

Functional Differences Between SIMS/4D and SIMS/.NET

Introduction

This document is intended to provide a brief description of the principal functional differences between the SIMS/4D and new SIMS/.NET versions.

Applicable to All Modules

Date Specification

SIMS/4D allowed users to enter dates using slashes, hyphens, periods, commas, spaces, etc. between the mm/dd/yy values and the software would automatically reformat the date to appear with slashes and a 4-digit year. SIMS/.NET does not support spaces, but does support all of the other delimiters. SIMS/.NET also provides a calendar that can be used to select a date. Also, in SIMS/4D null dates were identified as 00/00/0000 while in SIMS/.NET null dates are signified by not having the date check box checked, which caused the displayed date to be grayed-out.

Tabbing into Pick-Lists

When tabbing between fields in SIMS/4D, when a pick-list was encountered, that list would drop down, thereby awaiting for a selection to be made. In SIMS/.NET, when tabbing between fields and a pick-list is encountered, the picker button is highlighted, but the list isn't automatically displayed. To display the pick-list contents, the user must click on the picker button.

Saving of Related Tables Data

In SIMS/4D, when adding or modifying related table information such as Personnel -> Special Accesses the changes were retained, even though the "Cancel" button was selected for the overall record. In SIMS/.NET, changes to any portion of a record's information (related tables included) are only made if the "Save" button is selected, thereby saving all portions of the record and its related tables.

User Designed vs. Quick Reports

In SIMS/4D, selecting User Designed from the Reports menu invoked the Quick Report Editor. In SIMS/.NET, selecting Quick Report from the Reports menu invokes the Quick Report Editor.

Quick Report Editor – Field Selection Techniques

When using the Quick Report Editor in SIMS/4D, the user would drag-and-drop (holding down the left mouse button, after having selected a field) to create report layouts and sorting order. In SIMS/.NET's Quick Report Editor the user first selects the field to be added to the report layout and then clicks on the Add button, rather than dragging-and-dropping. Alternatively, the user can double click on a field selection to add that field to the report layout. Note that sort order can be specified on each of the fields placed on the report layout, by selecting None, Descending or Ascending from the pick-list of choices.

Quick Report Editor – Related Tables

When using the Quick Report Editor in SIMS/.NET, the Output List table for the selected module is the default. However, all related tables are also available for selection. When a related table is selected, a certain amount of information from the parent table is always displayed on the quick report, to assist the user in record identification.

Output List Navigation

In SIMS/4D, the user was allowed to scroll through the records displayed on the Output List. In SIMS/.NET, the user is provided with page up/down arrows on the Output List. Additionally, SIMS/.NET Output Lists also show the total number of records and a “Page x of y” position indicator, instead of a scroll bar indication of which subset of records are currently being displayed. Finally, a “Go to Page...” button has been placed on the Output List to allow the user to proceed directly to a certain page of records.

Output List Archived Record Indicator

In SIMS/4D, archived records were indicated by having an asterisk character precede the record display on the Output List. In SIMS/.NET, archived records are indicated in **red** type on the Output List.

Customized Output List Columns

In SIMS/4D, an Output List Customization Utility was provided to support the creation of customized Output Lists that were subsequently made available to all SIMS users, by typing a Ctrl-G sequence when the standard Output List was being displayed. Unfortunately, this customized display lacked the ability to then Add, Copy, Delete, or Query. In SIMS/.NET, a Customize Output List Columns button has been added directly on the Output Lists themselves, to support column display customization. Note that this customization only affects the current SIMS user and that full Add, Copy, Delete, and Query capabilities are still supported.

Querying Related Tables

In SIMS/4D, in order to be able to perform a query on field in a related table (e.g., vehicles in Personnel) a Query Related editor was invoked. In SIMS/.NET, the standard query editor is able to query or all tables and related tables. Additionally, an Advanced Quick Find tab has been added, to handle one-to-many types of queries. Additionally, user-defined custom queries can be created by a SQL Administrator and added to this tab. Contact SIMS Software for additional information of customizing the Advanced Quick Find tabs.

Uniqueness

In SIMS/4D several fields in a variety of modules were required to be populated and were also required to be unique, because the values of these fields were used as the linking keys to those records. Examples are Facility ID, Personnel ID, Container ID, etc. In SIMS/.NET these fields are no longer required to be populated or to be unique, since each record has an invisible key that is used for linking purposes. However, in SIMS/.NET the specification of uniqueness for any field can be specified by a SQL Administrator. Contact SIMS Software for additional information on making fields unique.

