
Outpost

Packet Message Manager

Release Content Description

For Version 2.2.1

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

This Release Content Description document provides information about new or changed functionality that will be found in Outpost Packet Message Manager Release 2.2.1.

Existing functionality from the original release is not described here. For current information on Outpost, refer to the following documents:

Name	Release Date
Outpost Packet Message Manager User Guide, Version 2.2	April 2007

1.2 Organization

The information in this document is organized under the following sections:

- **New Features.** A new feature is a new capability that has not existed in any prior version of Outpost in any form.
- **Enhancements.** An enhancement is a change to an existing feature that further improves the performance or usability of the application. Enhancements include minor changes, internal changes (that may not be evident to the user, but contribute to improved supportability increased stability, or application performance) and bug fixes.
- **Changes since Version 2.2.** A list of the various capabilities that have been introduced in maintenance/defect releases since the v2.2 release.

2 New Features

“New Features” refer to the creation of new functionality in Outpost that was requested by Outpost users to support the emergency response mission. The following New Features are implemented in version 2.2.1.

2.1 #599 Scripting in Outpost

Over the years, there as been different requests for features that just did not seem to fit the standard approach for Outpost’s interactive program. This included requests for additional automation such as to poll a list of BBSs in turn or detecting a file on the PC and writing it out as a new outbound message to name a few.

Additionally, the key test activity needed to complete a release is confirming that Outpost interact with a BBS correctly. With the addition of several new BBSs (with another 5 in the queue) and the different permutations that could exist when interacting with them, the level of testing to confirm the BBSs has gone up dramatically.

This is a **BETA** release of Outpost scripting as a means for increasing packet messaging automation. Scripting refers to processing a user-created file made up of commands and statements that control a specific sequence of events. Twenty-seven (27) script commands are defined under the following 3 categories:

General Statements

- Beep - Sounds a tone through the computer's speaker.
- Debug - Produces a display of all compiler output
- Define - Declares variables and allocates storage space
- Delete - Deletes a file from the disk
- Do... Loop - Repeats the block of code bounded by the Do and Loop statements
- IFF...then...else - Conditionally executes a block of statements dependent on the state of a file condition.
- Exit - Halts execution of the script.
- Goto - Branches unconditionally to a specified line within the script
- Increment - Causes the named variable to be incremented in value.
- Play - Plays a wave file
- Print - Prints the string expression to the Script Runtime window.
- Pause - Causes the script to pause in its execution
- Run - Runs an executable program, and does not wait for it to complete
- Ruw - Runs an executable program, and waits for it to complete

SendReceive Statements

- BBS - Sets the BBS of the station to which you want to connect during a Send/Receive session.
- Mycall - Sets the Station ID to be used during a Send/Receive session.
- Taccall - Sets the Tactical call to be used during a Send/Receive session.
- TNC - Sets the TNC or device name for a Send/Receive session.
- Retrieve - Defines what type of messages should be retrieved.
- SendReceive – Causes Outpost to connect to the named BBS.

Message Statements

- Newmessage – Sets up Outpost to create a message.

- Sendmessage – Saves the message to Outpost's Out Tray
- From - Assign a message's from address
- Message - Assigns the text to the message.
- To - Assign a message's destination address
- Subject - Assign a subject text to the message
- Type - Sets the message type

Additional statement structures are planned and all ideas are welcome. Again, the main purpose of this release is to confirm the overall usefulness of this feature to the emergency packet community.

DISCLAIMER: This is a **BETA** release of scripting. It will be tested as best possible, but as with any language, time will constrain the test coverage of all statement combinations permutations. This is also NOT a robust scripting language. You will not be able to calculate Pi or help balance your checkbook. This first release has is a very limited feature and capability set.
Initial support will be limited to helping you troubleshoot your scripts and queuing up enhancement and defect requests for future resolution.

Having said all that, I am using Scripting to support the Outpost v2,2,1 Send/Receive regression test of all supported BBSs and am pleased with the results to date! There will be an **Application Note** available at the time of the release with an explanation of all statement syntax's and script examples.

And as usual, I look forward to any feedback on its usefulness to the emergency communications mission and suggestions for enhancements.

3 Enhancements

An enhancement is a change to an existing feature that further improves the application. Enhancements include minor changes, internal changes (that may not be evident to the user, but contribute to improved supportability increased stability, or application performance) and bug fixes.

3.1 BBS Support

Several requests have come in for expanding BBS support. At this point, I am attempting to confirm the sponsorship from the requestors to help with characterizing the BBS.

