

ArcBI TS Newsletter

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ArcSys Hot Tip

Does Wintegrate work under Windows 10? The answer is yes. But it is important to have all the current Windows 10 updates installed, first, before *re-installing* Wintegrate.

The Updox client reviews are coming in with adjectives like “amazing”, “incredible” and “outstanding.” Contact us to jump on this revolutionary patient communication tool.

Did You Know?

If you want to more fully utilize Red Planet to its full potential, having a little bit of an understanding how it is put together will go a long ways. At its core, Red Planet is designed around the concept of multiple flat files (think spreadsheets). Each of these files has a common set of data. Each file can have any number of records (think rows, can be in the millions). Each record can have any number of fields (think columns, generally less than 150). A field contains atomic information like a date, dollar amount, word or even paragraphs. A screen typically displays a record (row) in a two-dimensional manner.

Another feature of a certain type of field is that it can be a link. A link is a way of tying fields between files. A good example of this is that the patient name is not stored in the appointment file—only the patient number. The patient number links to the patient file where the name (address, birthday, phone, etc.) is stored. This is known as a relational linking. This can be good and also a little risky.

Why? Let’s say a patient has 74 appointments scattered over a 10 year period. If the patient gets a new phone number, then any report generated from the appointment file will show the *new* phone number because it is not stored in the appointment file but in the patient file. Most of the time this is ok and we really don’t care what the phone number was on an appointment 10 years ago.

But, let’s say we have a patient whose first name is Alene and has been coming into the practice for 5 years and then wants to be known as Allie. As you can see, this may be slightly more problematic. The nice thing about Red Planet is that it has a “changes” file where these types of things are recorded (and it is linked from all Red Planet files). If someone were to look at a report *prepared* 5 years ago and it says Alene but the same report printed *today* says Allie, we can at least look at the changes log to see why we have a change. Otherwise, we would have to save a copy of every report ever created—an enormous waste of disk space.

Flat files are easy concepts to understand and are an excellent resource for data mining. A Red Planet file can be easily exported to Excel. This makes it easy to provide information to spreadsheet programs and to other business entities.

On the patient registration or dashboard screen are buttons that allow you to see mini-spreadsheet views of a portion of the records from the main files such as appointments, transactions, lab tests and visit notes that are unique to that patient. On the second page we will explore this concept, further.



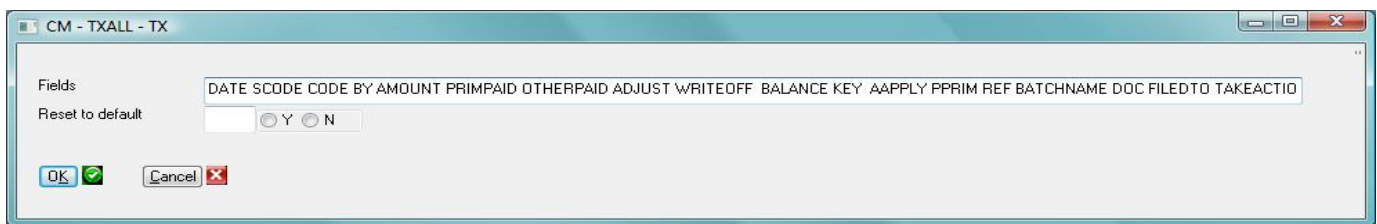


Now That You Know (Part 1)

From the patient registration screen there are buttons like TXALL and APPTS which will show the transactions and appointments for a given patient. The display of this information is sorted according to a default rule established for your business. To sort the information in a different manner, you need only click on one of the three sort buttons. The Sort button displays a list of the columns and allows you to make a choice to sort by ascending or descending. The other two buttons are just a quicker way to choose ascending or descending. When you have a short list, sorting may not be practical. But when your lists are many pages long, sorting can be a real lifesaver. Sorting is a great way to find “outliers”, too. Let’s say you were looking for a \$4.23 payment. If you sort by amount, then you can visually scan down (or up) the column of amounts looking for the desired value.



When you click on one of the Sort buttons you will see a choice at the bottom of the list that allows you to change the order of which columns are displayed as well as what the default sort will be. This then becomes *your own personal way* of always seeing data presented for that list. You can customize each list to your liking. Screw it up? Easy, just choose the option to Reset.



What are some other reasons for sorting?

Appointment scheduling: Naturally, we think of a schedule as being sorted by time from earliest to latest. But, when your list is really long and doesn’t fit on one screen, you can just as easily sort by descending time to see what is happening at the end of the day. A little “out of the box” you might say, but you do have this flexibility and until you try it, you can’t knock down the idea. Sorting by type can be a handy way of quickly seeing how many appointment types are occurring on a given day. Sort by last name (or first) to more easily find a patient (and it gives a patient count, too). Sort by callback to see who hasn’t received one. If you are looking at the list of appointments from the Appts button in patient registration, sorting by doc is a good way to see how many times a patient has seen different doctors in the group.

Medication lists: Sort by medication name to see how many times each medication has been prescribed. Sort by provider to see who has been issuing the scripts. Sort by pharmacy to see if there are any unusual pharmacies being used. Sort by date to see when scripts were issued.

Problem lists: Sort by name to more easily find a specific condition/diagnosis.

Visits: Depending on which columns are available, there are many great choices. Sort by ascending weight. Sort by chief complaint. Sort by descending BP.

Transactions All (TXALL): Sorting by date puts things in chronological order. By descending date you see the newest things, first. Sort by code puts everything in cpt/transaction order. By descending balance puts all of the open balances at the top of the list. By ascending apply puts data in “group” order from oldest to newest. By descending apply puts data in “group” order from newest to oldest. Regardless of the sort, use first page or last page to see the “outliers” for any given sort.

In the next issue of ArcBits, we’ll talk about Filters and what functions they can perform.