List Management

In SIMS/4D certain pick-lists could be modified from the pick list itself, during the value selection process. In SIMS/.NET all pick lists are managed via the List Management utility, which be accessed by a SIMS Manager or Submanager.

Personnel

In SIMS/4D personnel photos and signatures could be pasted into the respective Photo / Signature tab areas via the clipboard. In SIMS/.NET they are selected via Add Photo and Add Signature buttons, from previously saved files.

Classified Contracts Module

DD254 Relationship to Contract

In SIMS/4D the DD254 Form was available from the Forms module, while the associated contracts records were available from the Classified Contracts module. A button on the Output List screen of each of these modules supported the creation of the corresponding record (create a DD254 record from the Contracts module as well as create a contract record from the DD254 module). In SIMS/.NET, the DD254 is simply a tab on each Contract module record, where multiple DD254 records can be created for each contract record. Note that it is from this DD254 tab that the DD254 form can be printed, once the desired DD254 record has been selected.

Selection of the DD254 Form (DoD or NSA)

In SIMS/4D the selection of which DD254 Form (DoD or NSA) is to be used is made via the Utilities -> Printing Options, Miscellaneous tab. In SIMS/.NET the selection is made at the time of printing the form, with the default value being whatever was previously selected.

Forms Module

DD254

The DD254 form contained in the SIMS/4D Forms module has been moved to become a tab on each Classified Contract record in SIMS/.NET.

SCI Perm. Cert.

The SCI Perm. Cert. contained in the SIMS/4D Forms module has become its own module in SIMS/.NET called SCI Outgoing Requests.

AF 1292 and AF 1293

The AF 1292 and AF 1293 forms having to do with "Request and Authorization for Assignment and Relocation of Contractor Personnel", contained in SIMS/4D, have been eliminated in SIMS/.NET, since we could not locate any customers that are currently using those forms.

DoE Form 5634.2

The DoE Form 5634.2 form “Contract Security Classification Specification”, which is equivalent to the DD254 Form, contained in SIMS/4D, has been eliminated in SIMS/.NET, since we could not locate any customers that are currently using that form.

PAR Form

The Program Access Request (PAR) is currently the only form in the SIMS/.NET Forms module.

Documents

Transactions

In SIMS/4D document transactions were invoked by clicking on the Transactions button on the Output Screen. In SIMS/.NET document transactions are selected from the Transactions menu, when viewing the Output Screen. While the actual subsequent transaction screens are slightly different between the two versions of SIMS, functionality is essentially identical.

Audit Trail Display

In SIMS/4D the Audit Trail -> View screen layout is the same for all transactions. In SIMS/.NET dynamic tabs are used to display the transaction information in a format that is specific to each transaction.

Outgoing Requests

DoD and DoE Outgoing Requests

In SIMS/4D, both DoD and DoE Outgoing Requests were contained in the Outgoing Requests module. In SIMS/.NET, these are separate modules.

Incoming Visitors

Visit Authorizations and Visitors

In SIMS/4D, both Visit Authorizations and Visitors were contained in the Incoming Visitors module. In SIMS/.NET, these are currently separate modules.

Visitor Photos

In SIMS/4D visitor photos could be pasted into the Personal Info tab area via the clipboard. In SIMS/.NET they are selected via Add Photo button, from previously saved files.

Locks & Keys

In SIMS/4D, both Locks and Keys were contained in the Locks & Keys module. In SIMS/.NET, these are currently separate modules.

Utilities

System Customization

Information regarding e-mail and fax server parameters that were contained in the Utilities -> Internet Setup in SIMS/4D is now contained in Utilities -> System Customization -> System tab in SIMS/.NET. Additional new information regarding Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) authentication, client and server performance log have also been added to this area in SIMS/.NET.

A new Message Customization tab has been added where customized messages can be created and maintained for the Windows Login Message, Web Page Legend as well as the Windows Background Legend.

Regrouping of data onto tabs that better reflect the actual information content has also been done in SIMS/.NET.

Data Groups

SIMS/.NET supports the partitioning of data into Data Groups. This capability allows data restrictions to be placed on information so that only those users with access to a particular data group can view or modify those records.