# Newsletter for March, 2010
## from
## Club Data Corporation

This newsletter is sent monthly to Club Office users to provide helpful hints or information that you may find of value.

## Club Office Changes in the March, 2010 update:

**Data Base Changes:** There have been some fields added to the employee database that need to have a value. After you update the Club Office software, you will need to do the automatic DB update. There will be new message that comes up that you will need to follow and run to populate the DB. It should not take long – but be sure you type OK and wait for the process to be complete.



**POS Change:** For those of you who are using Credit Book or Prize Money features, we've added a new configuration that you can set so the balances of those accounts will display when you open a sale for a member.



You would want to set this feature up for the register(s) where Credit Book or Prize Money are applicable. (You need the 10.02.17a version of the SQLPos code for this feature.)

## New Hardware:  Now What?

We continue to receive urgent questions about what to do when you need new hardware.  Unfortunately, these questions often come when a computer technician is on site billing by the hour.  Prior planning on you part will save you time, aggravation, and expense when things don't go as you hoped.  We want to continuously remind you that you should involve Club Data prior to any emergency.

Here are some guidelines:

1. Call Club Data before you purchase your hardware.  We can provide you with some does and don'ts.  Like – select Windows 7 Professional rather than VISTA– and do not allow yourself to get too locked down in security software.
2. Software: Plan Ahead.  You will most likely need new software and instructions for installing. You can download the latest version of the Club Office workstation setup from the Internet for the workstation part of the setup.  For Time Clock, SQLPos, and Event Manager, call us so we can get you the latest version of code.  (In all likelihood, the software on your install CD is obsolete and not useable – so you do need to plan ahead.)  We'll probably want to use the FTP site for you to download the software from and that takes time.
3. Call in the AM and don't wait until the last minute before the register is needed.  It just might not happen.
4. If you have an Internet Connection to a computer, we can actually use "ShowMyPC" to get on your computer and help.  Keep this in mind.
5. There are other instructions for the computers that might not be obvious on the surface.  These involve turning off power saving devices on hard drives and interface cards.
6. Remember that installing a printer can also be an adventure if you are not reading the instructions and planning ahead.  Plan ahead.

## Purging Data:

Let us remind you that keeping a large amount of old history in your database or on your computer normally serves little purpose and can cause performance issues, especially when it comes to backup time, but there can also be performance issues when looking up or processing data.  Think about how long you really need to be able to look up old information and then setup a schedule to periodically save and then remove unnecessary data.  (With your ability to send statements to PDF format and save by month for example, keeping old member data is even less important than it has a been.)  Contact Club Data for ideas.

## Useful Information:

**Windows 7 Professional:**
We want to call you attention to a PDF piece we did about Windows 7 that you can find on our website.   It is prudent for all managers and key users to download and read the article that Dave wrote.

**Our observation on Windows 7**:  It is different – now necessarily better or worse than XP – but certainly different.  Using Windows 7 will certainly result in a learning curve for all people using it.

> If it is not the right time to learn a new operating system, keep in mind that you can still purchase XP-Pro on computers available from mail order companies like Dell.

This might be the time to get new hardware when you can still get new computers with XP-Pro without the steep learning curve with Windows 7. Remember to stay away from VISTA.

## Suggestions for E-Mailing Statements:
Please read attachment 1 for information and ideas for setting up your system for e-mailing statements to members.

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues**.**


**Bill Hallberg**
**Club Office Sales and Support**

## Attachment 1: Suggestions for using e-mail statements

If you were to send a billing statement in an envelope with first class postage to a 1000 of your members, there is every likelihood that (within a week) at least 999 would either arrive at their destination, or come back to you if there was a problem with the delivery.  If the member had moved and left a forwarding address, the postal service would most likely forward the letter to their new address.

Sending the same 1000 statements via e-mail would most likely produce different results.  As a rule, e-mail is a much faster delivery method that the postal service.  If everything goes right, most of the recipients would have their statements within an hour and some would arrive within seconds.

However, there are some downsides.

It is possible that up to 100 of the members would never see their statement because of spam filters, or incorrect e-mails.  Their e-mail either would be been routed into their deleted items folder or snagged by their Internet Service Provider's (ISP) spam filter.  More to the point, the sending office (you) wouldn't be aware that some of the statements never reached the intended recipients.

**So why do it?**
The opportunity to save 50 cents to a dollar per member per month has led many of our clients to the conclusion that the potential savings far outweighs the cost of an occasional misfire associated with using e-mail as the primary communication vehicle with their members.

**What can you do to improve your chances?  Run a test of your members' e-mail response and then test the E*Statements process.**
Send a test e-mail to your members and ask that they respond back to you.  70% will, 20% won't bother and the other 10% won't receive your message.  Our advice is to work with the 70% that you received.  Chasing the other 30 percent will take hours of your time and will be more frustrating than useful.  There are too many variables to raise the percentage significantly.

Be sure that you're using the latest and greatest Club Office software.

**How do I set it up?**
First, do the one-time-setup stuff. If you are using Outlook Express (Highly recommended) in Tools, Options, Security, uncheck the little box that reads "Warn me if other applications (like Club Office) try to send mail as me." If you don't, you'll get hundreds of warning messages and will have to click OK on each of them. Outlook does not have a way of disabling the warning. (Their rules, not ours.) We use the Microsoft mail application (MAPI) engine, so if you want to use another mail application at your club, and you want to use E*Statements, set up one PC to use Microsoft Outlook Express.

> **E*Statement Test:**
> In the member screen, set up **your** e-mail for several of the members and check the box that says E-Mail statement to above address.

.
**Can I use e-mail addresses for anything else?**
If you do find that you have success with a large percentage of your members, remember that there is an e-mail generator in the Member tab of the Report Generator on the pyramid that allowsw you to send e-mails with attachments to all or selected members (such as those with a specific class code or special interest.)


**What if I can't get the Microsoft MAPI program to work, or I use an E-mail system other than Microsoft?**

The Club Office system will make the .PDF files, either with the Generate e*mail statement process, or with the Archive Statements process. Once the files have been created, you can attach them to an e-mail and send them by hand. In practice, this probably still takes less time than printing, folding and stuffing envelopes, and still allows you to save the postage expense.

**Conclusion**
Sending e-mail can be a great way to communicate with many of your members. Keep in mind that they don't all get delivered, they don't always end up in the member's in-box, they don't always get read, and you don't always get notified about failures. You'll have to decide if the time that it takes to collect the e-mail addresses, test them, do the set-up is worth the cost savings of effectively sending to the 70 percent while continuing as "normal" with the rest.