

EASY TRIP NEWSLETTER

Come to Las Vegas, Stay to See Easy Trip

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>BG Consulting at the Trade Show</i>	1
<i>ET Windows Update Released</i>	2
<i>Windows XP Home Edition</i>	4
<i>Windows XP Restore Feature</i>	5
<i>Questions and Answers</i>	5
<i>Did you Know you Could</i>	5
<i>Are you Backing Up Your Data Now?</i>	6

EASY TRIP

What's new? As every new year rolls around businesses take inventory and set new goals. At BG Consulting we are looking at what enhanced services we can provide for our new and existing Customers. Please feel free to share your thoughts with us. We want to hear from everyone.

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BG Consulting at the Trade Show

Easy Trip and **Early Response** Software will be on exhibit at the Trade Show in Las Vegas. The event will be held February 22-24, 2004 at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino in Las Vegas, NV.

The LCT Trade Show will have educational sessions plus a wide variety of exhibitors related to the limousine and transportation industry. Seminars include Dale Carnegie and keynote speakers from Travelocity and Men's Wearhouse.

LCT Trade Show
February 22-24, 2004

Mandalay Bay - Las Vegas

BG Consulting will be in **BOOTH #33**. We will have a complete working copy of our well known Easy Trip software program. Working Demos will be available of both Easy Trip and Early Response.

Our company was the first to release a Windows program for the transportation industry and we remain the leader, providing new features at the request of our customers.

For more information please contact Limousine & Chauffeured Transportation or the NLA.

ET Windows Update Released

As we begin 2004 BG Consulting is announcing a new release of our Easy Trip software program. The new Version is **3.4** and will be available at the end of January.

To verify what Version of Easy Trip you currently have installed, please click on the **Help** selection in Easy Trip and then click **About**.

To receive an update, please contact BG Consulting and a new CD will be mailed to your company. All registered Easy Trip Customers are entitled to receive an update to the current version.

Customer Bonus Rebate

A new "**Bonus Rebate**" Tab has been added to the Customer Edit screen. For more information regarding what a Bonus Rebate is, refer to the Questions and Answers found on page 5.

On the new Tab a question exists to add a Bonus Rebate automatically, each time a new Reservation is made for that Customer. Additional information on the Bonus Rebate Tab must be entered to indicate the recipient and the method of payment, Percentage or Flat Fee.

Reservation - Event Name

On the "**Driver / Vehicle**" Tab on the Reservation Edit screen a new drop down field has been added, it is called **Event Name**. Data for this field can be entered from Options, Group Types, Event Name. The purpose of this field is to provide a way to track or group together Reservations for a single event or a specific venue.

Examples of Event Names might be a concert, wedding, sports game, or corporation event. The Event Name will appear on the Reservation Explorer and Scheduler screens.

Manifest

The Manifest screen has been changed so users may select one of the following:

1. **One Bill-To Customer**
2. **Select Event Name**
3. **Standard Manifest**

If the "Event Name" Manifest is selected and an existing Event Name is selected, then only those Reservations for the specified Event will be displayed or printed. The Event Name will appear on the screen and the printed Manifest Report regardless of which manifest is prepared.

Reservation Trip Sheets

The Reservation Trip Sheet screen has been modified and a two part Tab screen has been added. To specify all Trip Sheets for a single event select the "**Batch Print Reservation**" Tab and then select an Event Name in the drop down box.

Reservation Charge Screen

A new option has been implemented to allow four of the Reservation Charge amounts to appear automatically on every new Reservation. The amounts can be modified on the Charge screen as needed. The Charge fields involved are as follows:

- 1 **Wait/Travel**
- 2 **Stops**
- 3 **Tolls/Bridges**
- 4 **Parking**

Set Up

To set up which of these fields you want to use and define the monetary amount select Utilities, Charge Screen, Define Charges. Enter the **“Defined Charge”** and then check the box labeled **“In Use”**.

Vehicle Module

We have added several new fields and features to the Vehicle Module.

License Permit

A new option has been added to trigger a 30-day warning before the License Permit will expire. This feature can be enabled or disabled for each individual vehicle. To turn the feature on, simply check the box on the **“Licenses”** Tab for the desired vehicle.

If the warning box is checked, a message will be displayed 30 days before the license expiration. The message will be shown each time Easy Trip is started. Adjusting the License “Expires On” date will turn the message off.

Lock Code

A new field has been added to the first Tab in the Edit Vehicle to track the door **Lock Code**.

Airport Permits

Prior to Version 3.4 only one Vehicle Permit existed. Easy Trip now has a Public Utilities Permit (PUC) and four other separate Permit fields. All five of these permits can be found on the new **“Airport”** Tab.

The four new permit fields were designed to track the expiration of vehicle Airport permits.

Global Settings

We have added a new setting that allows users to select if the default location for Reservation Trip Sheets, Invoices, and Accounts Receivable reports should be the **Printer** or viewed on the **Screen**. The output location may be re-selected on the appropriate print screens.

