OA LodgeMaster Desktop 1.1.0

Released January 22, 2008

The OA LodgeMaster team is happy to announce the immediate release of Version 1.1! All of the lodge databases are ready, and we've uploaded the new installer to the website. Please be sure to read the details of the release in this email and to follow the uninstall and install instructions carefully.

In the extra day we had while the data center was doing network upgrades, we've added one additional surprise to the release: membership cards are now able to be sorted and you can print matching labels for the cards. Labels also now print correctly on regular address label sheets.

You can sign onto the website and download the new version. Those of you who had a previous version installed should uninstall it first (detailed directions are available on the download page). Then just run the new installer and you'll be all set.

The detailed information about the release is below. If you have questions or problems with the new installation, please submit a ticket online (http://support.oalodgemaster.org) or via email at support@oalodgemaster.org.

Yours in Brotherhood,

The OA LodgeMaster Team
Matt, Mike (P.), Mike (C.), Mike (G.), and Rob

When Will The Upgrade Take Place?

We'll be starting the upgrade on Friday night, January 18th between 6pm and 8pm pacific (9pm to 11pm eastern). We will send a email announcement when we begin. Once the upgrade begins you will no longer be able to synchronize with the server (see What Does This Mean For Your Lodge? below). We'll complete the upgrade by Monday, January 21st, at which time we'll send out an announcement with instructions about installing the new version.

What Is Different In The New Version?

To start, the installer has been replaced with an upgraded interface and a streamlined process. The installer now takes care of installing the SQL database; this no longer needs to be done inside of LodgeMaster. MSDE has been upgraded to SQL 2005 Express. The program now also uninstalls all portions of itself with a single click, negating the long un-installation instructions we had before.

Inside LodgeMaster, the first run wizard has been greatly simplified - it's only one page now, you simply select your council number and enter your access code, and you're ready to go – no more “snapshot files.” The synchronization wizard has been updated and now uses web synchronization, so users who had to open up ports to get things working before won't have to anymore.

A number of bug-fixes have been made to the program (though we'll be releasing a much more comprehensive bug-fix release in the near future), and a number of other smaller changes have been made.

That isn't it, though, the big change inside the program is the user account area, which has been improved and full user-level security is in place. You can now control what member records a user has access to (lodge or chapter only) and what actions they can take (none, view only, edit, add, delete). The other areas can also be secured now, giving a user access to one area but not another.

Does The New Version Work on Vista?

Because of the upgrades mentioned, the new version works on Vista! We've had a number of users testing the new release, and we have had very few problems. We're confident that most Vista users should be up and running easily with the new installer.

Why Is This Upgrade Different From Past Ones Where We Simply Downloaded A Small Update?

The new version brings a couple of major changes to the system that do not allow for upgrades. We're upgrading SQL server on our end to a newer version, and because of this have to do a major database conversion to move all of your databases over. On your end, LodgeMaster will be using SQL 2005 Express to hold its data now, instead of MSDE. This all allows us greater flexibility in programming, more security features, and many more tools to help us diagnose problems and get you solutions faster.

What Does This Mean For Your Lodge?

When we take the server down on Friday to begin the upgrade and conversion, the old version of OA LodgeMaster will no longer be able to synchronize. Any changes you make in LodgeMaster before you install the new version on Monday will have to be repeated in the new version.

We know this is an inconvenience to some of you but unfortunately this is the only way to allow us to complete the upgrade an ensure everyone's data remains intact and accurate. If this schedule will cause major problems for your lodge (e.g., you have an event next weekend and you will be using LodgeMaster to manage the event), please contact support@oalodgemaster.org so that we can take steps and work with you to ensure that your data remains intact.

What Will I Have To Do Once The Upgrade Is Complete?

Once we send out notification that the upgrade is complete and the new installer is available, you'll need to uninstall the old program (we'll provide clear instructions on how to do this). Then you'll be able to download the new program and your new lodge access code. Simply run the installer and you'll be up and running.

What If I Have Questions?

Please submit a ticket on the help desk if you have any questions - this will allow each of the team members to respond as they have time - instead of sending all questions to one member of the development team. You can submit a ticket online (http://support.oalodgemaster.org) or via email at support@oalodgemaster.org.