm Protection, McAffee's antivirus, ZoneAlarm, and various other antivirus software, spyware blockers, pop-up blockers, etc. If you're using a switch or router that has firewall/gateway/blocking capability, either disable it or make sure that the TCP/IP port you'll be using (see step 7) is not blocked.

3. After you have a database set up and authorization code entered on the master, make sure the database is authorized for networking. This can be checked through the View | View Product Authorizations function -- the "Max Workstations" value will be greater than 1 if you are authorized for networking.

4. To make sure that the printer options, tab view options and other settings will be the same on each workstation (especially if you have already been using the program on a single computer for awhile), synchronize the settings for all workstations. This can be done at any time, but doing it before you copy the database to the other workstations will ensure they are set up correctly to begin with. Note that this is essentially a database function and does not require the other workstations to be connected yet -- it simply copies the master's settings to the other workstation's settings in the database. This function is under Maintenance | Network Functions | Synchronize local options to other workstations.

5. Copy the database to each workstation. This can be done using the Backup and Restore functions built into the software, or by manually copying the database file. Do NOT set up Campground Master to open the database file through a mapped drive on the network! If more than one workstation is accessing the same database file, the data will become corrupt. **Each workstation should be loading and saving the database from its local hard drive.** It's also important that the database have the same name on every workstation. To make sure these conditions are met, use the File | Save As command after loading or restoring the database, select a location on the local hard drive, and enter (or select) the file name you're using for the database.   Then use File | Open to reload that database, and go to Maintenance | Program Options | Database to change the auto-open database to the currently open one.

6. Find the IP address(es) of the master workstation. If you don't know its IP address, you can use the <u>Show IP address(es)</u> function under <u>Maintenance | Network Functions</u>. If it shows more than one address, you will need to figure out which one is for the local network and will be visible to the other workstations. Local network IP addresses often start with 192. The **IPCONFIG** command from a Command Prompt (DOS window) can also indicate the local area network's IP address in Windows NT/2000/XP. In Windows 95, 98, or ME, run the **Winipcfg** program from Start / Run.

7. Decide on a TCP/IP port number. You can use the arbitrary default port (6010), or if that is known to conflict with other software you can change it.

8. On the master workstation, open the database and make sure the Network settings (<u>Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup</u>) are set accordingly: The workstation ID should be 0, and the Master ID should be 0. (The master ID can be another number, but this is the easiest way to keep track of it.) The other options are covered later, but all of the check boxes should be checked..

9. On each of the other workstations, open the database (if not already open) and change the network settings accordingly: The workstation ID should be different for each one (1, 2, 3, etc.), the Master ID should be 0, and the Master IP address should be the address from step 5.

You can also specify various heartbeat frequency, timeout, and other options if you prefer. See the *Network Setup Dialog* section for more details.

If the master workstation is running at the time you perform the last step for each workstation, you should see it immediately connect after you change the settings and click OK. You're done!

If a connection error is shown, double-check your network settings and refer to the following sections, or contact us for support. If you are running a firewall, try disabling the firewall -- if connection is successful with the firewall disabled, you will need to determine how to enable the selected port for the firewall (consult the documentation for the firewall). Likewise, other security software may need to be disabled or configured to allow Campground Master to communication, such as Norton Antivirus (disable Internet Worm Protection), ZoneAlarm, McAffee, Windows XP's Security Center firewall, or various antivirus or anti-spyware software.

Once every workstation is connected, you can start re-enabling any security software -- enable one program at a time, and double-check to make sure it doesn't interfere with networking by closing down both the Master and Client workstation(s) and restarting them. If it prevents connection, see if you can configure exceptions in the security software to enable the Campground Master software and/or the IP port you're using (see step 7 above).

Setting up Multiple Connections

If you want to access multiple parks (with separate databases) from a single location, it can easily be done over the internet. It works best if each park has a static IP address, so you don't have to find out the current address each time you connect. And of course there has to be an internet (TCP/IP) connection to the Master workstation at each park. Also be sure that any firewalls, gateways, etc. will allow messages for the selected Port to pass through. You will also need to have a copy of each park's database available (at least an initial version of it, with the same filename).

While the network parameters are normally set once in the Network Setup Dialog and never changed, these parameters need to be different for each park you want to connect to. This can be done automatically by setting up shortcut icons with the network parameters and database name in the Target field. The available "command line parameters" are listed below.

/Workstation= This is equivalent to "This Workstation's ID" in the network setup.

/WorkstationName= This is equivalent to the "Nickname" setting.

/MasterIP= This is equivalent to the "Master IP address" setting.

/MasterID= This is equivalent to the "Master (server) workstation ID" setting.

/IPPort= This is equivalent to the "TCP/IP Port" setting.

If a setting will be the same for all connections, it does not need to be included. The database name can appear after all of the settings, and can contain a complete folder path if necessary. Below are a couple examples (excluding the CampgroundMaster.exe portion of the Target line):

```
/Workstation=1 /WorkstationName=remote /MasterID=0 /MasterIP=192.169.34.55
/IPPort=6010 Marina.prk
```

```
/Workstation=2 /MasterIP=66.123.45.67 /MasterID=1 D:\Data\Hilltop.prk
```

Multiple Databases on One Computer

If you're using Campground Master for multiple businesses, with separate databases for each, you might want them all to access the data from a central server. While this isn't generally recommended (since they would need to be connected to the server to work with the software), this is possible if your organization requires it.

There are a couple special steps required for this. You need to enable multiple instances of Campground Master to run on one computer (which is normally not allowed, to prevent problems sharing a database), and you need to set up multiple shortcuts with parameters such that each instance loads a specific database and communicates on a specific IP port (because they would all be at the same IP address, they need to use different ports).

Since the server is probably unattended, you may want to do this as shortcuts in the Startup group so they all start up when the computer boots. You could also include log-in information in the parameters so it doesn't show the Log In window, but be sure to use a low-level login to prevent tampering (set up a Guest operator to use as the default login).

To enable multiple program instances:

In the file "Campground Master.ini" (in the C:\Windows\ folder), you need to put the following setting in the **[Main]** section:

AllowMultipleInstances=1

To set up multiple shortcuts:

Lets say you need to set up the server to run Campground Master with 3 different databases. Start by copying the normal Campground Master shortcut on your desktop (and give each one a different name). Then set up each shortcut to load a different database and use a different IP Port by changing the Target in the shortcut's Properties. For instance if the databases are named "Park One", "Park Two" and "Park Three", set up the shortcut targets like this:

```
"C:\Program Files\Campground Master\CampgroundMaster.exe" /IPPort=6010 Park One
```

```
"C:\Program Files\Campground Master\CampgroundMaster.exe" /IPPort=6011 Park Two
```

```
"C:\Program Files\Campground Master\CampgroundMaster.exe" /IPPort=6012 Park Three
```

(Note that quotes are not needed around the database names.)

If you have a default "guest" login setup, with operator and password both "guest", then add this to the target line:

`/Operator=guest /Password=guest`

In addition, you can have it minimize each instance to the taskbar tray by adding this to the target:

`/Hide=1`

You could also include the Workstation, MasterIP, and MasterID parameters, but since these will presumably be the same for all three instances then it's not necessary (once it's set for one of them, those settings are saved in the INI file that's shared by all instances).

Of course, you also need to configure the Network Settings in the respective client workstations to connect to the appropriate port for its database.

Network Setup Dialog

This function under <u>Maintenance</u> | <u>Network Functions</u> will only be available if you are authorized for networking (more than one workstation), and changes can be made only if you're logged in with an Administrator access level. Note that these options are stored in the file *Campground Master.ini*, so they must be set up separately for each workstation.

The descriptions here give basic information about the options -- for complete information on network functions and options, refer to the other Network Functions sections.

Connection

Maximum number of workstations authorized -- This value is determined by your authorization (the number of workstations for which you purchased a license. It is not editable.

This Workstation's ID -- Each workstation must have a unique numeric ID, which starts at 0. So for instance in a 5-workstation system, this number will be in the range 0 to 4. The workstation ID will be shown in the caption bar for easy reference.

Nickname -- You can give a workstation a nickname, which will show in the caption bar and is also used in diagnostic messages. This is optional, so you can leave this field blank. The nickname will also be shown in the caption bar.

Master (server) workstation ID -- One and only one workstation is designated as the master, and will be running the server side of the network. This is usually the workstation with the ID of "0", but may be changed if necessary. It's critical that this is the correct ID -- it must be the ID of the workstation at the given IP address!

Master IP address -- This is the IP address of the master workstation (server). This value is not used on the master itself, but all other workstations must have this set properly.

TCP/IP port -- This is the port number used for communicating. All workstations must use the same port number. A number above 6000 is recommended to reduce the change of conflicting with other communications software.

Show "Connecting" progress window -- When this is enabled, a window will automatically open any time the a workstation (excluding the master) is attempting to make connection with the server. This should be left on to server as an indication whenever the connection is lost. (The window will automatically close 5 seconds after a connection is made.) However if the network is unstable and workstations require reconnecting often, this window may be disabled to reduce the annoyance.

Timing

Time-out for requests (3 to 300 seconds) -- Enter the number of seconds to wait for a response from the server when communicating (requesting a record lock or sending changes). Typically this should be about 3 to 5 seconds, but for slow (internet) connections you may raise this. It may also need to be raised if you're running a large number of very active workstations.

Remote update refresh delay (0 to 300 seconds) -- This determines how long to wait before the program is considered "idle" and can refresh the screen when an update comes in from another workstation. It does not mean that the data update itself is delayed. The purpose of having a refresh delay is so that the screen doesn't refresh frequently when you're trying to look at something or click on a function. Any time the mouse is moved or clicked, the program is considered "active" and screen refreshes from other workstations will be delayed until activity stops for the indicated number of seconds. If you open and close a dialog or change tab views, the screen will refresh immediately, so an easy way to force an immediate refresh is to click on another tab view and then click back, or to press **F9** for the Search function and then **Esc** to close it.

"Heartbeat" frequency (3 to 300 seconds) -- This time determines how often an "alive" message is sent to the server (or to other workstations from the server). This must be at least 3 seconds to avoid networking bottlenecks. This frequency also determines how often a workstation will check to see if it has been disconnected and will attempt to reconnect automatically (if the auto-start function is enabled). If all workstations are idle, this also serves to keep communications happening on the network, and will affect how frequently the network status indicator changes on the status bar.

Diagnostic Options

Networking Enabled -- Unchecking this option will completely disable all network functions.

Auto-start Networking on program startup (and reconnect if disconnected) -- This should be left enabled for normal operations, but may be disabled to avoid repeated connection attempts for workstations known to be disconnected from the network.

Force Autosave of the database -- The auto-save function under Database options should be enabled, but just in case it's disabled by accident, this function will make sure the database is still saved after every operation. While it's recommended that the database should always be auto-saved after every change, this can cause delays in very active network environments or for very large databases.

Log all network activity -- this option can be enabled to create detailed network activity logs for troubleshooting. These logs are generally small and can be created without any noticeable affect on the system. Like other logs, they are automatically deleted after 30 days (or whatever the auto-delete setting is under Database options).

Request a database update every time connected -- This can be a dangerous option, so be sure you understand it before using it! When this is enabled for a client, it will request the full database from the server every time it reconnects. This can be useful for seldom-connected workstations, since it may be quicker to get the whole database than to get all of the changes since last connected. However, this also means that any changes made on this client while offline will *not* be sent to the master and will be lost. So only use this option if you know that the client never is used offline to make changes.

Connecting Progress Dialog

Non-master workstations will display this dialog any time a connection to the master is being made or is terminated (either upon starting up, whenever the connection is lost, or if a connection is manually initiated through the network functions). If this becomes an annoyance rather than a benefit, it can be disabled through Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup.

During normal startup, assuming the auto-start network option is enabled, this dialog will appear to show the progress. Once a connection is made, the dialog will close automatically after 5 seconds (you will see the countdown). You can also close it immediately by clicking the Close button. Note that this will *not* close the connection, just the dialog!

If a disconnect or network error is detected, for instance due to network errors or if the master workstation is shut down, the Connection dialog will automatically appear to show that it has been disconnected. If a connection is not in progress or already established, the "Connect to Server" button will be enabled. You can click this to attempt a connection any time. However if auto-start is enabled, it may automatically start reconnecting immediately, or after the "heartbeat" time. Once it's connected you can again wait for the 5 second timeout or close it at any time (even if it's not finished connecting -- it will continue even with the dialog closed).

If a connection cannot be made, the dialog will show an error after a few seconds. Again, you can either wait for the heartbeat to reconnect automatically, click Connect to reconnect immediately, or Close the dialog and let it work on its own.

If your workstation is disconnected and auto-start is not enabled, you can use the Connect to Server function under Maintenance | Network Functions to initiate a connection (which will also show Connecting dialog).

Other Network Functions

There are several functions under Maintenance | Network Functions that can be used when diagnosing network problems or for maintenance. Most of these are only available for operators with Administrator access.

Network Setup... -- This opens the Network Setup Dialog for setting various network options.

Synchronize local options to all workstations -- This is used to copy this workstation's "local" settings to all other workstations. This will copy this workstation's settings to all other workstations' settings in the database, and of course send the changes to each workstation. It can be done on the master even if the other workstations aren't connected -- the changes will be synchronized just like other database changes when the workstation is reconnected.   Use this with care if there is any reason that other workstations might require different settings. The local settings include: Printer Options, all tab view options (from their Option buttons), tab view default site filters, and default settings for Reports (meter lists, occupancy report, etc.).

View Network Diagnostics Window -- This will open either the Net Client or Net Server diagnostics window (depending on whether this is the master workstation or not). Unlike most other dialogs in Campground Master, this diagnostics window can be left open while you work. Actually, the window always exists and is functioning (recording messages), it's just hidden unless you view it.

Show IP address(es) for this workstation -- This is just a utility function for determining the IP address of the master workstation, and will show all known IP addresses for this computer. This may be a single address or multiple addresses, depending on your network setup (e.g. one address may be visible to the internet and another visible to the LAN).

Connect to Server -- For non-master workstations, this will initiate a connection if it's not already connected to the master. A Connecting Progress Dialog will be shown (if it's not disabled in <u>Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup</u>).

Disconnect from Server -- For non-master workstations, this will immediately disconnect from the master. If you have the auto-start option enabled, you will be given an option to disable this option so it will stay offline (until the next connection is made manually).

Work Offline -- If this is a non-master workstation, you must specifically select this function to enable offline changes. You must also first Disconnect from Server if not already disconnected. Once working offline, changes can be made at will. They will be logged, so that when you reconnect to the server, the changes will be transmitted to the server to synchronize the database.

However, working offline is **not completely safe**! Even though it will synchronize the changes, there are limits to what can be synchronized. For instance, since locks cannot be acquired for changes, it's possible that a change you make will conflict with a change made by another operator. The results of this are unpredictable -- either change may take precedence depending on internal circumstances, but usually the earlier change will be kept because by the time your change arrives, the value has been changed already. Previous values are compared as an integrity check, so if the value is different than your previous value, your change will be ignored. Obviously it's also possible that a record has already been deleted before your changes are received (though this is rare). In general, record additions are safe because each workstation uses unique record ID's, and changes to different customers or reservations will be safe. However, be sure to avoid making any changes (including adding transactions) to the same customer or reservation on different workstations.

Force view to rebuild/refresh -- If all goes well you should never need to use this function, since the views (Rack, Arrivals, etc) should update automatically whenever a change occurs on any workstation. However if a change doesn't seem to be showing up on the Rack or other tab view, try using this function. This will rebuild some internal indices and refresh the view to make sure that it shows all reservations properly. If it still doesn't seem to be correct, then you may need to request a total database refresh.

Request a total database refresh -- A non-master workstation can request that the entire database be refreshed. This might be needed if log files become corrupt preventing resynchronization, or if the workstation has been offline so long that logs no longer contain all of the changes needed. (Generally these are detected automatically and a full refresh will be done as needed -- however this function is provided just in case things don't seem to be synchronizing correctly.) Note that this can cause significant delays at the master as well as this workstation while the database is being transmitted, so use only when workstation activity is minimal.

Start Server (allow connections) -- if the server has not been started, use this function to start the server (master workstation only).

Stop Server (work offline) -- This function for master workstations is similar to the Work Offline function, but in this case it will stop the server completely so all workstations will be disconnected.

Clear all record locks -- This master workstation function will immediately clear all record locks for *all workstations*. This can be useful if a workstation becomes disconnected before releasing its locks (during editing), and a record it had locked needs to be edited by another workstation. However, you should make sure that all other workstations are in an idle state (no dialogs are open) when you do this, otherwise it could unlock records that really should still be locked. An alternative would be to stop the server before clearing locks. When you restart the server, all workstations will re-request locks for records currently being edited. Likewise, any time the software is closed, all locks are automatically removed.

Net Client Diagnostics Dialog

This dialog can be opened on non-master workstations to view the activity on the network and perform a couple diagnostic functions. This dialog may be left open while working in the program (though it will stay on top unless it's minimized), or closed/hidden at any time.

This function is available only to operators with Administrator access, and is available through Maintenance | Network Functions | View Network Diagnostics Window.

Network settings are shown for reference -- to change them, you must use the Maintenance | Network Functions | Network Setup function.

The large window will show status messages, indicating messages received and sent by this workstation. It will not show activity from any other workstation. In general, this can be used to see if it's getting and sending "Alive" messages, see the results of record lock requests, changes sent and received, and error messages. Sequence numbers are shown where appropriate, for comparison to logs if needed.

If you want to see the Alive messages, you must check the "Include details" box. (Unchecking this will help minimize the messages shown and allow easier inspection of the messages.) Also, when details are included you will see the details of every change transmitted or received, in the same format as the log.

By default the message window will hold 100 lines. You can increase this if necessary, however this can dramatically affect the speed and possibly cause networking problems due to extra delays (up to about 1000 lines should be tolerable without problems). Note that the number of lines will still be saved even if the window is closed / hidden (so the messages are still there when it's opened again. However, once the program is closed it will revert to 100 lines to avoid adverse effects.

To verify that things are connected properly, you can Ping the server or Send a test message. Just click the Ping button to verify the connection and to see how fast it responds. You will see a response with a number of milliseconds. Anything under 100 ms is good for a LAN, and anything under 500 ms is good for an internet connection.

If you send a test message, it will go to the server and then be re-broadcast to all other workstations, and will appear in their network diagnostic windows.

Net Server Diagnostics Dialog

This dialog can be opened on master workstations to view the activity on the network and perform a couple diagnostic functions. This dialog may be left open while working in the program (though it will stay on top unless it's minimized), or closed/hidden at any time.

This function is available only to operators with Administrator access, and is available through Maintenance | Network Functions | View Network Diagnostics Window.

Most of the functions are the same as the Net Client Diagnostics Dialog, but the server has a few additional functions.

The server diagnostics will show each of the workstations connected (by nickname if they have nicknames set up). You can Ping them all at once or individually, or forcefully disconnect one or all of them. (Remember that they will automatically attempt to reconnect if they have the auto-start network option enabled.) To completely disconnect and not allow reconnection, click the Stop button to stop the server.

If you see a Start button instead of Stop, that means the server is currently stopped. The server will not automatically restart (even if auto-start is enabled) if you stop it manually. To restart the server and wait for client connections, click the Start button.

How Networking Works

This section describes in detail how the real-time networking functionality in Campground Master works. It may be helpful to understand what's going on behind the scenes, to get a better idea of why some things work the way they do.

Real-time Networking

Each workstation will have its own copy of the database, both on the hard disk and in RAM memory. This allows each workstation to operate quickly and independently when viewing data, running reports, etc. This also allows workstations to be operated offline if necessary -- though not recommended in general, this allows operation even if the network is down, or for instance if you want to do some reports offline. Note that non-master workstations can only work offline if the Work Offline function is specifically selected (administrator access is required for this).