- #576: MFJ-1274
- #589: JNOS (confirmed)
- #592: OpenBCM
- #596: SNOS
- #604: TNOS

3.2 Send/Receive Session

- #612: Enhance Error handling for the SendReceive Session Manager. This change begins to address issues that surfaced following the v2.2 release and a renewed interest in using telnet for BBS access.
- #613: Expand notification levels to 4. This change allows the users to turn on or off different notification levels that may occur during a SendReceive Sessions. Notifications pop up and persist beyond the SendReceive Session.
- #625: Make log settings persist from one Outpost run to another. Currently, on running Outpost, the different log options are reset to no logging. This was originally implemented to avoid large files from being created. Some teams have requested that this feature persist since it also provides another audit trail for message traffic.
- #626: Resolves issue where after using Tactical calls with serial TNCs, the TNC is left with MyCall set as the TacCall, and any beaconing currently set up will beacon as the TacCall. This change sets the TNC back to the FCC call on completion of a Send/Receive Session. This change has no effect on AGWPE or Telnet.

3.3 Message Handling

- #615: Highlight Draft messages sitting in Outpost in BLUE Text. This is primarily to highlight messages that are in the Draft folder or in the Out Tray that are still in Draft status and not ready to be (and will not be) sent.
- #632: When tabbing out of a new message subject, update the Form Caption to the new message name.
- #640: Adds an NTS pull down to select the HX option.
- #644: Adds a global option to make formatted NTS be treated and sent as PRIVATE messages. This is the case where users are using the NTS message maker to create NTS messages to be sent to another named user within the local network. This message is not intended for the NTS traffic

network. The current workaround is to press the **Priv** Button on the Message Form once the message has been written to the Message Window.

- #646: Add a separator in the between the Subject Line identifier, and allow a mix of letters and numbers. Currently, Outpost will append the MSG# to the TAC ID to create a unique Identifier, resulting in a unique identifier as TAC###. The dash character “-” can be selectively added to create the Unique Identifier with the format: TAC-###. This may be useful when identifying locations that traditionally have a number in its ID, such as Fire Station 4 (ie: FD4) and adds clarification in the Subject Text (FD4-102:...).

3.4 Defect resolution

- #534: This change implements a check to determine whether the KA-NODE/NETROM Path File is open during a BBS Path Update activity.
- #597; Checks if any configured printer is still there at startup. The printer may be there when initially configured (such as when using a laptop), but may not be there when needed.
- #598: Check if the directories for the log files are still there at startup. These problems arise when sharing Outpost.ini files between different PCs.
- #621: Resolves the situation where Outpost aborts with Runtime Error 6 when selecting a BBS or TNC. Problem was that the 2 .dat files were recently copied off of a CD-Rom as Read Only files. Outpost will detect and report that the files are Read Only. The user will still need to manually reset them to not read only.
- #631: When a data file size mismatch occurs, the program leaves the base form up without exiting.
- #650: Resolves the case when Outpost does not completely process a message someone else wrote to the BBS with no text in the message body.

4 Changes since Version 2.2

The following is the list of changes that were released as part of the Maintenance releases that followed the release of Outpost v2.2.

4.1 Release 2.2.0c228

- #617: Implemented a means to capture the PacForms and automatically loading them into Outpost. On the receiving end, automatically run the pac-read.exe program to display in the original form.
- #633: Resolved issue where DXNET was not retrieving messages.
- #635: Resolved issue where DXNET was not sending messages.
- #646: Resolved issue where DXNET not processing the date of 9-Oct correctly.
- #639: Resolved issue where DXNET headers were not process correctly.
- #641: Added support for KAM-4 PBBS.

4.2 Release 2.2.0c212

- #590: Upgraded error checking to the "BbsGetMsgs" call to resolve type mismatch error 13s.
- #593: resolved issue with mdcheck to PK-232 not working with the appended call sign.
- #595: Resolved problem with Runtime error 91 Object variable or With Block variable not set on closing a window. Outpost now prompts to first save or throw out open messages if they have been changed.
- #600: resolves problem where ipagwpe is not displaying the message.
- #605: Outpost errors with Telnet or Winlink error: "Connection must be in transparent mode." vs Line mode. Workaround in place, but final solution is still pending v2.3.
- #609: Telnet timeout problem. Implemented different approach.
- #610: Resolved Outpost aborting with 40006. Issue is with F6FBB replying with space-embedded status causing telnet to disconnect but Outpost still throws another command.
- #623: Outpost does not correctly recognize a Telpac BBS because call sign included the characters "KAM", thereby forcing a wrong detect. Updated all SID detect strings to be more unique.

4.3 Release 2.2.0c198

- #574: Resolved problem where Outpost and AGWPE did not work well with Netroms.
- #584: BBS SP Command not populated when entering a NEW command.
- #585: Trace file generates File Open errors.

- #586: resolved issue where IPW created messages that default to the last date listed.
- #588: resolved problem where Outpost truncates messages that are really about 10K.