HOTEL READER BOARD

KeyWest TECHNOLOGY

Hotel Reader Board Documentation
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Hotel Reader Board Documentation

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Introduction

Digital reader boards are dynamically updating signs used to keep guests, students, employees, event attendees, and many others informed of meeting rooms, schedules, and activities for the day.

The **Hotel Reader Board** software works in combination with **SignWave** and **MediaZone Pro** to automatically obtain and display daily event and scheduling information on the reader boards. SignWave is Keywest Technology's digital door card solution. MediaZone Pro is Keywest Technology's digital reader board player solution. As facility bookings change, the **Hotel Reader Board** software automatically collects appropriate data and updates schedules on the reader boards to reflect changes.

The **Hotel Reader Board** software allows for other media content to be displayed alongside or interspersed with event information, such as time, date, local weather, local news, important announcements, personalized messages, videos, and more.
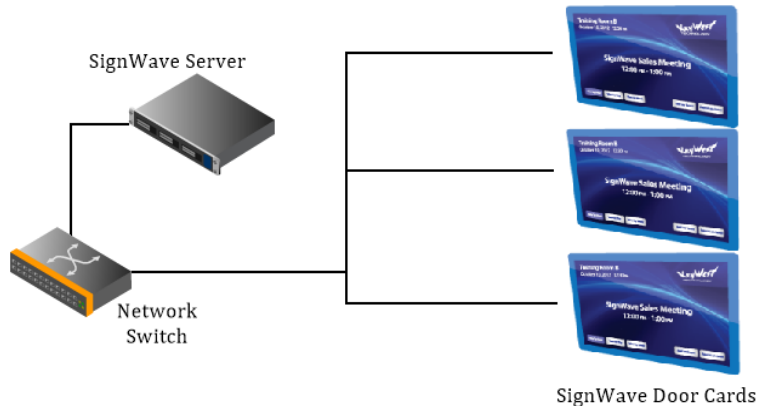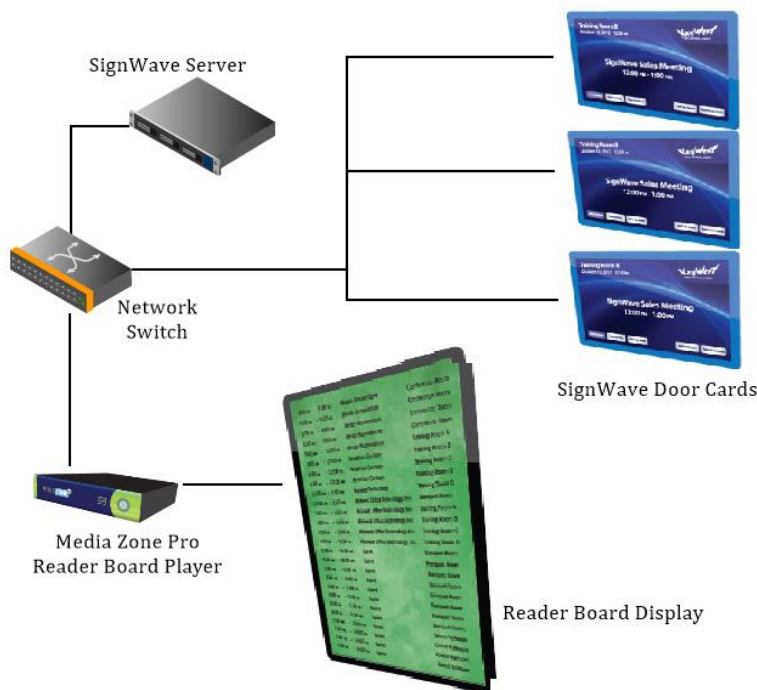
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SIGNWAVE AND HOTEL READER BOARD

A basic understanding of the **SignWave** digital door card system will aid in the understanding of **Hotel Reader Board's** software operations.

SignWave consists of **SignWave** door cards, a system of touchscreen tablets used to display event and room information, and the **SignWave Service**, a central hub distributing event information for each room to the appropriate door card. The diagram below represents a simple **SignWave** system utilizing three door cards.

