

Windows Troubleshooting Handbook

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with specific answers to problems we have heard of at the Five Star Support Desk. If you try the solutions listed below before calling for support, you will save time, you will save the cost of a support call and you will learn more about your computer and become more self-sufficient. Almost all of the calls we get after hours are covered in this booklet, so if you follow it you will probably never need to incur the cost of calling for support after hours.

Have a glance through the major topics identified in this booklet, so that when you experience a problem, you will know how to use the booklet as a guide. Be sure all your evening and weekend staff know about its contents so that they can become self-sufficient too.

Get a notebook for staff to keep an error log. Write as much detail as they can when they suspect a problem. This information is very useful to our support staff when they diagnose the problem. If you see an error message on the screen, be sure to write 3 pieces of information in the log: record the error number, the program name, and the statement number. These pieces of information are prominently displayed on the Five Star error window.

If you get an error or have a problem, before you call support, click the Safe Exit Button on the Five Star error screen, and then try the same operation again. If you don't get the error this time it was a fluke – you might have had a power problem or something and you just saved yourself a call!

- 1) My computer is frozen/Five Star is not responding to my typing. Or, I am experiencing intermittent freeze-ups, erratic operation or slow operation.
- 2) Errors during the night audit.
- 3) I have an error 102, 105, 107 or 109 on the screen.
- 4) A warning message appears saying "An error occurred and I must run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference.
- 5) I have an error # on the screen other than the ones listed in previous topics.
- 6) Call Accounting or an Interface has stopped.
- 7) My network server is working but one or all of the workstations have stopped.
- 8) I had to reboot my computer (or it restarted itself) while using Five Star.
- 9) I got an error during my nightly backup.
- 10) The Guest Account Inquiry balance for one of my guests is right, but the Edit In House Guest screen shows a different balance.
- 11) The Edit in House Guest & Guest Check Out screens show guest checked in, but the Guest Account Inquiry and other screens show checked out.
- 12) The F5 window and the Today's Room Inventory window show sold out, but the F6 Block Rooms window shows one or two rooms left.
- 13) There are two guests checked in to one room.
- 14) Windows shows more than one Five Star on the bottom line of the screen.
- 15) Guest Check Out says 'Someone is recording charges for this guest'.

**1) My computer is frozen/Five Star is not responding to my typing.
Or, I am experiencing intermittent freeze-ups, erratic operation
or slow operation.**

Freeze ups: It may be that your computer has frozen or Windows may have frozen but your computer is still operational, or Five Star may have frozen but Windows and your computer are fine. You must determine which of these three is the problem by following the steps below in order to exit properly.

First and foremost, don't turn it off, don't press the reset button and don't press control-alt-delete. If you do, you may damage Five Star data files which will compound the problems you will experience.

There are 2 steps in determining what's wrong and what to do about it.

Step 1: Press the CTRL key and hold it down. While holding it down press the Pause key about 20 times.

If the computer responds with anything on the screen, like this >2>2>2>2>2>2>2>2>2>2>2 then your computer is NOT frozen. Five Star may have been working on a very long procedure or it may have gotten itself into a program loop it could not get out of. There are long procedures at the end of the Night Audit in the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program and in the Data File Integrity Check program. With the >2>2s on the screen you should just type RUN and press enter. The program will continue exactly from where it left off. However, if it seems that Five Star is in a loop and it will never end, you can also type START instead of RUN and Five Star will go back to the Log In screen. Whatever it was doing will be terminated so we don't recommend typing start during the night audit, Rebuild Room Cross Reference or Data File Integrity Check.

Step 2: If the computer does not respond with anything on the screen then Five Star (and possibly other programs) is frozen. Press Ctrl-Alt-Delete once. If Windows has not frozen it will

display a Close Program window. Click on Five Star in the window and then click on the End Task button. It may take Windows up to 20 seconds to respond and you may see a second confirmation window. Click on End Task from this window too. (Caution: If you use Windows NT Workstation, your instructions will be different. Have your NT administrator write instructions for you.)

When you press CTL-ALT-DEL, if the Close Program window does not appear, your computer *is* frozen and your only recourse is to turn it off. Leave it off for 10 seconds and then turn it back on. Don't just turn off the power switch on the screen, you must shut down the computer itself.

