



## FSC Manager January 2008 Newsletter

### Coming Soon

#### Version 8.0

Version 8.0 has been released to beta testers. It will be released to all agencies in February. The most significant feature of this update is the addition of Commercial Auto download. Carriers that have been certified so far include:

- Acuity
- Allstate
- Auto-Owners
- EMC
- Grange/Integrity
- Hastings Mutual
- Hawkeye/Indiana/Liberty/Peerless
- Pekin
- Progressive
- Safeco
- State Auto
- Travelers
- United Fire & Casualty
- Unitrin
- West Bend Mutual
- Westfield

### Communication

#### How to Get Trained

Who might need training at your office? The new employee? A current employee who hasn't used Marketing? The boss on.....everything?

FSC offers **free, unlimited**, online training for all customers! Every week, FSC holds ten training sessions on common areas of the system. Anyone can sign up for these sessions at no cost. To register for these sessions, go to:

<https://fiservfsc.webex.com/mw0304/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=fiservfsc&service=7>

In the Search for field, type FSC Manager and click GO. A list of available sessions will appear. Click on the topic to see a brief outline and then register.

#### Service Link

We are currently working with IMT to implement real-time transactions. Agencies will be notified when this is available.

There are several other carriers that are not currently offering real-time transactions. When we have contacted them, the carrier indicates that they haven't heard that their agencies want this type of feature. Let your carriers know that real-time is a benefit to your agency and that you prefer to place your business with carriers that have agency friendly systems. Make sure to use the term "real-time" as apposed to Service Link. Service Link is what we call real-time in the FSC Manager.

## From the Tech Support Archives

### New Hardware

Windows Vista has been tested and does work with the FSC Manager as a workstation or a stand alone computer. However, we do not support Windows Vista as the operating system for a computer acting as the **server** for FSC Manager. Currently, if running a VISTA workstation, the User Access Control needs to be turned off.

Windows 2008 has not been released. Until the final code has been released, we cannot fully certify our software on this platform.

### Backing up Data

How important is backing up your data? It should be of the utmost importance. With the number of agencies going paperless increasing, an agency's data is the future of their business. Every year, agencies lose data due to hard drive failures. In some cases, the agency is up and running as soon as a new server is installed and the data restored from backup. In other cases, the agency thought they were backing up the data only to find that the process wasn't working properly or the media was faulty. This is a case for agencies doing periodic data restoration for practice and to verify that the backups work. Most backup software has the option to email a log after it completes the backup job. It can also notify about job failures. Finally, there are the agencies that haven't been backing up at all – not recommended!

So, now you're going to back up, but what method should you use? The first line of defense is a redundant hard drive on the server, frequently referred to as "mirrored" hard drive or RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks). In the event one hard drive fails, the other will be used as the primary disk, generally without missing a beat. Make sure that the RAID level is RAID-1 or RAID-5. RAID-0 is NOT redundant. Although strongly recommended, this should not be the only method of backup.

Other media options for backing up:

1. Magnetic Tape
  - a. Pros
    - i. Much higher capacity than DVDs (up to 800GB uncompressed versus 4.7GB with DVD)
    - ii. Faster backup time than DVD
  - b. Cons
    - i. Generally more expensive than DVD
    - ii. Restoring files is generally more time-consuming. If a file was backed up towards the end of the tape, the drive will need to "fast-forward" or unspool a lot of tape to get to that point.
    - iii. Tape drives and media are generally not available at local computer stores. Widely available online (CDW, NewEgg).
2. DVD
  - a. Pros
    - i. Inexpensive and widely available media
    - ii. Media takes up little space
    - iii. Restoring files is generally easier than with tape
    - iv. If drive goes bad, they're widely available to replace
  - b. Cons
    - i. Limited life
  - c. Formats
    - i. DVD-R, DVD-RW, DVD+R, DVD+RW
      1. DVD±R is only writeable once. DVD±RW is erasable and rewriteable approximately 1000 times
      2. DVD+R/RW possibly superior to DVD-R/RW
      3. They both claim 30-100 year lifespan
      4. Reports that media is rather unstable and lifespan not reliable. Some claim the lifespan is only 5-10. There are "archival grade" DVD-Rs that

- have underwent ISO guideline tests with a projected lifespan of > 100 years.
  - ii. DVD-RAM – Quite different than DVD±R/RW
    1. DVD drive must support writing this format
    2. Allows 100,000 rewrite cycles
    3. 30+ year expected lifespan
- 3. External hard drive
  - a. Pros
    - i. Much higher capacity than DVDs and most tape drives.
    - ii. Fastest accessing of data (both backing up and restoring)
  - b. Cons
    - i. Cost makes it much more prohibitive to have several drives for rotation

In addition to having backups, it is recommended the agency implement a good rotation scheme – having several days worth of backup. Sometimes if data is corrupt, it is useful to be able to go back a week or even a month to retrieve data. Finally, every media has a life span and should be replaced at appropriate intervals. Talk with your hardware vendor about implementing the right backup system for your office.

### **Contacting Customer Service**

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