Outpost v2.8 Release Content Description

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1. Introduction

This Release Content Description provides information about new or changed functionality that will be available in Outpost Packet Message Manager Release 2.8. This information is organized under the following sections:

▪ *New Features:* A new capability that did not exist in any prior version of Outpost in any form.

▪ *Enhancements:* 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.

2. New Features

2.1. ER#1039: New Serial Comm Library

With the proliferation of USB-to-Serial Adaptors, there have been several problems reported where Outpost could not talk to the Adaptor but other packet apps could. This turned out to be severe limitation with the Serial Comm Port library that Outpost was using for the last 10 years.

This change replaces the MS Library with a lower level implementation that offers better controls. A few advantages come with this change:

• Now supports Comm Port numbering up to 99, instead of the previous limit of 16.

• While not fully checked out, Outpost does run on Linux under Wine with USB-to-Serial Adaptors (NOTE: there are a few other problems that need to be resolved before I would recommend a full move to Linux, such as BBS Path errors).

• Better performance with more (NOT ALL) USB-to-Serial Adaptors. I have received a lot of feedback since starting this topic back in April, and hope to get an USB-to-Serial Adaptor Resource page up on the website shortly after the release of v2.8

• #1041: resolves the invalid port 0 error that came from the old library.

2.2. ER#1060: User Program Launch

Launch was introduced with Outpost v.2.5 as an internal feature to handle custom requests for putting user programs and html forms on the Outpost Main Menu.

The immediate impact to existing Outpost users is that Ics213mm.exe is moved changed from a hard-coded menu option to a Launch file entry. A Launch How-To will be written and posted up on the web site to describe how it works and set it up.

3. Enhancements

3.1. Outpost

ER#1034: URGent flag not reset. This change corrects a problem where the urgent flag for a new message is not reset for the next message.

ER#1038: Add Global Message ID. With the introduction of Profiles, the message ID counter now became relative to whatever profile you currently had loaded. This meant that you could have sent CUP102, CUP103, CUP104, and then changed profiles (say, defining a new user or BBS) with the same Message Identifier (CUP), and potentially end up with the same message IDs going out. This change now adds a Global Message Identifier and the option to choosing which one you want to use.

See Tools > Message Settings, *Msg Numbering* Tab for where to select this option, and Tools > Report Settings, *Variables* Tab on where to set the next value.

ER#1040: TNC Timer tuning. At the end of a session where Tactical Call Signs are used, Outpost puts the TNC in CONV (converse) mode and sends a burst that lists the FCC Call Sign and Tactical call as the legal identifier. If the channel if heavily used, it is sometimes difficult to break in and send the burst before the TNC times out. This change ensures that the identifier is sent prior to the end of that timeout.

ER#1047: Add NTS as a default message. There are some teams that exclusively send NTS messages as part of their operations. This change adds the option to set NTS as the default message type on pressing New Message. This change does not pop open the NTS Message Maker form, but gives the user the option of developing whatever NTS content as they see fit.

ER#1048: No Printer Error. This change resolves the corner case where your PC has no printers configured. On pressing Print Setup and canceling, an error was produced. This situation is now resolved.
NOTE: I need a secondary confirmation from someone that this truly the case.

ER#1050: Two character Domain Names. Outpost performs a lot of checking of addresses to ensure that the address format entered actually is valid for the BBS type used. This change corrects the case where, for SMTP addresses used with Winlink, xNOS, or BPQMailChat, if the domain is a 2 character (such as a country name like ".it" for Italy), it is accepted.

ER#1053: Correct hierarchical address handling. This change corrects the problem where the "#" character that may be used in a packet hierarchical address was not recognized.

ER#1055: JNOS "0" message check. When listing messages (LM) in JNOS, once they are listed, JNOS assumes that you will download because they are of interest, or will ignore them. ON the next LM, it reports something like "5 messages, 0 new". Outpost performed a "0 new message" check on JNOS mainly for bulletin area messages, but in the event someone manually connected to the BBS and LM'ed his/her own messages, when running Outpost again, the private messages would not be retrieved. This change fixes this situation.

ER#1056: Parse real address. As more and more users originate messages from the internet into the packet world, the address handling needed to be updated, specifically when an incoming message comes in with a display name followed by the actual address, such as
"Jim Oberhofer <kn6pe@arrl.net>". Outpost now checks for display names and only stores the address located between the <..> characters.

ER#1061: NTS Standards Update. This change brings the NTS Message Maker Form into compliance with the currently documented message form standard. This is the first step in breaking NTS Message Maker out into a separate program that will support Outpost as well as the Winlink messaging environment.

ER#1062: Play Sounds Enhancement. This change introduces default data and application path tags that can be set up in the Outpost.profile files in the event a local package is produced for team distribution.

ER#1063: Message from Ipserial. This change corrects a problem with creating a message to Outpost from a highlighted text area in Ipserial, Ipagwpe, and Iptelnet.

ER#1064: BBS Support for Kantronics KWM-1200. Adds BBS support for this BBS. It essentially works the same as the KPC family of products

ER#1065: LMI Hyphenation. If the Subject Line Identifier was configured with a hyphen between the 3 character ID and the number, it was not picked up in with the Local Message ID (LMI). This change makes this use of this configuration across all IDs.

ER#1066: Subject Line ID. Usually, users set the starting message number to something like 100, so the Subject Line ID would read (for instance) CUP100. However, if the number was set to something less than 100, the number of digits was reduced to that number size. This change now adds a minimum 3 character pad so that all message IDs now show at least 3 places for digits. For example, if the number was set to 1, the Message ID would read CUP001.

ER#1067: Opdirect & PacFORMS. This change backs out #1031 to deal with a transmit buffer problem when Opdirect replies to the PacFORMS browser.

ER#1069: Ics213mm. Corrects the Field logic when entering a new message if NEW was not pressed first.

… and no others

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