The **Hotel Reader Board** software bridges a gap between **SignWave** and **MediaZone Pro**, enabling door cards *and* digital signs to display event information pulled from the same source: an event management software (EMS) file. The **Hotel Reader Board** software is installed on a **MediaZone Pro Player**, and a playlist containing a specific media file is sent to the player in order to display events. The diagram below is the same as the diagram above with **Hotel Reader Board** loaded on a **MediaZone Pro Player** connected to a display screen.
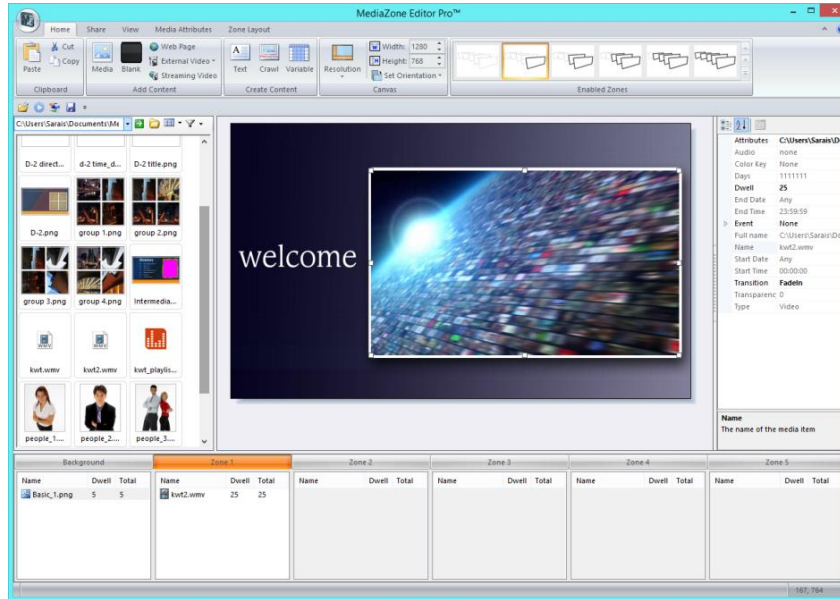

The reader board playlist is created and edited utilizing two different software interfaces: **MediaZone Pro Editor** and **Hotel Reader Board** installed on a **MediaZone Pro Player**.
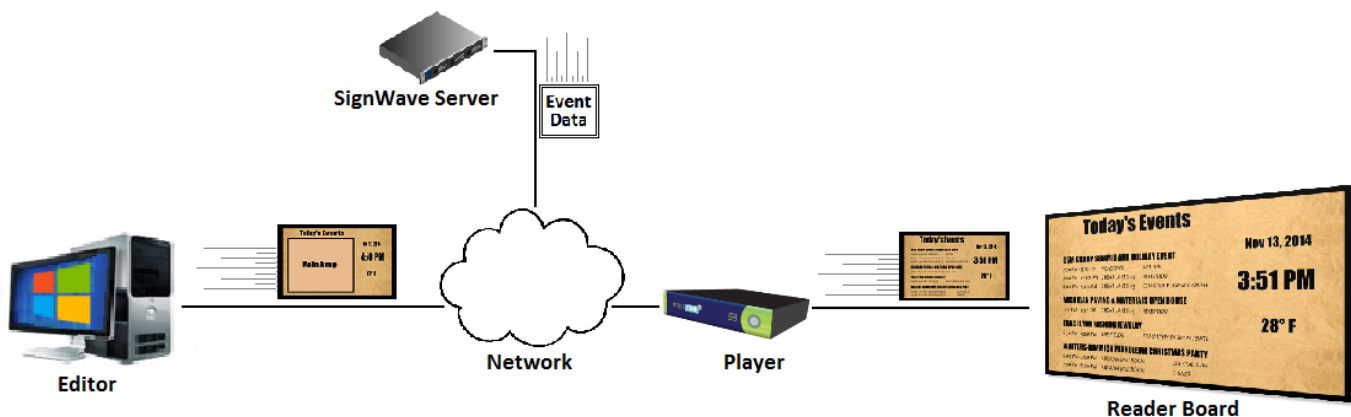
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MediaZone Pro Editor

MediaZone Pro is a complete digital signage software system featuring all of the tools needed to build compelling playlists using text, graphics, video, and animation. Applications for **MediaZone Pro** range from keeping viewers informed of community news or local weather to influencing a targeted group of consumers by displaying the right media content in the right place at the right time. Since the **Hotel Reader Board** software works in combination with a **MediaZone Pro Player**, all of the features available in **MediaZone Pro** can be used alongside or alternate of the reader board event information.

