

Prevelly, WA: Momentous Memorial Service strengthens links



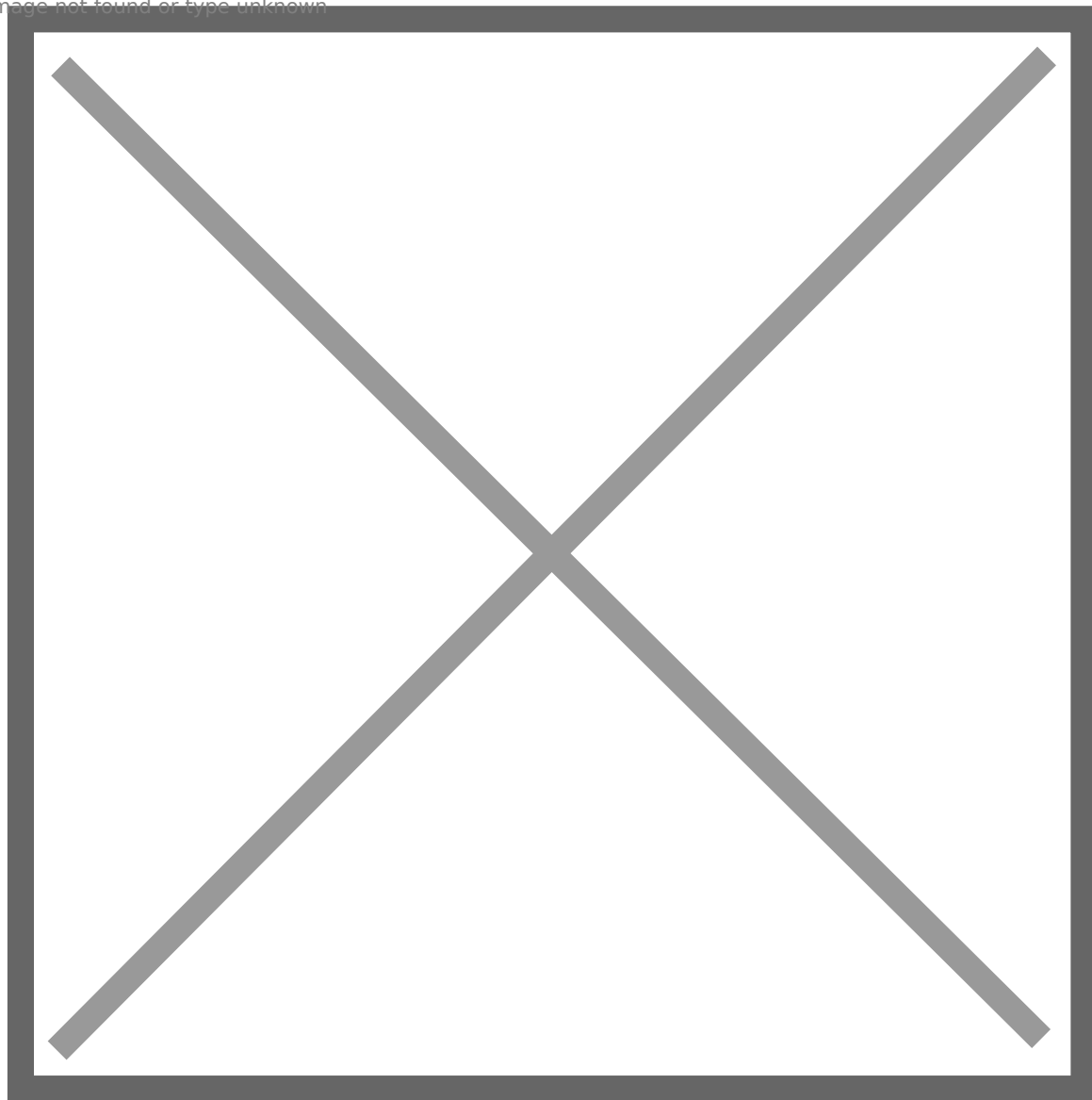
On Saturday 29 July, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, a very special and long-awaited for Memorial Service took place at the Chapel of St John the Theologian in Prevelly, Margaret River, located approximately 285kms south of Perth. For those who attended, it will also be remembered as a very moving service that paid tribute to the Allied service personnel, particularly the ANZACs, the people of Crete, and the founders of the Chapel in Prevelly, Mr Geoffrey Edwards and his wife, Beryl.

