

The ArtsMan Chronicle

March 31, 2009

AMS^{DO} ARTS
MANAGEMENT
SYSTEMS



Where does the time go?

By Diane Tuma

Welcome to another issue of "The ArtsMan Chronicle!"

Once again, spring is upon us, and many of those in the northern climes are thankful to be finally getting some warmer weather. It has been a very long winter!

Back by popular demand this month, we are rerunning our article on "Season Subscriptions". Many of our clients are in Season Subscription mode, and we are hoping this help you with your order processing.

We have articles on a couple of our clients in this issue, the Manitoba Opera and The Barn Dinner Theater, as well as a synopsis of the INTIX Annual Conference which was held in Salt Lake City this past February.

Version 6 Support Update:

Due to current economic conditions, many clients have been unable to prepare for a conversion to Version 7. Support for Version 6 will continue through to the end of 2010 with some limitations.

Manitoba Opera - Using Theatre Manager for Development and Fundraising

Manitoba Opera is Manitoba's only full-time professional opera company and serves a region that also includes northwestern Ontario, Saskatchewan, and the Dakotas.

In August, 2007, Heather Laser, the Director of Development with the Opera, began the process of looking for a software program what would assist them with their development and fundraising activities. During the search process, she spoke with other clients in the area that use Theatre Manager and was impressed with how highly they spoke of the system and Arts Management Systems. Along with the capabilities of the software, and the comments from other users, the size of the system was perfect for them. Because they weren't looking for a ticketing solution at that time, they were able to buy just the modules that they required. Heather likes the fact the system can be tailored to their needs.

In June 2008, Theatre Manager was successfully installed, and things have been going smoothly for them. As they've been working with the system, they've been learning more about it's capabilities, and have had a trainer come out to do more training for them twice. Heather said that "each time we've had a trainer come in house, we've been able to build on our knowledge." She likes having a dedicated trainer coming in and being able to barrage him with questions. There is always so much more that they can learn. Heather has been finding it helpful include training sessions in her budget, and is already budgeting for their next session.

Heather also said that she likes that they can submit requests for enhancements to the system, and if it is possible to do, these enhancements are completed and included in future upgrades. She likes that the developers "listen to what people on the street are saying", and try to incorporate their requests.

The Barn Dinner Theatre is Featured in Dramabiz Magazine

The Barn Dinner Theatre in Greensboro, North Carolina has been using Theatre Manager since June, 2004, and is currently enjoying their 47th "Dinnertaining Season"! They are proud to be the oldest continually operating dinner theatre in the United States, and attribute much of their success to being able to adapt to the demands of the public. They make it a regular practice to listen to patron feedback on the comment cards, website emails, and in person during their nightly table checks. They read these cards and emails religiously and discuss them as a management team.

Notable Quotes:

*Version 7 has a number of new components to it which I am confident Meaford Hall staff will utilize to streamline business.
... Meaford Hall*

*We have our Online Tickets up and running, and just to note it is working great!!
... Prince Albert Raiders*

99% of the theatre's business is done by phone/advance reservation and their online reservations are growing each year thanks to the ease of use of their Theatre Manager software which is integrated into their website.

David Garrison, the Operations Manager at the Barn Dinner Theatre, was extremely happy when they switched from their antiquated DOS-based ticketing system to Theatre Manager. "We can now train a new hire to take basic reservations in their first hour. Programming a season used to take a systems specialist with 3 reference manuals over a month to program a 12 month season (we format each season to a calendar year), and even longer to work out the bugs of the build. No other person on staff could even begin to understand the sheer volume of programming info needed for even basic small changes. And forget about running a mailing list. That required a call to the software technical service desk."

With Theatre Manager, David can build the core of a season in a day, and iron out the dates and times the next day. "Adding performances can be done in fewer than 5 clicks of the mouse. Transaction monitoring is surgical with this system. I can look back 4 years ago on an account and tell who did what to the account, click by click, and what time they did it, to the second."

The Barn Dinner Theatre is Featured in Dramabiz Magazine (cont'd)

Dramabiz Magazine is a magazine dedicated to helping the theatre industry create a thriving business. In January 2009, The Barn Dinner Theatre was approached Dramabiz Magazine about being a feature in their next issue. "The Endurance Race from Heyday to Here and Now", by Joel M. Dorr is now currently available in their current issue. It can also be accessed on line at the following link: <http://www.dramabiz.com/search.php?mode=found&id=928>. The article follows the history of the theatre and explores their successes and achievements. Certainly remaining in business for 47 years is something to celebrate!

