

TECH TIPS

... AND OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

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Happy 2004!

Why Read TechTips?

Or...What's in it for ME?

- Keep abreast of important information relating to your Hudson Products
- Learn how to utilize and benefit from features and enhancements.
- Troubleshoot your own questions and issues.
- Get ideas on how to more effectively manage all aspects of your business.

GROWING YOUR COMPANY, ONE RESERVATION AT A TIME...

Welcome to the first newsletter that will help you learn more about the tremendously powerful business management tool that your company is already using. Any person with the proper knowledge and training on how to use a tool, will realize more professional and profitable results.

If you are reading this newsletter you already know a little about what The Hudson Group does for you, or perhaps you have a vague idea. The Hudson Group develops and customizes software-based solutions that manage and grow your transportation company's assets.

Most clients think that the staff and employees of The Hudson Group are a group of talented techies, who sit in dimly lit rooms and write computer code, day and night. While there may be a thread of truth to that perception, these experts are working diligently to produce and provide for you the most dynamic and powerful data management tools available in the industry. The most well known of those products are :

HWeb Reservations—An efficient internet based reservations system which allows your clients to complete all

reservation details on-line, from any internet access point worldwide. Reservation details can be automatically and periodically downloaded directly into your back office reservations and dispatching system. Transcription errors by Reservations agents become a thing of the past when

"Every dollar your company makes begins with the incoming reservation!"

clients enter their own itinerary and reservation details!

HWeb Agent—A powerful and quick Windows based Reservation data entry and capture interface. Your Reservations Agents will be able to gather more information in less time thereby making the reservation process quick and hassle-free for your clients.

HWeb Dispatcher—Once recorded, this tool allows you to manage your reservations, your driving staff and your fleet. Know at all times where your assets are and which assets are either occupied or available. This key component

of the total HWeb package will bring immediate cost saving efficiencies to your business.

HWeb Admin—A robust and versatile reporting tool which allows owners and managers to get snapshots, or global views, on their business efficiency and profitability. The information gleaned here will help with important business decisions and may determine changes in company policy or procedures that will increase overall profitability.

HWeb Bridge—An application that runs in the background and which automatically imports web-based reservation details and can even check for your vehicle availability for clients who are reserving online.

Effectively managing the reservation process from first call to final invoicing is a foundation to your company's long term growth and success. Every dollar your company makes begins with the incoming reservation! We know that this information needs to be recorded quickly and accurately. Once that information is captured, ***we put it to work for you.***

Technology Experts Partnering to Grow Your Business.

CALL US (BUT NOT RIGHT AWAY...)

You will have questions. Things may not always work the way you expect. You may get stuck somewhere or even get a pesky error message that won't go away. Don't despair!

Your first inclination is to pick up the phone and call Hudson Tech Support. We are truly glad that when you have a question, you feel confident enough in the skills of the Hudson support staff to want to call, but wouldn't it feel better if you could answer the question on your own? Not only does your question get answered more quickly and conveniently when you handle the situation yourself, but you also learn how to avoid or correct the problem again in the future. When you learn more about the system and how to make it work better, you are making yourself more valuable to your company. You become the resource for other staff within your com-

pany.

So, when that problem arises try the following:

- Log out of the software and restart it and see if the problem persists.
- Restart the PC, Log into the software and see if the problem persists.

For Non-Critical problems: **send an e-mail to Support@HudsonLtd.com**. Make sure you provide specific details about the issue.

For critical Issues, when the answer has to be had at this moment and your business can't continue without immediate assistance, then you should call Hudson's service number (coming soon). When you call, you may be routed to the current on-call service technician or may be directed to a voice-mail system. If you leave a voice mail message describing the nature of your



Calling may not be necessary....

issue, your message will be reviewed within minutes and your call returned. The more information you can provide at the time of your call the easier it will be for the Hudson Support staff returning the call. This will also help ensure that the proper technician, with the solution to your issue, will be able to respond to and resolve your need.



The Lighter Side

Three people were traveling in a car together: an industrial quality control expert, a hardware engineer, and a software engineer. As they were going down a VERY steep hill, they realized the brakes were out and they faced certain death.

The quality control expert said, "No Problem, we'll put together a work group, study the problem, make a fishbone diagram and come up with suggestions about how to solve the problem."

The hardware engineer said, "That'll take too much time; we'll DIE! I think I can dismantle the ignition system, find out the problem and cross wire the brake system so we can stop the car."

The software engineer just said, "What's the big deal? Instead of getting upset, why don't we just push the car back up the hill and see if it happens again?"

TO COMPACT OR NOT TO COMPACT; ...IS IT REALLY A QUESTION?

All information captured by Hudson Reservation programs is stored in a Database. Depending upon your installation, you are using either Microsoft Access or Microsoft Sequel Server. The information here is directed at clients using MS Access. MS Access, though a stable and useful database platform, can become sluggish, slow and less efficient over time as reservations are entered, modified and processed. You might notice that after a while it takes a lot longer to load, find, and save reservations. Dispatch grids



may also work as though slow and tired. If this is the case, you can pick up the speed by having everyone log off their workstations and then having the Network Administrator perform the following:

Open HWeb Administrator, Click on Database Utilities, then Click on Database Compact. Make sure that the Primary Database is the one selected. Then Click on the EXECUTE button on the bottom of the window.

What Happens....

After you hit the Execute button, Microsoft Access goes through the database and deletes empty

spaces and non-critical information. The end result is that your database is cleaner, neater, and easier for HWeb products to read, use and manipulate.

