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To: All SERF users
CC:
Topic: Guide for booking resources of the Spatial Ecology Research Facility (SERF)

Abstract

The Spatial Ecology Research Facility was set up in 2006 to enhance the ability of Otago ecologists, including staff and postgraduate students, to address research questions with a spatial dimension. SERF is physically located at the School of Surveying and takes the form of an office in which networked computers and specialized software enable the integration and analysis of spatial information derived from remote sensing imagery, aerial photographs, GPS and other geo-referenced field data.

In order to improve the management usage efficiency of the SERF resources, a shared calendar has been implemented where users can easily book for SERF resources (e.g. computer, specialized software, GPS...) from any computer connected to the internet. This documentation aims at guiding SERF users to access and take advantage of the booking system.

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1 Introduction

The SERF booking system is set up as a Google™Calendar (<https://www.google.com/calendar>). This solution allows to share calendar(s) online between several users. Each resources is associated with a specific calendar managed through an administrative account (not accessible by users). Each resource calendar is shared with a public *SERF users* account from which booking can be done. Upon request to the administrator, all resource calendars can eventually be shared with individual users who want to manage booking from their own Google™Calendar account.

2 How to proceed?

2.1 Logging in

Users who do not own a Google™Calendar account or were not granted sharing of SERF resource calendars can access the public *SERF users* Google™Calendar account (<https://www.google.com/calendar>) in an internet browser (Figure 1). Logging into the public *SERF user* account can be done using:

- Email: `serf_users@hotmail.com`
- Password: `serf_user` (note that *user* is singular in the password).
This **PASSWORD SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED** by any user. If so, it will be reset by the administrator who also reserves the right to change it at any time and inform users afterward.

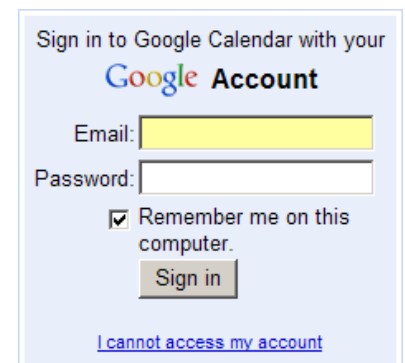


Figure 1 Google™Calendar login

2.2 Booking a resource

Each resource calendar is not editable by users in itself. It means that users cannot create an *event* (an other name for a booking) straight into the resource calendar they wish to book. In fact, booking a resource requires the user to:

1. *create an event* into the *SERF user* Calendar.
2. *invite* the adequate resource calendar.
3. *wait* until successful acceptance of the invitation.

Resource calendars are set up to accept automatically all invitations for any time frame for which the resource is not already booked, otherwise the invitation will be declined and the resource will not be booked.

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2.2.1 Creating an event

The easy way to create an event is to click and drag the mouse through the required time frame of the booking. When releasing the mouse the user must fill the “**What**” field with his name as illustrated in Figure 2(a) and click “*edit event details* »”. Alternatively, an event can also be created by clicking the “*Create Event*” link in the upper left corner of the window. In this case, the user will go straight to the page where all the details of an event can be set [Figure 2(b)] and fill the time frame manually.

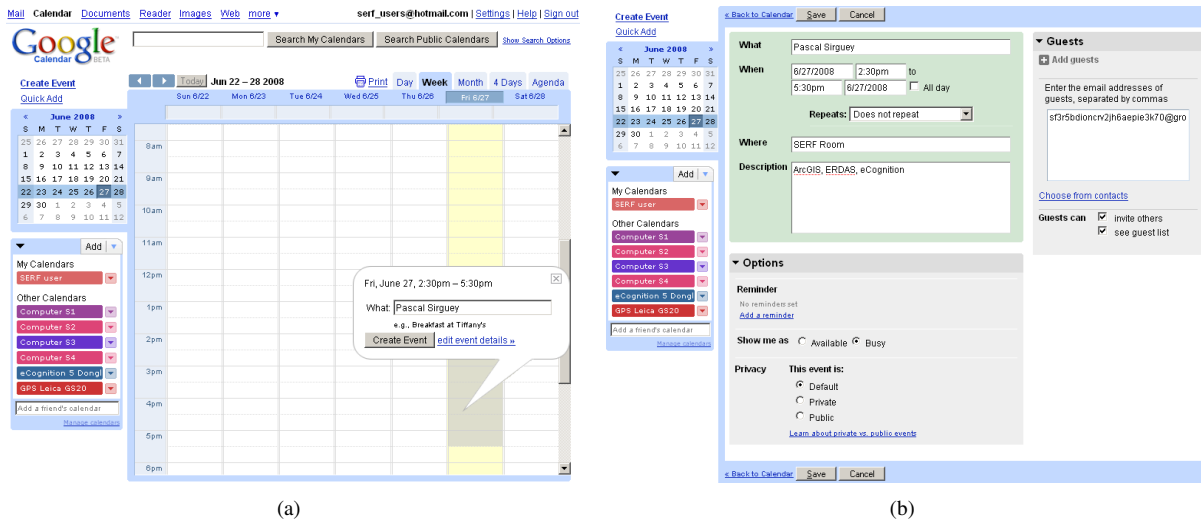


Figure 2 (a) General page of the calendar where user can create an event by dragging the mouse over the time frame required. (b) Event details panel to be filled up with user name, software used and the resource calendar ID to be booked.

