



**Roomcast™**

DIRECT XML LINK TO  
BOOKING.COM USER GUIDE

How to automate your availability and rates with...



**IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ THIS MANUAL IN FULL BEFORE USING ROOMCAST**

Terms & Disclaimer

The XML link is supplied "as is" and is not an indemnity policy. It is an "optional" link for Resident Pro. Booking.com can offer contingency plans to manage your availability on their extranet if XML is down. Contact your account manager for more details. No liability for consequential damages. In no event shall Resident Pro Ltd. be liable for any damages, including any loss of profits, or other incidental or consequential damages, arising out of your use or inability to use the SOFTWARE or written materials, even if Resident Pro Ltd. has been advised of the possibility of such damages. You are advised to periodically check the participating agencies Extranet carefully, to ensure the accuracy of your published availability, rates, other restrictions, and forward bookings. In any case, Resident Pro Ltd. accepts no responsibility for any under or over selling of your rooms.

**Recommendation:** When a new booking arrives from Booking.com you may want to login to your Booking.com Extranet to print, or to simply double check the booking details, party size etc. We recommend you always check the booking for accuracy against the sites own extranet. If you want to view all the online bookings made on Booking.com, then login to the Booking.com Extranet.

**NOTE:** Please note that this system merely facilitates the "automatic" selling down to your last room, but it in no way guarantees to prevent overselling or underselling. In all circumstances, if you receive a booking you cannot accommodate, or have a Query about, you must contact Booking.com or the customer.

**WARNING:** After the Booking.com link is setup, you should NOT change any of your room types inside Booking.com without first informing Resident Pro. This can seriously affect the existing link.

**Who to Contact?**

In all circumstances, if you receive a booking you cannot accommodate, or have a Query about, you must contact Booking.com or contact the customer.

Remember, you can login to the Booking.com Extranet to check booking details, rates and availability.

For errors or configuration issues between Resident Pro and Booking.com you should contact Resident Pro at [support@softwareworks.co.uk](mailto:support@softwareworks.co.uk)

**Section 1. Availability**

You can upload your available rooms up to 1 year ahead, in batches of anything between 1 day, and 92 days at a time (the area you select on the Reservation Chart will be uploaded). Each time a booking is made, or modified, the availability will be "automatically" uploaded for those days.



To begin, highlight a number of days on the Reservation Chart, right click for the Popup menu, and select "Sell online..." and "Availability / rates". This shows the number of rooms you have left to sell (which you can sync at any time), and allows you to sync rates (see next section).

Other options on this popup menu include "Sync avail" (to sync the availability without viewing the rooms left to sell), "Pause" and "Intray". The Intray is explained in a later section. "Pause" will stop the chart from automatically updating your availability, each time a booking is made, or changed. This may be useful if you want to start swapping a lot of bookings around, and don't want the synchronisation to slow you down. Whilst paused, any days that change will be highlighted in PINK on the date of the Reservations Chart, to remind you to "Sync" those days, to bring your online availability up-to-date. As soon as you "Sync" those days, the PINK shading will be removed from the dates. **Note:** "Pause" will not stop bookings from coming in from the internet.

**Tip:** When selecting many days on the chart, it may be easier to use the keyboard – SHIFT and RIGHT ARROW key. Also, to reposition the chart to start on a certain date, go to that day and click on the REFRESH icon.

When you select the "Sync" button, you are only updating the "Availability" for the dates shown. You are not updating any rates or restrictions. Close the window and the sync will take place in the background, allowing you to continue to work (see progress bar on your taskbar). If there is an error during sync (for example, if your internet connection is down), the jobs in the Queue will be restored, and synchronised later.

#### Tips to limit your availability

The main concept behind Roomcast is to "automatically" sell all your Available rooms, to maximise your sales potential, right down to the last room – without having to change your availability "manually". However, there are several ways to change the way your availability is calculated:-

(i) Do not let

If you use the "Shadeout" (do not let) feature on the Reservation Chart of Resident Pro, then these rooms or areas of the chart will be classed as unavailable.

(ii) Symbols

Any Symbols you place on the chart, i.e. HOLD, LET LAST etc., will be classed as unavailable. If you change the pattern of a symbol (i.e. move it from one room type to another) then you must Sync your availability for that period.

(iii) Close rate

Any rates you close will be classed as unavailable (see Rates).