Unlike most networked database applications, Campground Master operates as a real-time system. When changes are made at one workstation (reservations added, dates changed, etc.), those changes will be immediately sent to all other workstations so that they will be up to date. If the changes affect the current tab view, the screen will be updated immediately to reflect the changes, just as if they were done at each workstation (subject to a refresh delay setting, which can be used to prevent numerous screen refreshes when the workstation is in use).

As mentioned in earlier sections, Campground Master does not depend on a shared database file for networking -- every computer must have its own copy of the database, preferably on its own hard drive. Networking is done entirely through TCP/IP communications, with simple notification messages. This is similar to the way "Chat" programs like ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, or MSN Messenger program work. Therefore it can work just as well through the Internet as it does through a local area network.

Naturally it's important to keep changes synchronized and to prevent two workstations from making different changes to the same information at the same time. This is achieved through three mechanisms -- record locks, sequence numbers, and logs.

Record Locks

Before any changes can be made to a record in the database, it must be "locked" by the workstation. All locks are requested through the master workstation (which also acts as the network server). If a record is already locked by another workstation, then the lock request will be denied, and the operator at that workstation will be informed that it can't be edited. If the lock is granted, then editing proceeds normally. For the most part this is transparent to the operator as long as there is no conflicting locks, except for a small delay when requesting the lock (e.g. before the editing dialog is opened).

Once the editing is complete, the changes are sent to the master workstation for distribution to the other workstations, and the locks are released so other workstations can edit the record if needed. If a workstation gets disconnected or goes down while it has records locked, these locks will be "stuck" in the master workstation -- but they will be cleared automatically when the workstation comes back online, or they can be manually cleared at the master workstation by an administrator function.

Sequence Numbers

Whenever changes are made, they are tagged with a sequence number and logged, as well as sent to the master workstation. If changes are missed for any reason, the gap in sequence numbers will be detected. The master workstation will request any missed changes from a workstation and will make sure they are applied in the correct order. Likewise, the master makes sure that a workstation is up to date before allowing it to lock any record, so that data integrity is maintained. Sequence numbers are checked often (along with the "heartbeat"), so a change missed due to network problems (extremely rare, but possible) will be quickly detected and corrected.

The other benefit of logging changes with sequence numbers is that it can allow automatic synchronization after a workstation has been offline. For instance, if you could call in to your network via the internet from home, all changes since the last time your home workstation was connected will be synchronized automatically. Likewise, you could work offline (preferably after getting synchronized), then call in to the network -- all of your changes will be downloaded to the master and the database will be synchronized.

If a workstation cannot be synchronized for any reason, there is a fail-safe mechanism -- the entire database can be transferred from the master to a workstation. This will be done automatically if the master can't find all of the changes needed by a workstation (e.g. if the log file becomes corrupt due to a computer crash), or it can be done manually any time if the workstation doesn't seem to have the correct data. Note that this can only be done *from* the master workstation -- if a client workstation, rather than the master workstation, is determined to have the only "good" copy of the database, then it must be transferred manually to the master and then synchronized to the other clients.

Logs

Sequence numbers indicate when changes are missed, but in order for a workstation to "catch up" on missed changes, they must be logged so that they can be retrieved. Each workstation maintains log files of all changes, both for its own workstation and for all other workstations. Thus if changes are requested for a specific range of sequence numbers, it can read them from the log and send them to the requesting workstation. If the log entries for the requested sequence numbers can't be found, the only recourse is to refresh the entire database -- this will be done automatically when needed, but can cause a significant delay. Therefore make sure that history logging is enabled and that disk space doesn't run out.

A new log file will be started each day, and named according to the database name, date, and workstation ID. Log files are automatically deleted after a specified number of days to keep disk space to a minimum, but you should keep logs for at least 7 days if possible. Another reason to keep logs for a longer period is that they can serve as a complete audit trail. Every single change to the database is recorded, and every entry has the date, time, and operator responsible for the change. The logs are in tab-delimited text format, so they can be examined if necessary (some knowledge of the database structure is required).   In addition, network problems could be diagnosed by comparing the logs of different workstations.

You can optionally log record locks and unlocks as well as the changes. While this is not required for any functionality (and in fact will make other functions slower and use more disk space), it can be useful for diagnostic purposes if a software bug is suspected. In general, you can leave this option turned off.

Finally, one great side-benefit of the logs is the ability to completely recover after a crash, even if the crash destroys the database. As long as the log files are intact (for at least one workstation), you can restore from a previous backup and have Campground Master automatically re-apply all changes made since the backup was made.

Online Setup

Overview

This section describes online (Internet) related setup functions. The functionality for sending E-mail confirmations is covered here, but the Online Reservations functionality is covered in a completely separate chapter.

SMTP (Send mail) Setup

To enable E-mail confirmations, the appropriate settings need to be configured first (in Maintenance / Online Setup / SMTP Setup). This enables sending E-mail messages from within Campground Master. (SMTP stands for "Simple Mail Transfer Protocol", which is the current standard E-mail system used on the Internet.) These settings are similar to configuring most E-mail applications in Windows, like Microsoft Outlook.

To use the E-mail confirmation function, Campground Master must be able to access an SMTP mail server via the internet. It may not work directly with web-based E-mail like Hotmail or Yahoo unless they also have an SMTP server available (check with your E-mail provider). However if there is an SMTP server available to you, for instance though your web site provider, then that can be used. America Online also has an SMTP server available now (see below).

SMTP Settings

In most cases, you will only need to enter one thing in the Server section, which is the Host name/address. The rest of the settings default to the most common values. The host name/address is usually "mail" or "smtp" followed by your ISP or web host domain name. A couple examples are below:

> **smtp.mywebsite.com**   (for instance if you have your own domain name for your web site)
> **mail.myisp.net**   (for instance if you do E-mail through an ISP like Earthlink)

Most SMTP servers use port number 25, no authentication, and the other settings as shown by default in the SMTP Setup dialog.

If you have any questions about the proper settings to use in SMTP Setup, please contact your internet provider.

Of course your name & E-mail address also need to be entered in the Sender section -- this is used as both the "From" and the "Reply-To" for every E-mail you send. Optionally you can have it use the Park's Name and Park's E-mail address, as defined for the Park (or Parks) through Park Setup. This is useful if you have more than one park set up in the database, and want to use a different Reply address in confirmations depending on which park it's for. (If an E-mail is sent to a customer without reference to a reservation, the park specified as the Park shown on non-reservation receipts will be used, and that setting is specific to each workstation.) Note that you still need to fill in a default Name and E-mail address here, in case an the Park record doesn't have the E-mail field filled it.

You can use the **Test** button on this Setup dialog to test your settings by sending an E-mail to yourself.

America Online Settings

If you use America Online for your Internet access, there is an SMTP server available for you to use. The following Server settings should be used:

Host Name/Address: **smtp.aol.com**
Port Number: **587** (although 25 may also work for the port)
Authentication method: **AUTH LOGIN**
Username :   **(your AOL screen name)**
Password :   **(your AOL password)**

Also, the Sender E-mail address should be in the Internet format (your AOL screen name followed by "@aol.com"), such as: **myscreenname@aol.com**. Note that any spaces in your screen name must be removed, so "My Screen Name" would become MyScreenName@aol.com.

Using the SMTP function to send E-mail

Once the SMTP configuration is done (particularly the Sender and Server information as mentioned above), then a new button will be available on the Reservation Transactions dialog for any reservation that's not yet checked in (it assumes there's no need for a confirmation once they're checked in). Likewise, it will appear when you use Quote/Confirmation from the Reservation Details dialog.

You can also send E-mail messages to customers using the blue E-mail "link" on Customer Details (like before, but now it uses the built in E-mailing instead of opening the default E-mail program in Windows).

Important: Campground Master does not keep any record of E-mails sent. Instead, you can set a blind-copy address (BCC all mail to) so that all outgoing E-mails are also sent to another account (e.g. your own E-mail account) for your records. We suggest setting up a special mailbox with your web provider or ISP for these copies, for easy reference.

Confirmation E-mail Text & Options

You can configure the E-mail confirmation letter text similar to the options for printed confirmation letters. This configuration is done through Maintenance / Online Setup.

The first option enables a preview of the confirmation E-mail before sending. This is recommended, especially if you might want to add special notes to the message for each customer. It will open an E-mail window where you can edit the text or subject of the E-mail as needed before sending.

The Subject for the E-mails should be something fairly generic, but also something that should catch the customer's attention. For instance, include the name of your campground so they know what it's about.

The Letter text may be any length. You can also add line breaks, blank lines, etc. using the Enter key just like typing a letter. The Bottom text can also be any length.

There is also an option to show only the deposit paid and balance due on the confirmation letters, in case you don't want to show details. In addition, when using this option you can show how many adults and children the rate is based on (since the transactions detail information is not shown, this might be important).

Receipt Printer Direct to Port Settings

This function is actually found under <u>File</u> / <u>Printer Setup</u>, rather than the Maintenance menu, for the sake of printer setup consistency.

Most receipt printers work best when the text is sent directly to the interface port, rather than using a Windows printer driver. To enable this option, simply check the "Direct-to-port printing enabled" box on this dialog and select the interface type below. Once this is enabled, an additional 3" receipt printer receipt style will be available for direct-to-port printing.

<u>Interface port</u> -- select the port that the printer is connected to. If it uses a parallel port, that's usually "lpt1".

<u>Baud, Parity, Data bits, Stop bits</u> -- These only apply if a serial port is selected (com1 through com4). Enter the appropriate values according to your receipt printer manual. (Most are set up for 9600 baud, no parity, 8 data bits, 1 stop bit.)

Cash Drawer Setup

This configuration function, accessed through the *<u>Maintenance</u>* menu, is used to set up the options and hardware commands required to open an electronic cash drawer.

Most cash drawers are connected through the receipt printer, and are opened with a command to the same port or by printing a commands in a special font to the printer. Either of these methods is supported, as well as interfacing directly to a cash drawer without a receipt printer (provided the cash drawer has a serial or parallel interface). Selecting the method of commanding the cash drawer, assuming more than one method is available, can involve some experimentation to see which method operates it faster.

Generally the direct approach is best -- that is, command it directly to the hardware port. This will also be the fastest, especially if the cash drawer can be connected to a separate port without a receipt printer involved. On the other hand, if the cash drawer is connected through a receipt printer there can be a significant delay even if it has a direct-to-port (pass-through) command option, depending on the version of Windows used and how the print spooler handles it. Of course if the receipt printer is connected to a different computer on the network and you're using printer-sharing in access the printer, then the only option is to command it through the printer.

Another factor is whether you're printing all of your receipts to the receipt printer -- if so, then it's best to command it through the printer driver, so the command can be sent at the same time as the receipt instead of as a separate command. If you don't print a receipt but open the drawer through the printer driver, this often results in the paper being scrolled one line each time you open the drawer. In this case, it's better to command it directly through the hardware port if possible.

Networking note: These settings are separate for each workstation, and are specifically *not* synchronized when a *Network Functions* / *Synchronize local options* is performed. If you have more than one workstation on a network, each one must be set up individually (so they can have different brands of equipment on different workstations if required).

<u>Cash drawer is present</u> -- Obviously this should be checked if you want the software to command the drawer. The function to Open Cash Drawer will only appear on the dialogs if this is checked, and it will only open automatically when printing a receipt if this is checked.   All other settings are disabled unless this is checked. Note that if a cash drawer is removed, or the database is moved to a computer without a cash drawer, it's a good idea to uncheck this so it won't sent cash drawer commands to the port, possibly resulting in affecting other devices like a printer or modem that's now connected to the same port number.

Show an "Opening Cash Drawer" message while opening drawer -- Check this option if there is a delay opening the drawer (some printer drivers can cause a few seconds' delay). This simply serves as an indication that it did send the command, so you don't have to wonder while you wait.

Send command directly to the hardware port (RECOMMENDED) -- Select this to send the command directly to the port. This is the recommended option since it's fast and won't feed extra paper, and doesn't require a receipt printer driver to be installed. This can be used whether or not the drawer is attached to a receipt printer, assuming the printer has a special pass-through command to open the drawer. Of course if the drawer is attached directly to a serial or parallel port, this is the only option you can use. Several examples are listed at the bottom of the dialog.

Baud, Parity, Data bits, Stop bits -- These only apply if commanding through the port and if it's a serial port (com1 through com4). Enter the appropriate values according to your cash drawer or receipt printer manual.

Send command through the 3" receipt printer driver -- Select this to send the command through the Windows printer driver, but as text printed in a special font. For instance, Epson printers can be commanded to open the drawer if an 'A' character is sent in the "control" font. Note that this always sends it to the printer designated for the 3" receipt printer (under File / Printer Setup), even if you're printing a receipt to a different printer. It also requires the special printer driver from the receipt printer manufacturer.

When printing a receipt.... -- This selection simply determines when (and if) you want the command to be sent automatically when a receipt is printed. Usually you want it to be sent before the receipt text is printed, so the drawer opens immediately. However this can be changed as needed (it may even be necessary to send it after the text for it to work properly with your printer). Note that it doesn't matter which receipt format you're printing -- even if you print a full-page receipt to a laser printer, the cash drawer command will be sent separately to open the drawer, even if it's connected through a receipt printer.

Open drawer immediately after a payment is entered -- Select this option particularly if you don't always print receipts, but want the drawer to open (and any change due shown) as soon as a Payment is entered on the Transactions or POS dialog. This will open the drawer for any payment, refund, or deposit transaction, regardless of the payment method.

Characters to send -- This is the most critical part of course. Refer to your printer or cash drawer manual if your printer isn't one of the examples listed on the dialog. The command string must be entered as a string of decimal numbers separated by commas. (Plain text entry is not possible because most command codes use non-printable characters.)

Test -- After everything is set up the way you think it should work, click the Test button to send the specified commands. If it works, you're done. If not, you have more experimenting to do.

Credit Card Processing Setup

This section primarily applies if you plan to process credit cards directly through the software when making payments, instead of using a separate credit card terminal.

Processing credit cards through the software helps keeps a record of credit card information, avoids duplicate entry into a separate terminal (and possible mistakes), and assures that credit card payments can't be recorded without the credit card charge being approved.

Note: There are two options on this dialog that can apply even if you don't process credit cards through Campground Master. One is the CVV2 Enabled option, which you can select to allow CVV2 entry with the credit card information. The other option is for setting the number of tracks supported by a credit card mag-stripe reader, if you're using one.

Processing Software

Credit card processing is supported through 3rd-party authorization processing software. The processing software is required to handle the actual communication with the merchant bank, which is only possible with certain licensed providers.

Note: If you're outside the U.S., this may not be available depending on the software and your merchant account. This is only guaranteed to work in the U.S. at this time, although Canada merchants may be supported in some cases.

Campground Master is currently compatible with two different products:

X-charge -- This is our provider of choice, and integrates seamlessly with Campground Master. There is no charge for this integration no matter how many workstations you have, and it works in conjunction with their own merchant services (so support for both the software and the merchant services are provided by the same company). Their discount rates are very competitive (they can provide you with a detailed comparison to your existing merchant statement), and it's simple to get set up. Contact us to find out more. (U.S. only at this time.)

ICVerify --   This software is sold separately from merchant services and can be used with most existing U.S. merchant processors. While we do support its format, we only recommend this option if you don't have the ability to change your merchant provider. Important -- if you're using more than one workstation (networking), then you must use the Multi-user version of IC Verify. If you have more workstations than the multi-user version supports, you may have to buy multiple copies of the software (and have multiple phone lines) to support all of your workstations.

Whichever processing software you use must be installed and running at the same time as Campground Master. This must be on the same computer or a computer that is accessible through a mapped network drive. In a networked environment, this only needs to be running on one computer, which should either be the Master workstation or one that the master can see through a mapped drive.

Campground Master communicates with the processing software using a "request/answer file". Essentially this means that an authorization request is written to a file, the processing software picks it up, processes it, and puts the response back in another file that Campground Master reads. All you need to do is tell Campground Master where this directory is located (which is determined by the processing software).

Hardware

The computer with the processing software will also need to have a dial-up modem. We recommend an external serial-port modem for ease of support and safety (lightning strikes to telephone lines can destroy a computer if the modem is internal, because the wire goes straight into the computer with no isolation). We recommend US Robotics serial-interface modems.

You will also probably want a mag-stripe reader for swiping credit cards -- not only does this save a lot of time and eliminates mistakes, most merchant services also offer a much lower discount rate for swiped cards. Keyboard-wedge interfaced readers work best (these connect in-line with your keyboard and don't occupy other ports), although a USB reader that simulates keystrokes can be used. The reader must support either Track 1 or Track 1&2 reading. We recommend the ID Tech mini-mag reader, model number IDT3331-12. Magtek makes a similar "mini-wedge" reader. Note that the reader should be set to either include a CR/LF after each track or the "sentinel" characters, or both. (Do not use the Tab character as a delimiter.) These settings are usually set with dip switches on the bottom of the reader.

It's also a good idea to use a 3" receipt printer, especially for printing the credit card signature slips. These can be set up to print automatically on the receipt printer when the credit card payment is processed, separately from the customer's receipt. A normal full-size printer can also be used for the credit card slips, but it's not as convenient.

Any receipt printer with a Windows driver can be used, or any printer connected directly to the parallel or serial port. We recommend either a serial or parallel interface, depending on what ports your computer has available. Examples of receipt printers that work well are:
- TMU220PD-103   Epson U200 series, a basic impact printer
- SP512MC42-120 STAR SP500, a fast impact printer
- TMT-88III   Epson TM-88III, a fast thermal printer

Before printing credit card slips, you should go to File / Printer Setup to configure the printer (especially if using a 3" receipt printer). See the chapter "*Setting up your Campground Database*" for details.

Basic Integration Setup

There are just a few steps required to set up Campground Master for integration with IC Verify or X-Charge. Below are the steps for setting up a single-user setup or the master workstation in a networked setup:

1. Make sure the processing software's "server" or "master" is running, and configured to pick up the request/answer files. In IC Verify, this may require starting a special "multi-user" process and configure it appropriately. In X-Charge, this should be enabled automatically.
2. Locate the path for the request/answer files. (In X-Charge, open the X-Charge server window and click the "Setup" button to see the Transaction folder.)
3. In Campground Master, go to Maintenance / Credit Card Processing Setup, and check the "Enable..." box
4. Enter the request/answer file path from step 2 in the corresponding field.
5. Select the type of processing software used (X-Charge or IC Verify).
6. Enter a user number, using 1 for the master (this is already set to 1 by default).
7. Select other options as desired (see below).

For networked setups, there are only a couple steps for setting up the Campground Master clients:

1. Go to Maintenance / Credit Card Processing setup, check "Enable...",
2. Enter a unique user number (starting at 2 for the first client, since the master will be 1),
3. Select "Send processing requests to the Master workstation".
4. Select any other options desired.

IMPORTANT -- We recommend setting X-Charge or IC Verify to dial just 1 time (no retries), to minimize the time it takes to give up -- you can always retry from Campground Master if necessary. **If Campground Master times out while the processing software is still trying to connect, this will result in duplicate charges to the customer's credit card!** If you ever get a time-out message in Campground Master while the processing software is still attempting to connect, increase the time-out setting. (And be sure to void the extra charge through the processing software's interface.) You can also eliminate the risk of duplicate charges by setting the option in the X-Charge Server to reject duplicate charges -- but then if you have a legitimate duplicate charge you would have to work around this.

Setup Option Details

These options are primarily related to the actual processing software and mag-stripe reader. See Maintenance / Printing Options / Credit Cards for options related to what information is printed on receipts.

Enable credit card processing -- This option must be enabled to set any other options, and to enable the "Process" function on the payment entry dialogs.

This workstation's "User" number -- This determines the file name used for the request/answer file. This is normally 1, but if you have multiple workstations then each one will have to have a different number. Note that the lowest user number for the processing software is 1, not 0 -- so don't use 0 like you do for the networking ID.