Some freeze-ups are inevitable; it is impossible to completely eliminate them. But if your computer freezes more than once a month or so, you have something that your hardware people should fix for you. Computers freeze for four reasons:

- 1) Power fluctuations can cause freeze ups. You **MUST** protect your main computer with an Uninterruptible Power Supply, or UPS for short, commonly worth about \$200. You must protect your secondary computers on a network with a high quality surge protector, commonly worth about \$40. These 'ounces of protection' are worth many dollars in wasted time and support costs. We recommend the APC or American Power Conversion brand.
- 2) Hardware sometimes is 'flaky'; that is, it works most of the time but fails sometimes. Flaky hardware **MUST** be checked and replaced by your hardware company.
- 3) Network cabling. If your network cable has a bad connection, when the connection breaks it usually freezes your computer. If you suspect this, have your network cable expert check and replace the cable ends.
- 4) Software can cause freeze ups too. Windows sometimes does this, but it shouldn't if it is set up correctly. Your hardware company can confirm your Windows setup.

If the freeze-ups are more frequent than once a month try this:

First, reboot the server and workstations using the proper shutdown procedure. We have found that 9 out of 10 strange problems go away with a proper shutdown.

If the problem persists, follow these steps:

Step 1: Delete all files with the extensions .TXT and .LST and .PRN and .BAK and .B01 from your \GJWIN\DATA directory on your server. When you have more than 1500 files in a directory Windows 95 and 98 can slow down when adding files to the directory.

Step 2: Run the Windows program called SCANDISK. Make sure it is a thorough scan and that errors will be automatically corrected. Simply click START then RUN then type SCANDISK and press enter. Do this on the server and all workstations.

Step 3: Run the Windows program called DEFRAG. Make sure it is a full optimization and that errors will be automatically corrected. DEFRAG should be run once every 3 months whether you have problems or not. Simply click START then RUN then type DEFRAG and press enter. Do this on the server and all workstations.

Step 4: From within Five Star run the Data File Integrity Check program on the administration menu. Run the Check All Files Option. If you run this from your network server it will be much faster.

Step 5: From within Five Star run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the hotel setup menu. If you run this from your network server it will be much faster.

2) Errors during the night audit.

You can handle all problems in the night audit without the assistance of Five Star after hours support.

If the error happened any time after the Post Room Charges report, don't rerun the night audit. All the functions that follow will be run automatically during the next night's audit.

If the error happens before the Post Room Charges report, you can rerun the night audit.

If the error happens during the Post Room Charges report don't rerun the night audit. You will have to post each room charge by hand that the night audit didn't finish posting. The rooms showing on the Post Room Charges report got posted but the rest did not. Confirm this using the Guest Account Inquiry program. Post the missing charges by hand in the Record Guest Charges Screen.

If you have a printer problem like the paper jams or runs out, you will probably get an error. DON'T abort the night audit. Fix the printer and click the retry button. It will continue from exactly where it left off.

If the error on the screen is error 102, 105, 107, or 109 you will not be able to continue running the audit until the problem is fixed. Stop the night audit, by clicking on the Safe Exit button on the error screen. If there is no safe exit button, only an Exit button, click on it and then type BYE and press enter. You will be returned to the log on screen ready for more work. You should run the Data File Integrity Check program following the instructions in topic 4 BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO RERUN THE NIGHT AUDIT.

If your computer appears to freeze, check topic 1 first.

When you rerun the night audit you will need to know what the Manager Override Password is to do so, as you will be asked for this password when you re run the night audit. We at Five Star do not know what your password is; only your manager knows, so there is no need to call us to find out what it is. Call your manager. Even if we happen to know what it is, we cannot give it out without your manager's approval. The password can be seen or changed on the Options screen on the General Hotel Profile program on the Hotel Setup Menu. Only attempt to rerun the night audit if it did not get as far as posting room charges. If it posted the room charges do not attempt to rerun it. When you rerun the night audit, the selling date will already have changed to the next date. Don't worry; the program will give you a chance to change it back as you restart the night audit.

3) I have an error 102, 105, 107 or 109 on the screen.