2.2.2 Filling appropriate information

Users are asked to briefly document their booking by indicating their name and the software(s) planned to be used. The “**Where**” field must be filled up in the case of resource(s) taken out of the SERF room (e.g., GPS). About the options, all reminder should be removed. Pop-up reminders are useless since users are not expected to stay logged in longer than the time needed to make the booking and later pop-ups will annoy further users. E-mail reminders are useless since users will not be able to access the `serf_users@hotmail.com` account to read it.

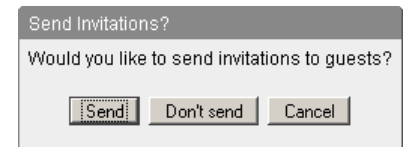


Figure 3 Sending the invitation after saving the event.

2.2.3 Inviting a resource

After all information have been filled up, the user may invite the resource he wishes to book. In the “**Guests**” panel [Figure 2(b), upper right] the user must indicate the *Calendar ID*(s) of the resource(s) to be booked. The list of all *Calendar ID* is provided in Table 1. These IDs are also accessible by clicking the “*Manage calendars*” link below the calendar list (Figure 6). Note that you can book at the same time for a computer and a software requiring a dongle (e.g., eCognition) by inviting both *Calendar IDs* at the same time.

2.2.4 Saving the booking

Save the *event* to make the booking and **do send** the invitations to guests (Figure 3). As long as the resource is available, the invitation should be accepted almost instantaneously. If so, a new item appears in the calendar with the resource’s color confirming successful booking (Figure 4).

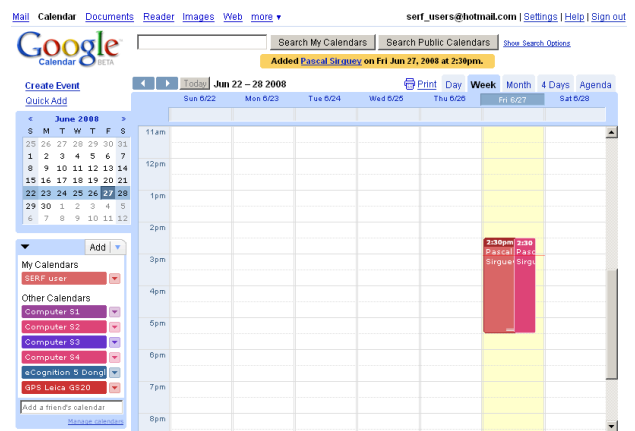


Figure 4 Confirmed booking.

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2.2.5 Change or delete a booking

Users can easily change or delete a booking. Changes can be done by dragging or editing the *event* time frame in the “*event details panel*” [Figure 2(a)]. When a booking is modified or deleted, a notification must be sent to the resource to update or cancel the booking (Figure 5). Users can update their booking if they underestimated the time frame originally but they must do so in advance to the new booking since resources will not accept booking *a posteriori*.

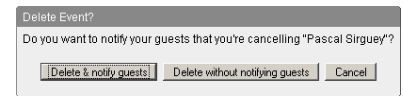


Figure 5 Notification of a change to the resource.

3 Resources

Table 1 List of resources and Google™ Calendar ID

Name of resource	Type	Google™ Calendar ID
S1	Computer	sf3r5bdioncrv2jh6aepie3k70@group.calendar.google.com
S2	Computer	jsqipo4n9fet1tdmrio3od155g@group.calendar.google.com
S3	Computer	flhai9o3i06qq2qd1sb4ljjsi0@group.calendar.google.com
S4	Computer	88fhktqbql86rbfk3vu54fd08g@group.calendar.google.com
eCognition 5 Dongle	Software	enrdiephiqf9msb4r7js0j62b8@group.calendar.google.com
GPS Leica GS20	Harware	v4mtr5t9lloe6au81kvlbaqeio@group.calendar.google.com
PCI Geomatica Dongle	Software	dr4vpeugv6ai5eqvogqmb3585c@group.calendar.google.com

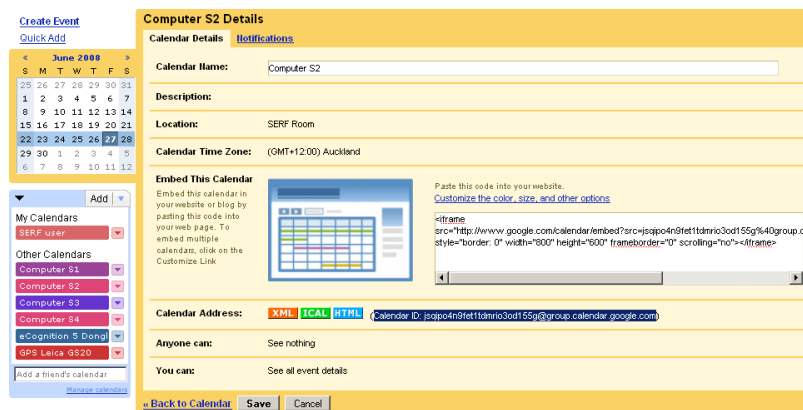


Figure 6 Obtaining Calendar ID.

4 Good practice

It is possible to provide comments about the booking by editing its details afterward. It is recommended to comment issues that may have arisen during a booked session such as problem with materials and subsequently notify the administrator.

It is assumed that the booking system put in place is simple and flexible enough to enable an efficient use and monitoring of the resources by all users. It is the responsibility of the users to take care of booking the resources they need appropriately. *Over-booking* (i.e., booking a resource but not using it) and *under-booking* (i.e., using a resource for which no booking has been done) will not be tolerated.

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