

LoftOrganiser ...The 'Golden Rules' for you to follow!

The following 'rules' are intended to steer you away from bad disciplines and into good habits right from the outset of using LoftOrganiser:-

- 1) Re-Installing LoftOrganiser
 - a) Re-installation of LoftOrganiser from the original CD supplied to you will **OVERWRITE** your existing data files with the result that all data will, effectively, be lost!
 - b) So never, **EVER**, attempt to re-install LoftOrganiser from the original CD unless one or more of the following conditions exist
 - i) You have entered no pigeon data at all
 - ii) You have entered just a handful of pigeon records which can easily and quickly be recreated
 - iii) You have taken the precaution of renaming and/or relocating the existing *LoftOrg_be* file, thereby protecting existing pigeon data records
 - iv) You have just made a backup of the *LoftOrg_be* file to a CD or 'Memory Stick' which can be copied back to your hard drive after re-installation
 - c) Play it safe!
 - i) Whatever the reason for you thinking about re-installing LoftOrganiser, **call PBO Solutions FIRST** before you do anything!
 - ii) We will then help to ensure that you proceed safely.
- 2) Backups
 - a) It's an **absolute imperative** for you to create and maintain copies of LoftOrganiser on external media such as a CD or 'Memory Stick'. There is an easy-to-use backup feature which you can find within *General Maintenance* off the *Main Menu*.
 - b) Over and above your LoftOrganiser data file (C:\Program Files\LoftOrg\LoftOrg_be) you should also backup all YOUR other personal data on a regular basis.
 - c) The best way to do this is by installing a CD-Rewriter into your PC. This will allow you to copy the **LoftOrg_be.mdb** file onto a CD at any time. We recommend you do this weekly. Alternatively you can buy a *Pen Drive* (aka *Memory Stick*) which plugs into any spare USB port and acts as a portable hard drive.
 - d) Data loss can be truly catastrophic and, having spent a great deal of time creating and maintaining pigeon data in LoftOrganiser you should never risk losing all of that work for the sake of copying the file onto a CD costing as little as 10p!
 - e) If you do not already have a external USB hard drive, CD-Rewriter or Memory Stick then **GO AND BUY ONE NOW ...** failing that make it clearly known to family and friends that you want one of these items as a Birthday or Xmas present!
- 3) Never, **EVER**, delete a Pigeon record
 - a) Should a Pigeon be lost, sold, or transferred out of your lofts you should simply reclassify the Pigeon by changing its **STATUS**.
 - b) Changing Status effectively screens these pigeons out of certain drop-down lists, and reports you will subsequently call upon, leaving you to focus exclusively on Pigeons currently alive and well in your lofts.
 - c) The **ONLY** time you should countenance deleting a Pigeon record is when you discover you have created a completely incorrect or fictitious record. Even then, make sure you are satisfied that you have not created any racing records associated with this Pigeon nor created any Sons & Daughters referring to this Pigeon or chaos may ensue!
- 4) Maintain Appropriate Locations
 - a) Should you reclassify any pigeon to a *Status* indicating that it no longer resides in your Lofts then you must always change its *Location* to one indicating that it isn't in the Lofts.
 - b) We recommend that you always create and retain a *Location* of '**Z**' for this purpose. All reference pigeons entered as ancestral information to your current team of Pigeons should also be put into '**Z**'.
- 5) Ring Numbers and Formats
 - a) We strongly recommend using the four-digit year format when adding new pigeons to the database. This ensures that rings from the same Union, when sorted alphabetically, will always show the oldest rings first and the newest rings last.
 - b) Always, **ALWAYS**, apply the same data entry criteria to Ring Numbers. So when entering foreign national rings in particular decide how you want them to look and then **STICK** to this format as it will be devilishly difficult to modify later on.
 - c) Example formats that we recommend are as follow (please note that Belgium, French and Dutch rings benefit greatly from a 'dash' as they don't have a letter separator between the Year and Serial elements of the Ring Number):-
 - i) GB2003N12345
 - ii) BELG2003-1234567
 - iii) NL2003-123456
 - iv) WHU2003N12345
 - v) NEHU2003TEE1234
 - vi) FR2003-123456
 - d) **NEVER** use spaces within a Ring Number nor at the back or front of the ring number
- 6) Update Racing Status after every Race
 - a) When you enter a Pigeon into a Race, created by you in the Racing module, you must remember to update the Racing Status of each and every Pigeon entered into the race *regardless of whether, or when, it was timed*.
 - b) A pigeon cannot be entered into another race whilst it holds a Racing Status of '**A**' in any other race, this is why it is crucial that you update this data at the earliest opportunity following the race.
- 7) Capital Lettering
 - a) Always minimise the use of capital letters throughout LoftOrganiser, reserving these for special effect only e.g. **SIRE** and **DAM** names in the *Long* and *Short Details* fields.
 - b) Many reports have limited space available to hold key data and with capitals taking up so much more space than lower case lettering you could be restricting your information output somewhat.
- 8) Photograph Management
 - a) LoftOrganiser has been designed to incorporate colour photographs of your Pigeons in some stunning reports. However if an imported image is very large then it can hinder the performance of your PC when running LoftOrganiser.
 - b) Therefore you should adopt the follow principles in photograph management:-
 - i) Save images in 'JPEG' format rather than any other e.g. **BMP**
 - ii) Keep the file size under 100kb ... this will reduce the strain on your computer when loading images
 - iii) Crop the image dead-square as all placeholders and reports have been designed to accommodate a square image filling the box edge-to-edge with no blank borders.