Playlists are created in **MediaZone Pro Editor**, and sent over the network to a **MediaZone Pro Player** connected to a display screen. A digital signage playlist is a file created by a digital signage editor program containing audio, video, image, and other media files that will be played back on a player in a particular sequence. Because **Hotel Reader Board** utilizes the same EMS file as **SignWave** to acquire event information, the event information is not available in the **MediaZone Pro** Editor while a playlist is created. Instead, a specific bitmap (.bmp) image file will be overwritten with the event information after a playlist is sent to a **MediaZone Pro Player**.
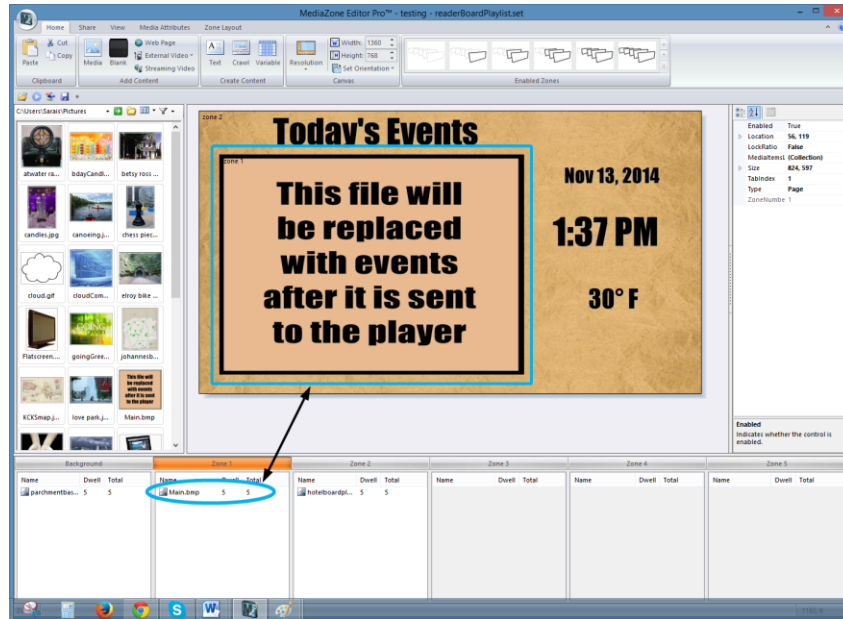

The .bmp file image seen in the **MediaZone Pro Editor** will not be seen on the display screen because the event information replaces the image in this file with event data. The file that will be overwritten is defined in the **Hotel Reader Board** software, and must be in .bmp file format. This .bmp image file will be referred to as the 'overwrite file' throughout the remainder of this document.
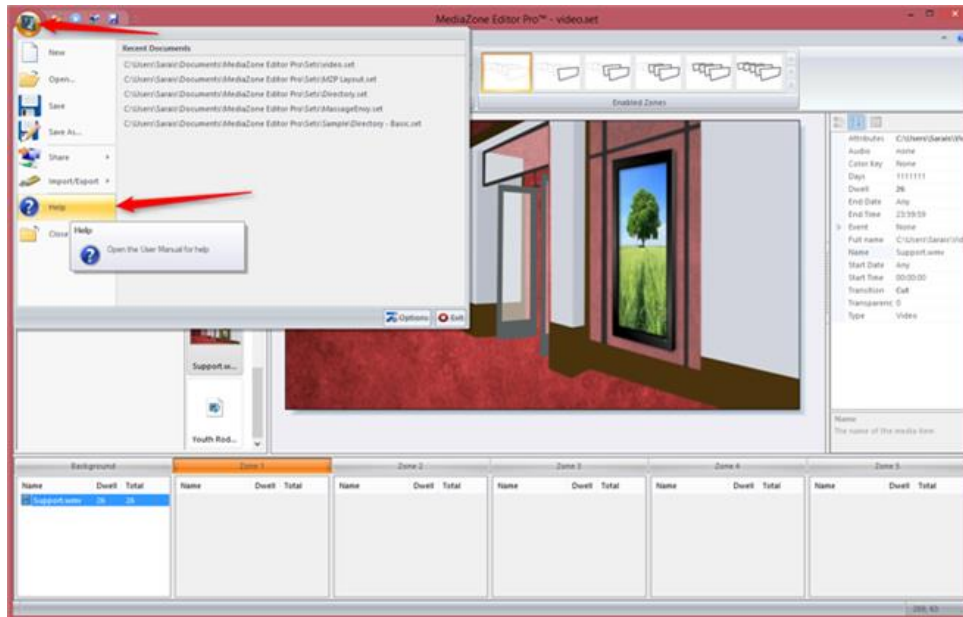
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OVERWRITE FILE

The 'overwrite file' is defined by a filename and path entered in the **Hotel Reader Board** interface. In the image below, the 'overwrite file' is "Main.bmp". (Please refer to page 13 for more information about selecting the 'overwrite file.')

Daily event information can show at all times or can be just part of the display, mixed with local information, ads, or other content. The 'overwrite file' can also be interspersed with media content in one area so event information alternates with other content in one part of the screen.