Send processing requests to the Master workstation -- If you're using multiple workstations, and if this is not the master workstation, you can choose this option if only the Master workstation has access to the processing software's request/answer file directory. This allows you to use multiple workstations even if you're going through the internet, and it also eliminates the need to have mapped network drives between all computers. It does add a slight delay, however, so if you are able to access the master's drive directly then it may be better to use the direct path instead. Note that the credit card information is scrambled when sent between workstations for security (as well as in database and log files).

Process using path on this workstation (or a network path visible to it) -- This is the only option for single workstations or the master workstation. If it's a networked workstation, then you could still use this option for slightly faster processing if the required path is visible to this computer.

Path to request/answer files -- If this field is enabled, you must designate the path where the processing software expects to find the request/answer files. You can use the Browse to select the appropriate folder, or type it in manually.

Processing software used -- Select the brand of processing software being used, so Campground Master knows the proper format needed to communicate with it.

Time-out for processing -- Enter how many seconds to wait for a response. This should allow enough time for the processing software to dial, process, and return a response. This only applies if using the path option to directly communicate with the processing software. If it's sending requests to the master workstation, the master's time-out value is used. Note that in a multiple-workstation environment, you should allow extra time in case it's busy with another workstation's request.

WARNING -- The time-out value is only intended as a fail-safe in case the processing software fails or is not running. Make sure the time-out value is sufficient for the processing software to give up **before** Campground Master times out. We recommend setting X-Charge or IC Verify to dial just 1 time (no retries), to minimize the time it takes to give up -- you can always retry from Campground Master if necessary. **If Campground Master times out while the processing software is still trying to connect, this will result in duplicate charges to the customer's credit card!**

Expiration date format for processor -- This setting depends on the settings in the processing software. This is usually YYMM, but some processing software allows it to be changed.

AVS enabled -- You can set this if you want to use (and your processor supports) Address Verification. The Zip code and Address information will be included in the authorization request if it's available, and the response will show the AVS response. Due to differences in processing software responses, you also need to indicate whether the AVS response is included when the authorization is not approved, and if the response is included when there was no address information sent. These are pre-set according to the processing software selected above, but if you see responses with extra or missing letters in them, then these setting can be adjusted as needed.

CVV2/CVC enabled -- You can set this if you want to enter a CVV2/CVC code for credit card payments (the extra 3-digit code on the back of some credit cards, or the 4-digit CID code on the front of American Express cards). If your credit card processor supports CVV2, the response will be shown for this also. As with AVS, the responses expected from the processing software may be adjusted as needed.

Void transactions must be done directly with the processing software -- Normally you can do Voids directly in Campground Master by deleting the payment (or refund) transaction, and it will be processed accordingly. However, in some cases the processing software may not allow voids to be handled through Campground Master, so this option would be checked to allow voids to be deleted without processing. Do not check this option unless you always get an error message when trying to Void a transaction!

Forced Sales enabled -- If your processor enables forced sales (entering an approval code obtained by voice authorization), and you want your clerks to be able to do this, then check this option. An extra "Forced" button will appear on the payment entry dialog allowing you to do a forced sale.

Process swiped cards automatically -- This option saves a step when swiping cards -- as soon as the card is read (successfully), it will submit the payment for processing so you don't have to click the Process button. Note that if you select this option, you must enter CVV2/CVC code and/or address information **before** swiping the card!

Automatically close payment dialog if the transaction is approved -- This option can save yet another step. As long as the transaction is approved, the dialog will immediately close without requiring you to "OK" the approval message. The only drawback is that you won't be able to see the AVS or CVV2/CVC response codes.

Include billing address entry fields if AVS is enabled -- If you use AVS, Campground Master will automatically get the address information from a customer's record whenever possible. However if the customer record is not filled out yet, or if you're entering unbound/POS transactions with no customer information, you may want to enter this information manually. This option adds Zip/address entry fields that can be filled in when needed. You can also verify/change the information before processing as needed.

Card reader supports 2 tracks of data -- if you're using a magnetic strip reader and it's a Track 1&2 reader, this option should be selected so that the program knows to expect 2 tracks of data before processing it. If you want to include both tracks of data to the processing software, you can select that option also (but it's not required).

Shift Report

This function only appears if Shift functionality is enabled. See Define Data Fields for details on how to enable Shift Functionality.

This function creates a special report that summarizes the activities of the current shift. If you have manager access, you can also view reports from one or more past shifts, and summarize them if desired.

Note that unlike the Transactions tab view, this report does not update dynamically. If you need to refresh it, you can click the Refresh button.

The Shift Report consists of two main sections -- Sales and Receipts. The Sales section is essentially the same as the Transactions tab view Quick Report for "Transactions by Category", showing the total charges for each category. (The main difference is that both the Normal Text and Long Text of the transaction categories pick list are shown.)

The Receipt section contains information that would normally take 5 different reports to generate. First it reports Payments, Deposits and Refunds separately for each Payment Method you have defined. Next it shows the change in advance deposits, which is basically new deposits less deposits applied. (This is shown inverted so it offsets the Deposits received.) Finally it shows the change in the A/R balance. If all goes well, the Cash Receipt Total and the Sales Total will be the same figure.

After these sections are some additional totals:

- Deposit Amount -- this is the total amount of cash, checks, and credit card receipts (plus any other payment methods). Basically the total receipts for the shift.

- Total Advance Deposits -- this is the total unapplied deposit balance for all reservations and customers.

- Total AR Balance - this is the total A/R balance (balance due from customers, not including unapplied deposits).

Shift Change

This function only appears if Shift functionality is enabled. See Define Data Fields for details on how to enable Shift Functionality.

Each time you want to close out a shift, use this function to change the shift number. By default, it will simply increment the shift number (and this is the only option unless you have manager access). If you have manager access, you can change the number to anything you want.

There is also an option to save the current database to a separate backup file on the hard drive. The backup will be renamed to contain the shift number and date, so any number of backups can be made to the same location on the hard drive.

If you have networking enabled, this can only be done on the Master workstation. It also makes sure that no other workstations have records locked (dialogs open), and will prevent any other workstation from accessing records until the shift change is completed.

To complete the shift change, simply click the OK button. The backup will be saved if needed (and a prompt displayed showing the name of the backup), and the shift will be changed.

New Database (clear all)

This will close the current database and initialize the software for creating a new database. Administrator access is required to use this function, as it is usually only done once when creating the campground database and never done again.

All of the data tables will be emptied, default fields will be enabled, and default pick lists will be set up. The operator list will also be reset to having one Administrator operator, which will be logged in automatically so you can continue with setup.

You will be prompted for a name to give the database, which will also be the file name used for it. This new database file will be stored in the Campground Master program folder (the exact location depends on the installation, but it's usually in C:\Program Files\Campground Master\). From now on, that will be the default database, opened automatically when Campground Master is started (unless the "Demo" icon is used to start it).

Using New Database is not terribly dangerous because it's not easy to write this new database over your old one (you would have to select the name of the old one manually, and then it will warn you about it), but it's not something that should be done without a good reason.

Purge Old Data

This function allows purging of transactions and reservations prior to a given date, to decrease database size and speed up reporting functions. If your computer does not have a lot of memory or your database gets very large, you may find that the functions slow down significantly after awhile. This means that the database is too large for your RAM and must be used from disk, which is thousands of times slower. This is the reason we suggest 512MB or RAM for extended use -- for most parks this will be enough to hold many years of data without the need to purge.

The Purge dialog consists of a prior-to date, several options that determine what type of data is purged, and a file name for doing an automatic backup of the data before purging. Be aware that the purge operation cannot be cancelled once the "Purge" button is pressed, and cannot be undone except by reloading a backup!

Purge data prior to:

This date designates the age of the data to be purged (and what will remain "live"). It defaults to the beginning of "last year", which could actually be anywhere from one year ago to almost 2 years ago. We recommend keeping at least 1 full year of data if possible for reporting reasons. If this is not possible, you can adjust the date as needed. If you have several years of data then you can also elect to purge farther back, keeping more data "live".

One thing to note about the date is how it's used when purging -- when purging reservation transactions (and/or the reservations themselves), they will only be purged for reservations that ended prior to the given date. Therefore any reservations ending after that date will retain its complete history, even if some of the transactions happened prior to the date. However, customer transactions and unbound transactions will be purged as long as the transaction happened before that date. (Therefore a customer might have some of its transactions purged, but not others that were for a reservation ending more recently.)

Backup prior to purging:

Unless you clear out this field, a backup will be made prior to the purge function. We recommend that you **also** do a manual backup, just in case this file cannot be written for some reason. By default, it will put the backup in the same folder as your current database, and will use the same name with "backup as of yyyy-mm-dd" appended to it. Once the purge is done, you can reload that file at a later time to access the historical (purged) data. It's important to note that the backup file will be the complete database as of the time you perform the purge, rather than *just* the purged data.

IMPORTANT: If you do multiple purge operations on the same day (for instance with different options), the default file name will be used each time -- this will overwrite the original backup with the "newer" database, so the original purged data will be lost! Be sure to double-check the file name and change it if necessary to avoid overwriting an existing backup. You will be warned that the file already exists and can cancel the operation, but you need to be aware of why it's important to not overwrite it.

What will be purged

You can purge transactions, reservations, and customers.

Generally you will **not** want to purge customers, since that's your core customer database. In extreme memory conditions you may elect to purge the ones that have not been used for a long time, but otherwise it's not recommended.

Transactions primarily dictate what can be purged. Only transactions that "balance" will be purged (i.e. no balance is due for the reservation or customer), and the associated reservation or customer can only be purged if all of its transactions are purged. Therefore any old reservations or customers with outstanding balances (usually due to forgetting to enter a payment) will remain forever unless they are manually "cleaned up". The Payments Due tab report can be used for finding unbalanced reservations and customers.

You can choose which transactions are purged -- unbound, customer, or reservation transactions. For instance, you may decide to only purge unbound transactions (generally counter sales) and leave any bound to customers and reservations for historical purposes. Or you can purge customer-only transactions (also usually counter sales), or all reservation transactions.

In addition to the transactions, you can purge the actual reservations that ended prior to the date. Again, this will only be done if the reservation "balances". Any transactions for the reservation will be purge automatically, whether you selected the option to purge reservation transactions separately or not.

Finally, customers who don't have any reservations or transactions can also be purged if desired, to help clean out old customers who don't return often. This is done *after* any other selected purgings above, so if all of its transactions and reservations are purged now, then it will also be purged now. There is also an option to only purge customers that have "never" had any transactions or reservations. If this is selected, it will check the "prior" transaction and reservation figures (explained below), and keep the customer if it has any history -- therefore, even if the customer's transactions and reservations are purged, it will be kept because it had history prior to the purge. This can be useful for cleaning out customers who were entered or imported from an old database but never returned since the software has been in use.

When all of the options are set the way you want, and you're sure you have a backup, you can click the "Purge!" button. The purge should only take a few seconds, and a dialog will show how many records of each type were purged.

Keeping prior totals

Although the records are purged, a few "prior" balances are maintained for historical purposes.

When transactions are purged for reservations or customers, the total amount of payments made in those transactions will be saved (as a single value) and will show up on the Transactions History. This is also added to any total from prior purges. Thus you can still get an idea of how much revenue each customer/reservation has been responsible for.

When reservations are purged, their customers will retain a running total of the number of days-stayed and number of reservations purged. This will show on the Reservation History dialog as a quick reference to show how much business they did in the past that's not still "live".

Keeping balances

Deposit and Accounts Receivable balances (if you use them) are maintained by making "Adjustment" transaction entries automatically. Generally this is only necessary when purging Unbound transactions, which don't have to balance to be purged, since the net balance for purged reservation and customer transactions should be zero. The "Operator" name for these adjustments will indicate that it's an automatic adjustment due to a purge.

Raw Data Tables

Each of the <u>Raw Data Tables</u> selections of the <u>Maintenance</u> menu will open a dialog with a grid showing one of the complete data tables. If you've been using the system for awhile, be sure you have some time to wait if you open the Reservation or Transactions tables, as these can be large and slow to open. These dialogs can only be accessed by an operator with Administrator access.

In general, these data table functions should be used only by someone who is very familiar with the database, because they contain some internal fields that aren't normally seen and major damage can be done if things are changed or records deleted. On the other hand, this is the only place that some database "corrections" can be done. This manual won't cover any specifics about this, but access to these tables may be required when calling for support. Each table has an <u>Allow Editing of Fields</u> check box, which is disabled by default, so that the tables can be browsed without worry.

That said, there are some good uses for the data tables for certain tasks.

Uses for the Data Tables

One potential use for the data tables is to print a list of customers, for instance. You need to use caution because the grid printout can be very large and will result in a report several pages "wide" as well as "tall". You can minimize the printing by using the Print Preview to figure out which pages are of interest. Then when you Print you can enter the start and end pages. If you need pages that are not in continuous range, like 1, 5, and 9, then you need to do three separate Print operations with the start and end pages both set to 1, then both set to 5, then both set to 9.

The grid on data table dialogs can be sorted by any column by clicking on the column header. This can make them potentially useful for finding a particular record, since all fields are available to sort by.

The Sites data table can be very useful if you are setting up your sites and have a lot of site information to enter. Because the grids used here allow you to copy many fields at a time, and make many copies of a field, it can dramatically speed up the process. For instance, it can take only a few seconds to set hundreds of Site Type fields to the same value.

You may have noticed that the Parks table is not represented in the Raw Data Tables menu. This is because the Parks setup requires special handling due to the authorization codes, and cannot be manually edited.

Aside from the uses mentioned above, no changes to data tables should be attempted without consulting with the Cottonwood Software support staff first.

Working with Data Tables

The Data Tables dialogs themselves are very similar to the Pick List dialogs. There is a grid for the table with one record in each row. The controls are the same as well, except that only the Sites table has the Move Up and Move Down buttons (records in the other tables have no reason to be moved).

You will also see a new check box on some of them: <u>Show Links as Index values</u>. When this is selected, any fields that use relation links to other tables (for instance the Site field in Reservations) will show the numeric index value instead of the human-readable form (e.g. the site name). This is for troubleshooting purposes only.

Warning -- Remember that the Sites table and the Operators table are the only ones that are reasonably safe to edit here. The other tables are generated by the software and should only be edited by an expert.

Warning -- There is no Cancel button -- any change you make to the tables is instant and permanent. This also applies to Deleting records.

Editing data tables is basically the same as for pick lists. One thing that can be useful, particularly on the Sites table, is the multi-copy operations. You can do two different kinds of multi-cell copying that can be useful.

Copying one value to multiple cells

This can be used to copy a cell to multiple cells in a column, multiple cells in a row, or a combination (multiple rows and columns in a rectangle).

> 1. Highlight one cell to copy (click on it once, it should change to a dark blue background).
> 2. Press **Ctrl-C** (or **Ctrl-Insert**) to copy that cell to the Windows clipboard.
> 3. Move the cursor to (or click on) the upper left cell you want to paste to so all are highlighted.
> 4. Use **Shift-arrows** to move to (or **Shift**-click on) the lower right cell you want to paste into.
> 5. Press **Ctrl-V** (or **Shift-Insert**) to paste the value into all highlighted cells.

Note that if it doesn't work, it may be that one or more cells in the range does not accept the copied text as a valid value. (Cell validation is done each time you change a cell, which could abort the entire paste operation.) Also make sure you have the <u>Allow Editing of Fields</u> box checked.

Copying multiple cells at once

This allows you to highlight a range of cells in a row or column or rectangle and copy them all to another location as a group. It can only make one copy of the cells at a time, however (e.g. you can't highlight one column and copy it to multiple columns at once).

> 1. Highlight the upper left cell to copy (click on it once).
> 2. Move the cursor to (or click on) the lower right cell to copy, so cells all are highlighted.
> 3. Press **Ctrl-C** (or **Ctrl-Insert**) to copy that cell to the Windows clipboard.
> 4. Click on the destination cell for the upper left cell copied.
> 5. Press **Ctrl-V** (or **Shift-Insert**) to paste all of the copied cells as a group.

Note that the copied cells are still on the clipboard after the paste, so if you need to paste multiple groups then you can repeat steps 4 and 5 over and over as needed. This is useful for copying many fields in one record to multiple other records.

Database Maintenance

Overview

The database maintenance functions are miscellaneous functions you can use occasionally to check the database for anomalies or make manual corrections. Database anomalies like bad links, orphaned transactions, etc. could occur as a result of internal program errors, accidental deletion of records through Raw Data Tables or Pick lists, database corruption due to a computer crash, or improperly restoring from a backup database.

Except for the balance adjustment functions, it's a good idea to run through these every few weeks just to make sure no problems are occurring that need to be corrected. The "orphan" functions and the bad-links function can correct the database automatically. Unmatched transfers need to be manually corrected.

Most of these functions require administrator access (at least to make any changes), but the Orphan and Unmatched Transfer reports can be viewed with Manager access so they can at least be monitored more readily.

Networking note: Since some of these functions require a large number of records to be locked and modified, it's recommended that you perform these only on the Master workstation.

Deposit Balance Adjustment

This Administrator-only function, accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance*, is used to enter a manual adjustment to the overall Deposits balance. This balance is a running total of the amount of advance deposits received from customers than have not yet been "used", or applied toward reservation charges.

The dialog will show the current all-time totals for deposits received, deposits applied, any previous adjustments, and the current balance. When making an adjustment, you can either enter the adjustment amount (the new balance will change accordingly), or you can enter the new balance if you know it (the adjustment required will be calculated accordingly).

Either way, just click Save when finished, and the adjustment will be added as a new unbound transaction. As with other transactions, this adjustment will be tagged with the time, date, and operator. You can see the adjustment on the Transactions reports (tab view).

If you make a mistake you can either enter a new adjustment, or you can edit the transaction through the Transaction tab view (right-click on it, select Transactions).

A/R Balance Adjustment

This Administrator-only function, accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance,* is used to enter a manual adjustment to the overall Accounts Receivable balance. This balance is a running total of the amount of charges to customers than have not yet been paid.

The dialog will show the current all-time totals for charges (including taxes & discounts), payments received (reduced by refunds/credits), deposits applied, any previous A/R adjustments, and the current balance. When making an adjustment, you can either enter the adjustment amount (the new balance will change accordingly), or you can enter the new balance if you know it (the adjustment required will be calculated accordingly).

Either way, just click <u>Save</u> when finished, and the adjustment will be added as a new unbound transaction. As with other transactions, this adjustment will be tagged with the time, date, and operator. You can see the adjustment on the Transactions reports (tab view).

If you make a mistake you can either enter a new adjustment, or you can edit the transaction through the Transaction tab view (right-click on it, select Transactions).

Report and repair Orphaned Transactions

This pair of functions (one for Reservations and one for Customers), accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance,* will report and repair situations where a transaction is in the system and linked to a reservation, but the reservation's link to the transaction has been broken (or likewise for customers). In this case, it looks like everything is fine from the point of view of the Transactions tab view, reports, etc., but if you look at the Transactions for the reservation (e.g. through Reservation Details), the transaction does not show up and is not added to the balance. This is most likely due a program crash and/or incomplete database recovery.

If there are no orphans found, a simple message will appear saying there are no problems.

If any orphans do exist, each orphaned transaction will be shown in a list with the most relevant details. You should print this list before making any changes, just in case you find out later that fixing the problem causes balances to be incorrect. (This can result if the operator added the transaction again, after seeing it missing from the reservation.)

First you should check each transaction determine if it should be fixed or deleted. Double-clicking on the transaction will open the Transactions dialog for the given reservation or customer. Naturally, since it's orphaned, the transaction won't show up there. What you need to determine is whether the transaction should be there, or whether another transaction has already been added to replace it. Generally this can be determined by the balance due, but checking more details may be necessary.

If the transaction should be deleted (i.e. it would be a duplicate if it was fixed to show up on the reservation), then click the transaction in the list to highlight it, and click <u>Delete Selected Transactions</u>. If it should be fixed (i.e. you want it to show up on the reservation), then leave it in the list.

