Athenaeum

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November 2010 Newsletter

Upgrades during the holidays

The majority of sites wishing to update to Athenaeum Pro 8.6 can do so with a self updater. This simple procedure involves stopping your FileMaker Server, installing two files and running an update script, then re-uploading your files. The process doesn't take long at all. Contact us when you want to update.

The changes were listed in an earlier newsletter, plus we have added some tiny adjustments to some window dimensions for Windows 7; extra information on the issue declined red screen; modifications to latest date changes; and some other small asked for tweaks as well as a few bug fixes.

Athenaeum Pro Stocktake Summary

In a nutshell:

• Set your end dates [optional]

• Check your library recesses and public holidays [optional]

• Check your next stock take run number

• Start a new stock take and scan your items

• List missing items

• Process the missing items

• Run your missing report and your Annual Summary report

Most issued report

Want to know what the most issued items were in the library last year, or for any period of time? Watch this short YouTube clip: http://sumware.net/athenaeum/athnotes/?p=135

Stock-Take Questions

Two frequently asked questions are:

"do I have to close the library when I stock take" and

 "can I stock take part of the library?"
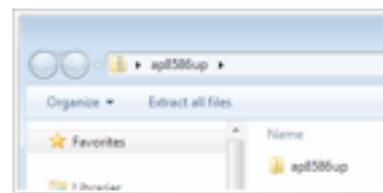
Respectively, the answers are No and Yes.

It is a simple procedure to find all items in a particular location or locations that were NOT part of a particular stock take run. Not sure how? Just e-mail support and ask.

Tech: Expanding "zip" files

Our favoured distribution format for data files is the "zip" format - a compressed file format. Windows (unhelpfully, I think) calls these "compressed folders" and when you double click on a zip file, a window opens showing the contents.

Occasionally, we are asked about a zipped file not opening properly. The problem is sometimes that folk are trying to "run" the enclosed program directly from the zip file, rather than extracting the contents of the zip file. The clue is the zipper on the folder icon in the window location bar.

You can see a quick video for windows XP on our support site here: http://sumware.net/athenaeum/athnotes/?p=104

Archiving vs Deleting

In Athenaeum, you normally do not delete items, but rather Archive them from the catalogue.

Archiving is where a copy of the title's information is sent to the catalogue archive file and the original detail removed from the catalogue.
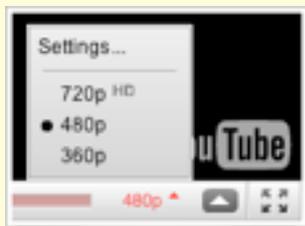
If you chose "delete record", from the records menu, Athenaeum will archive the item rather than delete it by design.

Archiving allows you to return the item to the catalogue, should it be returned to the library and also allows the historical reports to correctly determine the value and existence of previously disposed items.

If you do want to permanently delete, rather than archive, simply archive the item and then delete it from the archive. Or, go to the audit layouts and delete from there (be careful, of course).

YouTube Movie quality

When watching screen casts on YouTube, ensure you have the best quality setting for your internet band width.
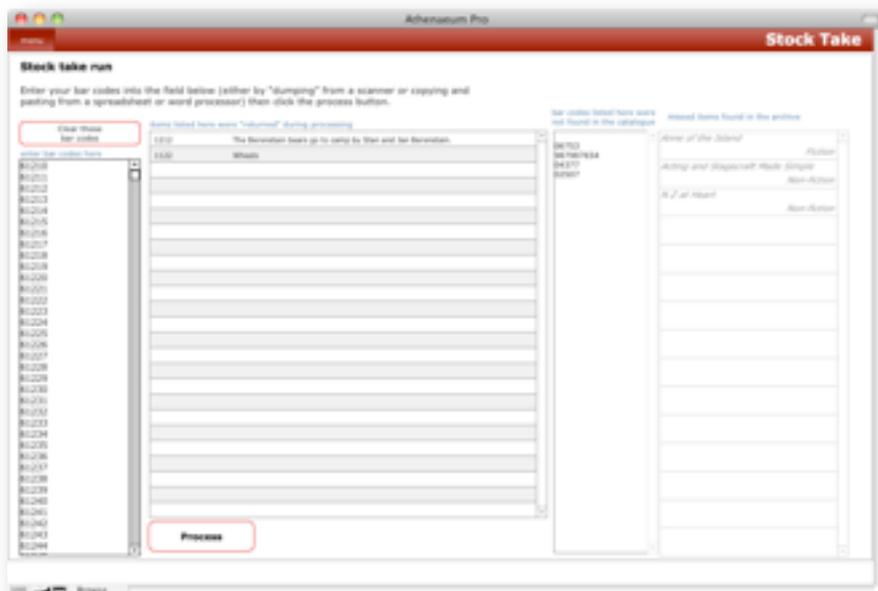

Movies showing details of computer screens usually require a quality of 480p or higher. The current highest YouTube setting is 720p (HD). However this setting requires a pretty good connection to the internet, otherwise it will stutter and play poorly.

A setting of 240 or 360p will play back quickly, but will look blurry and is generally unreadable for this type of video.

Library Jargon?

At a recent training session, it was decided that "stock-tooken" might be a fun way to reference an item of which you have taken stock.

One might guess that we start to look for humour in strange places while performing repetitive processes!

A cordless bar code scanner can dump 100's or even 1000's of bar codes into your Athenaeum Pro stock-take for fast processing

Cordless Bar Code Scanners & stock take

Robin Achmad at Green Bay High School shared her Athenaeum stock take method recently.

Robin uses a Voyager cordless bar code scanner with Athenaeum Pro 8.5.

Starting at the Catalogue Utility screen, stock take tab, Robin clicks the "Dump" Bar Codes button–which leaves the cursor blinking in the bar code entry field–and then commences her shelf scans. Should the scanner move out of range, the scanner automatically switches to "collect" mode and stores the bar codes scanned until it returns within range. When back in range, the stored bar codes are automatically sent to Athenaeum and appear in the bar code entry field.

Robin then clicks the "Process" button and Athenaeum quickly takes stock of the listed bar codes, noting returns, missing items and scanned items found in the archive.

Simpler Scanner

So what to do if you don't have that level of sophistication in your scanner?

I was reading through the forum today and found this gem from Natalie Mackenzie at Alfriston School in 2007.

I had commented about the Voyager scanner and its ability to switch data collection modes as it went in and out of range. Natalie had a cordless scanner, but not one that could do the automatic mode switch. A quick raid of the school's audio resources found a clever, if somewhat geeky solution.

Natalie said back then: "I got around this problem quite simply.

By using the remote headphone set off the listening post, (plugged into the host computer) I had one ear listening to the scanner, and one listening to Athenaeum. Any beeps telling me something was wrong with the book or the scan, I could check immediately. Of the 8000+ on our catalogue, I had less than 30 books to look for, and these were mostly very thin books that may have been stuck to a neighbouring book or just missed when I pulled the books part way off the shelf.

I was able to complete the entire stocktake on my own, over 6 hours, whereas the old way of carting the books, took longer and with two people!"