

Documentation for Ryan's In/Out Board v3.0

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Latest version of Ryan's In/Out board, along with support forums etc. can be found at <http://www.equitasit.co.uk/ryansiob>

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1. Introduction

Ryan's In/Out Board (RyansIOB) is a PERL driven in/out board for small-medium size organisations that needs staff to be aware of other staff whereabouts. It will work for larger organisations but it may slow with larger numbers of staff.

Staff are able to quickly change their status by either clicking on their name or calling the main script with a "name" parameter. Comments can be added to describe where they are. Standard comments are provided (Lunch, Leave etc.) but can be added to/replaced by any comment the user wishes. With the aid of a cron job it will also clear all staff as OUT every night, without removing any comments they have entered. Its displays the date/time the last change was made to each persons status.

Although the interface is clear and simple,users can also search for the status of any staff member. The generated page can be automatically refreshed at your chosen interval and status colours are defined by you.

It also displays staff internal phone numbers and you can use your own header and footer files.

Finally, staff can be grouped into teams or departments. The resulting In/Out board can then be filtered by users to display just one team/department.

2. Features - at a glance

- No database required - text files driven
- Takes minutes to setup
- Simple and familiar web interface - no client software required beyond a web browser
- Cross-platform - runs on host of servers and clients
- Fully customisable
- One-click status change - even from desktop
- Automatically checks people out overnight¹
- Standard (customisable) and user added comments can be added to user status.
- Search feature
- Fully customisable look and feel through config files - no HTML/CSS experience required.
- Handles cross timezone situations where server is in different timezone to clients.

3. New features (version 3.0)

- The binary "in/out" statuses have been replaced with a range of statuses.
- Default comments have been moved into the new status lists. Custom comments are still permitted
- Status can now be specified as URL parameters calling the script (see 10.2 below)
- The Status field is now a drop down which changes your status on select (javascript submit can be disabled)
- \$tablerow_fontfamily config option added
- Optional setting to enable autodisplay of only a user's department if a username is displayed (e.g. they change their status)

4. Updating from previous versions

4.1 Updating from < v3.0

You cannot use your old ryansiob_config.pl file for v3 and above. There are a number of new options which need to be present. In particular the old "@reasons" (default comments) list has been replaced by the new status lists. This means that selecting default comments is no longer possible as they are now statuses instead.

If you have changed your @reasons array in the config file you will need to divide it into those comments which indicate "in" and those which indicate "out". Add them to the new @instatuses and @outstatuses arrays in the config file accordingly.

¹ Use of separate script (provided) within scheduled task/cron job required.

4.2 Updating from < v2.2

If you are updating from v2.1.5 or lower then you will need to be aware of the new departments feature. Users can now be grouped into departments and teams and you can filter the board to show only the one the user chooses.

If you have all your staff/users in a single team then it's probably best to disable the department feature. To do this set the config option `$ryansiob::use_dept` to be 0 (zero).

If you are going to use departments there are a couple of things you need to change.

1. Change your datafile to have a number at the end of each row

```
alison|Alison|OUT|04 May / 17:34| - |Tuesday
```

must become

```
alison|Alison|OUT|04 May / 17:34| - |Tuesday|1
```

where the 1 is her department number.

2. Set the department names in the config file.

Edit `$ryansiob::dept_names` to equal your list, remembering to keep "Every" as the first entry (this is team zero). In addition to the departments feature the code has been written to be compatible with "use strict;". This means several of the global variables have changed. If you have tweaked your code at all – make sure your changes reflect the new names or you'll get a failed script.

See `ryansiob.config.pl` for details of variable names.

5. Legal/Licence

Ryan's In/Out Board is copyright (c) 2001-2010 Ryan P. Cartwright

Ryan's In/Out Board is released under the terms of the "GNU Public License" which can be found at <http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html>

You should have received a copy of the full licence (`licence.txt`) with Ryan's In/Out Board, if not you can download it from the address given above.

Ryan's In/Out Board is provided "as is" and without any express or implied warranties, including, without limitation, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. It was written to fulfil a need at my then employer but I have attempted to make it usable by other organisations.

Note that this software was released as Whosin until release 2.0. Apparently "Whos-in" is a similar product released and trademarked by Hudsoft in Australia (I'm in the UK) and the owner has requested that I "remove all references to [his] product from [my] web site, and any other sources".

Personally I feel that "Whos-in" is his trademark and not "Whosin" but quite frankly I cannot be bothered to argue so from v2.0 the name changed to "Ryan's In/Out Board" or RyansIOB for short.