With preparations in the making for many months, the event began to take shape early in the day. A marquee, set up to protect the attendees from the inclement weather, was filled with chairs, which still did not accommodate the 120 plus people in attendance. Beautiful wreaths were brought by specially invited guests and military personnel, to be laid at the foot of the plaque on the Chapel wall during the service.

An air of anticipation began to mount, particularly as the father and son team played the bagpipes in full Scottish regalia at the foot of the masts for the Greek

and Australian Flags. Waltzing Matilda, The Australian National Anthem, Amazing Grace, followed by some traditional Scottish tunes, visibly stirred the audience, and set the scene for a very special event ahead!

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The Memorial Service commenced formally just after midday, with a Trisagion Service presided by His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea. In attendance also were His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloa from the Archdiocesan District of Brisbane, the Very Rev. Archimandrite Makarios Souris from the Holy Monastery of St John in Forrestfield, and Father John Sullivan, parish priest of the Church of St Nicholas in Bunbury, who also overlooks the Chapel of St John the Theologian in Prevelly. His Grace, on behalf of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, welcomed everyone warmly and gave an overview of the reason that the Memorial Service was being conducted.

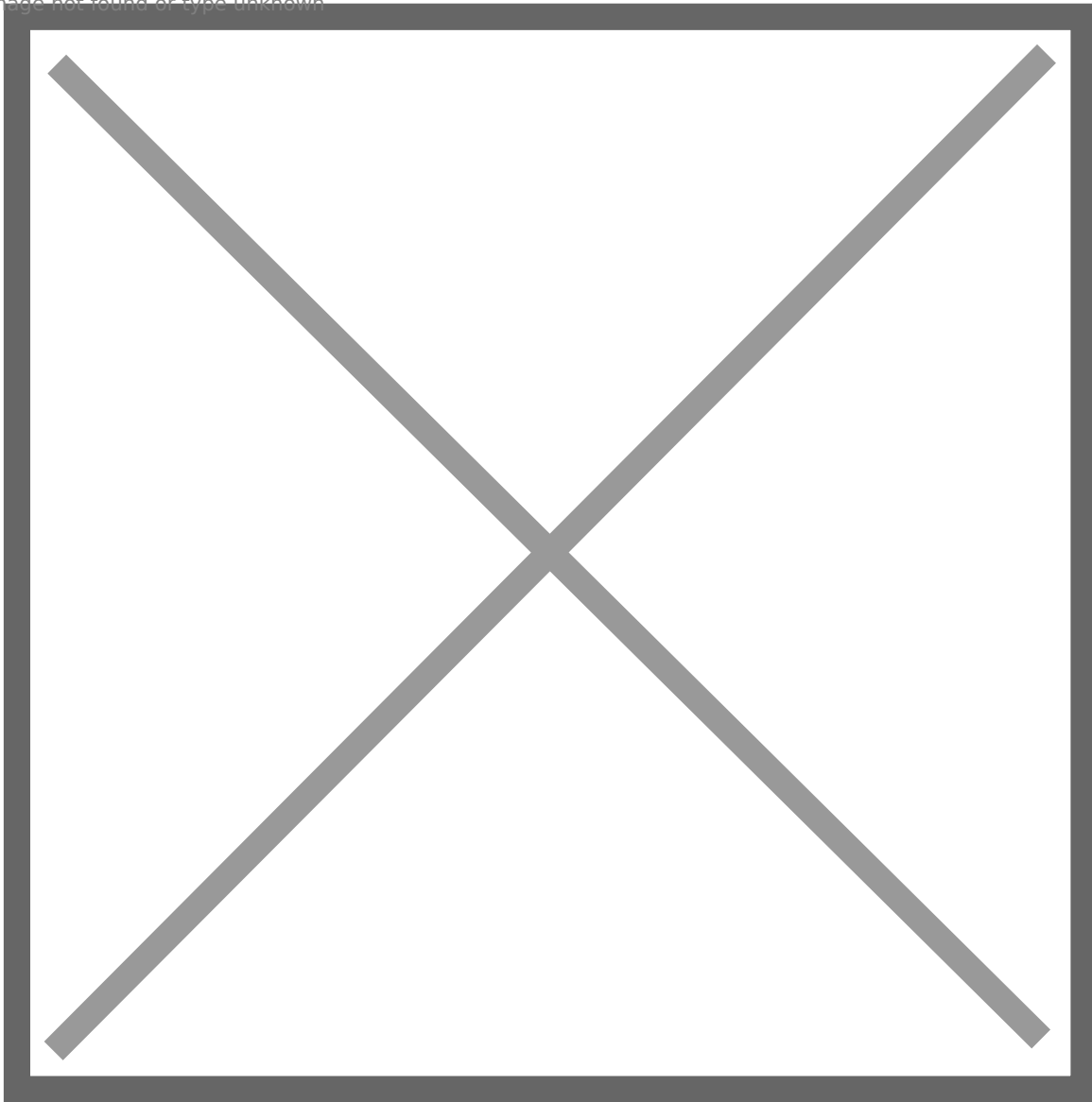
This year marks the 82nd anniversary of the WWII Battle of Crete. The anniversary