For information on how to use **MediaZone Pro Editor**, please refer to the user manual at this link: http://helpdesk.keywesttechnology.com/index.php?/Knowledgebase/Article/View/4/31/mediazone-editor-pro-user-manual or within the **MediaZone Pro Editor** software. The '**Help'** selection in the **File** menu opens the same user manual.
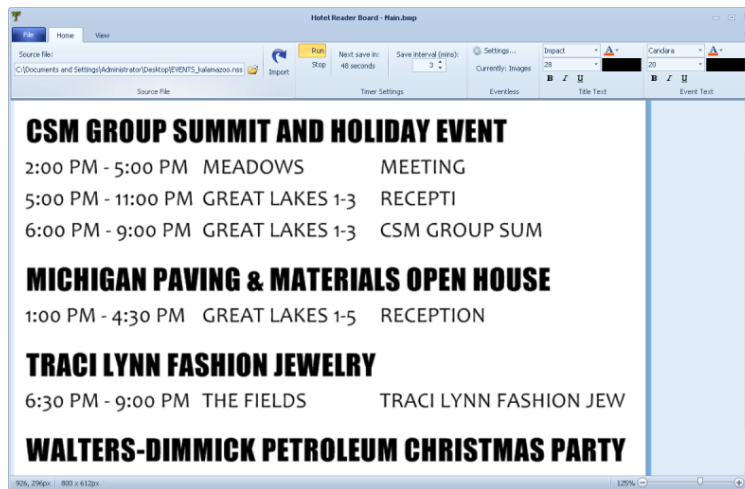
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Hotel Reader Board Interface

The **Hotel Reader Board** Interface provides controls to modify the font, size, color, and style of the event information text. These controls allows for the title and event text to have different settings. This interface also offers a tool, called **Eventless**, which fills the event information area with other media content when no events are scheduled for that day.
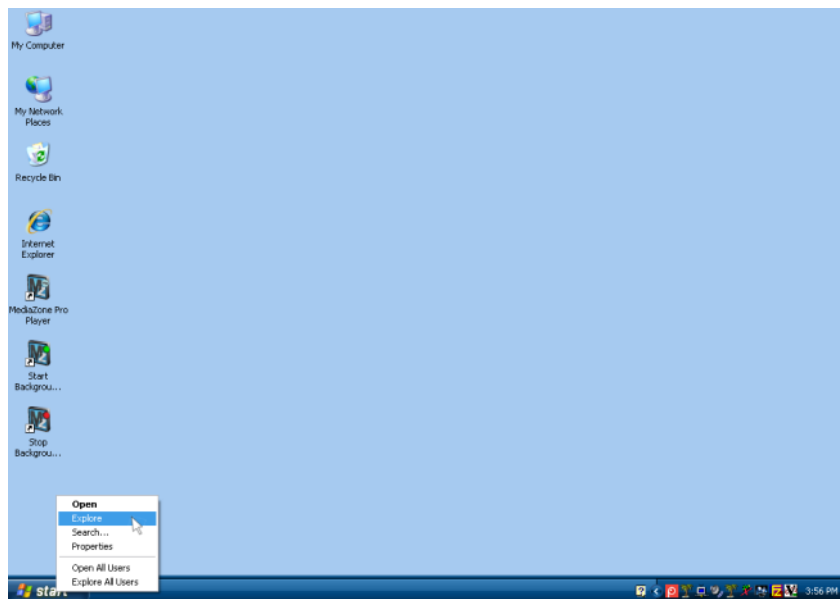
In addition to aesthetic settings, this interface provides settings to configure the **Hotel Reader Board** software functions, such as **Timer Settings**, EMS **Source File**, the 'overwrite file,' and the event information display area size.

> **Note**: *As stated earlier, the majority of a playlist is created and edited using **MediaZone Pro Editor**. Please refer to the **MediaZone Pro Editor User Manual** for settings or features not described in this document.*
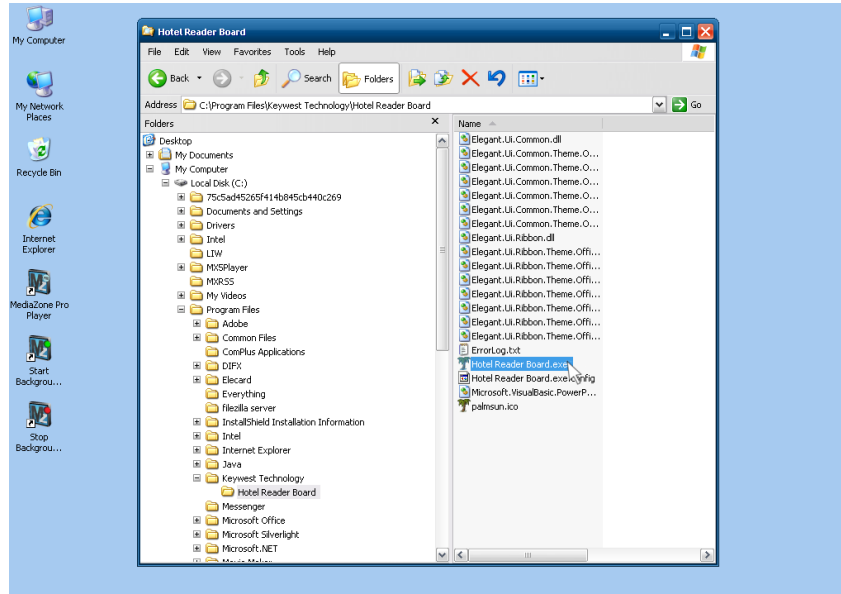
STARTING THE PROGRAM

