



The Monthly Poop

Special Guest Article

“5 Tips For Pet Sitting Business Success”

Our guest writer, **Kristin Morrison**, is the founder of the **Six-Figure Pet Sitting Academy**.

New Releases

Independent Contractor Invoices
(available upon request)

Your IC sitters can now generate an invoice and bill you (the owner) for services.

Drag n Drop Reassignments

We have implemented a warning for uncommitted reassignments.

Time Window Conflicts for Sitter Time Off (Beta)

We have an option to loosen up the constraints if there is overlap between the end and begin times of time off. For example, if a sitter has time off from 1pm - 3pm, the system will not schedule her for a 3pm-5pm visit because of the one minute “overlap”. You can now tell LeashTime to ignore the one minute overlap.

Featuring Features

Many of you have requested new features in LeashTime. Some of you have done so repeatedly! We have heard you and we want to do everything possible to meet your needs. We are wrapping up a release for our new and improved billing functionality and will soon be ready to work on a lot of new features that have been on hold.

As a special thank-you, we are going to have a promotion where you can tell us what new features you would like to see in LeashTime and provide details on how you want those features to work. We thought we could make this a little fun and interactive and make sure we had a comprehensive list of requested features.

We are going to run a contest where you can submit a new feature request to us (if you have done so already, please do so again). Not only will you request a feature, but you can write up detailed specifications (this is optional). We will post the best feature requests on Facebook, where everyone can comment on them.

CONTEST RULES

1. You may submit detailed descriptions of new features to be added to LeashTime. A new feature may be something you have asked for but which is not part of LeashTime as of December 31, 2012.
2. Multiple entries are allowed.



3. Entries are submitted by email to support@leashtime.com with subject line: FEATURE REQUEST.

4. Each email may contain several suggested features.

5. You can amend entries. Make sure to put FEATURE REQUEST in the subject line.

6. All entries become property of LeashTime, LLC.

7. The top 10 entries received by January 31, 2013 will be posted on LeashTime’s Facebook page.

8. Facebook readers will be allowed to comment on the posted suggestions until February 14, 2013.

9. LeashTime will judge the top three feature suggestions based on (a) greatest impact (b) quality of feature description (c) Facebook comments.

10. Winners will be announced February 20, 2013.

AWARDS

- First Prize - free LeashTime for 3 months
- Second Prize - free LeashTime for 2 months
- Third Prize - free LeashTime for 1 month

EVEN IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO ENTER THE CONTEST, send us your feature request (again for some of you). We want to have a comprehensive list of requests organized and prioritized. You can make your feature request very terse or you can give us a long explanation of how it would work and what all the possible scenarios are.

This will help us immensely in staying organized. Right now, we get feature requests embedded in with normal support requests and part of other conversation threads. We have the emails but it would take a very long time to comprehensively sort through emails and read each one to determine all the requests.

The deadline for this is January 31, 2013. Once we receive and organize all the feature requests, we will issue a report on what the status of those requests are.