highlights the long association between the Greek Orthodox Monastery in Preveli, Crete, and the grateful Australian, New Zealand and British soldiers sheltered by Monks and assisted in their escape from German soldiers. Mr Geoffrey Edwards was one of those valiant Australian soldiers saved by the Monks and became a pioneer of development at Gnarabup in WA during the 1950's. He never forgot the courage and kindness of the Monks and showed his gratitude by gifting a parcel of land at Prevelly, Margaret River, to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia.

He, with the assistance of other modest veterans, built the Prevelly Chapel as a memorial. "The building of this historic Chapel by Geoff Edwards" as emphasised by His Grace Bishop Elpidios, "reminds us today of the importance of being grateful to our benefactors. Everyone has someone who has assisted them in life, and we must be grateful to these people. Of course, let us not forget that the Great Benefactor of all humanity is our Lord Jesus Christ."

Following on from the Trisagion Service, the audience was then taken on a journey of how the ANZACs were evacuated from Crete, told most vividly and in an emotionally charged manner by Mr Gil Goodwin. The audience was spell-bound by his heart-felt storytelling, which also recounted the efforts made by one soldier, Mr Stanley Lawrence Carroll, as relayed to Mr Goodwin by Carroll's son in recent times.

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The Honourable Consul of Greece in Perth, Mrs Georgia Karasiotou then offered her emotional address, which acknowledged the efforts being made, not only by Greeks, but also by non-Greeks in the local community in keeping the memory alive.

“The Spirit of Crete” was then sung by the Riversong Choir and The Red Dress, the lyrics of which gave an holistic account of the events that led to the evacuation and which lifted the hearts of the audience through the melodic symphony of the beautiful voices singing in unison.

The laying of wreaths began with His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea and the Consul of Greece. Wreaths were also laid by Major Gareth Hughes, representing Brigadier Brett Chaloner CSC, the Commander of the 13th Brigade, Mr Gordan Tenby, representing the Margaret River RSL, and Sergeant Deborah Thatcher.

With the Greek and Australian Flags now raised to full mast, Mr Apostolis Fotiadis sang The Greek National Anthem in a most stirring manner, followed by the equally as moving Australian National Anthem, sung by the Riversong Choir and The Red Dress.

His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea officially concluded the proceedings, emphasising the importance of 'freedom' for all peoples and stating that this Chapel stands as a reminder and symbol of what it means to be 'free'. His Grace acknowledged once again the special contribution made by Mr Geoff Edwards and his wife Beryl, and acknowledged the presence of their daughter, Marilyn, in the audience. He continued his acknowledgements with special thanks for the amazing work done by the volunteer workers, but especially to Father John Sullivan and Presbytera Anna, who have been key drivers of this event.