Once all transactions have been checked, then click the <u>Fix...</u> button at the bottom to fix any that are in the list. The links will be repaired automatically so the transactions will appear on their respective reservation or customer transaction lists.

Report and repair Orphaned Reservations

This function, accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance,* is very similar to the Orphaned Transactions function. It repairs internal database links where the reservation knows what customer it belongs to, but the customer does not show the reservation in its Reservation History. While this is only a minor problem since it won't affect any reports and will rarely be noticed, it should be corrected.

If there are no orphans found, a simple message will appear saying there are no problems.

If any orphans do exist, each orphaned reservation will be shown in a list with the most relevant details. Since it's most likely that an reservation orphans should be corrected (even if they were subsequently cancelled or checked out), it's recommended to simply click the <u>Fix...</u> button to correct all of the links. If you do want to make adjustments to the reservation first, you can double-click on it to go to Reservation Details.

Report Conflicting Reservations

While the program has many safeguards against double-bookings (reservation conflicts), they can happen if changes are made to raw data tables or when importing data from another system. This function, available through Maintenance / Database Maintenance, will check the entire database for any reservation conflicts and show them in a list that can be printed out. You can also view the reservation details and make corrections directly from the list.

There is also an option to include waiting-list reservations. While waiting-list reservations would usually not have a site assigned and thus could not conflict, there may be cases where a specific site was requested for the waiting list. Enabling this option will show any "conflicts", which in this context would mean that the requested site is still not available for the wait-listed reservation.

Reservations that are Cancelled will not be shown, nor will Inquiry, Can't Book, or Day Pass reservations. Guest and Owner reservations will not be shown because they are never considered "conflicts" (they can appear on the site at the same time as a normal reservation).

Report Unmatched Transfers

This function, accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance,* will list any Payment or Deposit Transfer transactions that appear to not have a "matching" transaction for the other side of the transfer. (Transfers always consist of two transactions -- a positive transfer in to a reservation or customer, and a negative transfer out of another reservation or customer.) Unmatched transfers can occur if a transfer is deleted and the operator does not answer "Yes" to the prompt to delete the other side (or in older software versions where this wasn't automatic), or due to program crashes with incomplete database recovery.

You should always Print the list before making corrections just in case you make a mistake and need to see what was there before.

There is no function to automatically correct unmatched transfers, so you will need to manually correct each one. This most likely means deleting it, and adding a new transfer if necessary. To make corrections, double-click on one of the transactions in the list to get to the reservation or customer Transactions dialog. From there you can investigate and correct the problem.

Repair <bad links>

This function, accessed through *Maintenance / Database Maintenance,* will check all of the records for having "bad links", which are essentially links to records or pick-list values that no longer exist. Bad links can be a result of deleting pick-list items already in use, improper editing of raw data tables, program errors, and computer crashes/lockups. While bad links normally cause no problems, it's a good idea to clean them up once in awhile just in case they affect some function in the future.

Note that when you use this function there will be one prompt asking you if you're sure you want to do it, and then it will be an instantaneous action (more or less). There is no way to cancel it once it starts, so it would be a good idea to do a backup beforehand just in case.

12   Point of Sale

Overview

Point of Sale, or "P.O.S.", is an added-cost option available for Campground Master. If you have not purchased this option, then this chapter can be completely ignored (none of the included functions will be available, unless you're using the sample database demo with the P.O.S. functions enabled). The simplest way to determine if you have purchased the P.O.S. option is look at the main menu of the program. If there is not a P.O.S. menu item after Transactions on the top menu bar, then your license does not include the P.O.S. option.

P.O.S. Summary

The goal of the P.O.S. functionality is primarily two-fold -- to take the place of a cash register, with bar-code scanning capabilities, and to provide inventory database functions. It's typically recommended for use in a store or registration office check-out counter that sees a fair amount of traffic with a large number of items sold, where the required rate of sales is too great to enter each item's charges manually. However it can greatly aid convenience and reduce errors even if only a dozen or so items are sold on a regular basis.

The P.O.S. functions are separate from the reservation functions in some ways, but they also fully integrate with Campground Master. P.O.S. transactions are combined for reporting and exporting to QuickBooks, and P.O.S. sales can be added to a customer or reservation receipt (by using the added "P.O.S." button to jump into P.O.S. sales-entry mode temporarily). It's basically just another function in Campground Master -- by default, the "cash register" icon will open the P.O.S. dialog for making sales, which is similar to the Transactions entry dialog but has inventory item scanning support and other features to aid in rapid sales. P.O.S. transactions are also seamlessly included in the Transaction tab view reports, with additional filtering and grouping options available for detailed inventory sales reporting.

The P.O.S. option also adds support for a bar-code scanner and pole display (both optional). The pole display is also used by the normal Transactions dialog for reservation check-in, etc., if the P.O.S. option is present. (While hardware support for a receipt printer, cash drawer, and credit card reader are also important for P.O.S. functions, those are included even without the P.O.S. option.)

The key features added by the P.O.S. option are:
- A cash-register-like interface for entering sales
- Bar-code scanner support
- Pole display support
- Inventory database for scanner support, price/descriptions, quantity on hand, etc.
- Automatic discount pricing based on several factors
- Inventory tracking and reporting functions
- Inventory reporting/filtering of Transactions
- Inventory import from CSV or tab-delimited text files
- Vendor purchase order printing, receiving and reporting

Setting Up For P.O.S. Use

You'll find most of the setup functions for P.O.S. in a special section of the Maintenance menu, with some settings appropriately located under new "P.O.S." tabs in Program Options and Printing Options. Setting up the P.O.S. falls into 3 general areas:

- Hardware setup
- Database fields and options setup
- Inventory setup (and/or importing from another database)

For complete information on setting these up, see the P.O.S. Setup section.

P.O.S. Functions

Overview

Basic P.O.S. functions include sales entry, reporting, and purchase order functions. Most of these can be found under the P.O.S. menu on the main menu bar. The one exception is transaction (sales) reporting, which is done using the Transactions tab view along with all other financial reports in Campground Master.

New Shortcuts and Helpful Tips

There are some new shortcut keys added for the P.O.S. functions:

- **Ctrl-T** -- Re-opens the last **Transactions** added or viewed (sales ticket)
- **Ctrl-I** -- Find **I**nventory
- **Ctrl-L** -- Find (**L**ook up) Receipt

Here are some other helpful keys you can use in various functions. They're not all new, but listed here as a refresher:

- **F4** -- This hasn't changed, it's still the same as clicking the cash register icon on the toolbar. But with the P.O.S. option it now opens the new Point of Sale dialog instead of the normal Unbound Transactions dialog (unless this is changed through Maintenance / Program Options / Functions). So at a busy P.O.S. workstation, you'll be using F4 a lot (or you should be), unless you prefer clicking the icon with the mouse.

- **F4** inside Transactions -- F4 also opens the P.O.S. dialog when you're inside the Transactions dialog for Reservations or Customers (same as clicking the P.O.S. button inside that dialog).

- **F8** -- Use this to print a receipt in th P.O.S. dialog (it also does the default Print function in just about any other dialog, as it did before).

- **Ctrl-Enter** -- This is the same as clicking the Done button (or Save) on most dialogs.

- **Esc** -- This is the same as clicking Cancel on most dialogs (or Close, if there is no Cancel button).

Sales Entry -- Point of Sale Dialog

The Point of Sale dialog is the "cash register" interface of the program, where you enter sales or return items.

This dialog can normally be opened with **Alt-.** (the Alt key with the period key), or with the **F4** key, or by clicking the cash register icon on the toolbar. (This depends on the settings in <u>Maintenance</u> / <u>Program Options</u> / <u>Functions</u> -- it might be set to open reservation transactions instead.) You can also open it from the menu, <u>P.O.S.</u> / <u>Sales Entry</u>.

Many of the functions in this dialog work the same as the Transactions dialog for reservations, customers, and unbound transactions. Functions that work the same won't be covered again here, like printing receipts, opening the cash drawer, viewing transaction details, entering payments and refunds, etc. -- see the main <u>Working with Transactions</u> chapter for the details of those functions.

This dialog has some special features to save time and support functions more like a cash register. It supports entering special charges, credits and discounts just like the Transactions dialog, but those can be disabled or restricted to certain operators to further simplify the interface.

Note that if this dialog is opened for previous transactions (a sale already completed), most functions will be disabled -- you can't add more inventory items or charges, and may not be able to delete any transactions. This is usually only done for reference purposes or to return items.

Entering sales for customers or reservations

If you want to add P.O.S. transactions to a reservation (to combine them with their reservation receipt for instance), or if you want to add the merchandise to the customer or reservation balance without entering payment in full at this time, then you can open the normal <u>Transactions</u> dialog for that reservation or customer first -- then click the <u>P.O.S.</u> button at the top of the Transactions dialog (or press **F4**).

Alternatively you can use the <u>Select Customer or Reservation account</u> button to choose where the POS transactions will go. You can do this any time before printing or closing the P.O.S. dialog. You can also <u>Change</u> the selected customer or reservation if necessary, but again this must be done before saving the transactions or printing a receipt.

If you find that you almost always want to apply P.O.S. transactions to reservations instead of anonymously, then you may want to change the settings so that the cash register icon (and the **F4** key) open Reservation transactions first. This will allow you to find the reservation to apply it to at that time. You can still enter anonymous P.O.S. sales by going through the P.O.S. menu when needed. Alternatively you could leave the settings for the cash register to do anonymous sales, but always use the Rack or On Site list to locate the reservation first, and right-click to get to its Transactions before entering P.O.S. sales.

Scanning or entering search terms

The main feature of the P.O.S. dialog (in fact the primary benefit of the P.O.S. system as a whole) is the easy selection of inventory items from the database and automatic addition of those items to the "ticket", with the price, taxes, and any applicable discounts. With the addition of a bar code scanner, and optionally a receipt printer, cash drawer and pole display, it becomes a fully functional cash register which is also tied into the inventory tracking. This is all handled through the simple "Scan" text entry box.

Note: If you prefer, you can allow sales entry with no inventory tracking at all. This would be done using the <u>Other Charges</u> button, with <u>Continuous entry</u> enabled. See below for details.

If you're using a bar code scanner, all you have to do is make sure the text cursor (a little blinking vertical line) is in the Scan box, then scan the item's bar code. The cursor is actually returned to the Scan box after every action, so you rarely have to worry about that in.

If you don't have a scanner, or if the item doesn't have a bar code, simply enter some word or partial word that should be part of its item code or description, like "ice" or "shirt", and press the **Enter** key.

When an item is scanned or a word is entered, one of four things can happen:

- If the item scanned is found in the database, and it's an exact match with the item's code, and it's the only exact match -- the item will be automatically added to the ticket, just like in store check-outs. The description and price will be shown, with any known discounts, and applicable taxes added at the bottom. If sounds are enabled, a beep will indicate that it was added automatically

- If more than one exact item code match is found (for instance if you have the same item listed more than once because it requires selection of color), then all matches will be shown in a list. If sounds are enabled, a different sound will indicate that your attention is required to select the appropriate item.

- If no exact match is found, it will check the database to see if the item code or description for any items contain the text or code you entered (a partial match). If any partial matches are found, they will be listed for you to select one. Note that even if only one partial match is found, it will not be automatically added because it's only a partial match -- you must confirm it by selecting it from the list.

- If no exact match or partial match is found, the selection list will appear but will show a message that there is no match. A different sound will indicate no match, if sounds are enabled.

In addition, you may be able to view your entire inventory list by simply pressing Enter without entering any text. This is an option that can be disabled if your inventory is very large (see Maintenance / Program Options / P.O.S.).

Selecting Items

If a list is shown to choose from after scanning or entering text, just use the arrow keys or the mouse to select the one you want, press **Enter** (or double-click on the item), and it will be added to the ticket. You can also Cancel if you want to just try again, or click Details after selecting an item to see more information before making a selection, or even to make changes in the inventory data (if your access level allows it).

If you want to try finding the item a different way, for instance if you don't know the name but want to browse items by Item Class, click Find More. This will open the Find Inventory dialog to help you locate and select the item to use.

You may also have the option to Add New if your access level is high enough. In this case, the Edit Inventory dialog will open with a new inventory record and the code you entered or scanned will already be inserted. If you complete the information and Save it, then that new item will immediately be added to the ticket. Or you can Cancel to simply return to the P.O.S. dialog without saving or adding the item.

Adding Quantities

If more than one of an item is being sold, you can save time and space on the receipt (and space in the database) by entering a quantity for it instead of scanning/entering it multiple times. To do this, you have to move the Quantity field and change the number **before** scanning or entering it. The quantity cannot be changed once an item is added to the ticket.

Tip: Press **Shift-Tab** to move from the Scan field to the Quantity field, then just type the number and press

Enter to get back to the Scan field.

Discounting Items

If you have set up Item Discounts for items that are always applied or depend only on the quantity purchased, those discounts will be deducted from the ticket and added to the receipt automatically when applicable.

If there are automatic discounts that only apply to certain Discount Types, such as seniors, employees, club members, etc., then you must select the discount type used **before** scanning the items. This is important -- discounts will not be automatically applied if you change this after adding the items to the ticket. (This also allows you to change it for different items, for instance if you know a senior discount is best for some items and the member discount is better for others.) To select the discount, click on the Discount type used field with the mouse and select the discount from the list. You can also press **Alt-U** to jump to the list and use the arrow keys to select the appropriate item (**Alt-down** arrow will open the list up to make selection a little easier).

There is also a function to manually discount items. (This can be disabled or may only apply to certain operator access levels.) To add a manual discount, select the item in the transaction list to be discounted and click the Discount Item button. An "Enter Special Discount" dialog will appear, where you can select the appropriate category, discount type, description and amount or percentage of discount. The category will default to the same as used for the item (recommended). After making the selections, click Save and the discount transaction will be added.

Note that there are no safeguards in discounting items, so this should only be allowed for managers or other trusted people. For instance, a discount can be entered that's larger than the price of the item, or multiple discounts can be added for a single item. Of course they are all recorded as entered, so accountability is still there.

Voiding Items

If you entered an item and want to remove it from the sale, there are two ways to do it - Void or Delete.

If you have a sufficient access level, then you can select the item in the transaction list and click the Delete Selected Items button at the bottom. Simply confirm the prompt and it will be removed, along with any applicable taxes and discounts.

If you don't have access to delete items, or if you prefer to show that it has been voided on the receipt, then select the item and click the Void Item button. Instead of removing it from the list, an additional transaction will be added with a negative quantity to credit the item, and it will show "Void:" in the description. Voids done this way are also recorded in the transactions, for reporting and historical purposes.

Voiding the Sale

If you wish to void the entire sale instead of individual items, simply click the Cancel button. All transactions entered will be deleted without saving them. Note that it's possible to void the sale even after a payment is entered (depending on the settings and your access level), unless it was a credit card payment that was already processed and authorized.

Other Credits

If the function is enabled and you have sufficient access, you can use the Other Credit button to enter special credits. This is usually used for coupons or other special cases. Note that credits entered this way are not

applied to any particular item and will not reduce the price of an item, so the item's full price will still be counted in sales reports. It also won't reduce the taxes calculated. However it will reduce the amount to be paid and will thus affect Receipts reports appropriately. Credits are generally reported in their own category, so they can be applied to your accounting as needed.

As with discounts, there are no safeguards on entering credits, so you may want to only enable this and allow access as you feel comfortable.

Other Charges

If the function is enabled and you have sufficient access, you can use the Other Charge button to enter charges without selecting an item from the inventory.

This function can be used to enter miscellaneous charges (sales) that have no related inventory items. It works basically like the Charges on the main Transactions dialog, opening the Enter Charge dialog for the details, but with a couple extra features. The main addition is the Continuous entry option. With this checked, the Enter Charge
 dialog will re-open immediately after each charge is entered, until you click Cancel to stop entering charges. You can also select the Same Category option to make it keep the same category selected subsequent charge entries.

For even more rapid price entry, you can select a default Transaction Category for other charges (see Maintenance / Program Options / P.O.S.). When this is set, the category is pre-selected on the Enter Charge dialog and the cursor starts in the Amount field. Simply enter the amount and press **Enter** (assuming quantity 1, and assuming the taxes selected by default are correct). In this mode, it's basically like a cash register where you can just enter one amount after another. You may even use this mode to skip inventory tracking altogether if you prefer.

Memo

As with the main Transactions dialog, you can use this function to enter notes with the ticket. Memos don't appear on the receipts unless you select the 'Print' option when you enter the memo.

Refund Payment

This is only enabled if there is a credit balance (e.g. after returning an item), so you can enter the refund given to the customer.

Cash / Credit Card / Other Payment

Use one of these to enter the payment for the sale. This is basically the same as for Transactions, but there are a couple a special options that apply only to the P.O.S. dialog. Depending on the options selected, it may print a receipt and/or close the P.O.S. dialog immediately after entering the payment.

The difference between the cash/credit/other buttons is that the cash & credit buttons will pre-select the payment type and start the input cursor in a more appropriate field. Other Payment is the general purpose payment entry which can be used for any payment type.

Note: If you are accessing the Point of Sale from the P.O.S. button on a reservation's or customer's Transactions dialog, you don't need to enter the payment here. Just click Done to go back to the Transactions dialog, and enter a payment for their complete bill at one time. (This is the only time the Point of Sale dialog can be closed without payment in full, without canceling.)

Returning Items

Returning items is also done through this P.O.S. dialog. You can either just start normally with a blank sale, or you can locate the original receipt and re-open it to return items. The latter method is recommended, so you can verify the amount paid, any discounts applied, etc., especially if they don't have their original receipt.

To return an item without finding the original receipt first, simply enter a **negative** quantity (e.g. **-1**) and then scan or enter the item. A negative charge will be shown, with appropriate taxes also deducted. Then enter a Refund Payment and print a receipt if they need one.

To return an item and record it with the original receipt, use the Find Receipt function to locate the original receipt. This can be located by the receipt number or item code, and/or date. See the Find Receipt section for details. Once the item is located, this P.O.S. dialog will be opened with the complete original receipt. Then you can select the item to be returned (click on its transaction line) and click the Return Item button.

When you click Return Item, a dialog will show the description to be used on the receipt for the return, and allow you to enter the quantity returned (in case the original entry was for multiple items). Click Save, and new transactions will be added with appropriate negative charges and taxes. Any automatic discounts that were based on quantity may also be adjusted. Then enter a Refund Payment and print a receipt if they need one.

Note: The Return Item function adds new transactions, never affecting old ones. This way it's impossible to affect reporting for previous days or shifts -- the return is a new transaction. While it may be possible to use Delete if your access level allows it, this should not be used for simple item returns.

Also note that when viewing an old receipt, there is a new option next to the Print Receipt button, "Print only new transactions". This is the default, and recommended for returns. Only the returned item and refund transactions will be printed, instead of the entire original receipt.

Selecting a Reservation or Customer

Depending on how you use the Point of Sale functionality, you my never need to select a reservation or customer for the P.O.S. transactions. In this case, they're treated like Unbound transactions, or simple cash register sales.

However there may be times when you're ringing up a sale and realize that the customer wants to put it on his reservation account instead of paying for it now. If you know this ahead of time, then it's generally easier to bring up the Transactions entry dialog from the reservation itself, then go to P.O.S. from there. But if you're already in the Point of Sale dialog then you can also select the reservation (or customer) account from there.

When you use the Select Customer or Reservation account button from the Point of Sale, a dialog will appear where you can select where the P.O.S. transactions should go. If a reservation or customer has already been selected, their name and site number will appear instead of the Select button, along with a Change button. However the Change button will be disabled if it's too late to change the account for this sale (e.g. if editing an old receipt, or if you're already coming from the Reservation Transactions dialog).

To select a reservation, click Find Reservation and locate the desired reservation with the normal Find Reservation functions. Once selected, that reservation's information will be shown for verification. You can change it by using Find Reservation again.

Likewise, use Find Customer to select a customer's account -- remember however that this will only put it on the customer, not their reservation, so this should only be used in special cases (for instance if they don't have a reservation).