6. Requirements

Ryan's In/Out Board (RyansIOB) uses a simple text file as a database and thus requires nothing beyond the latest PERL and a web server capable of serving PERL cgi scripts. You will need:-

- A web server (i.e. Apache, IIS)
- PERL5 or above
- The Date::EzDate module for PERL

RyansIOB has been tested on Apache 1.3 and 2.0 running SuSE Linux (7.0 – 9.0), Debian (Sarge up to Squeeze). I have no reason to believe it won't work on any GNU/Linux system. It has also been tested on Apache on Windows XP and 98, IIS on Windows XP and 2003, all running Active State's Activeperl.

7. Resources

Where to find the programs mentioned above, many Linux distributions have packages for most of these. Check with your distribution packages first.

Apache

<http://httpd.apache.org> - Linux and Windows versions

IIS

Microsoft's web server is usually supplied with "professional" versions of Windows, but you may have to install it. See Windows Installation later in this document.

Perl

- Linux/Unix : <http://www.perl.org>
- Windows: <http://www.activestate.com/Products/ActivePerl/>

Date-EzDate

This is a Perl module that is not usually supplied with PERL.

- Linux/Unix (from CPAN) : <http://search.cpan.org/~miko/Date-EzDate/>
- Windows Activestate version : <http://www.activestate.com/activeperl/> .

8. Installation - Linux/Unix

Note: Ensure that you have a web server, Perl and the Date-EzDate module installed prior to following these steps. Apache and Perl are both usually available as packages for Linux Distributions. The Date-EzDate module can be downloaded from CPAN (see above). Unpack it and install it according to it's README.

8.1. Copy the following files onto your webserver

These should be somewhere below your web servers cgi directory, which should be read/executable by web users. (i.e.:/usr/local/apache/cgi-bin/ryansiob/)

- ryansiob.pl
- ryansiob.config.pl
- ryansiob.search.pl

8.2. Copy the following files into a separate directory on your server but not accessible by web users. (i.e.: /usr/local/ryansiob/)

- datafile
- allout.pl
- ryansiobdoc.txt

datafile needs to be read/writeable by your web user (i.e. www-data). allout.pl needs to be executable by the user who will run any cron job that calls it.

8.3 Copy envelope.gif to a directory under your normal web pages (i.e. /usr/local/apache/htdocs/images). Ensure envelope.gif has readable permission for your web user.

8.4. Edit ryansiob.config.pl according to your needs. This is explained in the comments contained within the file.

8.4a. Pay attention to the department settings. If you do not want to use departments (e.g. all your staff are in one team) then set \$ryansiob::use_depts to equal 0 (zero)

8.5. Edit the config line at the top of ryansiob.pl,ryansiob.search.pl and allout.pl. Also ensure the first line of ALL scripts (*.pl) points to your perl binary. (i.e. #!/usr/bin/perl). You can usually discover this by typing "which perl" into a shell.

8.6. Edit datafile to match your staff list. This is a plain text file with a single line for each staff member. Each line should read:

email_username|name|status|date/time|comments|phone|return_date|dept

i.e.: jsmith|john|OUT|||654||1

8.7. In it's simplest starting form each line need include only the email username and name. From v2.3 RyansIOB supports multiple domains for email. If the email entry contains a '@' then RyansIOB assumes this to be a full e-mail address. If it does not the RyansIOB will append the contents of the \$maildomain config setting.

```
jsmith|John|OUT|||654||
```

will be written to the browser with the email address:

```
jsmith@yourdoamin.com
```

whereas

```
jsmith@otherdomain.org|John|OUT|||654||
```

will be written to the browser with the email address:

```
jsmith@otherdomain.org
```

User's names should contain underscores instead of spaces...

```
jsmith|John Smith (Head Office)|OUT|||654||1 is invalid
```

```
jsmith|John_Smith_(Head_Office)|OUT|||654||1 is valid
```

It doesn't matter what order you enter the rows in - they will be sorted by the script before displaying. That way when you add new staff you can just add them to the end of the file and they'll be placed in the correct location in the lists when the script is run.

8.8. Take particular care to ensure that the email username field is there. Even if you are not using e-mail links you should ensure that there is a pipe (|) before each users name. i.e:

```
|user1|OUT|||phone|
```

```
|user2|OUT|||phone|
```

8.9. If you want Ryan's In/Out Board to check everyone out at night you need to set up a cron job for a user who can execute allout.pl. For example, on Linux add a line in your daily cron file like this:

```
0 0 * * * /usr/local/ryansiob/allout.pl >/dev/null 2>/dev/null
```

9. Installation - Windows XP/2003

9.1. Download and install Activeperl as shown above. Once installed you will probably need to reboot so the environmental variable to the perl binary is active.