Hotel Reader Board does not create an entry in the Windows Start menu. To locate the program file, right-click on the **Windows Start** button and select **Explore**.
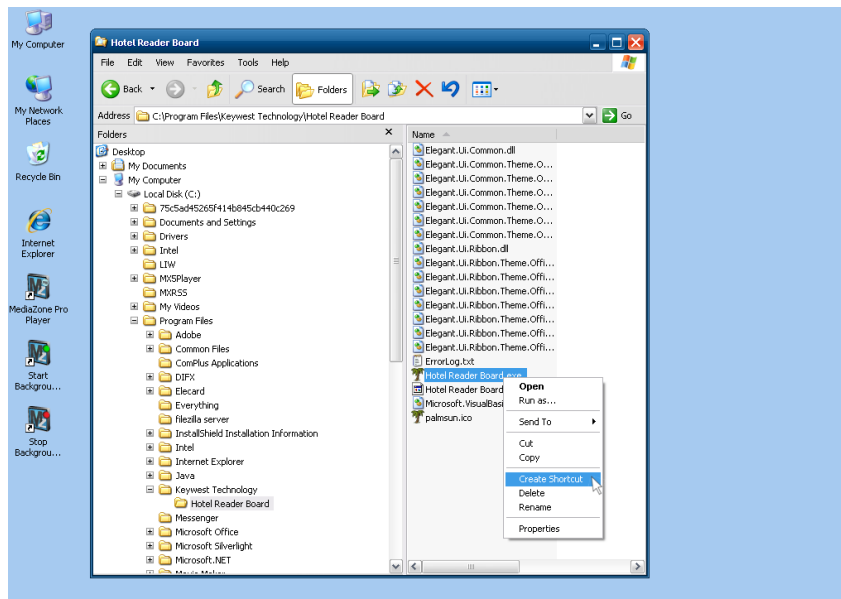
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The file path to **Hotel Reader Board** is C:\Program Files\Keywest Technology\Hotel Reader Board\Hotel Reader Board.exe. Double-click on **Hotel Reader Board.exe**, or right-click and select open.

A shortcut to the **Hotel Reader Board** software may be created. Simply right-click on the **Hotel Reader Board**.exe icon and select **Create Shortcut**. This can add efficiency if the player is rebooted often. Each time the player is rebooted, **Hotel Reader Board** will need to be started again.
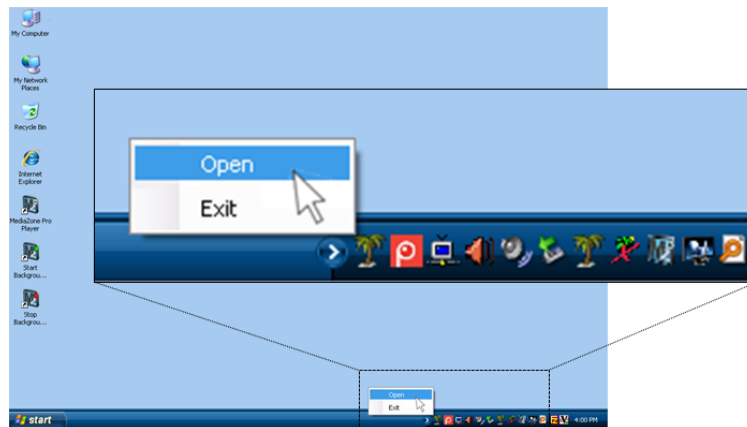
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ACCESSING THE INTERFACE

To open the **Hotel Reader Board** interface, locate the **Hotel Reader Board** palm tree icon in the system tray on the desktop.