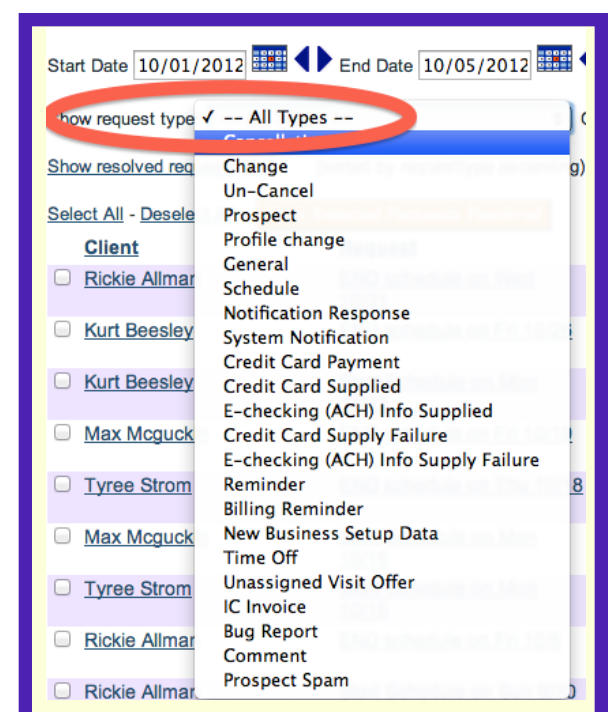
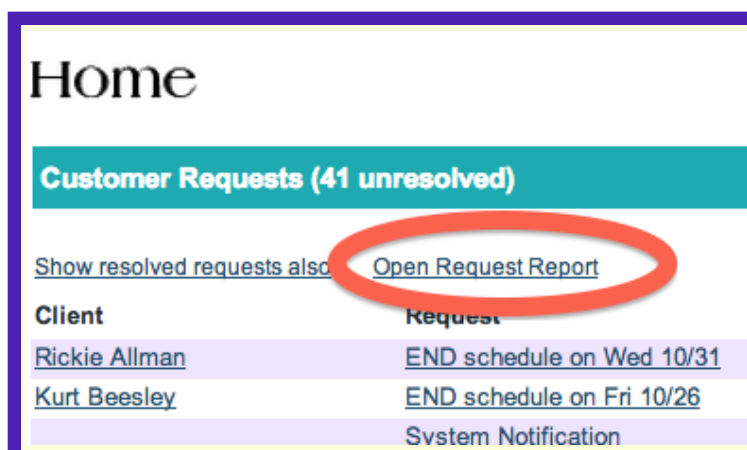
We are looking forward to working on some exciting new features in 2013!

POINTERS (NOT THE DOG BREED)

How to See Resolved Requests

- (1) Go to the **Home** page.
- (2) Click **Open Request Report**
- (3) Enter start and end date choose type of requests you’d like to see from **Show request type**
- (4) Click **Show**
- (5) LeashTime will produce a list of resolved requests that you can open up and review

NOTE: if the client made a request, it will also be available in their profile’s **Communications** tab



Basics of Billing

Discounts

LeashTime offers you the capability to discount individual visits. Generally, you can accomplish the same thing through custom pricing for clients. There are three types of discounts that you can set up:

- **Fixed dollar discount:** this is just a flat dollar amount and will be applied to visits in sequential order, until the amount is fully used up.
- **Percentage discount:** the amount you want to reduce the visit charges by for a particular client; this discount applied to the base or custom charge for a client and does not factor in any adjustments.
- **Unlimited dollars discount:** this is a flat dollar discount applied to more than one visit.

First, you need to set up the discounts that you want to offer. To do so, follow these steps:

- (1) Go **Admin > Discounts**
- (2) Click **Add New Discount**
- (3) Give the discount a name in the **Label** field
- (4) In the **Amount** field, type either a flat dollar amount or percentage (do not type a percent or dollar symbol). Check appropriate box to indicate what kind of discount it is.
- (5) Indicate when the discount starts and ends (if it never ends, set a date several years into the future)
- (6) In the **Duration** field, indicate how long the discount is valid for
- (7) In **May extend beyond the end date** checkbox, indicate whether the discount is still valid after expiration date so long as the discount was first applied prior to expiration date
- (8) Ignore **Member ID required**
- (9) Make sure to check the **Active** box and **Save Discount**

Now that we have the discount set up, we need to apply the discount. There are two ways to apply the discount:

- **Client Profile:** in the Basic Info tab of the client's profile, you can indicate that the client is eligible for a discount (see figure to the right)
- **Visit Editor:** you can edit (and, where appropriate, copy) a visit with a discount applied, even though the client does not have a discount applied to their profile.