If you decide not to put the sale on any reservation or customer, or decide not to change it from what it was, click Cancel.

If you've already selected one but you decide not to put it on n account, click the Change function in Point of Sale and use the Clear Selected Reservation and/or Customer button to clear the selection and then Use for POS to reset it to a basic P.O.S. sale.

That there are Access Levels that can be configured to not allow P.O.S. sales on customers and/or reservations unless they're paid in full at the time, or to not allow them at all.

Find Receipt

The Find Receipt function is opened through P.O.S. / Find Receipt on the main menu. It can also be opened by pressing the **Ctrl-L** key.

This function is used to locate a previous P.O.S. receipt. This is especially helpful for returns, but it can also be used for other purposes. For instance, by entering an item code and perhaps a date range, you can get a list of all receipt line-items for that item.

Note that this will only show transactions that were entered through the P.O.S. sales entry dialog, not through the normal Transactions dialog.

There are three ways you can look for receipts -- by date, by receipt #, or by inventory item code. A date range can be combined with either the receipt # or inventory code search if necessary. After checking the appropriate options and entering text to search for, press **Enter** or click Search. All receipt line-items matching the criteria will be shown (thus a single receipt may be represented by many lines in the results).

If you want to view a particular receipt in its entirety, double-click on the line (or select it and press the View button). The P.O.S. dialog will open with all of the transactions in that receipt. From there, you can return items or print another copy of the receipt.

When you're done viewing and/or changing that receipt, the Find Receipt window will still be open in case you need to look at others.

When you're finished with finding receipts, click Cancel.

Find Inventory Item

The Find Inventory Item function is opened through P.O.S. / Find Inventory Item on the main menu. It can also be opened by pressing the **Ctrl-I** key.

This dialog is used to locate an inventory item in the database, and is also used from inside other functions such as Edit Inventory and Create Purchase Orders, as well as when Find More is used inside the P.O.S. dialog search results list.

It can also be used to print simple inventory list reports according to a specific filter (or no filter at all, to list all items). While that's also possible with the Inventory Check-list report, there is a difference -- In this dialog, each item shows its price and price with tax (public information). The Inventory Check-list report is designed for internal use, showing Cost and Total Cost for inventory valuation. As with all other reports, the items listed can be printed, exported, or copied to the clipboard.

Normally you would just enter a search term or scan an item into the text box. However you can also filter items using the Inventory Filter, either in combination with a search term or instead of a search term. The filtering allows you to locate items by many different criteria.

When you find the inventory item you're interested in, double-click on the line or select the item and press the <u>View</u> or <u>Use</u> button -- depending on how it's invoked, this "OK" function is different. If it's used from inside another function, then the "OK" function is to close the Find dialog and use that item for the indicated function (e.g. add it to the purchase order). If it's invoked from the top level (main menu or Ctrl-I), then the OK function is to view the item's details.

When you're finished with finding items, or don't want to use any of those found for the function you came from, click <u>Cancel</u>.

Inventory Filter

This dialog is used from several different places. It's used to define a filter for finding or listing only particular items from the inventory database.

Nearly every field in the inventory database can be filtered using this function. The "Reset" state will be no filtering at all (include all items) **except** inactive items. Note that even a reset filter must have some things checked, so that all possible combinations of conditions are included (e.g. all cases of what taxes apply).

The filter selections should be simple enough to understand. It's just a matter of figuring out which conditions you want to check. Quantities can be filtered by any range (minimum and maximum values. Keep in mind that **all** "Filter by" conditions selected must be met for an item to be included. For instance if you enter both a price and a cost range, an item will not be included unless it meets **both** the price and the cost criteria.

To filter by class, category, park (if applicable) or vendor, just select the ones that you want to include -- use Ctrl-click to select multiple items. If no items are selected, than that's actually the same as selecting none of them (all items cases be included). You can filter by more than one field at a time also -- for instance to show only items belonging to a particular class **and** from a particular vendor.

Inventory Reports

Three different inventory reports are currently available. Each report uses the same dialog, with the only differences being the default filtering and the fields that are shown. By changing the filter after opening the report, you can modify any of them to fit your needs.

Note: Any changes to a report's Inventory Filtering is remembered, local to the workstation. While this allows you to customize the conditions of each report, even to be different on each workstation, this also can result in a report being "broken" if the filter is tampered with or changed by accident. If this happens, simply change the filter according to the default filter for the report, as indicated for each report below.

These reports don't total columns like Total Cost, which would certainly be handy, but you can export (or copy/paste) the data into Excel or other spreadsheet programs if you want to total the columns or do other manipulation.

Inventory Check-list report

This report simply lists all inventory items (except inactive ones), with the quantity on hand, cost and total cost of the complete inventory. This can be used for tax reporting of inventory valuation (assuming all of the costs entered are correct for your accounting methods), or simply used as a check-list for taking inventory.

The default filter is simply a reset filter -- Click the <u>Change Inventory Filtering</u> button and click <u>Reset All</u> to get it back to the default.

Items below re-order threshold

This report lists all inventory items which have a quantity on hand lower than (or equal to) the re-order threshold. It won't show any inactive items, and it won't show any that don't have an on-hand or re-order quantity entered. It shows the on-had and re-order quantity, along with the minimum re-order quantity, cost, and vendor. This can be printed or exported for placing orders (assuming you're not using the internal purchase orders).

The default filter is a reset filter with only one change. To get the filter back to the default, click the Change Inventory Filtering button and click Reset All, then **un**check the box to Include if qty > re-order threshold.

Old stock

This report lists all inventory items that have not been sold in the past 30 days, that show at least one remaining in stock. It won't show any with no quantity on hand, and it won't show any that haven't been sold in the past 30 days.   The price, last sale date, and qty/cost information is shown so that you can determine the value of the old stock.

Note that if an item has no sales in the system (no transactions for it), then it will be listed because it's assumed that it has never been sold since it was entered in the system. This may list items recently entered in the database, so be sure to take that into account when it shows a blank last-sold date.

The default filter is a reset filter with two changes -- To get the filter back to the default, click the Change Inventory Filtering button and click Reset All, check Filter by the number of days since last sold and enter 30, and check Filter by qty and enter 1 for the minimum, 0 for the maximum.

Purchase Orders

Overview

Campground Master isn't designed to be a complete accounting system like QuickBooks, so it doesn't handle things like cost accounting, inventory valuation, average-cost or LIFO inventory cost updates, etc. However, some basic functionality has been included for easily entering order details and printing purchase orders that you might be able to use when re-ordering inventory -- or at least serve as a list for each vendor that you can give to the person in charge of ordering.

Of course these are simply called purchase orders due to their basic function, as an "order" to purchase inventory items. If you don't actually issue purchase orders but rather pay up front, that's between you and the vendor. Basically a "purchase order" here is a list of inventory items that you want to order from each vendor, with basic vendor information included to look like an official purchase order. You can add some specific information on the orders, either by vendor or for all orders. You can also add extra line-items like shipping or other charges so that they appear on the printed orders.

The basic procedure for handling purchase orders is:

1. Select the items from inventory you want to order (and/or automatically add all items below their re-order threshold or other filter criteria).
2. Adjust the quantities and cost of each item if necessary, and perhaps change vendors as needed.
3. Add any extra line items (shipping, fees, etc.)
4. Create the purchase orders (this creates the order records and puts them in the Print dialog ready to be printed).
5. Print the purchase orders.
6. Print mailing labels or envelopes if needed.

Later...
7. When an order is received, go into the Receiving function, verify the quantities, and 'Receive' the items to update inventory and confirm the order has been fulfilled.

Note: The Campground Master database doesn't store complete purchase orders -- it works just like transactions, so that it simply keeps a list of the line items. Each line item is given an appropriate P.O. #, and that's what ties the line items together. It's smart enough to assign the same P.O. # to every line item ordered from the same vendor (in a single session), and when these are printed they will come out as coherent orders for each vendor. However there is no function that will show a complete purchase order on a single dialog -- they will always be listed as individual line items, similar to the Transaction History for a customer, or the Transactions tab view. You can locate purchase order items by P.O.# of course, to show all items that were on and order and even re-print it if necessary.

QuickBooks note: While it's feasible to get QuickBooks exporting set up to properly update item inventory levels for each item sold (because quantities are included with the daily sales reports exported to QuickBooks), the purchase orders and received items are not exported to QuickBooks at this time. So if you're trying to keep inventory levels accurate in both systems, the quantities of items received will have to be manually updated in either Campground Master or QuickBooks (depending on which system you use to create and receive purchase orders). It's probably better to only worry about the quantities in Campground Master (assuming you want the associated warnings and reports to function), and only update the inventory in QuickBooks if and when reports are needed for tax accounting.

Create Purchase Orders

This dialog is accessed through the main menu: P.O.S. / Purchase Orders / Create Purchase Orders.

Here you will create a list of line-items that you need to order. This is usually for items in your inventory database, but you can also add any non-inventory items you need to.

Each line item can be ordered from a different vendor, and they can be all mixed up. When the orders are printed, it will group all items for a given vendor into a single order, assign an appropriate P.O. # to all of the items for that vendor/order (unless you enter P.O. #'s manually), and print out one order form for each vendor represented. If there are 10 line items from 3 different vendors, it will gather those items into 3 orders, one for each vendor. (Technically it groups them by P.O. number, but those are generated automatically to be different for each vendor so it's the same thing if you're leaving those as "automatic" -- see below for more information.)

The order of the items does not matter as far as vendors, but the order is preserved for the items of a single vendor. Therefore you should make sure that additional items like shipping charges are added at the bottom (and be careful about re-sorting them, which could move items around in the list).

Order Date

You can specify the actual date of the order by setting the date at the top of the dialog. Normally it's the current day, of course, but you may have a reason to change the date, for instance if you need to keep it consistent with the date of the check.

P.O. Numbers

Unless you already have a P.O. # system that you maintain, you'll probably want to let Campground Master automatically assign P.O. numbers. The numbers are created based on a format that you specify in Maintenance / Printing Options / Purchase Orders. Until you actually create the orders, the number will be shown in this list as "(automatic)".

If you prefer to assign specific P.O. numbers, simply click on that field and type the P.O. number you want. Be aware that if you enter your own P.O. numbers, then it will print separate orders based on those, not based on the vendors. For instance, If you enter different P.O. numbers for two items from the same vendor, two different orders will be printed. Likewise, it will combine any with the same number -- so if you enter the same number for items from different vendors, they will be printed on the same order anyway!

Adding Items to an Order

There are a few different ways you can add items to your order, described below. Remember that none of this is saved until you click the Create & Print Orders button at the bottom, so you can add and delete order items as needed until you get it the way you want, or cancel it altogether by closing the dialog without creating them.

Any time an item is added from inventory, the Qty (to order) will be set to the item's re-order minimum value, if it has one. The Cost will also be filled in with the cost value in the database, and the vendor information will be filled in. Note that the Vendor's Stock # and Vendor's Description may default to the Item Code and Item Description if those fields are blank for the inventory item, depending on the Printing Option settings.

Once an item is added, you're free to edit some of its details -- the Qty and Each values can be changed, you can select a different vendor, and change the Vendor's Stock # and Vendor's Description if needed. The P.O. Number can be set also, if necessary (see above).

If you hold the mouse cursor over the Inventory Item field of any item, the description and quantity on hand will be shown in a pop-up window. Note that if an item does not have an item code, its record number will be shown instead, like "<#4>". This doesn't matter to the order (the Vendor's stock #/description will be used), and you can see the description by holding the mouse over it. However we generally discourage entering items without an inventory code of some kind, even if it's a just word like "shirt".

If you need to see the Inventory Details or Vendor details for any item, click on the row once to highlight a field, then click the corresponding View button at the bottom. You can edit the inventory or vendor record if needed. Note that changing the item's cost or re-order minimum will **not** change the order cost or qty for line items already added. Changing vendor information will affect the corresponding information printed on the orders, however.

The four different ways to add items to an order are described below:

Auto-Add all items below threshold
For "automatic" ordering, just click this button. It will add all inventory items that show a current on-hand quantity equal to or less than the re-order threshold for that item. Of course this must be used with care -- it won't know if items have already been ordered, so it could result in duplicate ordering.

- **Adjusting the filter** -- You can also adjust the criteria for this auto-add function, for instance if you only want to include items of a certain class, or items that have less than a certain quantity (regardless of the re-order threshold). This is done by changing the filtering -- click Adjust Filter for items to auto-add. After the filter is changed, the Auto-add button will change to "Auto-add all filtered items" to indicate that it's not just items below the re-order threshold anymore. Note that any changes to the filter will be saved, and used next time also.

- **Resetting the filter** -- If you want to reset this filter to just be items below the re-order threshold, then open the filter (Adjust Filter) and click Reset All, and **un**check the box for Include if qty <= re-order threshold.

Find Inventory Item to Order
Use this function to locate and add a particular item to the order. This will open the Find Inventory dialog, where you can scan an item or enter a search term, or list items according to a filter specification. (Or show all inventory items by unchecking both check-boxes.) Once the desired item is located, double-click on that row (or select it with the keyboard arrows or mouse, and press Enter or click Use). It will be added to the order with the cost, re-order minimum, and vendor information from the inventory record.

Find Previously Ordered Item
Use this function to locate a previous order and add an item to a new order, with the same quantity, price, and vendor as before. The Find Purchase Order dialog will be shown, where you can use various search methods to locate the item you want.

Add a Non-Inventory Item
Use this function to add any miscellaneous items to an order, such as products not in the inventory database, shipping charges, fees, etc. It will add a blank line to the order, and you simply fill in the information for each field. These will appear on the order like any other items.

Creating the Orders

Once you've added all of the items you want to order, click the Create & Print Order button. If there are any errors (missing information), you will be prompted to correct the errors and try again. When everything is validated, all of the order items will be saved and it will open them in the Print Purchase Orders window (see that section for details). The list there will be nearly identical, except that the real P.O. number will be filled in for any that were automatic, and the items cannot be edited.

Print Purchase Orders

This dialog is accessed through either the Create Purchase Orders function or the Find/Print Purchase Orders function, from the P.O.S. / Purchase Orders menu.

If no items are selected in the list, then it will print orders for all items shown. If you only want to print orders for some items, select those items before clicking a Print button.

When the orders are printed, it will group all items with a given Purchase Order Number into a single order. Generally all orders created for the same vendor at the same time will have the same P.O. number.

Note that there is limited space on an order form for items, and it won't automatically print multiple pages. If there are too many items for one page, you can separate them into two order pages by selecting some of them to print each time. Tip: If they are all grouped together in the list, just click, hold the button down, and drag the mouse to select all of the ones you want to print.

Notes
You can enter notes to print on all of the orders, below the list of items. If it's a short note, you can just type it on the Notes field. Otherwise, click the "..." button next to the Notes field to open a multiple-line window and enter the information to be printed. If you need different notes for each order, then select and print only the appropriate items at once, changing the Notes text for each selection group you print.

When you're ready to print, just click the Print Orders button. You can also print labels or envelopes for the associated vendors if needed, and print or export the list of order items.

Find / Print Purchase Orders

This function is accessed through the main menu: <u>P.O.S.</u> / <u>Purchase Orders</u> / <u>Find/Print Purchase Orders</u>. This same dialog is also used for the <u>Find Previously Ordered Item</u> in the <u>Create Purchase Orders</u> function.

This function is generally used to locate previous purchase order items, either for reference, reporting, or to re-print an order. You can search for orders by several options, including date, inventory item code (which can be scanned from a bar code), P.O. numbers, vendor stock numbers, or a variety of Purchase Order Filtering options.

All of the relevant information about each order item will be shown. You can sort the items by any column if needed, and print or export the list you want it for a report.

If you want to view the inventory or vendor details for any item, simply select the row and use the appropriate <u>View</u> function at the bottom. You can also <u>Delete</u> items if necessary, but remember that this actually deletes the order -- it doesn't just remove it from the list!

If this was invoked from the <u>Create Purchase Orders</u> function to find a previously ordered item, then select the item you want and click Use (or press **Enter**).

If you're locating purchase orders to print, select all of the items you want to print and then click the <u>Print Orders</u> button at the bottom. (Or to print all of them, just click <u>Print Orders</u> without selecting any.) This will copy the order items into the <u>Print Purchase Orders</u> dialog, where they can be printed.

Purchase Order Filter

This dialog is invoked from either the <u>Find/Print Purchase Orders</u> function, the <u>Purchase Orders Outstanding</u> function, or <u>Print Vendor Labels/Envelopes</u>. It's used to help locate specific orders, and perhaps to generate a specific report.

Order items can be filtered by nearly any of the order information by selecting the appropriate options. For instance you can select a particular vendor (or multiple vendors), select orders by quantity ordered, date, or the operator who created the order.

You can also use inventory filtering to look for orders according to the item ordered -- particular classes, cost, and so forth.

To reset the filter to include all purchase orders, click the <u>Reset All</u> button (this also resets any inventory filtering).

Purchase Orders Outstanding (Receiving)

This dialog is accessed through the main menu: P.O.S. / Purchase Orders / Purchase Orders Outstanding (Receiving). This function is the easiest way to update your inventory to reflect an order received (assuming you generated the orders through Campground Master to begin with).

When this dialog is opened, it will show all ordered items in the system that have not been completely fulfilled, sorted by date. (Order items that have no quantity will not be shown, such as shipping). If necessary you can change the filtering criteria by clicking Change Purchase Order Filtering. Note that unlike most other functions, changes to this filtering are **not** saved -- it's reset each time the dialog is opened.

Receiving All Items

If an entire order is received from a vendor, the easiest way to "receive" it is to sort by P.O. number, locate the items for the order received, select all of those items (click on the first one, and Shift-click on the last one), and click Receive All of selected items. The Qty Received values will be updated and the inventory on hand is immediately updated for those items (if it's an inventory item).

Items are not immediately removed from the list when received, so you can print a report if needed. If you want to clear all of the items that have now been received in full, click the Refresh List button.

If only part of an order is received, you can also just select those items received (use Ctrl-click to select individual items if they aren't contiguous in the list). Again, you can use the Receive All of selected items function if the entire quantity was received for each item.

Entering Qty Received

If only some of an individual item were received (for instance 25 out of 100 ordered), then select the item and click Enter qty received of item selected. A dialog will appear showing the number ordered and previously received. Enter the amount received **this shipment**, and the remainder will be shown. Press **Enter** or click Save and the inventory will be updated.

Deleting Order Items

If necessary you can completely delete an order item. While not generally recommended (because it loses all record of the item being ordered), you may need to do this if an item you ordered will never be received. Select the items to delete and click the Delete Selected Items button to delete the ordered items. Note that if a quantity has already been received, the inventory on hand has already been updated -- so deleting the order item will **not** subtract the items from inventory.

Cost Accounting

It should be mentioned that the Cost field of an inventory item is not automatically updated when new stock is ordered or received. The cost entered in the inventory database must be changed manually if necessary. It's up to you whether this is important for your accounting, and which method of cost accounting you use. The Cost field is simply used as the default for future purchase orders (and listed on some inventory reports). There are no profit reports or inventory valuation reports in the system at this time.

Print Vendor Labels & Envelopes

This dialog is accessed through the main menu: <u>P.O.S.</u> / <u>Purchase Orders</u> / <u>Print Vendor Labels</u> (or <u>Print Vendor Envelopes</u>). It's also used if Print Labels or Print Envelopes is done from <u>Find/Print Purchase Orders</u>.

Vendor labels and envelopes are basically printed the same way as Customer labels and envelopes (from the <u>Reports</u> menu), so some of the details can be found in that section.

If you're accessing this function from the main menu, all vendors will be shown by default. You can also select which vendors to be printed by using either Purchase Order filtering or Inventory Item filtering, or both. If both are selected, an vendor must meet both criteria (pass both the filtered orders and the filtered items) in order for it to be included.