This section teaches you how to run the Data File Integrity program to fix damaged data files. Refer also to the steps in topic 2 if you got the error on the screen during night audit.

These errors happen when a data file is damaged. Data files are damaged when you shut a computer off incorrectly, or when someone reboots the computer i.e. presses the reset button, turns the computer off or presses CTRL-ALT-DEL twice. It can also happen when your power fails or if the computer freezes while you are using Five Star. Make sure ALL of your staff are PROPERLY TRAINED NOT TO SHUT OFF YOUR COMPUTER WHILE FIVE STAR IS RUNNING AND THAT ALL USERS FOLLOW THE STEPS IN TOPIC 1 OF THIS GUIDE.

There is no need to call Five Star Support when you see these errors on the screen. You can get out of the error easily by following the instructions that follow. When you go back into Five Star, retry the operation. If you get the same error, follow the steps in this section. If you get the error again when you retry the operation, you should write down the error number, program name and statement number as displayed on the error screen. If you need to call the Five Star Support line later this information may help solve the problem.

If the error is a number from 100 to 130 the error screen will tell you which file is damaged and it nearly always fixes the problem. (The file name may be H1DETL, H1RES, H1STAT, H1CLOG or something similar.) Write down this file name along with the program name, error number and statement number. You will need the file name to repair the file. The Data File Integrity Check program can always fix this type of error. Sometimes more than one file is damaged but Five Star will only find one error at a time. You might fix the first file it finds but then find the next file damaged when you retry the operation after running the Data File Integrity Check on the first file. Be careful to note the new file name and repeat the process of fixing the file.

To exit the error, click SAFE EXIT on the error screen. If there is no safe exit button, only an exit button, click on it and then type BYE and press enter. You will be returned to the Five Star log in screen. Log in and proceed to the Data File Integrity Check program on the Administration menu. Select Single File Only from the option line of this program. Run it on your network server, it will run up to 10 times faster than on a work station.

4) A warning message appears saying “An error occurred and I must run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference.

If you get an error immediately after you accept a reservation, check in, check out, edit in house guest, guest charges or create additional account screens and you exit from the program as described above, you must immediately use the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the Hotel Setup sub-menu. This program ensures that all your hotel files are correct and are the same.

Five Star will warn you after this happens. The warning message reads, “An error occurred while updating a reservation. You must run the rebuild room cross reference program soon to avoid errors.” The message also tells you who the user was that got the error, the time, the terminal number and the reservation number and name of the guest he or she was processing at the time the error occurred.

You should go to the user and ask him or her about that reservation referred to in the message. Something went wrong with it and Five Star did not get to finish all the blocking for the guest. If you don't run the rebuild room cross reference immediately, there is a very high probability that the next guest you autoblock for the same room type as the guest named on the error message will be blocked in the same room for the same date. This is because the program did not finish with the original guest, since the program did not finish.

If you see this error frequently, it means that reservation updating is not finishing frequently, and this is a problem you must eliminate for Five Star to be reliable. Do not ignore this message.

5) I have an error # on the screen other than the ones listed in previous topics.

There is no need to call Five Star Support when you see an error on the screen. You can get out of the error easily by clicking the Safe Exit button. If there is no safe exit button, only an exit button, click on it and then type BYE and press enter. You will be returned to the log on screen ready for more work. When you go back into Five Star, retry the same operation. If you don't get the error, it has been solved. If you still get the error you may have to contact Five Star support. You should write down the error number, program name and statement number as displayed on this screen.

6) Call Accounting or an Interface has stopped working.

All staff should know how to check call accounting or interfaces periodically and should know how to shut them down properly and how to restart them. In this topic call accounting and interfaces are simply called 'the program'.

To check the program, go to the computer that normally runs it. Pull the mouse down to the bottom of the screen so that you can see the start button and the 'task bar'. If the program is running, you will see it here. Click the mouse on the program and you should see it appear in full screen mode. Click on the dash on the top right corner of the window to minimize it (put it back on the task bar) so you can continue with other things.

If you don't see it on the bottom, it is not running which means call revenue is being lost. Start the program immediately following the directions below.