To apply a discount to the client's profile, go to the **Basic Info** tab of the client profile and at the bottom of the second column, choose the discount to apply and make sure to **Save Changes**. Every subsequent visit will have the discount applied.

To apply discounts to individual visits, click on the magnifying glass next to the visit. In the visit details editor, choose the Discount to apply to the visit and save the visit.

In EZ Schedule, add a visit as you normally would but before copying the visit click the **More Details...** button. Choose from the Discount dropdown list. Now, copy the visit and the discount will be applied to all the copied visits.

If you to view and/or delete discounts, you can do so from the Services tab. In the **Options...** menu, choose **View Discounts**. You will be able to see which visits are discounted. If you wish, you may delete discounts on selected visits.

Things discounts do not do:

- If you create a discount after scheduling visits, LeashTime will not retroactively apply the discount to previously scheduled visits
- There is no setting to indicate which services are discountable. All visits will have the discount automatically applied.
- In the next version of our billing system, we will be showing gross charges, discount subtotal and final total. Presently, each visit is discounted and the net price is displayed, without a subtotal of discounts.

Sitter Pay Tutorial

LeashTime automatically tabulates amounts owed to sitters for visits. Pay for sitters can be very simple and straightforward -- e.g. you pay your sitters a flat dollar amount per visit no matter what you charge or what discounts you provide.

In Table 1, we have listed the elements that can affect sitter pay.

Table 1

Elements of Pay	Where the information is pulled from
Base Pay	Admin > Service List Expressed as flat dollar amount or percentage of visit charge
Custom Pay (overrides base)	Sitter profile, Pay tab Expressed as flat dollar amount or percentage of visit charge
Additional Pet Pay	Admin > Service List Only expressed as flat dollar amount
Surcharge Pay	Admin > Surcharges Only expressed as flat dollar amount
Bonus for Visit	Individual visit details Flat dollar amount that is added to the Base or Custom pay rate (no matter how pay rate is calculated)

When pay is finally set up for sitters, you can quickly and easily calculate the amount owed for a given period of time. To do so:

- (1) Go to **Sitters > Payroll / Commissions**
- (2) Set a start and end date to denote your payroll period
- (3) Click **Calculate Pay**

After a few seconds, LeashTime will calculate the amounts owed to each of the sitters for the given date range and display the sitters in a list with the total amounts owed to them (See Figure 1). If you click the amount listed in the **Pay** column, a popup window will display a pay statement which itemizes visits for which they are being paid and the amount of pay for the visits.

There are a couple of things to note at this stage:

- LeashTime does not include incomplete visits in the pay amount. Instead, we will report that there are incomplete visits and you will have the opportunity to mark them complete before proceeding with calculating total pay.
- At this point, you will likely take the figures calculated by LeashTime and then physically administer payroll. LeashTime is not actually doing any payroll transactions.
- You will check sitters that you intend to pay and click **Pay Selected Sitters**. Again, this does not actually pay them, it just is recording that you have paid them for the itemized visits (through some other means like a check or payroll service).

NOTE: We do not calculate any payroll taxes, FICA, Medicare, garnishments, alimony, support or any other withholdings.

After you have recorded pay for particular period, a record of the pay statement is created and saved in each sitter's profile. This is available from the **Pay History** tab. Each pay period will have a separate line entry. You can pull up a pay statement for a particular pay period and review it at any time.

If you want to see all the pay statements for a particular pay period, go to **Admin > Reports > Payroll Report**. Set the date range to include the day you ran payroll not the time period that payroll represents. This will show you a list of all sitters, the total pay recorded and an itemized list of visits they were paid for.

If you want to see a list of visits within any arbitrary time frame (e.g. future) and what the pay amount is for the sitter (whether they have actually been paid or not without regard to completion status), then go to **Admin > Reports > Projected Payroll Report**.

Hopefully, you have a better understanding of how pay works in LeashTime.