If you use more than 1 "Room rate" with Booking.com then you will notice that each "Room type" has multiple Room rate names below it. Notice that the number of available rooms is duplicated for each rate, so you may have 7 doubles to sell, and all 7 will be sold at every rate. Booking.com calls this "Room Level Availability".

Click on the "Booking.com" tab...

	22/03/2013	23/03/2013	24/03/2013
Type	Friday today	Saturday	Sunday
Double Room	90.00 2	90.00 0	70.00 5
Special Rate	81.00 2	81.00 0	63.00 5
DBB	2	0	5
Flex Rate	2	0	75.00 5
Superior Double Room	99.00 2	99.00 0	90.00 4
Special Rate	99.00 2	99.00 0	81.00 4
DBB	2	0	4
Flex Rate	115.00 2	115.00 0	95.00 4

In the above screenshot, the default Booking.com rate for "Double Room" is "Standard Rate" and we can see that there are 2 Double rooms available at a rate of £90.00 on Friday. In this example, there are 3 other rates: "Special rate", "DBB" and "Flex rate", for each room type. Click "Sync" to upload the availabilities to Booking.com, otherwise the cells will be YELLOW to indicate that the availability has not been uploaded.

Although this screen shows how many rooms you have, you must also "Sync" your rates and restrictions (see next section). Rooms with no prices setup will be highlighted in RED. Rooms with limitations such as minimum stay will be AMBER. Those whose rate and availability have been previously uploaded will appear GREEN.

### Close All Rates

This button will close ALL the rates for the selected period. If you simply want to stop selling rates online this is quicker than going in and out of each and every room rate to "close rate". If you change your mind, click the button again to "Open all rates".

### Price Shift

If you wish to change ALL of the selected prices at once, then use this button to increase or reduce the existing prices by an amount or percentage of your choice. You can also set "minimum stay" and "maximum stay" to all the existing prices.

**Tip:** If you wish to check any of your published availability and rates, to see if you have successfully synchronised them, you can log in to your Booking.com extranet account.

## **Section 2. Rates**

Highlight a number of days on the Reservation Chart, right click for the Popup menu, and select "Sell online..." and "Availability / rates". To set or change prices for any room, click on the "Room type" name or one of its "Room rate" names below. You can then choose to either display a full year of rates for that room, or just the dates you have already selected on the Reservation Chart. Enter your room rates, together with any other restrictions, explained below. Use the COPY buttons to duplicate the cells to other days, and finally click the SYNC button to upload. Back on the Availability screen, you will notice the Rates you have added have turned the room from RED (no price setup) to GREEN (available). YELLOW means you must sync the availability.

**Tip:** To change a price, simply use the BACKSPACE button on the keyboard, and retype the new amount. You can also COPY ALL rates from a room and PASTE to a completely different room type. **Note:** With Booking.com, the SYNC button on the Rates screen does not upload Availability, and the SYNC button on the Availability screen only uploads Availability.

**Tip:** There is a short-cut on the main Reservation chart which allows you to see all the rates over the days you have highlighted on the chart – simple press R.

(i) Room price

Set to an amount, to start selling the available rooms.

(ii) Single price (Optional)

Set to an amount if the price for a Single occupant is different from the normal Room Price.

	22/03/2013	23/03/2013	24/03/2013
Type	Friday today	Saturday	Sunday
Quantity	2	0	4
Rate ID	56025	56025	56025
Room price	99.00	99.00	90.00
Single price	75.00	75.00	65.00
Minimum stay	1	1	
Maximum stay			
Disallow arrive			
Disallow depart			
Close rate			

COPY ALL   PASTE   **Superior Double Room - Standard Rate**

Copy cell to all forward days   Copy day to all forward days   Copy day to 1 week ahead   Copy day to all alike days   **Reselect all**

RATE   -1   -10   +1   +10    Change all forward days

KEY   **To sync**   **No price or closed**   Don't sync

(iii) Minimum stay (Optional)

Guests arriving on this day, must stay for at least this number of nights.

(iv) Maximum stay (Optional)

Guests arriving on this day, cannot stay for longer than this number of nights.

(v) Disallow arrive (Optional)

Set to 1 or 0. 1 means that guests cannot book these rooms if they want to "arrive" on this particular date.

(vi) Disallow depart (Optional)

Set to 1 or 0. 1 means that guests cannot book these rooms if they want to "depart" on this particular date.