If the program is running you should see the transaction on the top of the screen with a fairly recent time (and date), like in the last 20 minutes. There may be a message at the bottom of the screen warning you that no calls have been received in the last 20 minutes. (You can set the number of minutes for this warning, if your property tends to have fewer or more calls, in the Setup Interface Rules screen of the appropriate program.) The interface computer beeps to warn you that no transactions have been received in the time frame specified. Call Accounting also beeps if someone makes a 911 call from a room. You should never ignore a beep from the interface computer. If you find that you don't hear beeping when either of these conditions happens, have

your computer technician check the sound in the computer. The beep will save you \$\$\$ and maybe even a life!

To properly shut down the program as it says on the bottom of the program's screen, press and hold the CTRL key. While you are holding it, press the PAUSE key once and release both. You will see a message saying, "Do you want to stop the interface?" Select yes and press F4 until you are completely out of the program back to Windows. While the program is not running, call revenue is being lost, so restart it immediately.

To restart the program, Click START then PROGRAMS then START UP. You should see the program on the START UP folder list. Click it and the program starts. If you don't see it there, call Five Star support to set it up properly. We put it there, because when your computer is restarted, Windows knows to automatically restart the Call Accounting or interface immediately. Restarting the computer with a proper shutdown is another way to restart the program.

If you find that the program is no longer recording transactions, you can test the interface yourself to find out whether the problem is Five Star, your computer or your phone switch. Go to the Setup Interface Rules screen for the appropriate interface and note the Data Communication Port to Use field. It will either say ccom1 or ccom2. Write this down. Exit from Five Star and shut down the interface following the steps above. For this test to work the interface or call accounting cannot be running. On the computer you normally run it on, click START the SETTINGS then CONTROL PANEL then double click on the SYSTEM icon. Click on the DEVICE MANAGER tab and then on the VIEW DEVICES BY TYPE radio button. Scroll down the list of devices until you see PORTS COM & LPT. Double click on the word PORTS. You should see the COM port number you wrote down. If you wrote down ccom1, click on Communications Port COM1 and then click on the PROPERTIES button and then on the PORT SETTINGS tab. Write down the baud rate, data bits, stop bits and parity. Don't worry about the handshaking field. Close all windows until you are back to the desktop.

Click START then RUN then type HYPERTRM and press enter. Wait until the Connection Description window appears. Type test in the Name field and press enter. In the Connect To window, click on the pull down list in the Connect Using field. Click on DIRECT TO COM 1 or DIRECT TO COM 2 depending on which port you wrote down, ccom1 or ccom2. Click on OK. IN the COM PROPERTIES window make sure the baud rate, data bits, stop bits and parity are the same as the numbers you wrote down from the control panel. Click OK and the program starts.

Go to a bedroom and make a 2 minute long distance call to test the call accounting or process a transaction if you are interfaced to another system.

On Hyper Terminal you see a blank white screen. If call records are being sent and if the computer port is working, you will see something appear on the screen. If it looks like a call record or interface record then the problem is in Five Star and you should call our support desk.

If you see nothing, then either the phone switch has stopped transmitting or the computer's COM port has stopped working. Try rebooting the computer and retesting. If no different results happen, call your phone service company.

When they come, have them connect their lap top computer to the SAME cable Five Star is connected to and make a test call. YOU MUST SEE CALL RECORDS YOURSELF ON THEIR COMPUTER. If YOU do, they can go home. If YOU don't, they MUST fix the problem. They are responsible for the cable and for the switch. We have seen many instances where users were told by the phone company that they have tested the cable and switch, but they have not. Only if YOU see the call records can you satisfy yourself that the problem is not the phone service company's problem. If you do this, you will not get caught between the phone company and Five Star without a call accounting or interface!

If you see call records on the test laptop and you retest with hyper terminal and you still don't see records on it, you must call your computer hardware company next. The problem can only be a defective port at this point.

If you see something on the hyper terminal screen but it is garbage, like a lot of f's or ` (tildes) the transmission is taking place but the baud rate, data bits, stop bits or parity settings may be wrong. Recheck the numbers as described above and retest with hyper terminal. If the problem persists, call the phone service company and have them check the same parameters on the switch. For serial communication to work, these four parameters, baud rate, data bits, stop bits and parity must be identically set on the switch and in the Windows Control Panel.

