SUPPORT NOTE

Support of Reedholm Distribution Software

Why Upgrades Exist

Reedholm software upgrades are released after extensive software review, software testing, system performance evaluation, and updating of user manuals. Since they are major projects, upgrades are only done when accumulated patches, workarounds, and feature requests become too cumbersome for effective administration and support.

Upgrades Represent Knowledge

Software upgrades embody the latest Reedholm testing knowledge. Generally, they address all known problems with Reedholm distribution software. When an upgrade is released, record keeping of problems for the previous version is stopped.

Thus, patches need to be installed and used to gain the maximum benefit from Reedholm customer experience. Furthermore, upgrades need to be performed in a timely fashion. Patches are not offered for older, unsupported software releases.

Tracking Problems and Requests

Reedholm maintains an extensive support database that is accessed whenever customers request assistance. System configurations, communications, problem assessments, feature requests, etc. are maintained for every system under support. After assessment, customer problem reports and feature requests are logged in a general file.

If a customer running the latest software reports a problem that is not in the database, an attempt is made to duplicate it. Severe problems without workarounds are resolved with patches.

No attempt is made to use versions older than one year from the latest release to duplicate problems reported. However, internal memos communicate the problem and provide a record for placement in the customer system notebook.

Types of Releases

Patches address defects and add features and/or support for 3rd party software, such as new IE version. Periodically, patches are rolled into minor or major releases that require a software installation.

An upgrade is a major release designated by an increase in one of the first two version digits. Minor releases are identified by an increase of the last digit. For example, 8.0 and 8.1 are major releases, while 1.21 and 8.12 are minor ones.

Limited Support of Obsolete Code

When a major upgrade is released, support for the previous obsolete version is not dropped immediately. Every effort is made to alert customers in advance of changes so that arrangements can be made to keep current. Then, for a period that can be as long as one year, Reedholm support engineers have user manuals and access to distribution software so that customer queries can be answered and problems investigated.

Training is Necessary

Reedholm user manuals and support are based on the assumption that system users have gone through formal Reedholm training. In general, support is limited to those customers who are running the latest major release and who have been trained in its use. Training by phone or email is actively discouraged.

Lifetime of Software Versions

Reedholm customers are not confronted with major upgrades every year as evidenced by release history. The last releases of RDS DOS 8.12 and RDS Intranet 1.31—both minor releases—occurred in 09/09.

- RDS DOS 8.0 & Intranet 1.00 released 11/02.
- RDS DOS 8.1 & Intranet 1.20 released 08/06.
- RDS Intranet 1.30 released 09/08.