(vii) Close rate (Optional)

Set to 1 or 0. 1 stops selling this rate for this date.

### **Section 3. Intraday & Chart**

The Reservation Chart actively checks for new bookings, every 10 minutes. On the Reservation Chart, in the "Chart Key", you can click on the "Automatic" symbol to force Resident Pro to check for new online bookings, whenever you like.

**Automatic**

**Tip:** Right click to change the interval between 10, 15, 30 and 45 minutes. Left click to check the mailbox for new bookings. Hold down SHIFT and left click, to connect and check the online server directly for new bookings (bypassing the mailbox).

**Warning!** – When the Reservation Chart is closed, the system is unable to check for new bookings. Meanwhile, bookings may continue to be made online, but your chart will not be updated until you next open it, and wait for the "Automatic" check (or left click on the "Automatic" icon). You should use the 10 minute interval most of the time, to lessen the window of a chance double booking.

		<Dear
	<Julie Smith	Julie Smi

When a booking arrives in the INTRAY it will be instantly charted PINK, and the original booking will be sent to the "Intraday History" for your reference. Bookings will be automatically charted to the correct room, for the correct dates, complete with the name, address, telephone number, email, guestname, and any notes. Credit card details of the new booking will be stored in the "ETA/Credit card" area of the group leader.

Credit card details are encrypted and password protected.

**Tip:** You can leave online bookings PINK on your Reservation Chart, or confirm the booking to turn it GREEN, so that you know it has been checked (for example, from within the Booking Form, select Billing from the drop down menu, and Confirmed by).

**BEST PRACTICE:** Although Roomcast automates the process of daily selling, you are advised to login to check your Booking.com Extranet, periodically, and especially when you sync whole new periods of availability and rates. As a new booking arrives, or periodically, check the list of bookings [by the date the booking was made] on your Extranet. The Extranet is your direct sales window – use it!

#### Activity

When a new booking is made, or if there is a problem charting it, the details will be logged in the Activity window. This Activity window pops up each time a booking comes in. **Note:** Bookings cannot be automatically charted if the same room is not available for the entire stay – in which case, you should move bookings around, to make the same room available. Then you can go to the INTRAY to 'Book it now' (or to book it into any available room).

#### Disable Roomcast

You can use the Chart Options on an individual pc to permanently, or temporarily Disable the Roomcast service on that pc. However, be aware that if you disable Roomcast, your online availability will not be updated with any changes you make to the availability on that pc's chart, and you will then have to remember to select that period to sync, to ensure your online availability is accurate. As an alternative, you can use the Popup menu to "Pause" your availability synchronisation (it will be uploaded later when Paused).

### Intray booking details

For your reference, you can double click on any booking in the INTRAY to view the booking details. The bookings are listed in order of the date they came in, followed by the Reservation ID number. If you type the Reservation ID in the Recollect box, you are able to view all the occurrences of the booking in the history, in order to find credit card details, check the terms, etc.

The screenshot shows a reservation system interface. At the top, a pink banner reads "[ CHECK INBOX ] Select an area, then Right click, or press <enter> to make a new booking". Below this is a navigation menu with tabs: Calendar, Chart, Guests, Reports, Staff lists, Functions, Reception, and Log-out [Lin]. The main area is a calendar grid for the week of 09/09/2009 to 13/09/2009. A 'Web intray' pop-up window is open, displaying reservation details for a booking on 09/09/2009. The window has a pink title bar and contains sections for 'Roombasket bookings not charted' (listing a reservation ID 2009-09-02-145639-10004.TXT) and 'Booking history' (listing three reservation IDs). On the right side of the pop-up, there are buttons for 'Book it now', 'View activity', and 'View online bookings', along with a checkbox for 'Book any available room'.

### Pink means online activity!

The Reservations Chart on Resident Pro will show Roomcast activity in "PINK"

**A PINK TITLE BAR** = When the title bar of the Reservation Chart turns "PINK" as illustrated above, this means that an online booking in the "Intray" needs your help to chart it. See "Automated web bookings not charted" (below).

**PINK DATE** = When a date on the chart turns "PINK" this means that this day is out-of-sync with the online availability. You should Sync the availability for that day.