7) My network server is working but one or all of the workstations have stopped.

This happens when your network has stopped working. Exit out of Five Star on all computers using the normal F4 until you are out or by following the steps in topic 1 if you have errors on the screen. Do a proper shutdown and turn the power off for all computers including the server (not just the power button on the monitor, but the power button on the computer itself.) Leave all the computers off for 10 seconds. Turn the power back on the server and let it completely reboot itself to the point where you can use Five Star. Now turn the power back on the workstations. Never restart the workstations first because Five Star cannot run without the server.

If your workstations still aren't working, you have a network cable or hub problem. Check the network cable connections to the server and the hub. Check the power supply to the hub. If all are working fine you should contact your hardware supplier as soon as possible for repairs. Do not continue to use a network that works inconsistently. Each time it stops functioning you run the risk of damaging your data files.

9 OUT OF 10 NETWORK PROBLEMS GO AWAY BY SIMPLY REBOOTING ALL THE COMPUTERS IN THE PROPER SEQUENCE. EVEN IF YOU SUSPECT A NETWORK PROBLEM, REBOOT THE NETWORK PROPERLY JUST TO BE SURE.

8) I had to reboot my computer (or it restarted) while using Five Star

When your computer freezes and you have to shut it off or press the reset button to restart it or if you turned it off, you may have damaged your data files. You should go to the Data File Integrity Check program on the Administration menu and have it check all data files. It will rebuild any files it finds damaged. All your evening and weekend staff should have access to this program on their menu so that this program can be run as needed. You should run it before the night audit is run if you rebooted the computer during the day or evening. Run the Data File Integrity Check program on your network server if you can, it will run 10 times faster. (The Rebuild Room Cross Reference runs faster too.)

9) I got an error during my nightly backup.

Five Star Support cannot help with third party disk-to-disk, diskette, zip disk or tape backup programs. There are dozens of these devices available to you and we find it impossible to properly support them all. Much more practical is the approach we take, that is, your hardware supplier should create your backup routine, so that he can help you at a moment's notice ON SITE if you need to restore. We advise on what to back up and when. When your hardware and software suppliers work together this way you will be properly prepared for the occasion when you need the data on the backup media.

If you get an error or freeze up during your backup you should contact the manufacturer or your hardware supplier.

Backup systems have one significant limitation: They must have exclusive access to the files they back up. So if someone leaves Five Star running on the network, the backup program will report an error. Most backup programs will wait briefly for the file they want, and then skip over it. This renders the backup useless. You must be certain that no one has left their computer running Five Star. If you get errors during the backup, try again tomorrow night, don't bother rerunning it tonight.

You can leave your call accounting running during the backup and night audit as the files it leaves open do not need to be backed up. Ignore errors in your backup involving the files named H1CLOG, H1PROFC, H1CSTAT (for call accounting) or H1ILLOG, H1PROFI, H1ISTAT (for the interfaces program) or H1PLLOG, H1PROFP, H1PSTAT (for the phone interfaces program).

If you use a daily rotation of tapes or disks, i.e.. you have a Monday tape, a Tuesday tape, etc. as recommended by Five Star, and if you get an error consistently every Monday (for example) you probably have a defective disk. You should replace it immediately.

NEVER activate the automatic scheduled backup feature of your tape program. This feature is great for computers that get used from 9 to 5, but doesn't work for hotels that work round the clock. The program will start the backup when you are in the middle of something important, like the night audit. You should initiate the backup just before you start the night audit.

10) The Guest Account Inquiry balance is right for one of my guests, but the Edit In House Guest screen show a different balance.

The guest account inquiry balance is based on adding up all the transactions for a guest, to arrive at the total. The other reports and screens show the balance based on a total that is stored in the reservation file. Both are changed each time a transaction is posted. If you get an error during posting guest charges, or if one of your data files is damaged, this balance may become different.

You should run the Data File Integrity Check program. Choose Single File Only option from the option line. When it asks for a file name type H1DETL (that's the letter H, the number 1, and the letters DETL). If the file is damaged, it will fix it.