Note: *The correct palm tree icon can be identified by hovering over the system tray icons until locating the icon with the tool tip: "Hotel Reader Board."*
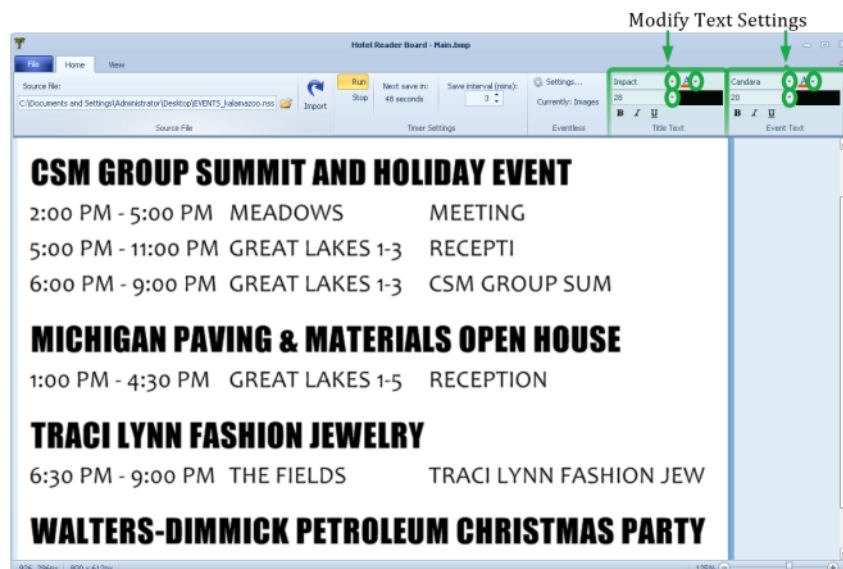

Right-click on the icon and select **Open** to open the **Hotel Reader Board** interface.
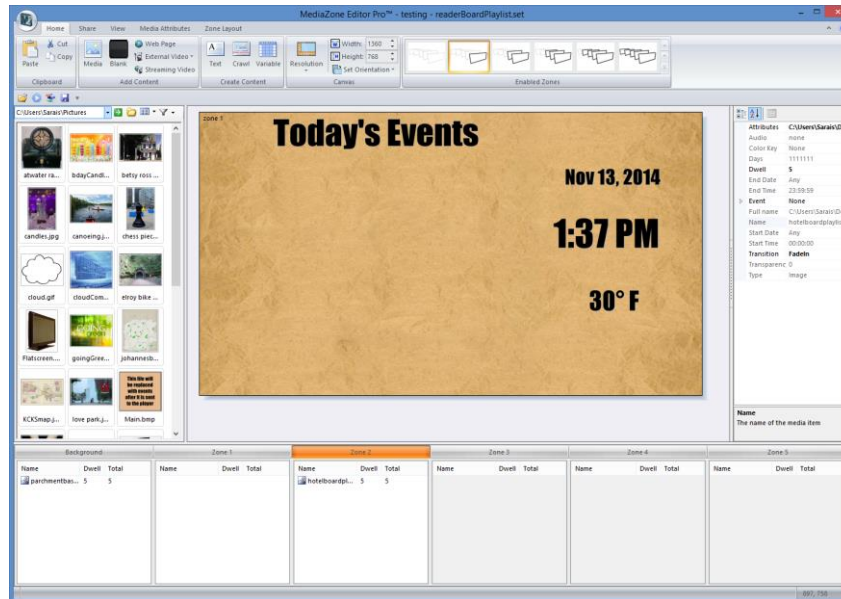

TEXT SETTINGS

In the interface, a user may change the font, size, color, and style of the **Title Text** and **Event Text**.
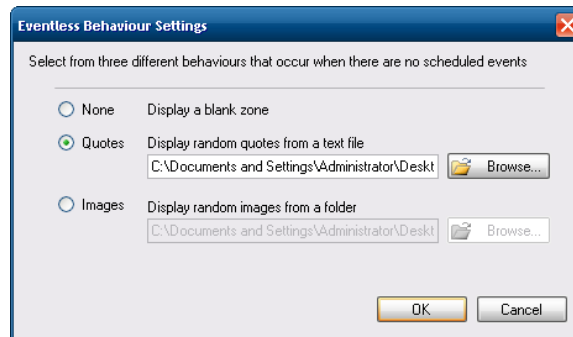
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EVENTLESS TOOL

When no events are scheduled for a day, the event information area is blank by default.

The **Eventless** tool allows for a series of quotes or images to be shown in the event information area when no events are scheduled. The **Eventless** area has a button labeled **Settings...** which opens the **Eventless Behavior Settings** dialog box. Displayed below the button is the currently selected **Eventless Behavior**. The **Eventless Behavior Settings** dialog box is shown in the image below.

There are three behaviors to select from when no events are scheduled. The **None** selection is enabled by default, and results in the event information area appearing empty. **Quotes** and **Images** behaviors fill the event information area with media content.