9.2. Once you have rebooted. Download and unzip the EzDate plug-in to a temp folder. Open a command shell and navigate to the folder.

9.2.1 Run "ppm install Date-EzDate.ppd". It takes a little while, so wait until you see the "installation successful" text in the command shell.

9.3. Install Apache or IIS if you haven't already got a web server installed. If this just a local (peer to peer) network it may be easier install Apache but the choice is yours.

9.4. Extract the ryansiob zip file to a temp folder and copy the following files to a folder that is under within your web facing cgi-bin. (i.e. c:\web_pages\cgi-bin\ryansiob)

- ryansiob.pl
- ryansiob.config.pl
- ryansiob.search.pl

Add permissions for IUSR account to have read access. Copy envelope.gif into the usual images folder for your website.

9.5. Copy "datafile" to a separate folder, outside of your web facing path (i.e. c:\data\ryansiob\) and give IUSR write access to the folder.

9.6. Copy the remaining files to a folder of your choice but not one under your web-facing path (i.e. C:\ryansiob\).

9.7. Edit ryansiob.config.pl according to your requirements. This is explained in the comments contained within the file. You will have to use the format "C:/path_to/datafile" for both XP and 2003. "C:\path_to\datafile" will NOT work! Also ensure that the top line of each script (*.pl) points to your perl executable. This is likely to be c:\perl\perl.exe or similar. Leave the #! in place.

9.7a. NEW in v2.2 - pay attention to the department settings. If you do not want to use departments (e.g. all your staff are in one team) then set \$ryansiob::use_depts to equal 0 (zero)

9.8 IIS Users ONLY:

9.8.1. Open IIS Management Console. Right click on default website and select "New" then "Virtual directory". Follow the on screen instructions and point the virtual directory to the folder containing ryansiob.pl, ryansiob.config.pl and ryansiob.search.pl.

9.8.2. Right click on the new directory and select properties. Click on Configuration. In the Mappings tab add C:\Perl\bin\perl.exe and the extension ".pl" . Using XP all should now

be working fine. For Windows server 2003 follow step 9.9.

9.9 Windows 2003 Server ONLY:

9.9.1. Open IIS Management Console. Browse "Web Service Extensions". On the left side of the main frame click "Add a new Web service extension". Add "Perl script" and under the "Required Files" section - C:\Perl\bin\perl.exe . Set Perl Script status to allowed.

After completing the above everything should now work. If not, it is more than likely permissions on your IIS server. Make sure you have allowed "scripts and executables" and directory security is anonymous.

10. Using Ryan's in/out board

- The ryansiob.pl script can be called from any client browser that can see the web server and has the correct permissions. e.g. <http://www.intranet.foo.com/cgi-bin/ryansiob.pl>
- Users can also call the script with a name parameter to quickly change their status. e.g. <http://www.intranet.foo.com/cgi-bin/ryansiob.pl?name=john> . In many organisations, users have a shortcut on their desktop to this URL enabling them to check in/out in a single (well double) click to open the page. *Statuses can be specified in the URL – see 10.2 below*
- The search script can be called in the same way as the main script. e.g. <http://www.intranet.foo.com/cgi-bin/ryansiob.search.pl> or <http://www.intranet.foo.com/cgi-bin/ryansiob.search.pl?name=john>
- The search script is case insensitive and automatically includes wildcards so searching for "jo" will bring "John" and "joan" as well as "Jo"
- Header files should not contain closing BODY, HEAD, TITLE or HTML tags - see sample header file at the project website for details.
- To sort the board by a field the user can simply click the field title. To reverse sort it you can click it again. You can set the default sort field (usually name) in the config file.

10.1 Using multiple statuses:

From v3.0 you can have a range of statuses. They are split (in the config) file into "ins" and "outs". All statuses are listed (sorted as defined in the config file) in a drop down box and coloured accordingly.

The previous option of default comments has been merged into these lists so that selecting one of the old "default comments" will change your status as well.

By default, selecting one of these options will change your status to that and mark you in or out accordingly.

If you click on one of the other status change fields (as defined in the config file) your status will be changed to "IN" or "OUT" depending on whether your current status is in the "in" or "out" list. So if your status is "Lunch" and that is an "out" status, clicking your name will set your status to IN.

Calling the script with a username will do the same behaviour as clicking one of the status change fields.