The volume and rate at which reservations are entered into and modified within the MS Access database will determine how long the benefits of compacting will last. Though the benefit of compacting will be immediate some clients may see a degradation of performance after only a few days while others may not see a slowing down again for several weeks. As a general rule of thumb, compact your database just before and each time you do a database backup.

RECENT ADDITIONS

The Hudson Group is continually developing enhancements to its products. Here is a brief overview of recent additions which you might be able to benefit from today...

Employee Sign In/Out— This feature assists in tracking when office staff "punch" in and out as well as when breaks are taken. This module also can be used to forecast and schedule employees for future work.

Dispatcher— New ability to pause the auto-refresh of the entire dispatcher program gives users the ability to make custom sort changes that

won't get reset when the system does an auto-refresh.

Also added to Dispatcher is the ability to now change the Holding Position of vehicles. In this fashion, the rotation can be more accurately displayed without having to change the vehicles actual holding time.

18 Service Types—Previous versions of HWeb products supported up to 12 service types. With the addition of 6 more, greater flexibility in the reservation process is achieved.

Fax— There are new faxing capabilities included for those



Tools to help you grow...

who are using Microsoft 2000 or Microsoft XP.

3rd Alternate Passenger

Type—This enhancement will allow you to further maximize accuracy of recorded passenger descriptions.

Pick-up / Drop-off Details

This new feature allows the capturing of Unit#, Room#, etc. in a separate field. When adding this information to a routed reservation, the reservation will not be "pulled"

from the trip.

PU/DO Change en Route -

A new advanced option will now allow changes to Pick-up and Drop off addresses on active reservations, which have been dispatched, without removing the reservation from routed trips. Advanced options should be discussed with a Hudson representative before being enabled.

Remember—these enhancements are provided to all Hudson clients as part of their monthly service charges. To get the latest version of Hudson products, send an e-mail to **Support@HudsonLtd.com**. We will schedule and arrange for the update.

COMING SOON...

As your company grows, so too does ours. As the Hudson group grows so too does the challenge of providing responsive and helpful client support services. We have recently added additional staff to handle your training and support needs. Also, to bet-



ter serve your service requests, In the near future, you will be provided with two primary methods for submitting service requests. You will be able to send an e-mail to **Support@HudsonLtd.com** for non critical issues. These will be replied

to within 48 hours. Other more critical questions will be handled by a single support phone number. Your phone call will then be routed to the Hudson Client Support Specialist most capable of answering your questions. Look for more information on this enhanced support system in the very near future...

ANSWERS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

Did you know that the Hudson Group maintains a documentation site on the internet?

The online documentation information is quickly and easily accessed by opening the Admin, Agent or Dispatcher programs. Click HELP, Hudson On The WEB, then Online Documentation (<http://www.hudsonltd.com/docs/>).

Here is a sample of what you will find at the online docu-

mentation site:

- Layout Formats
- CSV Templates
- License Update Instructions
- Database Backup & Maintenance
- HWeb Agent Guide
- Credit Card Processing



Connect to the internet for online help!

....and much more!

If you are looking for directions to something not posted here, send an e-mail to us at:

Support@HudsonLtd.com.

We will work to add the requested document to the online information pages.

~ Top 10 ~ Why Update your Software?

- It will work better
- New features and tools to help manage your business
- Easier to use
- Easier for Hudson to support
- Increase your profitability
- There is no cost to update!
- It just makes sense
- It is quick and easy
- More customization
- ...bet you can come up with a 10th reason...?

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QUESTION & ANSWER

Q: I have a grid that I open in the Dispatcher that only shows 500 records. How can I see more?

A: All grids are designed to show a maximum of 500 records by default. This way when you make/edit grids, you don't have to wait for the system to load every single record from the current table, which could take a while. To change this maximum per grid, right click on any heading within the grid, select grid properties, on the tab General, there is a box labeled "Max rows", change that to a larger number, press OK.

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Our Mission

Hudson partners with our service provider customers to streamline operations and help better manage information processing to result in overhead reduction and revenue increases using our e-commerce services combining computer telephony, database, EDI and web-based technologies.

Our goal is to be the top Application Service Provider (ASP) in our class by providing the best end-to-end services to our customers. To ensure consistent growth and opportunity, Hudson uses a unique development methodology and pricing model which requires us to invest in our application service solution and its delivery -- only succeeding if our customers do.

Primary Contacts:

Here are the first people to contact if you have a question:

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HUDSON GROUP MOVES TO FRANCE!

In November of 2003 Airport Connection, a Door to Door shuttle service located in Paris France went live with The Hudson Group's HWeb Reservation Agent Software and web-based online reservation system. Since that time, Airport Connection-Paris, a member of Ground-Net, has received over 500 online reservations! According to Hudson Group President Mark Ustik, "Airport Connection in Paris is proving very

quickly how efficient and profitable our internet-based reservation tools can be for a client." In addition to establishing an English language web interface for Airport Connection, Hudson Group developers and staff have worked closely with

Michel Klasing, Airport Connection's Owner and Manager to create a parallel online reservation system en-



Airport Connection—Paris, France is recent addition to Hudson client base.

tirely in French. Find Airport Connection at: www.airport-connection.com/.

WHAT'S YOUR BUILD?

It may sound like we are getting personal here, and in a way that is exactly what we are doing. When you report any "bug", question or quirk to the Hudson Group



Technical support staff, it will expedite the handling of your question if you can provide your revision number, build number and database version. This information looks like this:

Version 1.83e (1095) DB 63/50

This information is obtained by opening any Hudson product, then clicking on HELP and then ABOUT. In this example, this is Version 1.83e, Build 1095, using Database Versions 63 and 50.