Browse becomes accessible when the **Quotes** or **Images** radio button is selected. For **Quotes**, the dialog box states "a text file" must be selected. This text file must be in .txt format. A line break (or pressing enter on the keyboard) indicates the end of one quote and the beginning of a new quote to the **Hotel Reader Board** program. The text in this file does not have to be quotes; it can be any message(s) the user chooses to communicate.
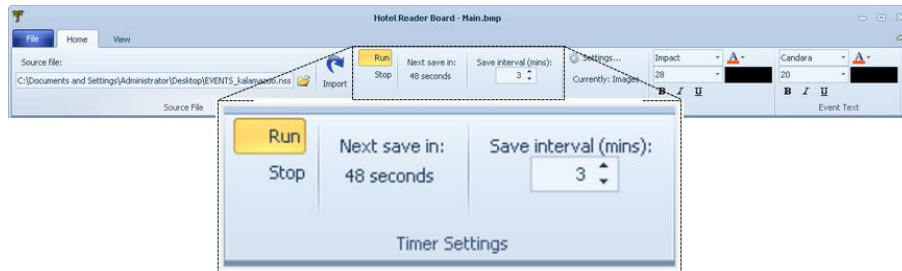
When the **Images** radio button is selected, a file directory of pictures must be selected. (A file directory is also known as a folder.)

The image or quote is signaled to change at the next save, as indicated by the **Timer Settings**. The order of media is random, so random that the same quote or image may be shown two or more intervals in a row.

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Timer Settings

Save interval in the **Timer Settings** area is the amount of time between the 'overwrite file' image being updated by **Hotel Reader Board**. Updating the 'overwrite file' means the software 'rewrites' this file's image with the most current event information or settings. For example, if change is made to the **Source File**, this change will be modified in the 'overwrite file' image at the next save.

The 'overwrite file' name stays the same, but the actual file image will be constantly changing as it is updated by **Hotel Reader Board**.

The **Save interval** indicates the time interval between media changing when **Quotes** or **Images Eventless Behavior** is selected.

Clicking **Stop** disables the timer until it is restarted by clicking **Run**. Disabling the timer is strongly recommended when altering settings in the **Hotel Reader Board** Interface.
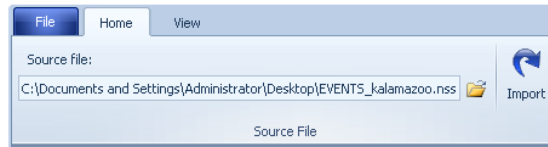
Configuration Settings in the Hotel Reader Board Interface

The settings discussed in this section will most likely not need adjusted once the desired configuration is achieved.

HOTEL READER BOARD SOURCE FILE

The **Source File** is the path and filename to the EMS file, found on the **SignWave** server. An EMS source file must be in .NSS file format, but a .txt file is also accepted for special configurations.
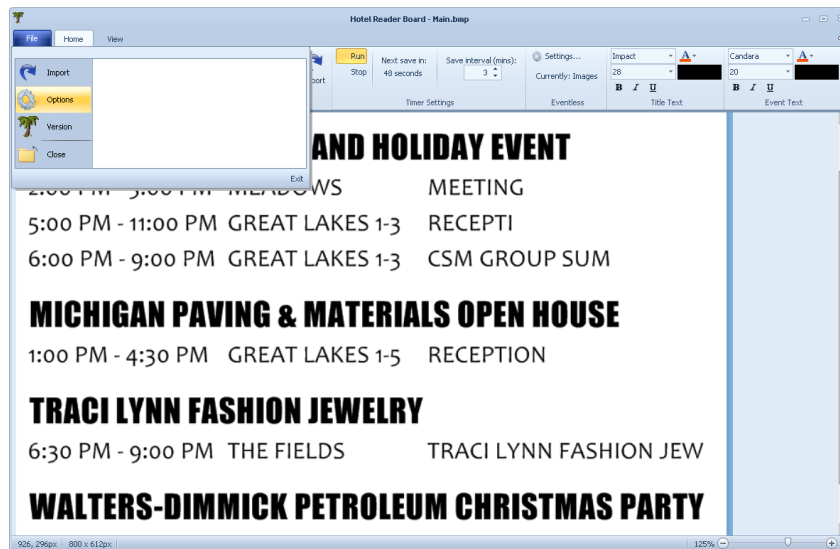

The .NSS file must be transported from the **SignWave** server to **Hotel Reader Board** on the **MediaZone Pro Player**. This can be accomplished by one of two methods: sharing the file over the network or transporting the file to the player disk drive. FTP software programs, such as **Smart FTP** or **FTP Voyager**, include scheduling features that automate the daily delivery of the file.