10.2 Specifying status in the URL

You can now give a status parameter when calling the script in a browser. If the status specified is in one of the defined status lists then your status will be changed accordingly. Otherwise the status parameter is ignored and your status is switched to IN or OUT accordingly.

e.g. <http://www.foo.com/cgi-bin/ryansiob/ryansiob.pl?name=Fred&status=Lunch>

Watch out for spaces in the status in your desktop shortcuts. Try substituting them with %20 instead.

11. Troubleshooting

The scripts return errors where the datafile cannot be opened etc. If you can't get it to display in your browser try running it from a command line server terminal.

If you want to ask me a question I prefer the sourceforge forums as it aids future users.

Here's a list of FAQ's from the sourceforge forum
(https://sourceforge.net/forum/forum.php?forum_id=407788)

Check there for more recent entries.

Q: When I try to access ryansiob.pl through a browser I get an Apache/Webserver error.

This is most likely a permissions problem. Check that the Apache user can read and execute the various perl scripts and that they can read/write the datafile and the directory containing it.

Q: I can view the list of users okay but when I click on the name of someone, nothing happens.

Again, check permissions. Ensure that the Apache user can write to the datafile. Also ensure you have no spaces in the username column for the datafile... i.e.

```
email1|user name1|OUT| || | is invalid
```

```
email1|user_name1|OUT| || | is valid
```

Q: My server is in a different timezone to my users and the date/time is showing 3 hours behind them.

Check ryansiob.config.pl for the clientzone variable and set it accordingly.

Q: I am getting "Premature end of script headers" from my browser / web server logs?

Check the first line of each .pl file. This should point to the location of your perl binary. You can use "which perl" to find out what this is on your server or ask your server admin.

Q: Can I change the default comments in the drop down box/ change the colours for the status?

Many things about ryansiob can be changed in the config script (ryansiob.config.pl). Read the comments in there to see what each variable does.

Q: Can I customise the output file so it includes my logo etc.?

You can, that's the idea of open source. You may not have to though. You can set a site header and footer file in the config script. A sample header file is listed in the sample files section at sourceforge. Ensure that the header/footer files only have opening or closing BODY and HTML tags respectively.

Q. Can my users have email addresses on different domains?

Yes. Set the \$maildomain config setting to be the most common domain you use and then enter the full email address for any user on a different domain in the datafile. e.g.

```
$maildomain = "yourdomain.com";  
jsmith|John|OUT|  
jane@otherdomain.org|Jane|OUT|
```

12. History

V3.0	Feb 2010	Status changed from binary to multiple options. Default comments removed. Status can be specified in URL. Font family added to tablerow. Optional setting to show only user's department by default.
v2.3	Jan 2008	E-mail links now supports multiple domains. Fixed bug with Javascript refresh section if user status is changed.
V2.2	May 2007	Departments added. Sorting by fields added. Security checks added. Code tidied - now "use strict;" works!
V2.1.5	Aug 2006	Minor Update - the distributed allout.pl script had corrupted characters at the end - fixed now.
V2.1.4	Jul 2006	Minor Update - config script bugfix - autorefresh meta tag was not always being printed
v2.1.3	Jun 2006	Minor Update - search script bugfix - all entries returned in place of results.
V2.1.2	Mar 2006	Minor update - main script prints datafile read/write errors to web browser. HTTP headers tidied up. datafile entries now sorted alphabetically in the script.
V2.1.1	Nov 2005	Minor update - couple of typo's caused errors when changing status - fixed now.
V2.1	Nov 2005	Windows/IIS Installation notes added (thanks to Steve Collett for this). Added configurable items for HTML Output HTML now fully W3C compliant. Rewrote main and search scripts - common routines now called from config file. Layout order now configurable
v2.0-5	Oct 2004	ryansiob.search.pl bug fix - failed to return any web content if it failed to find a match. Minor bug fix in ryansiob.pl - displaying personalised header file
v2.0-4	Oct 2004	ryansiob.search.pl rewritten to tidy code and fix bugs
v2.0-3	Oct 2004	Files in archive were inadvertently stored in DOS format - now in UNIX format. Minor bug fix for use of variable in void context. Envelope.gif now included in archive
v2.0-2	Sep 2004	Minor bug fix - returns not being displayed
v2.0-1	Sep 2004	Minor fixes to date functions
v2.0	Sep 2004	Renamed "Ryan's In/Out Board" from Whosin (legal reasons) Client timezone option
v1.0	Apr 2003	Full release version
v0.3	Aug 2002	HTML output tidied up - showing header is now optional
v0.2	Aug 2001	Initial release version
v0.1	Jul 2001	Internal test version for my then employer

