



# TimePilot Times

TimePilot newsletter No. 63, November 2019



## TimePilot Q&A

**Q. We'd like to use Extreme Blue Enhanced in our remote warehouse, but we don't get a cell signal there. Any advice?**

A. That's no problem! The clock transmits the data to your smartphone via Bluetooth wireless technology, so as long as your phone is within 10 or 15 feet of the clock, you're fine. Once the data is on your smartphone, the TimePilot smartphone app sends the data to the Cloud when the phone gets a clear signal.

**Q. I am getting a message to update the TimePilot program. I want to make sure I'm not going to lose everything I have already set up. Do I have to start from scratch and set up all my profiles and any existing punches I might have?**

A. No. All the setup information and  
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## Time Trivia

**Rap, rap, rise and shine:** From the early 1800s to the late 1900s, people called "Knocker-Ups" or "Knocker-Uppers" went from door to door in Irish and English factory workers' neighborhoods acting as human alarm clocks. They would knock on a client's windows until he or she awoke for the day. One Knocker-Upper used a pea shooter to rouse clients on the upper floors of buildings.

*Irish Central*

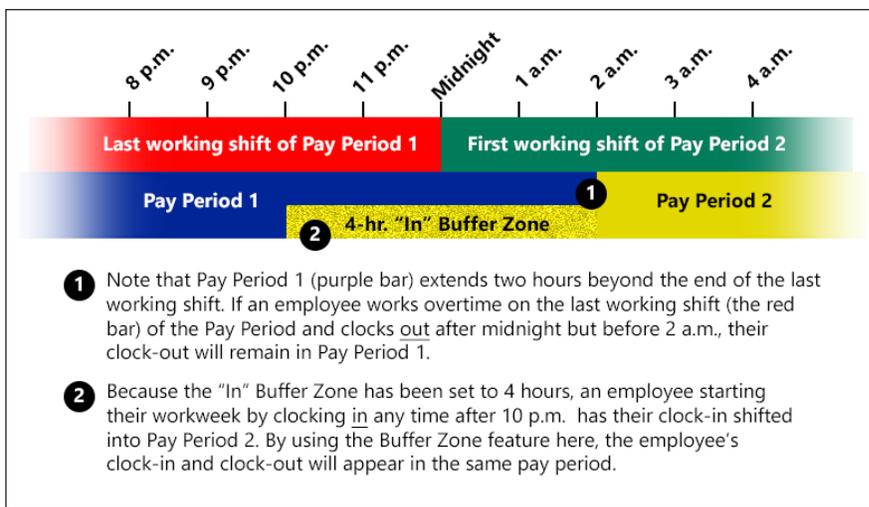
**Watching paint dry was too exciting:** To prove one of the fundamental laws of physics—that those laws do not change over time—a group of physicists watched clocks tick for 14 straight years. They were looking for tiny changes that would indicate that the laws were in flux; they didn't find any. "Most of it is automated, but someone watches it all the time, and someone carries a beeper," said the study's leader.

*Wired Magazine*



## TimePilot Lead Story

# Using Buffer Zones in TimePilot Central



The diagram above uses the example described in the text below to illustrate how buffers work.

**TimePilot Central software** has been designed to be as simple or as sophisticated as you want it to be. Many customers want to keep it simple, and will never use its advanced features. That's fine—the software is perfect for that.

But other customers have more complex situations, and we've tried hard to accommodate them, too.

## The question

If you have shifts covering 24 hours a day and seven days a week, when do you start and end your Pay Periods? The choice is more difficult than it sounds, because **there's never a time when all of your employees are "off the clock."**

Let's say your company has shifts running 24/7: The last shift in the Pay Period ends at 11:59 p.m. Saturday, and the first shift of the next Pay Period starts at midnight Saturday.

Here's the problem: Some of the employees in the last shift of the Pay Period will clock out after midnight, putting their clock-outs into the next Pay Period. And some of the employees in the first shift of the Pay Period will clock in early, putting their clock-ins into the previous Pay Period.

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## TimePilot Q&A

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punches are held in the TimePilot database, which is separate from the TimePilot program.

**Q. When I imported transactions collected by our Extreme Blue clock into our TimePilot Central software, I got a message that 50 of the transactions were "orphan transactions." What are orphan transactions and how can I get them corrected?**

A. Orphan transactions are clocks-ins or clock-outs that don't have an employee's name attached.

To explain further: When an employee taps their iButton to the Extreme Blue clock, the clock records the serial number of the iButton; it doesn't know to whom the iButton belongs. When the transactions are downloaded to a smartphone running the TimePilot app, the iButton numbers are matched against a list of numbers with names attached. In other words, the TimePilot app running in the phone is smart enough to know who has which iButton.