If you're accessing this function through <u>Find/Print Purchase Orders</u>, then only vendors for those orders will be listed (if you uncheck the option to filter out duplicates it will show a separate line and print a label/envelope for each order item, but that would probably be pointless). The filtering options will not be shown.

Note that the vendor contact names are not printed on the labels, since it's assumed that the contact names could contain multiple names or other information that wouldn't be appropriate for the labels.

You can view or edit any vendor's information by double-clicking on the corresponding line.

When ready to print, select the vendors to be printed (or don't select any to print them all), and click the <u>Print Labels</u> or <u>Print Envelopes</u> button.

Transaction (Sales) Reports

As with all other transactions, reporting for sales and receipts for point of sale transactions is done through the <u>Transactions</u> tab view. With the P.O.S. option, some new settings and filtering options are available for reporting inventory sales, and for separating P.O.S. transaction reports from non-P.O.S. reports if necessary.

For details on using the Transactions tab view for reports, see that section in the main *Dynamic Interactive Report Screens* chapter.

Common Reporting Tasks

Most summary reports needed are available by clicking the <u>Summary Options</u> button on the Transactions tab view. This options dialog has a number of Quick-Reports for the most common tasks, and a number of other options available for customizing reports.

The most common reporting task for a P.O.S. system is a report for balancing a cash drawer after a shift or at the end of the day. This is no different for the P.O.S. as it is for other transactions (presumably all types of transactions take place on the same computer or computers). Use the <u>Receipts by Payment Method</u> button to generate a report showing the net amount of receipts for each payment method (cash, check, Visa, etc.). This will show the daily total for each day selected in the dates. If you need a report for a particular operator shift, then open the <u>Filter</u> (or <u>More Filters</u>) and select the operator for which to report totals.

Another common report is an inventory sales report. Two new quick-reports available with the P.O.S. option -- <u>Inventory Sales by Amount</u> and <u>by Quantity</u>. Simply click the appropriate button and set the dates or other filtering as needed. These will report sales for each inventory item. If you have a lot of inventory items, you'll probably want to go back to the <u>Summary Options</u> and select the <u>Hide items with zero totals</u> option, so it only shows the items sold that period. By default, these reports show both the inventory item code and the description. You may prefer to show it by only the code or only the description -- this is another summary

option.

You can also report inventory sales according to class or vendor instead of by item. Class is probably more interesting if you have a large inventory. A Vendor report might be useful for showing which vendors are supplying you with the hottest items, or that you might be able to get a better deal from by leveraging your the volume of sales. For either of these reports, select the Inventory Sales quick-report and then go back to Summary Options to change the Group totals for each selection.

P.O.S. Transaction Filtering

A few special options are available in the Filter for P.O.S. transaction reports. You can opt to include either P.O.S. transactions or non-P.O.S. transactions (or both), in case you want to see separate totals for reservation income vs. merchandise income. (Of course this is also usually apparent if you report by transaction category, but that only works for reporting charges, not receipts.)

If you include P.O.S. transactions, you also have the option to filter the transactions by inventory. Thus you can report sales details for a single vendor or certain vendors, selected inventory item classes, filter by tax categories, and other possibilities.

Detail Reports

Transaction details are reported as usual, but with the P.O.S. option you can add columns for inventory item code, description, class, and vendor. Use the Detail Options button to select these columns in detail mode.

P.O.S. Setup

Overview

This section covers the setup functions added by the P.O.S. option for setting up your inventory database, various options for sales entry and receipts, and hardware.

Note that the setup for a cash drawer, credit card reader and credit card processing software are covered in the main Maintenance section since they are part of the main Campground Master program, not optional features.

Receipt printer setup is generally a matter of just connecting it like other printers and installing driver software. You will probably also need to adjust the various settings under File / Printer Setup and Maintenance / Printing Options for the 3" receipt printer. There is also a configuration for the message at the bottom of the receipts, under Maintenance / Park Setup.

Hardware Selection

Below is a list of suggested equipment to use for the P.O.S. system, with choices in some areas depending on your budget and preferences. If you need help locating a supplier, please contact us. Also see our web site for updated lists and vendor information. We can't support any hardware you purchase elsewhere (other than the setup in Campground Master itself), so we recommend finding a good vendor or a local computer technician to help with hardware setup.

Which items you need for your system depend on your situation. Technically the P.O.S. can be operated without any external hardware other than a standard PC printer. In a high-traffic situation, however, we

recommend that you use a bar-code scanner, a receipt printer, and a cash drawer, possibly with a pole display added for a nice touch.

A magnetic stripe reader for credit cards is only needed if you plan to process credit cards through Campground Master, and then you also need compatible processing software that works with your merchant account. ICVerify is compatible with Campground Master and works with nearly any merchant processor, but is an expensive software package. X-Charge a free alternative, which only requires that you sign up with their merchant account (which has very competitive rates). Let us know if you would like more information about this.

Choosing Hardware Interfaces

The bar-code scanners and mag-stripe readers usually interface through the keyboard, and the cash drawers interface through the receipt printer (assuming you use a receipt printer). So the only interface port you normally need on your computer for a basic P.O.S. setup is for the receipt printer itself. Or, if you don't plan to use a receipt printer but do want a cash drawer that opens automatically, then you will need to use a parallel or serial port for the cash drawer.

Parallel or serial work equally well in this application, but you need to make sure you know what ports are present and not in use by other devices. For instance, if you also want to use a pole display, that will occupy a serial port.

Also, if you plan to do credit card authorizations through Campground Master, then you may also need to connect an external modem. This will also occupy a serial port (we recommend an external serial-interface modem for simplicity in support, but an internal modem will also work if necessary). Note that only one of your Campground Master workstations will need a modem if you're using Campground Master in a networked setup.

Suggested Equipment

The items listed below show a recommended part number, which may be either the manufacturer's number or a part number at a popular vendor (which can be interpreted by most vendors). You can contact us directly to purchase these items, or contact your own vendor. These are all "basic" models, so there may be additional options available (for instance different colors, added stands, etc.). The sales person can help you with options and other questions.

Bar code scanners (keyboard wedge, triggered or auto-trigger, decoded)
MS210-K	Unitech MS-210 CCD, durable but short range
MK9520-72B47	Metrologic 9520 laser, long range

Receipt Printers (parallel or serial, with cash drawer port)
TMU220PD-103	Epson U200 series, a basic impact printer
SP512MC42-120	STAR SP500, a fast impact printer
TMT-88III	Epson TM-88III, a fast thermal printer

Cash drawers (interface to receipt printer, select printer brand when ordering)
ECD 2000	MMF basic drawer
APG S320	APG Multipro Series, various sizes and media slot options

Cash drawers with direct connection (if no receipt printer used)
MMF MCD 240	MMF drawer with serial/parallel interface options

Pole display
PD-3000	Logic Controls, serial interface

Mag stripe readers (keyboard wedge track 1 & 2)
    MTEK 21080203   Magtek mini-wedge
    IDT3331-12   IDTech mini-mag

If you're unsure about whether a particular device not listed here will work with the software, please contact us. Also see our web site for updated lists and vendor information.

Pole Display Setup

If you want to use a pole display with your P.O.S. system, so the customer sees the merchandise prices and descriptions, total due, etc., then you have to configure it through this dialog (<u>Maintenance</u> / <u>Pole Display Setup</u>).

When a pole display is properly set up, it will show items as they are entered or scanned, payments made, total amount due, etc. This will work in both the Point of Sale dialog and the normal Transactions dialog for reservations, etc.

Campground Master will work with nearly any pole display that can be connected to a serial or parallel port, presuming it's a 2-line, 20-characters-per-line display. Every brand of pole display is controlled with a different set of commands, but you simply need to enter those commands here so Campground Master knows how to communicate with it. The seven commands required are described below.

Settings

Important -- All of these settings are local to each workstation. If you have more than one workstation on a network, each one must be set up individually (so they can have different displays or use different ports on each workstation as needed). Also note that the settings are saved according to the workstation's ID (see Network Setup), so if that is changed for any reason then the pole display settings may need to be changed also.

Since many commands contain non-printable characters like ESC, CR, LF, etc., they must be entered in a special code. This code is a backslash, followed by an 'x', followed by 2 hexadecimal digits representing the character (byte) to be sent. For instance a linefeed (LF), which has the value 10 (0A in hexadecimal), should be entered as **\x0a**.

Note: Use the backslash (\ ), **not** the forward slash (/), for the special codes. The forward slash is usually on the key with the question mark (?). The backslash, which you need to use, is sometimes above the **Enter** key, and sometimes located other places.

Pole display is present -- this must be checked in order for Campground Master to send data to a pole display. All other settings are disabled unless this is checked. Note that if a pole display is removed, or the database is moved to a computer without a pole display, it's a good idea to uncheck this so it won't sent pole display commands to the port, possibly resulting in affecting other devices like a printer or modem that's now connected to the same port number.

Interface port -- select the port that the display is connected to.

Baud, Parity, Data bits, Stop bits -- These only apply if the interface port is a serial port (com1 through com4). Enter the appropriate values according to your pole display manual. (Most are set up for 9600 baud, no parity, 8 data bits, 1 stop bit.)

Reset Command -- Enter the command sequence you want to send to the display to clear it and get it ready for other commands. This often includes commands to turn off the cursor, put it in a non-scrolling mode, and clear the screen. This command will actually be sent every time something new needs to be displayed. To make sure it's correct, you can press the Test button next to it to see what happens.

Note -- Some displays have multiple modes of operation, like scrolling vs non-scrolling, auto-scrolling, horizontal scrolling, etc., so perhaps no commands at all would be needed in some circumstances. However, since this behavior is unpredictable (by the software), it's best to make sure the display is put in a non-scrolling mode, and use whatever commands are necessary to force the text to show on line 1 and line 2.

Line 1 command, before and after -- Enter the command sequence required (if any) that needs to be sent before and after any text that you want to display on line 1 of the display.

Line 2 command, before and after -- Enter the command sequence required, after the first line is displayed, to display text on the second line. Some displays simply need a CR character (\x0d) to get to the second line. Others require that both the first and second line are surrounded by certain command characters.

Test Line 1 & Line 2 -- after entering all of the necessary commands above, click this button to reset the display and send sample text "Line 1" and "Line 2" to the display.

Automatically wraps to 2nd line -- In some cases, the text written to Line 1 will be the full 20 characters. On some displays, it will wrap to the 2nd line automatically so the Line 2 command can be skipped before the 2nd line is displayed. If this is the case, check this option.

Idle message / Command -- After a sale is complete, you may want a special message to show on the display all the time. If the display supports automatic scrolling, you could even have a message scrolling constantly across the display. Enter whatever message text you want displayed during this idle time, along with any command characters necessary to get it displayed. You should also include the commands to reset the display (it doesn't sent a Reset command before the idle command, so if you just want to leave up the last total or balance due on the display, you can just leave this blank.). You can also use the Test button to make sure it's right.

Tip: for a scrolling message, don't forget to include some extra spaces at the end to separate the end from the beginning of the repeated message.

Pole Display Example Commands

Here are examples of the recommended command settings, for 4 different brands of pole displays.

Logic Controls PD-3000:
  Reset command: **\x1f\x14\x11**
  Line 1 before text:
    After text:
  Line 2 before text: **\x0d\x0a**
    After text:
  Automatically-wraps: **Yes**
  Idle message: **\x1f\x14\x05 Scrolling message here   \x0d**

EMAX:

Reset command:	**\x0d\x0d!#1 \x0d**
Line 1 before text:	**!#1**
After text:	**\x0d**
Line 2 before text:	**!#2**
After text:	**\x0d**
Automatically-wraps:	**No**
Idle message:	**\x0a\x0a!#4 Scrolling message here \x0d**

IEE:

Reset command:	**\x14\x0c\x0e**
Line 1 before text:	
After text:	
Line 2 before text:	**\x0d\x0a**
After text:	
Automatically-wraps:	**Yes**
Idle message:	**\x14\x0c\x0eStatic message here (no scrolling is possible)**

DynaPOS:

Reset command:	**\x1b\x40**
Line 1 before text:	**\x1b\x51**
After text:	**\x0d**
Line 2 before text:	**\x1b\x52**
After text:	**\x0d**
Automatically-wraps:	**No**
Idle message:	**\x1b\x40Static message here (no scrolling possible)**
Alternatively:	**\x1b\x51Line 1 message\x0d\x1b\x52Line 2 message\x0d**

Program Options - P.O.S.

These options are found through Maintenance / Program Options / P.O.S. (assuming you're authorized for the P.O.S. option). All of these settings affect the way that the P.O.S. sales entry dialog operates. You can set it up the way that best suits your operation, depending on whether you want to keep it simple, minimizing clicks needed to complete a sale, or whether you want all possible features available and the ability to decide exactly in what order you do things.

Note that these settings are global, so they affect all workstations in a networked environment. Also note that some of these options are further affected by the Access Levels, so even though an option is enabled here, it may not be available to certain operators.

Hide transactions for taxes on P.O.S. entry dialog -- When this is checked, the running total for taxes will show at the bottom, but the list will not show taxes. If this is not checked, then one or more tax lines will also appear in the list and will be updated after each item added. This might cause confusion, so it's best to leave this checked.

Warn if sale exceeds known inventory for an item -- This won't prevent the sale of an item, but pops up a warning message which must be acknowledged. While this can be annoying, it's unlikely to happen without a good reason. It's especially useful if you sell items that aren't brought up to the counter first, like ice or firewood. For instance if someone says they need 5 bags of ice, this will tell you if there aren't that many out in the freezer (assuming inventory is correct).

Warn if sale results in low inventory for an item -- This will show a pop-up warning if the item just entered is getting low. This is not recommended for a high-traffic location, since it can be annoying and time-

consuming. However for lower traffic situations, especially if the manager is likely to be the one handling sales, this can be a handy reminder that something needs to be re-ordered soon.

Enable Discount Item function -- This does not affect auto-discounts (set up through the Inventory setup), but enables a special button on the P.O.S. dialog allowing one-time special discounts to be entered. This is usually only desired in a small shop where the manager has the authority to offer discounts to preferred customers, for instance.

Enable Other Credits function -- This adds a button on the dialog to allow entering special "Credit" transactions. This is typically used for coupons or gift certificates, where you need the full price of the items to be recorded for reporting (so you can't use Discount), but you want to enter a Credit so the amount actually paid by the customer is reduced.

Enable Other Charges function -- This adds a "Charge" button so that you can enter sales outside of your inventory. This is usually needed for miscellaneous charges that can't be easily inventoried. It will open the standard Enter Charge dialog where you select a category, enter a quantity and amount each, and select the taxes to apply. This can also be used to operate the P.O.S. like a simple cash register instead of entering any inventory at all, just entering amounts one after another (with the "continuous" box checked on the P.O.S. dialog).

Default transaction category for Other Charges -- This is important if you use the Other Charges for rapid sales entry. It will select this category each time the Other Charges function is used, allowing you to simply type the price and press Enter to enter a sale. Typically this would be a general category like "Misc Sales". If you want the operator to select a category each time, select the blank entry at the top of the drop-down list.

Automatically print the receipt as soon as the payment is entered -- This simply saves a mouse click to speed up operations, presuming that you always want a receipt printed. As soon as a payment is entered that results in a zero balance due, a receipt will be printed.

...only if it's a credit card payment -- Select this along with the option above if you only need a receipt printed for credit card sales.

Automatically save transactions when a receipt is printed -- This option is designed to help prevent fraud (or mistakes). Once a receipt is printed for a customer, it will record the transactions immediately so that they can't be cleared out by simply cancelling the dialog. The dialog will remain open, but will show the transactions as "old" -- items can still be returned and a refund issued if necessary, but that will all be recorded too. (This option does not need to be checked if the next one is checked.)

Automatically close the P.O.S. dialog when a receipt is printed -- This is commonly enabled just to save a step, since printing the receipt generally signals that you're done. However you might not want to do this, for instance if it's common for the customers to have a question about it after you print the receipt, and want the transactions to remain displayed until they leave. (Tip: **Ctrl-T** will bring up the last transactions entered, so the last sale is still only a keystroke away if you remember this shortcut.)

Automatically re-open the P.O.S. dialog after a sale is completed -- Enable this in a high-traffic situation where you just want it to keep the P.O.S. dialog up and ready for sales. If you need to close the P.O.S. dialog for other functions (assuming it's currently empty and waiting), just press the **Esc** key (or click Cancel or Done).

Allow closing the dialog (Done) without printing a receipt -- If it's common that your customer doesn't need a receipt (or you're doing some testing and don't want to waste paper), enable this option so that a sale can be saved without printing a receipt.

Enable sounds when scanning or entering items -- Some people find beeps and bonks helpful, others find them annoying. This is mostly useful if you're using a bar-code scanner, and don't want to have to look at the screen each time you scan an item. With this enabled, a sound will indicate whether the scanned item

was found (uniquely) and the charge added automatically, or whether no match was found, or whether multiple matches were found and you need to select one of them. (The sounds used are the same sounds used throughout the program and Windows in general for "Attention", "Error", and "Warning" messages.)

Show entire inventory list if Enter pressed with no scan/search text -- This should only be used when your inventory list is small, so it doesn't cause unexpected delays. If you only sell a couple dozen items and don't use a bar code scanner, then it may be just as easy to press **Enter** and then select an item from the list as it would be to type in an item code or text to search for. Of course it could be enabled even for large inventory lists, but in that case it might be better to require that at least some text be entered (e.g. they could enter "App" if they're looking for a particular kind of apple), so if they press **Enter** by mistake it doesn't cause a delay while the whole list is being loaded and sorted for them.

Printing Options - P.O.S. Receipts

These options are found through <u>Maintenance</u> / <u>Printing Options</u> / <u>P.O.S.</u> (assuming you're authorized for the P.O.S. option). These settings are basically identical to the Receipts settings, but affect only the receipts printed from the P.O.S. sales entry dialog. Thus the P.O.S. receipts can have different defaults than receipts printed for reservations.

Before printing receipts, you should go to File / Printer Setup to configure the appropriate printer (especially if using a 3" roll paper receipt printer). See the chapter "*Setting up your Campground Database*" for details.

Note that these settings are local to each workstation, so they can be set differently for each workstations in a networked environment. They will be synchronized (applied to all workstations) along with other settings if the "Synchronize local options..." function is used under Network Functions.

Point of Sale Receipt default format -- Select the receipt format you will use most often for P.O.S. sales. You can select the format any time you print a receipt (without coming back here), but setting the most common one here will save steps later, and of course is very important if you configure the P.O.S. to auto-print receipts. See the section <u>Working with Transactions</u> for details on each format.

Copies -- If you usually print duplicate receipts, you can change this to **2** so that you don't have to change the number of copies every time you print a receipt. (You can still change the number of copies on the print dialog when printing -- this just determines the default number.).

Always Preview Receipts Before Printing -- When this option is set, you will get the chance to preview the printout before actually printing a receipt. (This option is the only way to get a preview for receipts.) This is usually disabled for P.O.S. receipts because speed is important.

Show printer setup dialog when printing receipts -- When enabled, a dialog will appear every time you print with options for printer selection, layout, number of copies, etc. This requires an extra step to "OK" this dialog each time. By disabling this option, that dialog is skipped so there's one less mouse click required. It will use the default settings from Printer Setup for the selected receipt type and the number of copies selected above. A small "Printing" message will appear momentarily just to let you know that it's printing, since there may not be any other indication if you're not near the printer.

Combine taxes of the same kind into a single line on receipts -- When entering transactions, taxes are usually added automatically. While P.O.S. taxes are generally all combined into one transaction anyway, if you come back in to return an item, for instance, this can result in multiple Tax transactions of the same kind. This option will combine all taxes of the same type into one line (total) on the receipt. Different tax types, for instance Sales Tax and Liquor Tax, will still be on separate lines.

Show tax details on receipts -- by default, each line for sales tax or other tax category will show the amount taxed and the percentage rate, like ($20.00 @ 8.25%). If you prefer not to have that information

printed on the receipt (for simplicity), you can disable this option.