The **Import** button loads the selected **Source File**, and events begin to show in the **Hotel Reader Board** interface. **Import** will also load settings after they have been changed, such as if the **Save interval** has been altered or the **Eventless Behavior** is modified. The **Import** button can be thought of as similar to a Refresh button in a web browser.
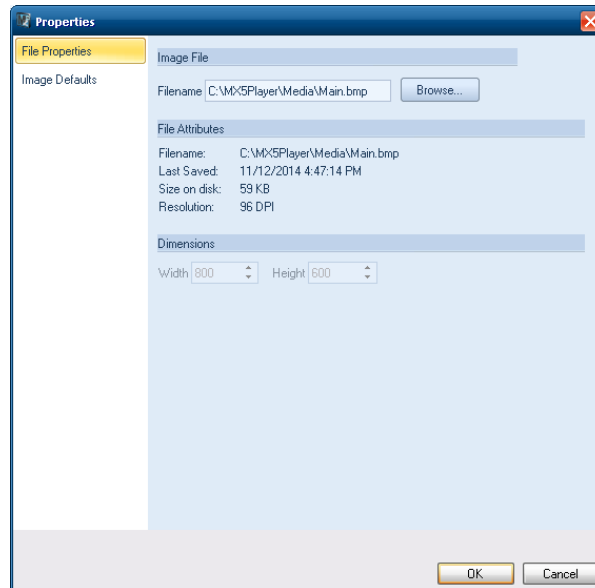
PROPERTIES

The **Hotel Reader Board Properties** are accessed by selecting **Options** in the **File** menu.

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File Properties

The **Image File** area in **File Properties** is where the 'overwrite file' is defined. Any .bmp file can be set as the file that will be overwritten. The intended 'overwrite file' path and name are entered in the **Filename** field. **Browse** allows a user to navigate to and open the intended 'overwrite file' using **File Explorer**.

Note: *If the image that is supposed to be overwritten is showing on the player, the **Hotel Reader Board** program is most likely not running. Another possibility is a new playlist has been sent and the 'overwrite file' has not yet updated; it will update at the next save.*

*Contrarily, the actual image of the 'overwrite file' does not always show when the **Hotel Reader Board** program is not running. The **Media Zone Pro Player** stores a copy of the updated 'overwrite file' image with previous event data; this stored file image is typically displayed at reboot. Event data in this stored image will not update until **Hotel Reader Board** is started.*
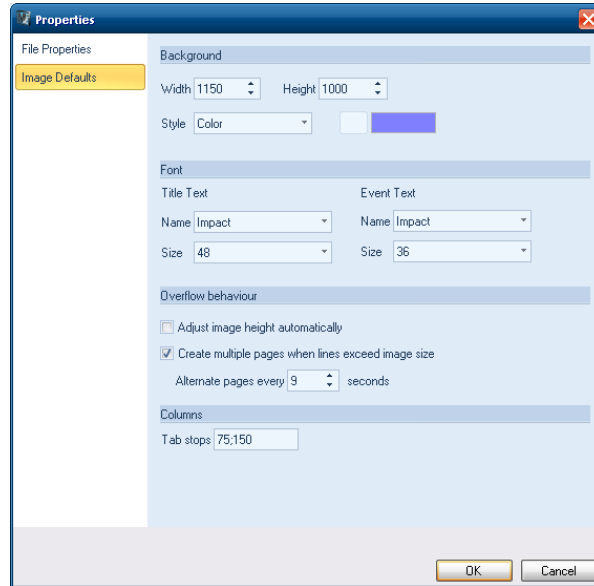
File Attributes displays information about the currently selected 'overwrite file.'

Dimensions refers to the dimensions of the currently displaying media in the 'overwrite file' area. When **Hotel Reader Board** is correctly configured the dimensions match the width and height set in the **Image Defaults Background** area. If the currently selected **Eventless Behavior** is **Images**, the dimensions are of the width and height of the currently displaying image file.

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Image Defaults

This dimensions specified in the **Background** area of the **Image Defaults** dialog box should correspond to the exact dimensions of the zone containing the 'overwrite file' in **MediaZone Pro Editor**. Matching the dimensions exactly ensures the event information area is properly sized, and the text will not be distorted.

The style drop down box offers two selections: **Transparent** or **Color**. When **Color** is selected, clicking in the empty box opens a color grid dialog to select a background color for the event information area.

The **Font** area adjusts the font type and size; these are the same functions as the **Title Text** and **Event Text** areas in the **Hotel Reader Board** interface toolbar.

Overflow behavior refers to how the event data is handled when it will not all fit in the event information area at one time. **Adjust image height automatically** will resize the event information area. **Create multiple pages when lines exceed image size** divides the event information into multiple pages which will display in a looped rotation. Each page displays for the amount of time specified in the **Alternate pages every __ seconds** field.

Event information is displayed in three columns. Typically, the first column is the time of the event, while the second column is the room the event will take place in, and the third column is the event title. **Tab Stops** control the amount of space between each column of information.

In the example below, the third column in the bottom group is offset from the rest of the third column. This is because the room 'Arcardia Ballroom' is too long and runs into column three's text. Increasing the second number in the **Tab Stops** field will increase the space between columns two and three so that all of the information in column three is able to line up.