

For the Clients & Friends of Arts Management Systems

May 2008

Volume 1, Issue 2



A New Season is Here!

Welcome to the second edition of the Arts Management Systems newsletter "The ArtsMan Chronicle"!

A new season is here, in more ways in one! Spring is here, especially for those of who are in the northern climates. It's nice to feel the warmer temperatures and to see the ground and trees begin to bud with new life.

It's also a time of beginnings and endings. Some venues are finishing their seasons, yet others are ramping up to start fresh ones. It's an exciting time for everyone.

Here at Arts Management Systems, we're still busy converting clients to Version 7. 25% of our client base has now been converted. Please see page 5

for more information on how to schedule your Version 7 conversion.

In our tips section this month, our trainer Tom will share some tips on doing subscriptions, both in Version 6 and in Version 7.

We also have some stories from clients to share with you, along with some information about an upcoming event that we are participating in.

REMINDER:

Support for Version 6 has been extended until September 30, 2009.

Red Butte Garden loves the fact that all of their various collections of data are finally all located in one centralized and easily accessible location.

Red Butte Garden – Everything is Finally in One Place!

Red Butte Garden, a part of the University of Utah, is a non-profit organization located in Salt Lake City, Utah. With over 100 acres including display and natural gardens, walking paths and natural area with hiking trails, Red Butte Garden is the largest botanical and ecological center in the Intermountain West that tests, displays and interprets regional horticulture.

Up until they implemented Theatre Manager in March, all the patron information was stored in various Filemaker databases stored in different

locations. None of these files were linked together, making any changes meant multiple entries.

When Red Butte Garden finally decided that they needed to change the way they managed their data, they decided on Theatre Manager. Derrek Hanson, the Director of Events and Visitor Services at Red Butte Garden, said that one of the main reasons why they chose Theatre Manager was its versatility.

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Red Butte Garden - Continued

They loved that even though it is a ticketing system, there are so many other components that link into it. All these components talk to each other! Access and changes are made real-time. They will no longer have to wait for a few days to see changes made. These are all bonuses to Red Butte Garden, and going a long way towards making their lives much easier.

Derrek says they like cohesiveness of Theatre Manager. Now each department can tap into each other's resources, and greatly reduce duplication of efforts. The various departments are located throughout the facility, and being able to log into the system and utilize the same data from each location was first on their priority list.

Their training session was great. "It was a bit overwhelming at first", said Derrek. "The system just does so much, we weren't sure how we would be able to fit all the training in!" Derrek and the other staff have been using the system for almost 2 months now and are planning to have a trainer come back to do some follow up training. "We know that there are things that we missed the first time through. Now that we've been using it

for a bit, we've found some more things we'd like to customize and learn how to do, so that we can use the system to it's fullest."

Red Butte Garden has also implemented the Web Sales Module. Currently they've been offering the tickets for the classes online, and are getting ready offer tickets to their concerts next month.

The fact that Theatre Manager allows Red Butte to do their ticketing in-house and keep any fees to themselves is another feature of the system that helped make their decision. They didn't want to contract the ticketing out to a third party. This way they control the extra fees, **and** they get to keep the extra revenue to themselves. Always a bonus!

The support team has been a tremendous help to the staff at Red Butte Garden. "I like how the support team can utilize Timbuktu to remotely access our system," said Derrek, "it certainly helps having the ability to allow the support team to take a look at what we've done, or show us how to do something live. It's a real time saver."

Derrek Hanson says that now each department can tap into each other's resources, and greatly reduce duplication of efforts!

It's All About Subscriptions at Salt Lake Acting Company!

Salt Lake Acting Company recently went through their Version 7 database conversion. When Cynthia Fleming, their Director of Audience Services, booked their onsite training session, it was supposed to be "all about subscriptions". It was then decided that since Arts Management Systems was already going to be onsite to do training, it would be an appropriate time to do the database upgrade. That way they would get everything done in one shot.

Most venues decide that the best time to their upgrade is during their "down" time, but that wasn't the case here. Salt Lake Acting Company was getting ready to start their season renewals and subscriptions, so it was actually a very

busy time for them. Subscriptions are the lifeblood of this theatre. Without them, the theatre couldn't exist. This meant that getting the upgrade done and subscription training completed was crucial. Cynthia felt that she already had the basic knowledge for getting Theatre Manager to do what she needed for their needs, and she really wanted to concentrate on training on subscriptions. Because this was very important to Cynthia, we were able to tailor her training sessions to focus mainly on the topics she needed.