Manifest

Two options exist on the main Manifest screen, Printer or Screen. If the destination of Printer is selected users may now redirect the Manifest output to be **Faxed**. Users may also redirect the printed version back to the Screen, to a Tile, or Email.

Email

The Email selection for PRINT has been modified to print the entire Email.

A new query has been added to the “Email User Password” screen. By default, once a user enters their password Easy Trip will remember it until they close the program. This means users will no longer be prompted continually to enter their password each time they send an email.

To disable this feature uncheck the box on the “Email User Password” screen indicating you do want to remember the password for this session.

Reports

New Reports have been added for a Full Customer Listing by Name, Customer Map Page by Account Type, Labels for Hotels, Unposted Reservations by Bill-To #, Cash Receipts for Voided Payments, and Active / In-Active Drivers and Vehicles.

Windows XP Home Edition

Microsoft has released multiple versions of the Windows XP operating system. The following are the three most common versions.

- 1 Home Edition
- 2 Professional
- 3 Windows Server 2003

If you are purchasing a new computer then it will most likely have a pre-installed version of Windows XP. The problem is retailers seldom tell you which version was installed and usually they say it does not matter, however it does.

Windows Server 2003 is much higher in cost so computer stores will not use this XP version unless specifically requested. The Server version is usually more than most smaller companies need.

Computer retailers install the XP Home Edition, which is not what business owners should be using. As the name implies the **Home Edition** was **meant** for **users at Home** who simply want to use the Internet, write a few documents, and maybe keep track of their house expenses. As noted by Microsoft, Windows XP Home Edition was customized for the home consumer.

Things that are Missing in XP Home

The XP Home Edition is missing features that are important and exist in the XP Professional Version. One key feature that is missing is **Security**. Every user on XP Home has administrator rights and full control to do whatever they want. This is not a good idea in an office that has multiple users or is interested in setting set up a computer network. In fact, running a computer network or LAN on XP Home can bring up a whole new can of worms.

We have found that setting up a network with XP Home Edition is awkward and may be difficult. Many vendors have seen applications behave differently, possibly due to differences in the common XP Home library files.

Another component that is missing in the Home Edition is **Integrated Faxing**. It is an option that can be installed. However, reviews have mentioned that it is somewhat hard to find on the XP Home install CD. In order to fax from Easy Trip software, you will need to properly install Integrated Faxing.

The Help files for XP Home and XP Professional are the same, which can lead to some confusion. This can be frustrating when something is documented to work and yet does not in the Home Edition.

For companies that are considering using **Terminal Services** for remote access to Easy Trip, it is not available in the XP Home Edition.

For anyone that is running a business or plans on setting up a computer network, you should really have **XP Professional**. Make sure to tell your computer retailer you want XP Professional and not the Home Edition. It may cost you about \$100 more, but it is worth it.

Working Demos are
available on our Web Sites.
(Free of Charge)

www.earlyResponse.net

www.easytrip.net

Windows XP Restore Feature

The System Restore feature in Windows XP can be used to restore your computer to a previous state in case of a problem. This component monitors changes to your computer's system files and some application files. System Restore automatically creates what are called "**restore points**". These restore points allow you to revert your computer back to a previous time, presumably when things were working correctly.

Microsoft documentation says that Restoring your computer does not affect or change your personal data files. Here is what they do not say. What constitutes a personal data file?

Issues / Problems with System Restore

1) If you restore your computer to a "restore point" before a program was installed and the program no longer works after the restoration, then you must reinstall the program again. Contact your vendor first to check on the appropriate procedure!

2) Turning Off System Restore may improve performance of your business applications since the restore points are not being maintained.

3) Restore points are kept for a limited time, restore points older than 90 days are deleted by default.

4) System Restore does **not** back up your Easy Trip data files. In fact a System Restore may replace newer required files with older incompatible files. If you have to do a "System Restore" you must then restore all of your Easy Trip files from your Back Up.

5) To prevent business applications from being monitored by Restore you can move these programs to a non-monitored hard disk partition.

Questions and Answers

Q: What is a Bonus Rebate?

A: The purpose of a **Bonus Rebate** is to provide a Customer, Hotel Representative, Travel Agency, or any person, a monetary compensation or credit for referrals to your company. In Easy Trip the customer or company receiving the Rebate is called the **Recipient**.

A Bonus Rebate can be entered for any unposted Reservation. The amount of the Rebate is created based on a Flat monetary amount or a Percentage of the base charge of the Reservation.



Did you Know you Could. . .

Past Newsletters

We have posted the last four years of our Easy Trip Newsletters on our web site. From our ET home page (www.easytrip.net) select the option labeled "**ET Help / Newsletters**".

The newsletter files are in a standard PDF format which is readable with **Adobe's Acrobat Reader**. There is a link on our Newsletter page to download a free copy of the Reader.

We have several other help files on this page including our series on Terminal Services and information on Backing Up your computer.

Are you Backing Up Your Data Now?

I am sure by now many of you think computer people sound like a broken record or your dad reminding you to study hard in school and get your masters degree. Ok students, quiz time.

