

## Let *Austrosoft* join the Club!



Whether you are in charge of running a sports club or a membership organization of a rather different kind (charitable organizations, labour unions, political parties come to mind), new AS Club is the software application that can help make your life a lot easier.

Developed in cooperation with a well-known South African yacht club, AS Club automates the maintenance of member accounts and takes advantage of Internet technology to get information out to your members quickly and inexpensively. The seamless integration of Internet services, such as database-controlled email and SMS, enables you to reach your members almost instantly, while saving substantial sums no longer spent on producing and distributing printed paper. The migration to electronic communications and an almost fully automated operation can however proceed at your convenience, as the program supports a more traditional approach equally well.

The software takes care of all charges, fees and member payments, allowing you to automate your accounting procedures almost completely. Member accounts may be charged under program control at 1/3/6/12-months intervals according to an easily set up schedule. The processing of electronic bank statements, downloaded from the website of your bank, makes the manual entry of member payments unnecessary. The job is completed in seconds while data capture errors are eliminated. Furthermore, AS Club breaks up lump sum payments and allocates them intelligently to club sub-accounts - useful, when EFT-payments are imported, and/or members settle their accounts only partly.

An integrated web camera connection lets you take photographs of members on-site; you can print their club ID cards seconds later. If ID's are meant to expire, AS Club will re-issue them automatically at any required interval (e.g. every 24 months).

AS Club is easy to use: you won't have to go through a lengthy setup and configuration procedure, the program works right 'out of the box'. Provided you have an Internet connection, this includes email and SMS dispatch. A 'Guided Tour' gives you a first impression, the tutorial will guide you along your first steps, and in-depth, contextualized help is available when needed, invoked by the F1 key.

AS Club reports keep you aware of the financial situation at all times, distinguishing between debits, credits and adjustments at the level of sub-accounts, one for each service the club is offering. Likewise, it keeps your members informed. A database controlled, advanced email distribution system, transferring data through multiple server connections for best utilization of your Internet connection, gets the latest statement of account out to your members fast, economically, and at the push of a button. Again, no special setup is required, the distribution system can utilize the Internet immediately after program launch. Of course, the traditional postal services may be utilized too. For instance, statement printing in A4 or A5 format, in colour or black & white, is supported (and AS Club will also print envelopes of any size your printer can handle).

User input is strictly validated to minimize the risk of incorrect data entering the system, one of the most common sources of errors in database-driven software. A streamlined graphical user interface guides the operator and helps to significantly cut down on time spent at the computer. Self-correcting database initialization and integrated backup/restore make the system dependable even under difficult circumstances, for instance when restarting the computer after an unforeseen shut-down, e.g. due to power failure.

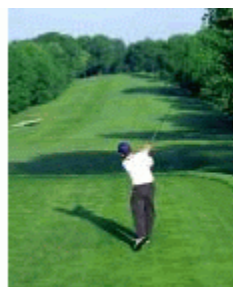
The Internet contributes greatly to data security: a backup of the member database is automatically uploaded daily to our web server (password-protected!). Seven generations of such backups are available in case of an emergency and can be retrieved with one mouse-click. Another important web-related feature is AS Club's ability to collect program updates from the Austrosoft website as they become available and to install them automatically, again without the user having to get involved.

The effort that has gone into the design of AS Club exceeds by some measure what would be considered 'standard' for software of this description!

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Clubs charging membership and service fees will typically debit their member accounts at periodic intervals; as a consequence, statements of account have to be sent out, account settlement is to be monitored on an ongoing basis, interest on overdue accounts may have to be charged, non-paying and non-responding members need to be reminded, notified of consequences, and so forth.

What's more, memberships are not static - changes may occur quite frequently: they might be caused by adjustments to the club's fee structure, the status and personal details of members, the modalities and intervals of payment, a member's *ad hoc* participation in other club activities, the wish of the club to add new membership types or services or to cancel redundant ones, etc.



In addition, the spread of Internet and cellular network services has made it feasible for clubs to take advantage of the convenience and savings in time and money such technology can bring about. - The computer can also assist with less obvious, yet still time-consuming tasks. An example would be the issuing of ID cards to members, which may have to be repeated periodically as ID's expire.

AS Club supports all of these tasks and many more, it automates most and performs them **reliably** and in an intuitive way. While much of the operation of the system can be picked up browsing through the tutorial and proceeding on a 'trial and error' basis, a thorough, illustrated, context-sensitive help system is available throughout and can be invoked by pressing function key **F1**. - Setting up the system may either begin from scratch - i.e. with the user creating a database of member accounts, membership categories and additional club facilities - or with the conversion of an existing accounting system (for enquiries about conversion aids please see the email link at the end of this article).

AS Club allows services to be chargeable annually, biannually, quarterly or monthly - any number in any combination may be scheduled. Member accounts will be debited at the appropriate dates with the appropriate amounts; of course, debits and credits may also be posted manually whenever required. Interest, which is calculated monthly as opposed to daily to lessen the volatility of account balances, may optionally be levied on accounts in arrears; in addition, a user-selectable 'grace period' may be applied. Memberships, facilities and payment schemes can be added, edited or deleted with monthly effect; should the change of a service result in an overcharge, the correct adjustment may be posted automatically. Thorough plausibility checks on data entry and the monitoring of critical user actions assure the consistency of the database. Over 200 detailed system messages keep the user informed of system actions and responses.