Like its predecessor Version 6, Theatre Manager's Version 7 subscription renewal process takes care of all Salt Lake Acting Company's needs.

Subscriptions are the lifeblood of Salt Lake Acting Company

Tom's Tech Tip – Subscriptions in a Nutshell

It's that time of year again when several of our clients begin building their season packages. There are some stunning differences between Version 6 and Version 7 – and some comfortable similarities.

What are the Similarities?

First, the three laws: 1) Same Seat, 2) Same Night, and 3) Same Price Code and Promotion.

Same Seat: if the patron has A101 for one event, then they have A101 for all events. This means that subscription packages must all be in the same venue.

Same Night: If a patron is coming to 2-FRI for one event, then they must be coming to 2-FRI for all events. In the case of concerts (which may happen on different days), we simply tell Theatre Manager that all concerts are on a common day like 1-SAT.

Same Price Code and Promotion: If the patron used a Sub-Adult for one event, then they are Sub-Adult for all events.

The other two players in the Season Subscription game are the control house (<http://www.artsman.com/Help/SeasonSubscriptions/SubCntrlEvnt.html>), and the favourite seats (<http://www.artsman.com/Help/SeasonSubscriptions/CrtFavSeats.html>).

The Control House is a “phantom event” with as many performances as your season package has. Make sure ticket prices are zero dollars, is set not to print, and only the “season” type promotions are enabled.

Favourite Seats indicate where the patron likes to sit and this integration with subscriptions is made very clear in Version 7 with a pictorial of the venue map.

The first step in creating a season package is to build your events and the Control House (V6 users: make SURE your database is sufficiently expanded prior to building your events. V7 users: the database expands for you). All your events (including the Control House) need to be built in the same venue. Version 7 users please note: you must have a Control House now.

If you perform in multiple venues, then you will have to have multiple packages and multiple Control Houses. The easiest way to have success in rolling over your existing packages is to copy your next year's events from the current year's events. This will ensure they are in the same venue, use the same accounting structure, and have the same prices and promotions.

The second step depends on whether you are in your first year of subscriptions, or your second (or later). If it is your first year, you will need to sell a grouping of tickets that include all your events and the Control House. Simply select each event and sell the ticket as you normally would (hint: re-order the buy list by Performance so you have all your 1-FRI's together).

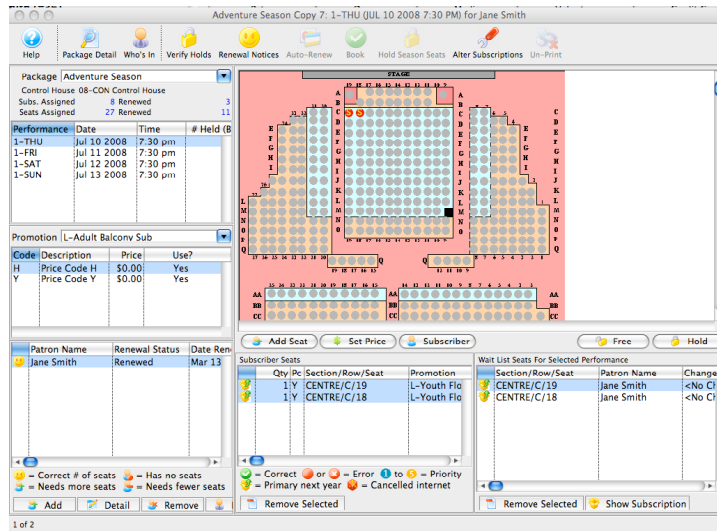
If you are in your second year (or any subsequent one), then you will need to rollover your existing packages, and edit them with your new events (<http://www.artsman.com/Help/SeasonSubscriptions/SeasonRenewalProcess.html>). In Version 6, we include next year's Control House as a part of the season package. Version 7 does this automatically for you, so there is no need to add it in the package. In either case – the Patron Favourite Seats file decides where a patron is placed in the new package, **not** the Control House.