- 1 When was the last time you did a back up of your Easy Trip data?
- 2 When was the last time you checked the media or verified your back up?
- 3 Do you know if you are backing up enough of your personal and business data files?
- 4 What would you do if you needed to restore the data from your back up?
- 5 Did you read the prior article saying that Windows XP Restore feature does not back up your data and can cause you problems?

How many of you got an "A" on our pop quiz? It is always troubling when customers do not perform regular back ups and then something goes awry.

Recently a client suffered the loss of their hard disk on their office computer. It simply no longer would allow data to be read from it. Fortunately the client had a back up that had been done within the last week and it was a full back up of all her Easy Trip data.



The client was able to bring in a computer technician and within a relatively short time she was up and running again on a different computer. The owner commented after everything was resolved that she was going to do daily back ups from now on, just to be safe.

As a business owner she was more than just lucky, she was educated. She paid attention to her business and planned ahead. She gets a gold star.

Personal Education

I myself have been the recipient of computer failures. In fact, I do not know a single computer programmer who has not at one time or another had a hard disk become damaged or files corrupted beyond repair. The secret is to plan ahead, it is the only option.

At BG Consulting backups are done on a regular schedule. The backup media is routinely verified against the original data to ensure the backup is working properly. Older backups are rotated around to several different locations for added security.

Where do I find a Back Up Teacher?

This is a great question and there are lots of choices. You can contact your local computer store like CompUSA to see if they offer a class or private educational instructions.

If you purchase a CD Writer you will need to learn how to burn or write your business data to a blank CD and then how to verify it. If you decide to buy a backup program like "GR Backup Pro" by GR Software, you might need guidance at first.

Whatever approach you select, please make sure to obtain the proper education from a qualified teacher so your backups are done and they are accurate.

EASY TRIP WINDOWS SOFTWARE

- r Over **300** built-in Reports!
- r Dispatch By Run Date, Customer, or Driver's Name
- r Manifest, Reservation Explorer (Calendar), Scheduler, Vehicle & Driver Availability

Customers

Reservations

Invoicing

Accounting

Multi-User/Network runs on: Windows 95, Windows 98, ME, NT, Windows 2000, XP, & Novell.

Reliable and Proven Software that Works!

- r Create your own Account Types, Run Types, Rates, Vehicle Types, **Landmarks**, and more!
- r **Duplicate** a Reservation for Round Trip, Multiple Car Run, or specific days in a Date Range.
- r Enter unlimited **Routing** Itinerary, Directions, and Instructions for the Driver.
- r Print from several different styles of Reservation Trip Sheets, Invoices, and Statements.
- r Reservation History, Special Instructions, Faxing, Paging, and send or receive **Email**.

Easy Trip Professional Version	\$ 975
Easy Trip Personal Version	\$ 575

Annual License & Technical Support Fee	
(Includes All Updates, License, and ET Technical Support)	
Professional Version	\$ 300
Personal Version	\$ 200

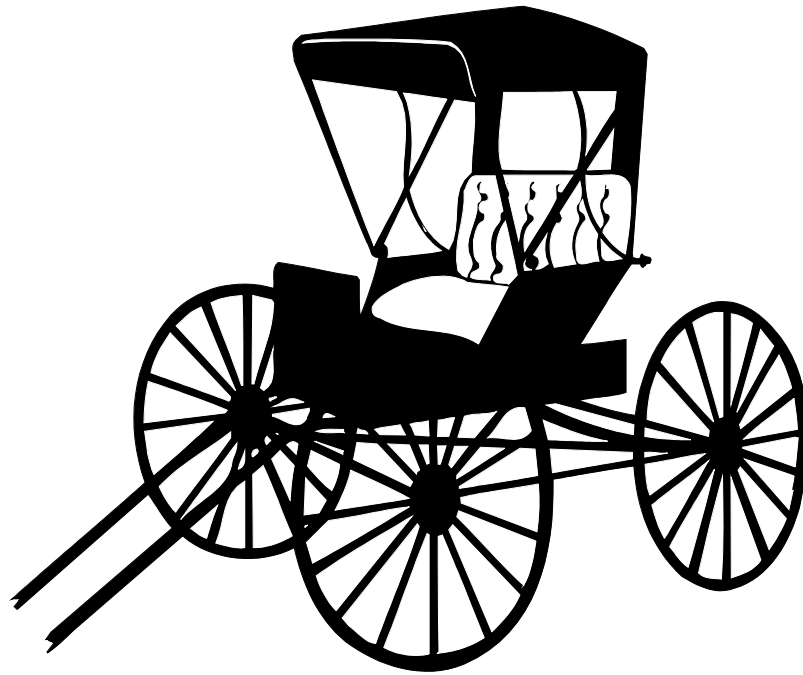
	— Accounts Payable	\$ 300
M	— Credit Card Processing	\$ 400
O	— Farm In and Farm Out	\$ 150
D	— Internet Reservations Import	\$ 150
U	— Multi-User/Network (Includes Security)	\$ 650
L	— Security	\$ 150
E	— Vehicle	\$ 150
S	— Worker/Driver	\$ 150

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Software Newsletter

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