However, you'll get an orphan transaction if an iButton number shows up that isn't on the list. That could happen if an employee from a different company taps their iButton to your clock. But that's rare. More likely, it's because you have employees whose names are in TimePilot Central but haven't been added to the list on the phone. That's why it's important to keep the list up to date. Here's how to send the most up-to-date employee profiles to a phone:

1. Start Clock Manager (you'll find it under the "Setup" menu in TimePilot Central).
2. Right-click the image of the phone and click "Send Profiles to Phone."
3. Choose whether to send all the profiles or just individual ones. Click "OK."
4. Now go to the app on the phone, tap "Settings" and choose "Cloud Functions," then "Get Profiles from Cloud." It may take up to a few minutes for the data to arrive.

That takes care of future problems; now you have to get names attached to those 50 orphan transactions. To do that, you'll use the TimePilot smartphone app to tell the clock to send the phone those transactions again. Here's how:

1. In the phone app, go to Settings > Clock Administration > Get Past Transactions.
2. Enter the number of transactions you want to re-download. To ensure you get all the orphans, let's re-download the last 75 (don't worry—the software ignores duplicates).
3. Tap OK and then touch the gray Management iButton to the Out probe on the clock. The clock will re-send the transactions to the smartphone, where each will be matched to a name, leaving you with no orphan transactions.



## TimePilot Lead Story

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The result will be that when you extract the Pay Period, not all the transactions that should be in this Pay Period will get extracted. **What should you do?**

### The answer

**One way to think of** the TimePilot system is to imagine that all the transactions—the clock-ins and clock-outs—are dumped into a big pot. (It's really called a database.) When you extract a Pay Period, you remove from the pot only the transactions that occurred between the start time and the end time of your Pay Period and place them in a different pot for processing.

To get all the transactions into the right "pot," you'll need to adjust your Pay Period **and set an "In" Buffer Zone, an advanced feature** in all editions—Retail, Professional and Enterprise—of TimePilot's software.

First, adjust your Pay Period so that it ends an hour or so after anyone in the last shift of the Pay Period might possibly clock out. This will ensure that you catch every clock-out transaction when you extract the Pay Period.

In our example, you'll set your Pay Period to start at 2 a.m. Sunday and end at 1:59 a.m. the following Sunday. Because the last shift of each Pay Period ends at midnight on Saturday night, employees can clock out almost two hours late and still have their clock-outs show up in the Pay Period.

**But wait! Starting the Pay Period** at 2 a.m. will leave out lots of clock-ins from the first shift of the week! Don't worry—that's addressed in the next step.

Now you can use the "In" Buffer to catch the "In" transactions that occurred before the Pay Period began and include them in that Pay Period. **Essentially, you're s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g the start** of the Pay Period, but to include only clock-ins—not clock-outs.

By setting the "In" Buffer to 240 minutes (four hours), any clock-ins that occur between 10 p.m. Saturday and 2 a.m. Sunday at the start of the Pay Period will be included in the Pay Period you are extracting, and any clock-out transactions in those four hours will be left behind.

**Now anyone who clocks in early** or clocks out late on Saturday nights will be included in the correct Pay Period and their work hours will calculate correctly.

How do you set up an "In" Buffer Zone? Start TimePilot Central, click the "Administrative" menu and choose "Change Time Period Buffers."

**For more on this topic,** see the article in [TimePilot's online help](#) (or the Help Menu in TimePilot Central). Scroll down to "Definitions" and choose "Definition: Buffer Zones."



## Cool Stuff

**Every once in a while, our employees come across "cool stuff." This is where they share their finds.**

### Wentworth Wooden Jigsaw Puzzles

**Christmas isn't too many weeks away,** and these British-made jigsaw puzzles make a great gift. The laser-cut pieces fit perfectly and don't bend like cardboard pieces often do. Each puzzle's pieces are cut to match the theme of the puzzle's subject. For instance, their Christmas puzzles have pieces that are shaped like reindeer, tree ornaments, gift packages and toy soldiers. Their themes range from reproductions of fine art to landscapes, animals and holidays. They'll even create a custom puzzle from a photo you provide.

<https://www.wentworthpuzzles.com/us/>

