

Lehnert Computer Services

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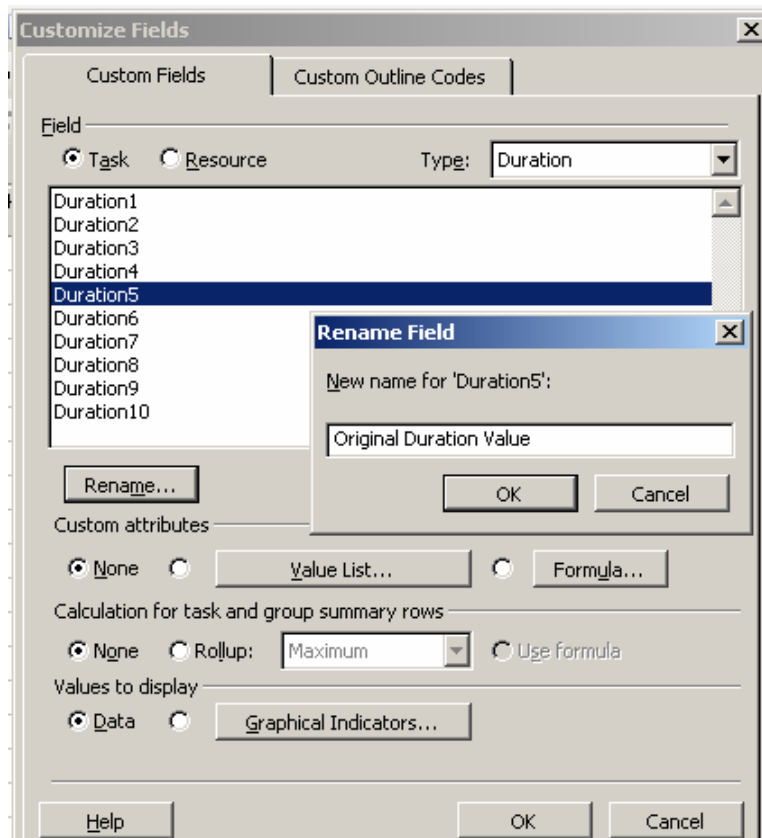
Article for MPA ezine – September, 2007
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Topic: What was the original duration for a task?

Question: During resource assignments, the duration seems to get recalculated. When I remove the resources, the duration doesn't go back to the original value and I don't remember what the value was. Any ideas of how to help with this situation?

Answer: During assignments of Fixed Work and Fixed Unit tasks, the duration is always calculated. If you entered a initial duration for either of these task types, after assigning resources, the duration is not the same value. Here is a little trick that could help restore your sanity. The system has 10 duration fields that could be used for various functions. Duration 1-3 is used for PERT calculations. For this example, I will use Duration 5.

1. Change the field name of Duration 5 to "Original Duration Value".
 - Tools → Customize → Fields
 - Make sure that the radio button to the left of "Task" is selected.
 - On the right for type select "Duration" in the pull down box.
 - Click on Duration5
 - Click on Rename
 - Enter "Original Duration Value" and click OK at the bottom of the form
 - Click OK at the bottom of the Customize Fields form to close



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2. In a table where the column "Duration" is located, right click on the column heading.
3. Click on Insert Column
4. Click on the pull down for "Field Name" and click the letter "O".
5. Scroll down until you find Original Duration Value and select it.
6. Click OK to close the form. The column should be visible in the table
7. Right Click on the title of the Duration column to select the entire column and select "Copy Cell" .
8. Click on the Original Duration Value column heading and click Paste.
9. You have now copied the Duration to a holding column. If the original duration changes and you need to be reminded of the value, you have it. The column can be cleared at any time the value will not change.

| Task Name | Original Duration Value | Duration | Start | Finish | Predecessors |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Product Development Te | 766 days | 766 days | 1/1/2004 | 12/7/2006 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initial New Product Screeni | 9 days | 9 days | 1/1/2004 | 1/13/2004 | |
| New product opportunity idk | 0 days | 0 days | 1/1/2004 | 1/1/2004 | |
| Describe new product idea | 2 days | 2 days | 1/1/2004 | 1/2/2004 | 3 |
| Gather information required | 6 days | 6 days | 1/5/2004 | 1/12/2004 | 4 |
| Convene opportunity of scr | 1 day | 1 day | 1/13/2004 | 1/13/2004 | 5 |
| Decision point - go/no-go to | 0 days | 0 days | 1/13/2004 | 1/13/2004 | 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Investigation Si | 53 days | 53 days | 1/14/2004 | 3/26/2004 | |
| Assign resources to prelimin | 1 day | 1 day | 1/14/2004 | 1/14/2004 | 7 |
| Develop preliminary investig | 5 days | 5 days | 1/15/2004 | 1/21/2004 | 9 |
| Evaluate the market | 10 days | 10 days | 1/15/2004 | 1/28/2004 | 9 |
| Analyze the competition | 5 days | 5 days | 1/15/2004 | 1/21/2004 | 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Feasibility Ana | 20 days | 20 days | 1/22/2004 | 2/18/2004 | |