Then go to the check out screen and call the guest with the error to the screen. The balance will be recalculated and saved correctly. Then cancel the check out. No check out will take place but the balance will be fixed.

11) The Edit in House Guest & Guest Checkout screens show my guest as checked in, but the Guest Account Inquiry and other screens show checked out.

The reservations file and another important file called the room cross-reference file are out of sync. Run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the Hotel Setup menu. It will fix this error. Run it on your network server if you can, it will take MUCH less time.

12) The F5 window and Today's Room Inventory window show sold out, but the F6 Block Rooms window shows one or two rooms left.

There is a data file called H1AVAL that stores the number of rooms available for each room type and date. This file is used for the F5 Availability window, the Today's Room Inventory screen, the Availability report and Forecast report. There is also a data file called H1BLOK which is used for the F6 Rooms Blocked window. If a reservation is made but interrupted when the computer is updating the files, these 2 files may go out of sync. Since the last file updated is the H1BLOK file, it is probably the wrong one.

These errors can be fixed using the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the Hotel Setup menu. Before you run it though, note that sometimes users overlook the fact that there may be rooms blocked for groups that did not get picked up or released back to inventory. This can make the Availability screen look wrong, but it is correct. The Room Availability Reconciliation report on the Reports menu can help you see the problem. It shows you exactly how the F5 Availability window arrives at the number it is at, and compares it to what F5 is actually showing. You should

print this report before trying the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program. It may save you some time.

If you find rooms blocked for groups that are not needed, run the Cancel/Release Rooms on the Group Management menu to return the excess room blocks back to inventory.

13) There are two guests checked in to one room.

This can only happen when the block in the F6 window is lost for the first guest who is checked in the room. With no block on the room anyone could be checked in. This most commonly happens if the reservation or check in process is not completed due to a freeze up or error. After you click OK on a check in, if you get an error or freeze up or power failure, you could see this error.

When this happens, use the Edit In House Guest program to move BOTH guests to another room. Then put the right guest back in the room using the Edit In House Guest program again. This reestablishes the right block on the room, and then put the second guest into another room.

To prevent this type of problem you should run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the Hotel Setup menu every time an error happens during a check in. If you get a message saying an error occurred during a reservation or check in, you really must run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program as soon as possible to avoid this error.

14) Windows shows more than one Five Star on the bottom line of the screen.

This happens if you accidentally break out of Five Star and then start another Five Star running. This problem is very common in Windows 95/98 that has a keyboard with the special windows key (down on the bottom row on either side of the space bar, with a picture of a window on it). Hit this key by accident and Five Star goes to a 'background window'. It is still running, but you can't see it and the Windows desktop takes over your screen. If an operator doesn't know what is happening, he might start a new Five Star running, the same way you always start up Five Star from the Windows desktop. Instead, you should simply click on the minimized Five Star at the bottom of the screen. It will bring Five Star back to full screen mode so you can continue to use it.

Screen savers contribute to this problem. We advise that you turn off your screen saver on the front desk; so inexperienced users don't get multiple Five Stars running. Each time the screen saver comes on, it minimizes Five Star at the bottom of the screen. The new user might think he should get Five Star running by starting a new one, instead of re-activating the first one.

To solve the problem, simply pull the mouse to the bottom of the screen to show the start button and the task bar. Click on any of the Five Stars at the bottom and it is brought to the screen. Press F4 until you exit Five Star and keep repeating the process until all the Five Stars are shut down.

Running more than one Five Star is not in itself a bad thing, in fact it is a very powerful capability if you understand what Windows is doing. Many new users don't, so we discourage it until you really understand the issues. Leaving Five Star tasks running hidden on the bottom line may interfere with running your backup and night audit, especially if the minimized task is in the middle of a reservation or something else. Be sure when you end your shift that you haven't left any Five Star's running on the task bar.

15) Guest Check Out says 'Someone is Recording Charges for this Guest'

This happens if you have an error while in the record guest charges screen. Five Star does not want you to check a guest out while someone is posting charges. If you exit abnormally from the Record Guest Charges screen while there is a transaction on the screen, this problem occurs. Simply run the Rebuild Room Cross Reference program on the Hotel Setup menu. This will solve the problem. Run it on your network server if you can, it will take much less time.