Show Receipt # on receipt -- If this is checked, a receipt number will appear on the P.O.S. receipts. This is very useful for P.O.S. receipts because if they bring back a receipt to return an item, the transactions can be found easily by entering the receipt number. Note that "Receipt #" is the default name of this field, but if you prefer "Invoice #" or some other name, you can change this by editing the name (Normal header) of this field under Maintenance / Define Data Fields / Transaction Fields.

Printing Options - Purchase Orders

These options are found through Maintenance / Printing Options / Purchase Orders (assuming you're authorized for the P.O.S. option). These settings affect only the purchase orders printed from the P.O.S. / Purchase Orders functions.

Note that these settings are local to each workstation, so they can be set differently for each workstations in a networked environment. They will be synchronized (applied to all workstations) along with other settings if the "Synchronize local options..." function is used under Network Functions.

Copies -- designates a default number of copies to print for each purchase order.

Always Preview Orders Before Printing -- When this option is set, you will get the chance to preview the printout before actually printing orders. This is a good idea so you can verify what's on each order, and in particular make sure that the orders aren't too long, filling up and overflowing a page.

Show printer setup dialog when printing orders -- When enabled, a dialog will appear every time you print, with options for printer selection, layout, number of copies, etc. This requires an extra step to "OK" this dialog each time. By disabling this option, that dialog is skipped so there's one less mouse click required. It will use the default settings from Printer Setup for the selected receipt type and the number of copies selected above. A small "Printing" message will appear momentarily just to let you know that it's printing, since there may not be any other indication if you're not near the printer.

Creating Purchase Orders -- While the settings in this section aren't strictly printing options, they are only used when creating and printing purchase orders so they were placed here for convenience.

P.O. # format -- This setting lets you format your purchase order numbers by including any text/digits along with any of several numbers representing date, time, or record numbers. Since you want each purchase order to be unique, it's important that the format include at least the record number (even including the time to the second doesn't guarantee unique numbers if you create orders for more than one vendor at a time). All of the same formatting specifications apply to the P.O. # as apply to receipt numbers and confirmation number formatting (Maintenance / Program Options / Formats), so refer to that section for details.

Use an Inventory Item's code for vendor's stock # by default -- Each inventory item in the database has a field for a vendor's stock number. To avoid redundancy and save time, you can leave that field blank in the inventory data if the item's code (e.g. a UPC scan code) is sufficient for the vendor, and check this option to use that on purchase orders.

Use an Inventory Item's description for vendor's description by default -- As with the stock # above, checking this option allows you to skip the vendor description entry for every inventory item, if the vendor doesn't require specific descriptions different from your item description.

P.O.S. Data Fields

To simplify data entry, as well as save database space, you might want to disable any data fields that you don't plan to use. This section briefly describes some of the fields in the P.O.S. system that can be disabled. Refer to the <u>Maintenance</u> / <u>Define Data Fields</u> section of the documentation for general information on managing data fields.

Inventory Item Fields

Qty, Re-order Threshold -- If your only purpose of setting up inventory items is to have pre-set pricing, and you don't care to manage inventory levels, then you can disable these fields.

Cost, Re-order minimum, Vendor, Vendor stock # and description -- If you don't want to print purchase orders with the software and don't care to keep track of vendor information, then you can disable these fields.

Add Tax 1 through 5 -- You only need tax fields enabled for which you have Taxes set up, so if you only have 2 different taxes then you might as well disable the other 3 fields.

Park -- This field is disabled by default, because in most cases all of your inventory is combined. However if you need to manage separate parks separately, or even separate stores in a single park, then you can enable this field to allow separate parks/stores to track their inventory levels and sales independently.

Inactive -- This field can be used to "hide" inventory items that you no longer sell (except from reports). Disable this field if that's not important.

Notes -- This can be a handy field if you like to keep a lot of information on your inventory items, but disable it if it's not necessary.

Inventory Item Discount Fields

This applies to both the General Discounts and Item-specific discounts.

Seasons/Dates Applicable -- These fields are only necessary if you have sales or other discounts based on specific dates, and want to set up discounts to automatically take effect on those dates.

Unavailable Sun - Mon -- These are only necessary of you want discounts to automatically be applied (or not applied) on certain days of the week.

Notes -- Disable if you don't need to make notes about your discount settings.

Vendor Fields

Address Line 2, Phone, E-mail -- These fields are for your own information, so disable the fields you don't want.

Tax ID, PO Notes -- These fields are used for printing purchase orders, but otherwise they are not needed.

Notes -- Disable if you don't need to keep private notes about the vendors.

Purchase Order Transaction Fields

Qty and Date Received -- If you are using the Purchase Order functions just as a convenience but don't

actually track your inventory or orders outstanding with the software, then you can disable these fields.

P.O.S. Access Levels

Specific access-level permissions exist for nearly every type of P.O.S. function (inventory maintenance functions, reports, purchase orders, each kind of transaction entry, deleting/returning items, etc.) You may want to review the defaults for these and make adjustments according to how much you want each level of operator to have access to.

Each Access Level Function entry that applies specifically to the P.O.S. system will show "POS - " in front of it, for easy location. Also review the "CC Processing" functions, since those usually apply to P.O.S. functions (though they apply to reservation and customer transactions too.

For general information on changing access levels, see the Maintenance / Park Setup / Access Levels Setup section in the main documentation.

Inventory Setup

Overview

This section covers the details of setting up the inventory system in Campground Master and entering your inventory.

Note that the order of topics here reflects the typical order that these should be set up, rather than the order they appear on the menus.

Inventory Classes & Transaction Categories

There are two pick-lists that you should set up before adding your inventory items. These allow you to split up inventory reporting and accounting two separate ways. These pick lists can be configured through Maintenance / Pick Lists -- see that section for general information about editing pick lists.

Inventory Class

This pick list is used only for inventory items. It can be used to logically separate your inventory however you like, whether it's broad classes like food, supplies, etc., or very specific classes like sewer hoses, propane accessories, and light bulbs. Classes can be selected for filtering inventory for reports or finding item details, and for grouping sales transactions by class.

Every inventory item must have a specific class assigned. So even if you have no need for detailed reporting, you should have a few broad classes that you can assign to your items.

Transaction Category

This pick list is shared with the rest of the system, so it also includes entries for all of your other charges like daily rent, extra people, taxes, etc. Every inventory item must also be assigned to a specific transaction category, so that when an item is sold, it knows what category to credit that too (similar to general ledger entries).

This is often a more broad categorization than Inventory Class, simply because it's a shared list. You might not want 200 different transaction categories for inventory items to overshadow the few needed for your reservation charges, especially since it would make the selection list a lot longer. In some cases, a single Transaction Category called "Merchandise" or "Gift shop" is sufficient, since additional transaction reports by Inventory Class can be done when more detail is needed. However there may be cases where you do need very detailed categories for accounting, especially if you export the data to QuickBooks and have many items/accounts for your inventory sales.

Vendors

A vendor can be set up and selected for each inventory item, just as a customer is selected for each reservation. However this is completely optional. You can skip the vendors completely, or you can just use them for occasional reference, or you can fully utilize the support for vendor purchase orders.

The Edit Vendor dialog for adding and editing vendors is nearly identical to the Edit Customer dialog. Vendors simply don't have as much detailed information. Likewise, the dialog for Find Vendors is basically the same as Find Customers. These functions are all accessed through Maintenance / P.O.S. Inventory Setup / Vendors. In addition, there is a button on the Edit Inventory dialog to add new vendors.

This dialog has the standard Previous and Next buttons, Add New, Delete, Find, and Print buttons at the top just like the dialogs for Customer Details, Reservation Details, and Site Details.

Only a couple unique fields need to be covered here -- see the Edit Customer and Find Customer sections of the main documentation for general information on operating these dialogs.

Tax ID -- This field is for your reference only. This is generally the tax ID given to you by the vendor, and can be recorded here for reporting purposes when printing a vendor list.

Purchase order notes -- This field is only used when printing purchase orders. Any reference information you need to include on your purchase orders when ordering from this vendor can be entered here. While this information is entered separately for each vendor, it's common to include a standard set of information here also. This might include notes about shipping preferences, billing contact person and billing address, etc. It's recommended that you use the "..." button to open the multiple-line editing window, so you can format the information the way you want it to appear on your purchase orders.

Avoid Duplicate Vendor Names

Every vendor should have a different Company Name, since that's how they're identified for inventory items. If you happen to have two vendors with the same company name, figure out something to put in the Company Name field of one of them to make it different (e.g. just "Inc" instead of "Inc." with a period).

Item Discounts
Overview

Note: Some of the information here may seem to be presented too soon, since it appears before the Inventory Item details. It's presented first because it's important to understand discounts before editing inventory records, and because you may want to set up some general discounts before adding your inventory, so you can apply the discounts to the inventory as you add it.

Automatic Price Discounts

The convenience of a P.O.S. system often depends on how quickly and automatically it handles ringing up prices at the check-out counter, and that includes handling sale prices and discounts without special attention by the clerk. While it may not be possible to handle every situation automatically, Campground Master has a very flexible system for automatic discounts for inventory items.

Some of the situations that can be handled with automatic discounts are:

- Fixed-amount off per item (e.g. $1.00 off)
- Percentage off (e.g. 10% off)
- Percentage off after a fixed amount off (e.g. $1.00 off plus an additional 10% off)
- Items discounted only certain days of the week
- Items discounted only on certain dates (e.g. holidays, promotional periods)
- Items discounted based on quantity purchased (with any number of different quantity brackets)
- Items discounted based on the customer's membership or discount category (e.g. club members, seniors)

Discounts are set up similar to Rates, such that you define a set of "applies if" conditions and the discount will be automatically used when a purchase is made that meet those conditions.

General vs. Item-Specific Discounts

Every single item in inventory can have different discounts applied as needed -- these are called "Item-specific discounts". This allows the most flexibility, but of course it could involve a lot of work if it required a change to every individual item when you wanted to have a general sale on every item in the store. Therefore there are also "general discounts", which can be used to change discounts for multiple items at once. You still need to add a general discount to each item that it applies to, but the advantage is that the when the general discount is changed (e.g. the sale is cancelled or the conditions change), you only need to change the single discount definition and it immediately affects all items.

General discounts are especially useful if you have periodic discounts on groups of items -- for instance an end-of-season 20% off sale. After adding the general discount, perhaps called "End-of-season sale", you would edit each inventory item that it will apply to and add that discount to its list. Presumably that discount will only apply for certain dates. So at the end of next season, all you have to do is adjust the dates for the general discount. You could even change the percentage if you decide to make it 25% off, for instance.

Likewise, you might have a senior discount that applies to some or all items. Maybe that discount is currently 10%, but you want to be able to change it or even cancel it later. Just make a "Seniors" general discount and add it to each applicable inventory item. Then if you need to change it, you only have to do it in one place.

Item-specific discounts would be used for things that can't be generalized, like a specific sale price for an item, or buy 3 get one free (because the amount of the discount would be specific to each item). They can also be used in situations that seem like they could be a general discount (like 10% off), but perhaps you're likely to change the amount of the discount for particular items and don't want to affect them all at once. (Even in this case, if any changes are likely to affect an entire group of items then you could set up multiple general discounts and apply them to items of the appropriate group.)

Multiple Discounts

When an inventory item has multiple discounts selected, there are certain rules for how they are applied:

Item-specific discounts are checked first -- if any item-specific discounts apply, then no general discounts are applied. The item-specific discounts are assumed to override any general discounts. (Thus a 30%-off special item-specific discount will override a 20%-off end-of-season sale.)

Only the first applicable discount found will be used -- multiple discounts will never be applied to a

single item. If there multiple general discounts selected for an item, for instance, it won't use all of them even if more than one could apply. Therefore it's important to arrange them in an order than puts the priority ("better") discounts before "default" discounts (e.g. special season sales should appear before senior discounts, unless the senior discount is better). In addition, it's important to properly qualify discounts using the "Applies if" conditions.

Important: The order in each item's list of applicable discounts is what counts, and they can be rearranged as needed for each item. In particular, remember that the order general discounts are listed in the Setup General Discounts dialog does **not** affect the order they are applied.

General Discounts Setup

Setting up general discounts by opening the Setup General Item Discounts dialog (Maintenance | P.O.S Inventory Setup | General Item Discounts). This will list any general discounts already defined (if there are any). From here you will add or edit discounts and move discounts in the list as needed. Moving rates in the list is important because the order that they appear here will be the same order they appear when they are selected when entering transactions. Therefore you may want to put them in a logical order, or at least put the most-used rates at the top. The order is also very important if automatic rates calculation is used.

The basic procedure for defining a discounts is to click New or Insert, and then enter the details of the discount definition. Insert is the same as New, except that the discount will be inserted in the list at the current selection point, rather than added to the end of the list. You can edit any of the existing discounts by clicking on the rate in the list and selecting Edit discount definition, or you can simply double-click on the discount in the list.

Warning -- Once a discount is edited or deleted, there is no way to Cancel the operation -- the changes are permanent once you leave the Edit Discount dialog and come back to the Setup General Discounts dialog. (Moving discounts is also "permanent" since there is no Cancel button, but you can always move them back.)

You can Move, Delete, or Copy one or more discounts by selecting the discounts in the list (Ctrl-click or Shift-click will select multiple discounts), and then click the appropriate button. Copying discounts is very handy if you have a large group of discounts and need to add a similar group of discounts have slight variations, such as percentages or season dates.

Remember that the order general discounts are listed here does **not** affect the order they are applied to items. The order does affect the order they will appear in the "Select Discounts" list when editing items -- and thus the default order they would be added if multiple items are selected at once -- but they can be rearranged for each item once selected, so the order here is irrelevant.

If you have special discounts for certain days, then the functions to Add and Remove dates from selected discount(s) makes it easy to add sale dates to the "Special dates applicable" for multiple discounts at once, or add it to the "Special dates not applicable" (which removes it from the discount) for other discounts. These functions open a dialog where you can enter as many dates as needed, separated by commas.

Editing Discounts

When you select New, Insert, or Edit from Setup General Item Discounts, the Edit Discount Definition dialog will appear. This is where you define all of the details of the discount.

This dialog is also used for item-specific discounts, when Add New Discount is selected from an Edit Inventory Item dialog.

The fields are described in detail below. All discounts must have a description and either a percentage or an

amount -- the rest of the fields are optional, and define when and how the rate is applied.

Description

This is important, since this will be shown on the receipts as the description for the discount. It should be kept appropriately short, especially if you're using a 3" receipt printer. Also note that the description for the item being discounted will be added in front of this description (for instance, if the description is "10% off", the receipt will show something like "Firewood : 10% off"). So keep it short!

This description is also what's shown in the selection list when using Select Discounts in the Edit Inventory Item dialog. While there's no restriction against duplicate descriptions, it would make it very difficult to select the appropriate discount when editing inventory items if there are any duplicate descriptions. If this is difficult to do while keeping them short, consider adding details widely separated from what the customer sees, like "10% off....................(end of season)". You will be able to see the details in the list, but if printed on a 40-column printer the details of the description will be cut off and not shown.

Discount each item a fixed amount

Enter a value here if you want a particular dollar amount subtracted from the price of each item. This fixed amount will be multiplied by the quantity of items as needed. You don't need to enter a dollar sign, just the number

...and/or discount by a percentage

Enter a percentage here (with or without the % symbol) to discount the items. This percentage is applied to the total price of the items, after they are multiplied by any quantity (and after any fixed-amount discount is applied if entered above).

Applies if Qty >=

If this discount should only apply if the quantity purchased is greater than 1, then enter the appropriate number here (e.g. if the discount starts if they buy 3, enter 3 here). Note that the discount will be applied to the total quantity purchased, not just those above the value here (e.g. it would be applied to all 3 items, not just those beyond 3).

Applies if Qty <=

If this discount should only apply if the quantity purchased is lower than a certain quantity, then enter the appropriate number here. This is normally only used in conjunction with the Applies if >= field for bracketed discounts, like 10% off qty 5 to 9, 15% off qty 10 or more. The 10% discount would have 9 in this field, so it won't apply if the qty is 10 or more.

Transaction category to use for discounts

You will usually want to leave "Same as inventory item" selected, so that the discount amount is subtracted from the total sales of that category. However there may be times when you want the discounts to be reported in a completely separate category, not affecting the figures for that particular category. In that case, select the 2nd option here and then select the category you want the discount amount to be reported in.

Note however that regardless of the Transaction Category used for the discounts, the discounts will always

count for the corresponding Inventory Item or Inventory Class for the item discounted. So even if you select a separate Transaction Category for the discounts (perhaps an "end-of-season" category), you can still get a report showing the actual amount received for each item or inventory class.

Also note that the Discount transaction types can be filtered when reporting, so you could get a report showing only the total discounts given for any transaction category, item, or inventory class no matter which way you choose to do it.

So, it may just be a matter of whether you want special categories for reporting particular type of discount (e.g. seniors, sales, close-outs, etc.). The other factor would be if you're exporting to QuickBooks, you need to map each category into some QuickBooks item or account. If you use special discount categories, this may not let you account for the discounts properly in QuickBooks.

Discount type to show for transaction

If this discount applies only to certain discount types, then you probably want to report these discounts according to the discount actually used by the customer. In that case, select the "Same as customer's discount" option. However if it has nothing to do with the discount types defined (e.g. just a sale price), then choose the 2nd option and select a discount to use for reporting. You'll probably want to add at least one special discount type for this, such as "Sale" or "Merchandise", that's different than any discounts that might be used for reservations.

Applies to Discounts

This function lets you select one or more discount types that this discount will apply to. For instance, if it's a senior discount, select the Senior discount type. This means that in order for this discount to apply, the Senior discount must be selected for "Discount type used" at the top of the P.O.S. sales entry dialog. You can select more than one discount type, or even all of them, and it will apply to any of the selected types.

Apply only if customer has no discounts

Check this box if this discount should only apply if no discount is selected for "Discount type used" when entering sales. While this sounds like it's not a useful option, it can be important for making discounts mutually exclusive so the proper one is used. For instance, you might have a 10% discount for seniors, 15% for employees, and 5% for anyone else (with other conditions like applying to certain dates). While the ordering of the discounts can be used make this work properly, it's a good idea to check this option for the 5% discount to make sure it's not applied to seniors or employees by mistake.

Season Dates Applicable

This field is used to specify the dates for which the discount is applicable (think of it more as "sale dates" than season dates, but "season" is used here to be consistent with Rates and Sites setup terminology). Dates in this field and the other two Special Dates fields can be entered as single dates or as date ranges. You can also enter dates without the year if you want to specify dates that apply the same to every year, but this only applies to the Season Dates, not the Special Dates. If you leave this field blank, it means that the site is available all year long (so there's no need to enter **1/1 to 12/31**).

Note that the dates in these fields will be entered in the "regional" format according to your computer's settings -- for instance, month/day for U.S., and day/month for Canadian, etc. U.S. format is used in the examples.

There is no limit to the number of dates or date ranges you can enter, and the field will scroll as needed. Separate each date range with a comma. A space after the comma is optional (it will be inserted automatically when displayed). The format of a date is fairly flexible as long as if follows the month/day/year convention. Each range should include two dates separated by the word "to". Here are some examples of valid range entries:

> **1/1 to 9/30, 11/1 to 12/31**   (note there are no years, so it applies to every year)
> **1/2/2002 to 4/3/02**   (years can be 2 or 4 digits)
> **10-5-01, 10-7-01 to 12-31-01** (single dates can be entered, and you can use the dash in a date)

Regardless of the date format you use, it will be changed to a common format (like mm/dd/yyyy) after you save the information. If you make a mistake in an entry, it will warn you when you click <u>Save</u> and ask you to fix it.

You can clear out old date ranges once that year has passed (and add new ones for upcoming years). Unlike the dates for Sites, there is no need to keep old dates in the lists since you won't add P.O.S. transactions for past dates.