**PINK BOOKING** = New bookings that are automatically charted appear on the Chart in "PINK"

### Automatic web bookings not charted

If there is a problem with the booking, for example, in the unlikely event that the Room type booked online is no longer available, or the hotel is full, then the booking will be held in the INTRAY awaiting your attention. If there is a booking in the INTRAY requiring your attention, the top of the Reservations Chart will turn PINK. So long as you can accommodate the booking (in any room) you can resend the booking from the INTRAY to the Chart. Just tick the box "Book any available room" and click the "Book it now" button – or you may want to move your bookings around to release the proper room before clicking "Book it now".

**Note:** Your room types are sold irrespective of whether or not a guest has to move rooms. If the same room is not available for the whole stay, then the booking will not be automatically charted, until you visit the "Intray" and "Book it now". It is your responsibility to accommodate this booking by first moving around other bookings, or to book it to any appropriate room.

### Deactivate bookings in the Intray

All the information needed to make a booking "manually" can be read onscreen in the Intray when you "double click", so you can jot this information down to manually transcribe to a booking, if needs be. You can also deactivate automatic bookings held up in the Intray, by double clicking on the booking in the list, and selecting "Deactivate". Sensitive data within bookings will be encrypted.

**Note:** if you are unable to accommodate a booking you must contact the Customer (or the Booking Agency). Simply deactivating bookings from the INTRAY will not do this for you.

### Reactivate bookings

You can reactivate bookings from the Booking History list, and click "Book it now" to chart it. Encrypted data will be decrypted. Bookings that checkout, or are older than 365 days will be automatically removed from the Booking History list.

When you receive a new booking, if you have multiple rates setup for a room, then the booking will be charted to the room with the "Room deal" on the day of arrival, but in the unlikely event that the "Room deal" is no longer available on the Chart, it will be made to another room of the same type.

**Recommendation:** When a new booking arrives from Booking.com the hotel does not receive a confirmation by email, however you may want to login to your Extranet to print, or to simply double check, the booking details: party size etc. Perhaps the best way, is to view the list of Bookings "by the date the bookings were made" [rather than by arrival date], so that you can clearly see those received most recently.

#### Modified bookings

After a booking is made, it may be modified by the guest online, or by Booking.com. If it is, the modified booking will automatically overwrite everything about the booking, including the Resident Pro "Booking no.". Such bookings will turn PINK again. The Booking.com "Reservation ID" in the "Contact" field of the Booking form will be retained. So too will any deposit paid. If the credit card details are missing, the Original card details can be viewed in the "Booking History" of the INTRAY. **Note** – Avoid adding manual notes or changes to "automatic" bookings on the chart. If a customer modifies the booking online, it may be "automatically updated" on your chart, and this may lose your notes. If you need to add notes to an "automatic" booking, use the Memo feature on the Calendar for that day instead.

If a booking has been modified or cancelled, there may be several bookings listed in the INTRAY for the same "Reservation ID".

#### Fax failsafe

If a booking cannot be delivered from Booking.com for over 1 hour (perhaps because your chart was closed), then it will be faxed to you instead. You can then collect the booking, as follows...

#### Recollect booking ID

If for any reason, you need to recollect an XML online booking from Booking.com, or find it in the Booking History, then type the Booking ID in the space provided in the INTRAY.

#### Troubleshooting tips

##### **Scenario: No broadband connection**

**Remedy:** You should contact your IT support, or your internet service provider, or your local telephone exchange. Meantime, Roomcast inside Resident Pro will attempt to use the internet, and will throw you communication errors, so you may have to disable it until you resolve your broadband connection. If you have to restart Resident Pro, answer "No" to "Do you want to check for new online bookings".

You can use the Chart Options in the Chart tab on an individual pc to temporarily disable the Roomcast service on that pc. However, be aware that if you disable Roomcast, your online availability will not be updated with any changes you make to the availability on that pc's chart, and you will then have to remember to select that period to sync, to ensure your online availability is accurate.

A short-term alternative may be to use the Popup menu to "Pause" your availability synchronisation, but Roomcast will still continue to check for new bookings every few minutes if you have a broadband connection.

You can also use the "Roomcast Setup" software to switch off the Roomcast service for all pc's, but you must restart Resident Pro on each pc.

##### **Scenario: Bookings are not appearing on the chart within a few minutes**

**Remedy:** Try holding down the SHIFT button on the keyboard while you press the "Roomcast" tick down timer on the Reservation Chart. Failing this, you may have to restart your Windows operating system. Restart the pc, and if the problem persists you should restart your pc each day.



For further information visit [www.roomcast.co.uk](http://www.roomcast.co.uk)