The screenshot shows the 'Sitter Payment' interface. On the left, there is a table of sitters with columns for Sitter, Pay, Check/Transaction #, Bonus, Check Amount, and Note. The 'Pay' column is highlighted, and a popup window on the right shows a detailed view of visits for the period 11/01/2012 to 11/13/2012. The popup window has columns for Service, Pay, Client, Time of Day, and Pets. The visits are grouped by date: Thursday, Nov 1, 2012; Friday, Nov 2, 2012; Monday, Nov 5, 2012; and Tuesday, Nov 6, 2012. Each visit entry includes the service type (e.g., Dog Walk, Mid-day Walks), the amount, the client name, the time of day, and the pet name.

5 Steps for Pet Sitting Business Success

Kristin Morrison

Here are 5 simple steps you can take today to create more success in your pet sitting business:

1) Accumulate business savings no matter how small at first. Even the act of starting with \$10/month is progress. Your business savings account will help get you through the lean times, especially when you are first starting out. Many banks will let you create free savings accounts if you set up a monthly direct deposit from your business checking account to your savings account(s).

Create three business savings accounts:

- 1) Prudent Reserve Account: for business emergencies
- 2) Basic Business Savings Account: to draw upon as needed for your recurring, predictable, annual expenses like business insurance
- 3) Tax Savings account: to prevent you from spending your quarterly taxes!

2) Create an action plan to ensure that your pet sitting business bookkeeping records are clean, orderly and accurate. Get accounting help if and when you need it. Be willing to pay someone to help you learn Quicken, Quickbooks or other financial software program. Knowing how much you are generating each week, month and year will help you set financial goals which will keep you focused and intentional in your business actions. Plus having a financial system in place now will make tax time much easier. If you find the financial aspect of business challenging, hire a bookkeeper and be willing to delegate this task. Money spent on creating orderly financial records is always money well spent!

3) Develop a yearly business plan and create goals and visions for yourself and your business. Review your plan quarterly and adjust as needed. Having your goals written out will serve as a map and will support you get to where you want to go in your business and your life.

You can download my 12-page [Pet Sitting and Dog Walking Goal Setting Workbook](http://www.sixfigurepetsittingacademy.com/resourcespetsitting.html) by clicking on the following link or typing it into your browser address bar.

Pet Sitting and Dog Walking Goal Setting Workbook

<http://www.sixfigurepetsittingacademy.com/resourcespetsitting.html>

4) Budget your time realistically and focus on income-producing activities. Get clear on how many minutes it takes to drive to your dog walking/pet sitting jobs. This will help you get clarity about how many clients you can realistically take in a given day and how much time you are spending driving, which is not an income-producing activity!

Setting a timer for those business tasks that you are resistant to and that you find challenging can help keep you on track. Focus your daily actions on income-producing activities such as marketing and answering the business phone. Incorporating income-producing activities into your daily schedule will cause your profits to rise!

5) Let go of difficult-to-work-with clients and staff members. Difficult staff and clients can eat up as much as 95% of our energy, leaving only 5% left for the majority of our clients and staff.

If you notice your thoughts or energy consumed by a particular client or staff member then it might be time to let that challenging person go. Be willing to ask for and receive help so that you are not making this decision on your own. Discuss your challenging staff member or client situation with someone whose opinion you value and trust. If you get clarity that it's better for you and your difficult client or staff member to part ways, be willing to let them go sooner rather than later. Remember: nature abhors a vacuum and taking the action of letting a challenging person go will often open the door for new (wonderful) clients and staff members to come to you!

Kristin Morrison is a pet sitting business owner and founder of Six-Figure Pet Sitting Academy™. Kristin is a firm believer in working smarter (not harder) and has created a multiple six-figure pet sitting business while working three days a week. She coaches pet sitting business owners on the fine art of creating a successful pet sitting business while maintaining a fun and successful life. You can email Kristin at: Success@SixFigurePetSittingAcademy.com