Creating Season Subscriptions

by: Tom Misner

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/SubCntrlEvt.html>), and the favorite 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, are set not to print, and only the "season" type promotions are enabled.

Favorite 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 (in V6), 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). In V7, simply add the package through the patron record SEASON tab, including their favorite seats and booking the reservation directly from there.

Remember the three laws:

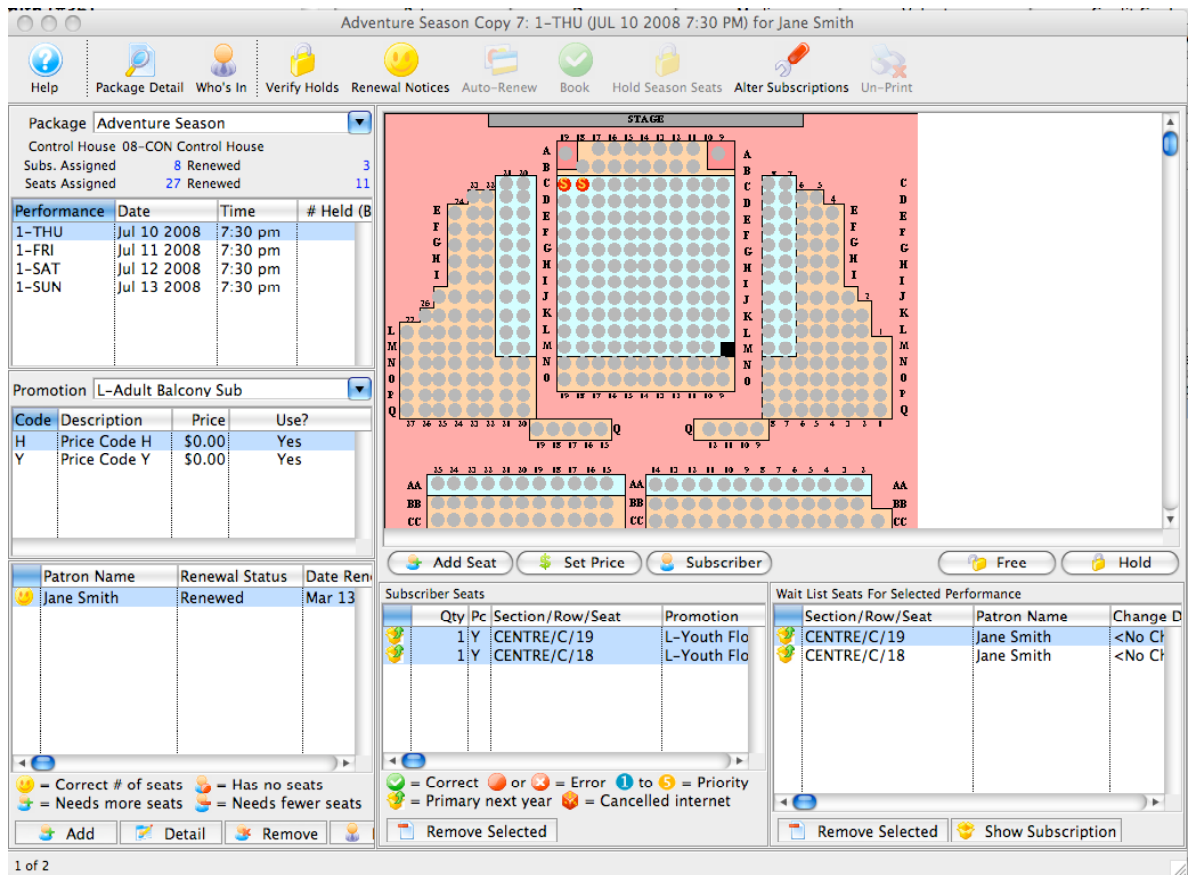
- 1) Same Seat
- 2) Same Night
- 3) Same Price Code and Promotion

Season Subscriptions, (cont'd)

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 when you rollover, so there is no need to add it in the package. In either case – the Patron Favorite Seats file decides where a patron is placed in the new package, **not** the Control House.