With every system launch, the database is scanned for errors, which, for instance, may have been caused by a spontaneous computer shutdown (e.g. due to power or operating system failure).

If possible, they are corrected automatically - alternatively, the user is given the opportunity to select a backup set before the startup continues. In addition, AS Club contains an email-based error reporting system, which can automatically send diagnostic information (including the full database) to Austrosoft; AS Club collects corrections or program patches from the Austrosoft website through a distribution system that allows to address individual AS Club installations.

AS Club monitors member activity and timely payments; it re-categorizes non-paying members as "Defaulters" or "Inactive" according to user-determinable time thresholds. A complementary action reinstates members to their former membership categories automatically once payment has been made.

The system credits payments to sub-accounts, one each per club membership category or club facility. Lump sum payments are split and distributed automatically among those sub-accounts ("AutoAllocate"). Settlement in full of sub-accounts may be enforced should a service require this - but partial settlements can be enabled if this is permissible ("AutoSplit"). These features support the import of EFT-payments from electronic bank statements - a feature of Internet banking, available from all major banks.

A comprehensive set of internal reports keep you informed of the system state; sensible filtering mechanisms enable you to extract the information of interest.

AS Club can produce statements of account at any time and for any time period; they can be printed on plain paper of A5 or A4 format, either in black & white or with a touch of colour:

P.O. Box 1111 Mossel Bay 6500 TEL: 072-160 0357 VAT Reg. No.		<b>Southern Seas Small Ship Society</b>		<b>Five'S</b>		
		CELL 072-160 0357	WEB www.austrosoft.co.za			
		FAX 072-160 0358	EMAIL asclub@austrosoft.co.za			
<b>Statement of Account</b>					Page: 1	
Mr. J.S. Bach 10 Brandenburg Platz Eisenach 20032			Account Number : 000001 Preferred Delivery : by eMail Membership Category : Ordinary Boating Member			
Details of Transaction	Allocated	Date	Ref	Debit	Credit	Balance
Month End Balance		31-Dec-2006	#####			31.53
Payment Received		25-Jan-2007	cash		-31.53	
Temporary Member	-30.00					
Interest @ 1.00%p.m.	-1.53					
Newsletter		31-Jan-2007	sy/Q02	5.00		
Car Parking		31-Jan-2007	sy/Q02	60.00		
Dinghy Parking		31-Jan-2007	sy/B02	60.00		
Sailing Magazine		31-Jan-2007	sy/M02	20.00		
Angling Affiliation		31-Jan-2007	sy/B02	150.00		
Long Term Rental B		31-Jan-2007	sy/M02	396.00		
Ordinary Boating Member		31-Jan-2007	sy/A02	900.00		
Month End Balance		31-Jan-2007	#####			1,591.00
Please note: when transferring funds into our bank account, kindly mark your payment: 000001-Bach				<b>DEBIT CARRIED FORWARD</b>		R 1,591.00
<b>Debt Ageing</b>		<b>Current</b>	<b>30 days</b>	<b>60 days</b>	<b>90 days</b>	<b>120+ days</b>
as of 31-Jan-2007		1591.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank : Second National Bank Branch Code : 024681 Account : Transmission Account No. : 1357 975324			Dear Member, We have switched to a new computer system. Please contact us with any suggestions regarding contents or layout of this statement.			

For instant delivery and savings in postage fees, statements should best be sent out via the Internet to club member's email accounts through the integral email dispatcher. They will appear in the member's email client (such as Microsoft Outlook Express or Windows Mail) in the following style:

**Southern Seas Small Ship Society**

**Five'S**

Tel 072.160.0357 Cell 072.160.0357 Fax 072.160.0358  
Web [www.austrosoft.co.za](http://www.austrosoft.co.za)  
Email [asclub@austrosoft.co.za](mailto:asclub@austrosoft.co.za)

**Statement of Account**

Mr. J.S. Bach  
10 Brandenburg Platz  
Eisenach  
20032

Account number 000001  
Membership Ordinary Boating Member

Details of Transaction	Sub-Acct	Date	Ref	Debit	Credit	Balance
Month End Balance		31-Dec-2006	#####			31.53
Payment Received		25-Jan-2007	cash		-31.53	
Temporary Member	-30.00					
Interest @ 1.00% p.m.	-1.53					
Newsletter		31-Jan-2007	sy/Q02	5.00		
Car Parking		31-Jan-2007	sy/Q02	60.00		
Dinghy Parking		31-Jan-2007	sy/B02	60.00		
Sailing Magazine		31-Jan-2007	sy/M02	20.00		
Angling Affiliation		31-Jan-2007	sy/B02	150.00		
Long Term Rental B		31-Jan-2007	sy/M02	396.00		
Ordinary Boating Member		31-Jan-2007	sy/A02	900.00		
Month End Balance		31-Jan-2007	#####			1,591.00
Carried Forward						R1,591.00

Debt Ageing as of:	Current	30 days	60 days	90 days	120 days
31-Jan-2007	1591.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Banking Details**

Bank Second National Bank  
Branch Code 024681  
Account (type) Transmission  
Account No. 1357 975324  
VAT Reg.