The final step is to renew the package. This has some differences between V6 and V7, so those will be discussed in the next section.

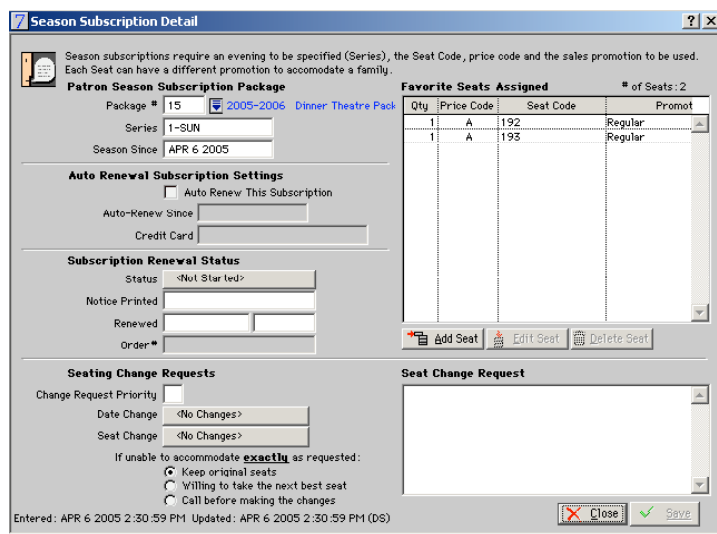
Subscriptions in a Nutshell, cont'd

What are the Differences?

An all-new user interface for subscriptions awaits you in Version 7. Instead of the favourite seats list, where you needed to know the seat code in order to select the seat, Version 7 gives you a graphic map, which makes choosing the favourite seats much like buying a ticket. Through the Manage Favourite Seats window, you can manage an entire package at once. All the patrons in a series are displayed, along with their ticket information (price code, promotion, seats, etc.). The favourite seats can also be managed individually if you prefer. Here are screen shots of the Version 7 and Version 6 Manage Favourite Seats windows.



Version 7



Version 6

Subscriptions in a Nutshell, cont'd

In addition, Version 7 offers an exciting new option – Wait Lists. Patrons can be wait listed for seats and placed in order for when seats become available (through turnover, change requests, etc.). Simply add the patron's requested seats to their favourite seats file, and they will be wait listed for the seats.

When booking a season package in Version 7, you can do it directly from the buy list. Simply click on the SEASON tab on the left-hand side, and you can see their package. Highlight it, and click BOOK on the top icon bar. If it is a new subscription, simply add it by clicking NEW on the same icon bar. When in the Manage Favourite Seats file, you can also drag and drop patrons from a contact list. The Version 7 season subscription package is very well laid out in the upgrade notes for 7.18.00 (see <http://www.artsman.com>, and click on UPDATES for more information).

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Order #163 for Mr. Ernest Ancion @ Barkley's Franks (Patron #5)". The interface includes a menu bar with options like Help, Transfer, New, Open, Duplicate, Delete, Print, Export, Sales Notes, Book, Payment Only, Manual Book, and Hold Season Seats. Below the menu is a table with columns: Patron Name, Year-Fiscal, Desc-External, Renewal Status, Date Renewed, Change Date, Change Location, and Performance. The table contains one row of data for Ernest Ancion.

Tickets	Patron Name	Year-Fiscal	Desc-External	Renewal Status	Date Renewed	Change Date	Change Location	Performance
Fee	Ernest Ancion @...	2008 - 2009	Classical Subscription	<Not Started>		<No Changes>	<No Changes>	1-FRI
Donation								
Membership								
Season								
Payment								
Transactions								

The main things to remember about season packages are:

- The three laws must apply (same seat, same night, same price code & promotion)
- Build your events first, packages second
- You are just selling a string of events as one
- The Favourite Seats file is the ruling indicator when rolling over a package
- The favourite seats are used on the renewal notices to calculate the subscription price and remind the patron where they are sitting

Scheduling Your Version 7 Conversion Salt Lake Acting Company (cont'd)

Timeslots for scheduling a Version 7 Conversion are quickly filling up, with our team already pre-booked to the end of the summer. To help you with your planning, we thought that we would put together some information for those of you who are still thinking about when and how you would like to proceed with your conversion.