What are the Differences?

An all-new user interface for subscriptions awaits you in Version 7. Instead of the favorite 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 favorite seats much like buying a ticket. Through the Manage Favorite 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 favorite seats can also be managed individually if you prefer. Here are screen shots of the Version 7 and Version 6 Manage Favorite Seats windows.



Version 7

Season Subscriptions, (cont'd)

Season subscriptions require an evening to be specified (Series), the Seat Code, price code and the sales promotion to be used. Each Seat can have a different promotion to accommodate a family.

Patron Season Subscription Package

Package # 15 2005-2006 Dinner Theatre Pack
Series 1-SUN
Season Since APR 6 2005

Auto Renewal Subscription Settings

Auto Renew This Subscription
Auto-Renew Since
Credit Card

Subscription Renewal Status

Status <Not Started>
Notice Printed
Renewed
Order #

Seating Change Requests

Change Request Priority
Date Change <No Changes>
Seat Change <No Changes>

If unable to accommodate **exactly** as requested:

Keep original seats
 Willing to take the next best seat
 Call before making the changes

Favorite Seats Assigned # of Seats: 2

Qty	Price Code	Seat Code	Promot
1	A	192	Regular
1	A	193	Regular

Add Seat Edit Seat Delete Seat

Entered: APR 6 2005 2:30:59 PM Updated: APR 6 2005 2:30:59 PM (DS)

Close Save

Version 6

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 favorite seats file, and they will be wait listed for the seats.

When booking a season package in Version 7, there are three easy ways to do it. **Directly from the buy list (just like booking tickets).** 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. This will take you to the favorite seats window where you can set the seats and book them all in one.

From the Patron record on the SEASON tab. Either click on the existing package, or add a new one by clicking the NEW button at the bottom of the window. If you are adding a new one, you can book it from the Favorite Seats file by clicking BOOK on the top icon bar.

From the Manage Favorite Seats module (Patron Sales>>Season Reservations>>Manage Favorite Seats). This is the image above and you can mass book seats by highlighting the patron(s) and clicking the BOOK button on the top icon bar.

Quick Tip:
When sending emails to the support team, please include your Company Name in the subject line. This will ensure that your request doesn't get lumped together with other requests which may just have a subject like "help" or "question". We know that all requests are important, and we don't want to miss yours!

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).

Season Subscriptions, (cont'd)

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 (including a Control House), packages second
- You are just selling a string of events as one
- The Favorite Seats file is the ruling indicator when rolling over a package
- The favorite seats are used on the renewal notices to calculate the subscription price and remind the patron where they are sitting

INTIX Conferences 2009 and 2010

The INTIX (International Ticketing Association) Annual Conference was held the first week of February in Salt Lake City, UT, and Doug Easterbrook, Tod Wilson and Larry Hubick were on there to meet and greet current and potential clients. It was once again a resounding success and the three of them enjoyed seeing those of you who stopped by the booth.

The 2010 conference will be held January 26th to 28th, in Toronto, Ontario. It has been a number of years since the conference has been held in Canada, and Toronto Organizing Committee is looking forward to welcoming everyone. We encourage you to attend the conference as every major supplier is represented at the exhibition and vendors use the conference to launch new products as well as user meetings for existing clients.

Please visit the INTIX website at www.intix.org for further details.

A Request for Information

There is no getting around the fact that times are hard, and many venues have been feeling the pinch of the economy. Have you found any new ways to do fundraising? Have you found ways to cut costs, other than obvious ones? If so, I'd like to ask if any of you would be willing to share your stories with me. I'd love to know how you have been coping with these challenges, so that I can add them to the newsletter to pass along to other clients.

I'd also like to hear any stories you may like to share. This newsletter is a way for our clients to share with other clients their experiences in marketplace, as well as experiences with Theatre Manager.

Please feel free to contact me at diane@artsman.com or give me a call at (403) 538-7760.

Editor's Note ... Correction to article regarding First Vancouver Theatrespace from the last newsletter ... It was mistakenly indicated that they doubled their sales for the Festival itself, when in fact it was "The Pick of the Fringe", one of their series, which had their ticket sales double.





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