Special Dates Applicable

Special Dates Applicable take precedence over season dates in determining if a site is available. Even if you have specific seasons, there may be times when you want to make some discounts available out of season. You could just adjust the Season Dates if you enter the dates for each year separately, but if you use the same Season Dates every year (entered without years, like **3/1 to 9/30**) then it's easier to enter any exceptions in this field.

The Special Dates Available field follows the same formatting as Season Dates, with the exception that they should always have a year in them. (Otherwise you would be better off adjusting the Season Dates.) It's OK to have dates here that are considered applicable by the season dates anyway, but it would add work for the software so it's best to avoid overlapping dates.

Note -- Since this is an *exception* list, you can't just put the normally applicable dates here -- use the Season Dates field for the normal range. The Special Dates Available list simply overrides "out of season" dates, making dates applicable that aren't in the normal season range.

Special Dates Not Applicable

This is the highest priority of the date fields. If a date is included here, the discount will be considered not applicable on this date even if the same date is in both of the Dates Applicable lists above. Dates in this list should always have years in them.

Days of the Week Applicable

These checkboxes allow you to indicate which days of the week the discount is applicable on, handy for things like a "Tuesday special". Note that the days of the week selected can be overridden by Special Dates Applicable or Special Dates Not Applicable, so take care in specifying special dates in these cases.

If you don't plan to have discounts that are based on the day of the week, then you should disable these fields (see *Define Data Fields*). This will improve the speed of the program.

Notes

The Notes field is just for your own notes, perhaps an explanation of why a discount is set up the way it is. The Notes are never seen by the customer. They can be any length (it will scroll as needed).

Adding and Editing Inventory Items

The dialog for adding, editing, or viewing inventory details is accessed through <u>Maintenance</u> / <u>P.O.S. Inventory Setup</u> / <u>Inventory Items</u> (assuming you are authorized for the P.O.S. option).

This dialog has the standard <u>Previous</u> and <u>Next</u> buttons, <u>Add New</u>, <u>Delete</u>, <u>Find</u>, and Print buttons at the top just like the dialogs for <u>Customer Details</u>, <u>Reservation Details</u>, and <u>Site Details</u>.

If there are no inventory item records yet, or if you click <u>Add New</u>, the Record ID will show <NEW RECORD>. To add an item, just enter the information needed into this new record. (Be careful -- if it actually shows a number for Record ID, you're editing an existing inventory record!)

When you're finished with an item's information, you can click <u>Save</u>, which will save the changes and close the dialog -- or you can immediately click <u>Add New</u> to add another record so items can be entered one after another. Each time you click <u>Add New</u>, the current item information will be saved, a new record will be created and the cursor will immediately jump to the <u>Inventory code</u> field to help speed entry. Another time-saver is to use **Alt-A** on the keyboard instead of using the mouse to click <u>Add New</u>.

To further speed item entry, certain fields will be automatically set to the values used in the last item. These fields are Inventory Class, Transaction Category, and any Tax selections. Therefore it's a good idea to add your inventory in batches of similar items, so you don't have to change these fields often.

Another helpful feature is the <u>Add Dup</u> button. This adds a new record with exactly the same information as the current one (and jumps to the new record so you're editing that one, not the original one). This helps when you're entering many similar items, for instance different kinds of soft drinks. Often the only changes you need to make between them are the inventory code (especially if using the bar code), description, and quantity on hand. Vendor stock # or description might also need to be changed if you're not letting those default (leaving them blank -- see below).

If you decide not to save the changes or new record, even after entering some information, click the <u>Cancel</u> button. You will be warned if any new information would be lost by canceling the changes to the record, at which point you can abort the <u>Cancel</u> and get back to the dialog without losing your changes.

There is no limit to the number of items you can enter (except in demo mode), except computer memory (10000 or more is generally not a problem).

The fields are described in detail below. All discounts must have a description and either a percentage or an amount -- the rest of the fields are optional, and define when and how the rate is applied.

Inventory Code

If you're using a bar-code scanner, this should be the bar code as scanned from the product (you can use the scanner to read the bar code right into this field). Otherwise it can be any name or code you want to use for the item. While it's possible to leave this field blank, it's not recommended since some reports show items using this field. Having one or more items with blank codes will make reports confusing.

Tip: When an item scan code or text is entered on the P.O.S. sales entry dialog, it will look for an exact match with this field first -- if one and only one exact match is found, then that item will be immediately added to the ticket. So if you're not using bar codes for everything, then using short unique codes like "fw"

for firewood can speed sales entry for common items.

If more than one exact match is found, then it will show those items in a list for you to select from (for instance you could use the code "soda" for all of your soda items). If no exact match is found, then it looks through all items looking for a partial match with either the inventory code or description fields, and will show all partial matches in a list to choose from (even if it's only one, partial matches can't be added automatically -- it would be shown in a Find list and it must be selected).

Description

This description is exactly what will be shown on receipts for the item, so it should be descriptive enough for the customer. It should also be short enough for the printer, so if you're using a 3" receipt printer (normally 40 columns), keep it short enough to fit on one line. If you're using a pole display, it should be limited to 20 characters (or at least make the first 20 characters reasonably descriptive). Also keep in mind that if discounts might apply then you should leave room for the discount's description. Receipts will show discounts with this description followed by the discount description, like "20 oz. soda : 10% off" (where the discount description is "10% off").

Inventory Class

Every item must be assigned to an inventory class. Depending on how detailed you want your reporting, you might have 2 classes or 100 classes, or more. This is completely up to you. Just click on the drop-down list and select the appropriate class. For convenience, you can click the Edit button next to the drop-down list to open the entire pick-list of classes for editing or adding new ones. For more information about setting these up, see the inventory setup section Inventory Classes & Transaction Categories.

Transaction Category

As with Inventory Class, each item must have a transaction category assigned, which will be used for each sale (charge) transaction for this item. See above for details.

Park (location)

This field will only appear only if you have more than one Park record defined. If you don't separate your inventory between parks (e.g. keep track of qty on hand separately for each location), leave this field blank.

Otherwise, select the park where this inventory item is located. If you have the same items at multiple parks, then the inventory items will have to be duplicated for each park, with the appropriate park selected and quantity on hand entered for each location. Also note that you will need to set up a filter under Filter inventory sales lookup at each workstation depending on its location, so that the proper inventory record is used and updated as sales are entered.

Vendor

If you want to keep track of the vendor for each item (or the preferred vendor, if several), then select that vendor here. Of course this is mostly important if you'll be printing purchase orders with the program, but you might want to just keep this information for your reference also. You can add a new vendor easily with the New Vendor button, without leaving the item you're working on. Note that it's important that each vendor have a different name, so that they can be identified in this list and assigned properly.

Vendor's Stock # and Description

These are only necessary if you're printing purchase orders. Even so, if the item's inventory code can be used for the vendor's stock #, and/or the item's description can be used for the vendor's description, then you can leave one or both of these fields blank. In that case, you must also make sure that the corresponding options in Maintenance / Printing Options / Purchase Orders are also enabled. If the vendor for this particular item wants a specific stock # or description, then you need to enter them here.

Cost each

This is helpful if you're printing purchase orders (so you don't have to enter it into the order each time), or you can enter it just for your reference. However it's not used in any reporting or accounting at this time.

Re-order threshold

This value can be used to warn you when stock is getting low, if the warning is enabled (Maintenance / Program Options / P.O.S.). It's also used for reporting (P.O.S. / Inventory Reports / Items below re-order threshold), and for automatically selecting items when creating purchase orders (P.O.S. / Purchase Orders / Create Purchase Orders).

Re-order minimum qty

This value is only used for the default order quantity when creating purchase orders (P.O.S. / Purchase Orders / Create Purchase Orders). Otherwise it can be left blank or just entered for reference.

Quantity on hand

This is the current quantity in stock, and should be entered for any item for which you wish to track the inventory level. It will be automatically updated each time a sale (or return) is made, and can be updated through purchase order receiving. Of course you can manually edit it here whenever needed also. If you receive more items that you want to add to inventory, you should use the "Add" button next to the quantity and enter the number added. This helps minimize mistakes that could be made by calculating the new quantity by hand.

If you don't want to track inventory for an item (and don't want any warnings that it's out of inventory), leave this field blank. Don't enter 0 -- that would actually indicate none in stock, not that you don't want to track it.

Note that the quantity doesn't have to be a whole number. For instance you can track gasoline, propane, yards of rope or whatever you need to in decimal-point quantities like 1.5 or 0.03. Likewise, the price will be multiplied appropriately with whatever quantity you enter on the P.O.S. sales entry dialog, and inventory updated accordingly.

Price Each

This must be entered for every inventory item. This should be the pre-tax price for a single item (Quantity 1), before any discounts. The dollar sign (or other currency symbol) does not have to be entered, just enter a number like 5 or 1.95. Prices must be entered with the decimal point if not whole dollars -- it does not assume 2 decimal places (e.g. $5.00 is entered as 5, not 500).

Applicable Taxes

Check the box for any taxes that apply to this item when it's sold. The total price with tax (for a single item) will be shown below. Of course tax is actually calculated after all items on a ticket are added up, rounding appropriately on the total rather than adding tax to each item at once.

General Discount Pricing Schedules Applicable

To select one or more applicable general discounts, click the Select Discounts button. A list will appear with all general discounts shown. Use Ctrl-click to select one or more discount that should apply to this item. Once selected, you can change their order with Move Up and Move Down. Remember that the discounts will be applied in the order they appear here, so the order can be important if the discounts aren't defined to be mutually exclusive. See the Item Discounts section for details on how discounts work.

Item-specific Discount Pricing Schedules

Item-specific discounts must be set up separately for each item that requires them (thus it's best to use general discounts whenever possible). These are added, edited, an deleted right from this dialog -- they don't appear anywhere else. If this inventory item is deleted, its item-specific discounts are deleted with it. If it's duplicated using Add Dup, its discounts are duplicated as also (items never share item-specific discount records).

If more than one discount is shown, you can change their order with Move Up and Move Down. Remember that the discounts will be applied in the order they appear here, so the order can be important if the discounts aren't defined to be mutually exclusive. Also remember that any item-specific discounts that apply will override any general discounts. See the Item Discounts section for details on how discounts work.

Inactive

It's never a good idea to actually delete an inventory item once it has been used in a transaction (at least until all such transactions have been purged), because that would break the link with the transaction and affect reporting. If you no longer stock an item, simply check the Inactive box. That will keep it from being brought up for a sale, and will hide it from most reports unless specifically filtered to include inactive items.

Notes

You can enter any notes you like here, just for your records. Customers and vendors will never see these notes, but you may find them useful for recording historical information, notes about ordering from certain vendors, etc. To enter more than one line, click the "..." button to open a multi-line editing window.

Importing Inventory and Vendor Data

The Import function can be found on through: File | Import | Import Inventory/Vendor data. You must have Administrator access to use this function.

IMPORTANT: Importing cannot be undone -- make sure you have a backup before doing the import, so you don't have to manually delete data if a mistake is made!

There are two primary requirements for the data to be imported:

1. It must be in either a comma-separated-value (CSV) or tab-delimited (text) format. If it's a CSV format, make sure that any fields with commas are enclosed in quotes (this is the standard).

2. The fields must be in a form that equates to the fields in Campground Master. For instance, the Contact name for vendor information must be a combined first/last name, City/State/Zip must be separated, Inventory Item Classes must match the classes you've defined in the pick lists, Taxes to be applied must be as a yes/no or true/false field for each tax rate, etc.

Importing Vendors vs. Inventory

Keep in mind that vendors and inventory items are separate records in Campground Master. Inventory Items are "linked" to vendors, but the vendor data is in a separate table.

You can import just the vendor data from a vendor list, or you can import the vendors along with inventory items at the same time if your import file contains the necessary information. You will see when defining the import fields (below) that there are two sets of fields -- one for Vendors and one for Inventory Items. If you're importing just the vendor data, then you will only select fields for vendors. If the import data has inventory information, then you can also import the inventory items by selecting those fields. If you have two separate lists, one with vendors and one with inventory, import the vendors first. Then import the inventory, and if the inventory information has a vendor's company name as one of the fields then it can be properly linked to the vendors already imported.

Importing Vendors from QuickBooks

You can import a vendor database from QuickBooks accounting software using this same Import function. First you need to export the data from QuickBooks using its Export function. In QuickBooks, select from the menu: File -> Utilities -> Export... an Export dialog will open where you select the lists to be exported. Export the Vendor list only.

Then click OK and enter a file name to export to, such as "Vendors.txt". This will be a tab-delimited file that can be used for importing below, and will have appropriate address/city/state/zip information if you entered this data uniformly into QuickBooks. Note that the exported table may also have some extra information in front, like "CUSTDICT" records. Just select those and delete them before importing the vendor data.

Importing Inventory from QuickBooks

You can also import inventory from QuickBooks if you have it set up as "Items". First you need to export the data from QuickBooks using its Export function. In QuickBooks, select from the menu: File -> Utilities -> Export... an Export dialog will open where you select the lists to be exported. Export the Item list only.

Then click OK and enter a file name to export to, such as "Items.txt". This will be a tab-delimited file that can be used for importing below, and will have item information. Note that the exported table may also have

some extra information in front, like "CUSTITEMDICT" records. Just select those and delete them before importing the vendor data.

The Import Process

There are several easy steps to importing.

>   **1. Select a file**. You can enter the entire path to the import file, or use the Browse button. When browsing, it will look for .csv and .txt files by default, but you can change the file type to show all files if needed. For instance, QuickBooks exports files with the ".iif" extension, so you need to select All Files to see those.

>   **2. Select the file format.** Select either comma-separated or tab-delimited. Don't worry if you get it wrong -- the data will obviously look wrong when you import it if you choose the wrong type, and you can simply change this selection and do the Load Import File again.

>   **3. Load the file for preview.** Click the Load Import File button to read the data. The data is not actually added to your database yet, it's just loaded in the list on the dialog for previewing and editing.

>   **4. Define fields to import.** If the file loaded successfully you should see the data in nice columns in the table. If the import file had headers in it, you'll even see the headers in the first line, like "first name", "last name", "city", etc. Now comes the important part -- you have to decide what each column means, in terms of Campground Master fields. This is usually pretty easy to do. Just right-click on each field (either the header or the actual data), and then select the field that corresponds to that column. Customer, Reservation and Transaction fields are listed separately, and there is also a separate list for Site Preferences (primarily used for preferences that might affect the charges, like 50A service). The column header will then change to that name so you know you've defined it. You don't have to assign fields to each column -- just skip any that you don't need or don't have corresponding fields. If you make a mistake, use the Remove function on the right-click menu. See the notes below for more details.

>   **5. Select vendor fields to use for duplicate-removal besides the company.** When vendor data is imported, duplicate vendors will be automatically removed if possible. This not only applies to data you're importing, but also to any vendors already in your database (it won't remove duplicates from your database, but it will avoid importing new duplicates.) This requires at least a Company name field (the data isn't much use without that anyway). You can also choose to check the Zip code field and/or the Address line 1 fields, to avoid filtering out duplicate vendor names unless they have the same address. If you uncheck these fields, or if they're not available in the imported data, then it will assume any that match first and last names are duplicates. Note however that this is only offered as a convenience when importing. Once the vendors are imported, you should make sure that there are no duplicate company names in the database. See the section on Vendors for details.

>   **6. Convert vendor names/addresses to mixed case or upper case.** Other programs may force or suggest that vendor information be all upper case, which is easier to enter but is not as professional looking on orders. So you may want to decide to start entering the information in mixed-case, and you can also have the import function convert the old information. Conversely, you can make sure that all of the old information is in upper case if you wish to keep with that procedure. Note that this only affects the data during this session, not data already entered or previously imported into Campground Master.

>   **7. Edit data if needed.** The preview list is fully editable, so you can delete any records that you don't want to import (like obvious duplicates or blank records), and you can even enter corrections as needed here before importing. Just click on a field in the grid to select it and then start typing to replace it, or click twice to edit the value without replacing it. Likewise, just click any field and click the Delete button to delete the entire row. (Ctrl-click and shift-click functions for multiple selection also works.) Note that it the import file included a header row, you should also delete that row.

8. Import the data. When everything looks right, click the <u>Import Data!</u> button to perform the import. You may see an error or warning prompt about duplicate filtering or field definitions if there seems to be something missing. As the data is imported, you will see customer/reservation totals and a duplicate total count up at the bottom.

When the import is complete, all records imported are removed from the list, but there may be some records left over in the list, with a message saying that some errors were detected. To see why a record was not imported, just hold the mouse over the record in the list -- an error message will be shown with the reason for the error. Errors are typically a result of records that don't have an Item code or Company name (required by Campground Master), or for Inventory Item Classes or Transaction Categories that weren't recognized, or fields that were not formatted properly. You can ignore them and close the dialog to skip importing those items, or you can manually edit the records and run the Import again, as many times as needed to get them all imported.

When all is finished, just Close the dialog -- the data is imported to the database and the reports will be refreshed if necessary.

Notes on Importing Data

Some fields can be selected more than once, and the data will be combined into the one field in Campground Master. For instance, any data that doesn't have a direct import field correlation can be imported to the Inventory or Vendor Notes field. Each imported field will be added to a new line in the Notes, so that information is transferred even if Campground Master doesn't have a specific field for it. Also, any number of columns can be assigned to Vendor Contact Names, and they will simply be combined into the single field.

The Add Tax fields (flags for whether each tax should be added) and the Inactive field are true/false fields. These must be one of the following: true, false, yes, no, T, F, Y, or N. (Upper or lower case does not matter). If it's blank, then it's assumed False. Note that the Add Tax fields are simply numbered 1 to 5. You will need to know which number applies to each of your tax categories -- see Maintenance / Park Setup / Taxes for this numbering.

Inventory Item Class and Transaction Category

Inventory Item Classes and Transaction Categories must be assigned to every inventory item in Campground Master. When importing, you must either select an import field for each of these, or assign a default class/category to every imported item (you will be prompted for this when you do the import). If the import file has no field that would correspond to these, then the default is the only possibility.

However if the imported data does have some kind of class and/or category information, then it would be a good idea to keep that. The difficult part is that an exact match must be found for the class and/or category in the corresponding pick list, or else it can't be imported. Since there are often a large number of classes given to items, it would b a lot of work to enter all of those manually into Campground Master. So here is a procedure which can help:

1.   Load the import data into this Import dialog.
2.   Locate the data column that appears to be the class information, and Copy/Paste that whole column into an Excel spreadsheet (or any spreadsheet program).
3.   Sort the column (if you didn't already to this before copying).
4.   Go through and delete any duplicates and an other unwanted information (like headers), and note how many there are.
5.   In Campground Master, close the Import dialog and open the appropriate Pick List, like Inventory Item Classes.
6.   Click New Record as many times as needed to add all of them.
7.   Copy the column of data from Excel, and Paste it into each of the first 3 columns in Campground Master

(starting at the first pick list item, of course)
8.   Now go back to Import, and you can import the data. (Select the appropriate field for each column in the import list of course.)

Repeat steps 2 through 7 for both categories and classes, if needed. Note however that it would probably be better to just do the classes and let the categories default to a single value. See the section on Inventory Classes and Transaction Categories for more explanation of these fields.

Filter inventory sales lookup

This function, under Maintenance / P.O.S. Inventory Setup, lets you set up a filter defining which inventory items will be available for sales entry (Point of Sale).

This is most often used when you need to track inventory separately for multiple parks or stores. For each workstation in the multi-park or multi-store network, you would set this filter to include only those inventory items designated for that park record. (Note that if an item's Park field is blank, it will still be available to all parks).

It could also be used to limit sales to inventory items of a particular cost (e.g. to exclude high-ticket items), or to restrict certain items like liquor at certain check-outs.

Actually most of the filter selections available would not make sense for this function -- it simply uses the standard Inventory Filter function for convenience and maximum flexibility.

If you find that some things you know are in inventory can't be found when entering sales, try opening this filter and clicking Reset All to make sure it's not filtering out something by mistake.

Index

- A -

- B -

- C -