Criteria:

- 1) Your venue must be hardware ready to support Theatre Manager Version 7. We can provide you with the hardware recommendations, or you can view them on our website at <http://www.artsman.com/Help/QuickStart/main.html>
- 2) Conversion of a database can take between 2 to 4 days. The best scheduling is to start after closing a show and through dark days. You will not be able to update the version 6 database during that time.
- 3) ArtsMan uses Timbuktu (TB2) Remote Access Client software (on the new PostGreSQL server) to support installation. If you have web sales, you may need to be installed on the Web Listener computer as well. If you don't have the TB2 client software, we can provide it to you at a cost of \$100.00 per user license.

There are two ways that we can do the conversion process for you – self-implementation and onsite training. For more information about these, please contact Tod Wilson at (403) 536-1214 or via email at <mailto:tod@artsman.com>

Cynthia is looking forward to using the new word processing feature to make their mailings look a bit fancier, but admits that may have to wait until next year. The staff at Salt Lake Acting Company haven't had a lot of opportunity to explore everything that Version 7 has to offer, but some of the new features that they like so far are: creating holds under a patron's name, and adding a timed release of the tickets; the concept of creating households and capturing all the patrons within the household; switching between screens is easier with the tabbed layout. They're looking forward to some slow time to be able to learn how the new Calendaring function works.

Currently, Salt Lake Acting Company just uses Theatre Manager for ticketing and donations. "I know that Theatre Manager can actually manage **everything** within a theatre, and one day, I'll eventually get to the point when I have it working as efficiently as it was designed to be," said Cynthia. "Right now I have it doing what I need it to do, and what I do use, works great!"

Cynthia told me that her opinion is that "it doesn't matter how great a software package is, if you don't get the support you need from the support team. If you have questions, and can't get assistance, then the package is useless. The support team at Arts Management Systems is fantastic. They understand how important my questions are to me, and respond accordingly. I always feel like the support team is right here in Salt Lake City with me, not in Calgary!" Cynthia likes how we listen to our clients and upgrade the system to accommodate their needs. "Arts Management is always looking for ways to make things better for their clients."

"I always feel like the support team is right here in Salt Lake City with me, not in Calgary!" – Cynthia Flemng, Salt Lake Acting Company

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Mail Lists Get a Workout at Hillbarn Theatre

Hillbarn Theatre, a community theatre in Foster City, California, is currently enjoying its 66th season.

I recently spoke with Chris Frye, the Office Manager at Hillbarn Theatre about their use of mail lists. A version 6 user of Theatre Manager, Hillbarn uses this particular feature of the software at least 25 times per year to create mail lists for such things as show announcements, donation requests and communicating subscriber benefits. These communications are done both through regular mail and through email.

Chris likes the way that the lists can be refined to target an audience. The ability of the system to weed out the patrons that aren't being contacted for a particular mailing saves them time and money by helping to eliminate any duplications.

One area where Chris frequently uses these lists is within the Donor Module. He is able to refine his searches by such things as donation amounts, as well as by when donations were historically made.

According to Chris, this component of the Theatre Manager software is one of the most utilized features of the system. Hillbarn Theatre wouldn't want to be without them!

A Proud Sponsor of the Magnetic North Theatre Festival!

The Magnetic North Theatre Festival was built from a dream to profile and promote the work of Canadian theatre artists and to provide the opportunity to bring together artists and practitioners to various points across the country.

Like its polar namesake, the Magnetic North Theatre Festival roves around the country, celebrating in a new Canadian city every second year and returning to its hosts at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa in between.

This year, the festival is partnering with the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), while they host their Annual General Meeting in Vancouver.

As part of our sponsorship of the festival, Doug Easterbrook and Tod Wilson will be attendees, and will participate in the Industry Series. This series presents sessions on a wide range of topics relevant to theatre practitioners. Each afternoon will begin with a plenary session, after which Doug and Tod will host one of the breakout sessions. Their sessions will be about Theatre Manager and will be held at the Granville Island Hotel.

If any of you are planning to attend the Festival/PACT Annual Meeting, or know of someone who will be, Doug and Tod will be happy to meet with you.

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www.artsman.com

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The Arts Management Team – How to Contact Us

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