**Please note:** when transferring funds electronically, kindly enter **000001-Bach** for payment details

Dear Member, we have switched to a new computer system. Please contact us with any suggestions regarding contents or layout of this statement.

The same system can be utilized to send out other club documents, from a monthly newsletter to a daily weather report, or the results of last weekend's racing.



AS Club dispatches payment reminders and other messages in SMS text format directly to member's cell phones. An easy-to-use integrated message editor helps to set up personalized messages with a few mouse-clicks.

They are assembled before transmission from your text, optionally modified with recipient-specific database information such as account number, member name, account balance, etc.

Messages can be sent to all members, to some or all members of a membership category, or to individuals.

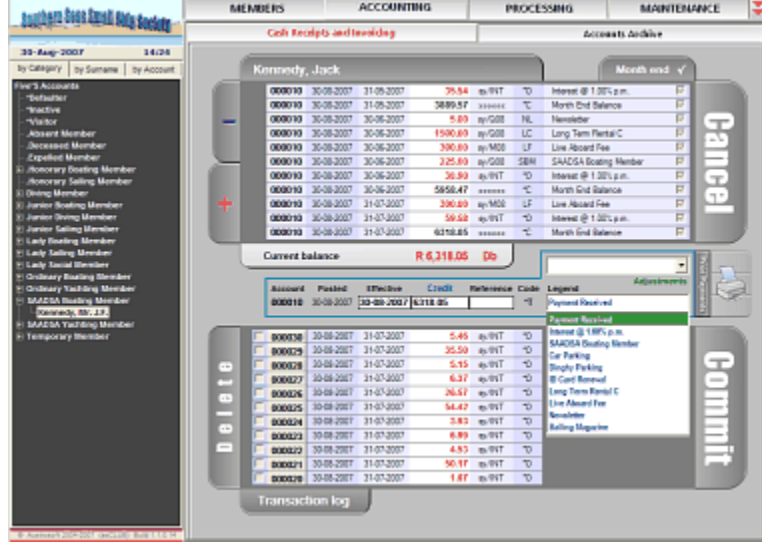
Additional Internet connectivity features, such as web server functionality and club-to-club communications, are currently under investigation.



AS Club prints the ID cards of your members in high quality and complete with colour photograph, and it reprints them automatically before their 'period of validity' expires. Your member's portraits can be acquired from files, from a scanner, a digital camera, or the integral live web cam feed.

The system reduces the workload of the operator greatly; it is automated to a remarkable extent and designed to be almost entirely self-administering. While the user interface is clean, intuitive

and mostly self-explanatory, three levels of help are nevertheless available: you can take the 'guided tour', browse the tutorial, and call up comprehensive, context-sensitive help attached to the F1-key.



AS Club is suitable for any club or organization that needs to maintain the accounts of paid up members and wishes to stay in touch electronically. It can be deployed on Microsoft Windows 2000/2003/NT/XP/Vista/7 (future versions as they become available); Windows 95/98 is no longer supported. For the installation required are: Administrator rights a display with a minimal screen height of 768 pixels.



AS Club is a mature application; development began in 2004 and was targeted from the outset to operate on advanced Microsoft Windows operating systems. It builds on a proven relational database system and integrates fundamental communications standards such as TCP/IP, SMTP, HTML and SMS.

The AS Club development is ongoing. Recently released were:

- Visitor accounts and account archiving
- The importing of electronic bank statements
- A new high-speed email and SMS dispatcher, utilizing multiple server connections
- Automated downloading and installation of AS Club updates from the web
- The integration of a web-based backup system, allowing daily uploads of the AS Club database for safe-keeping on the Austrosoft web server

We are constantly investigating new functions to extend the capabilities of AS Club:

- The integration of an access-control system that grants members access to club premises; envisaged is a smart-card controlled system
- 'Always on-line' technologies such as DSL would enable the club web site to be hosted in-house. AS Club could serve up club web pages and provide club members with direct access to account as well as general club information
- Club-to-club Internet-based communications, allowing advance notice of the arrival of guest members or foreign visitors at a participating club. Yacht clubs, for instance, would benefit from such a system, as visiting yachts could be allocated available berths or moorings before arrival; participating clubs would at all times be aware of vacant visitor berths or moorings. Such a system would be email-based and could thus be operated at a negligible cost.

Depending on demand, foreign language versions of AS Club may be released in future.

Over 25 years of software development expertise in the field of operating systems and large mainframe computers have contributed to making AS Club a remarkably dependable application. As with all software, user feedback is important and will be taken into account as future versions are specified.



Please contact Austrosoft for further information:

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 Web [www.austrosoft.co.za](http://www.austrosoft.co.za)