Gifts of appreciation were offered to key personnel by His Grace, who ended his remarks by inviting all peoples to the services conducted at the Chapel of St John the Theologian, reminding all that the heart of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios and all the clergy of our Holy Archdiocese is open to all Australians.

The organising committee prepared and invited everyone to a sumptuous and plentiful lunch in the Chapel Hall.

The Memorial Service will be held annually on the closest date to 28 July.







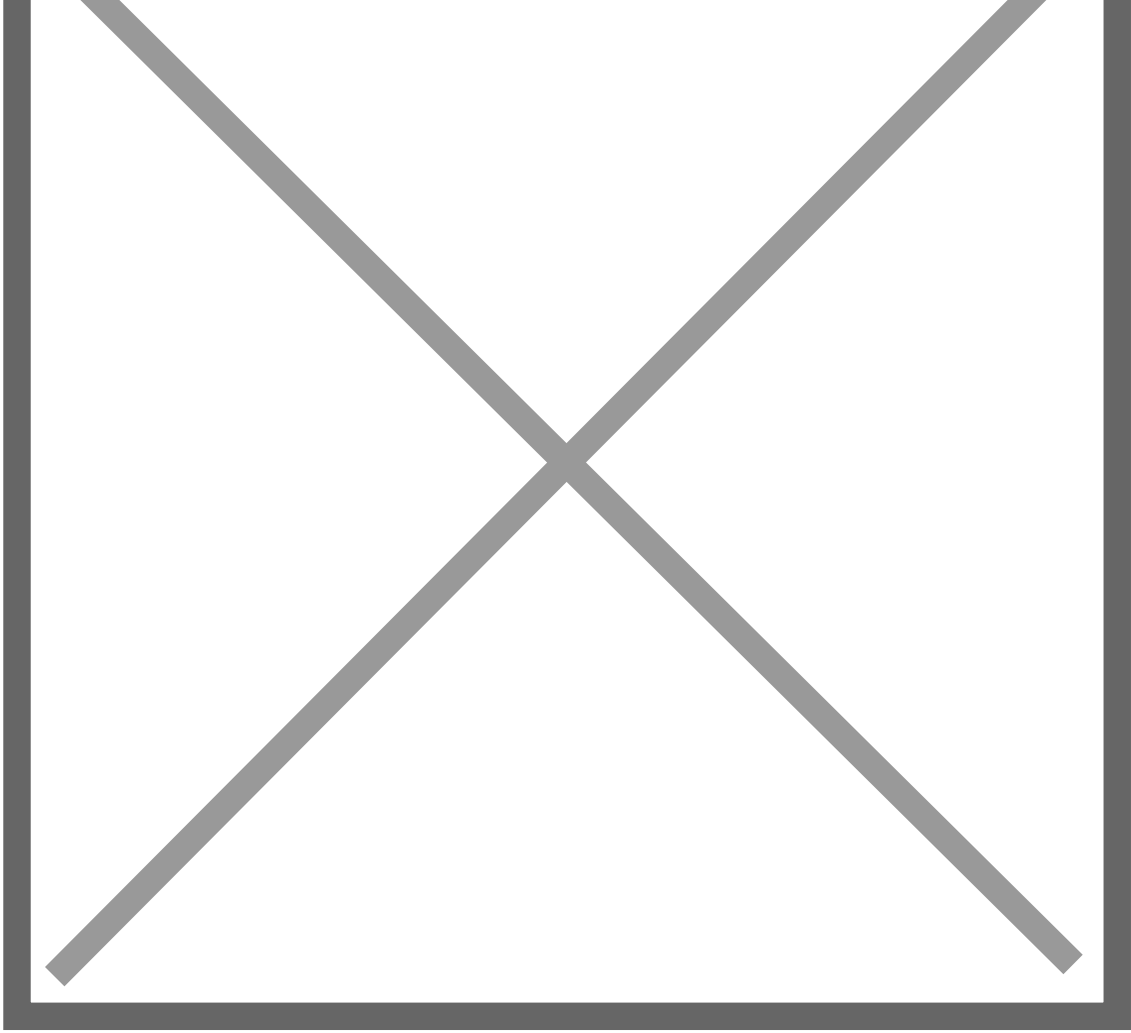




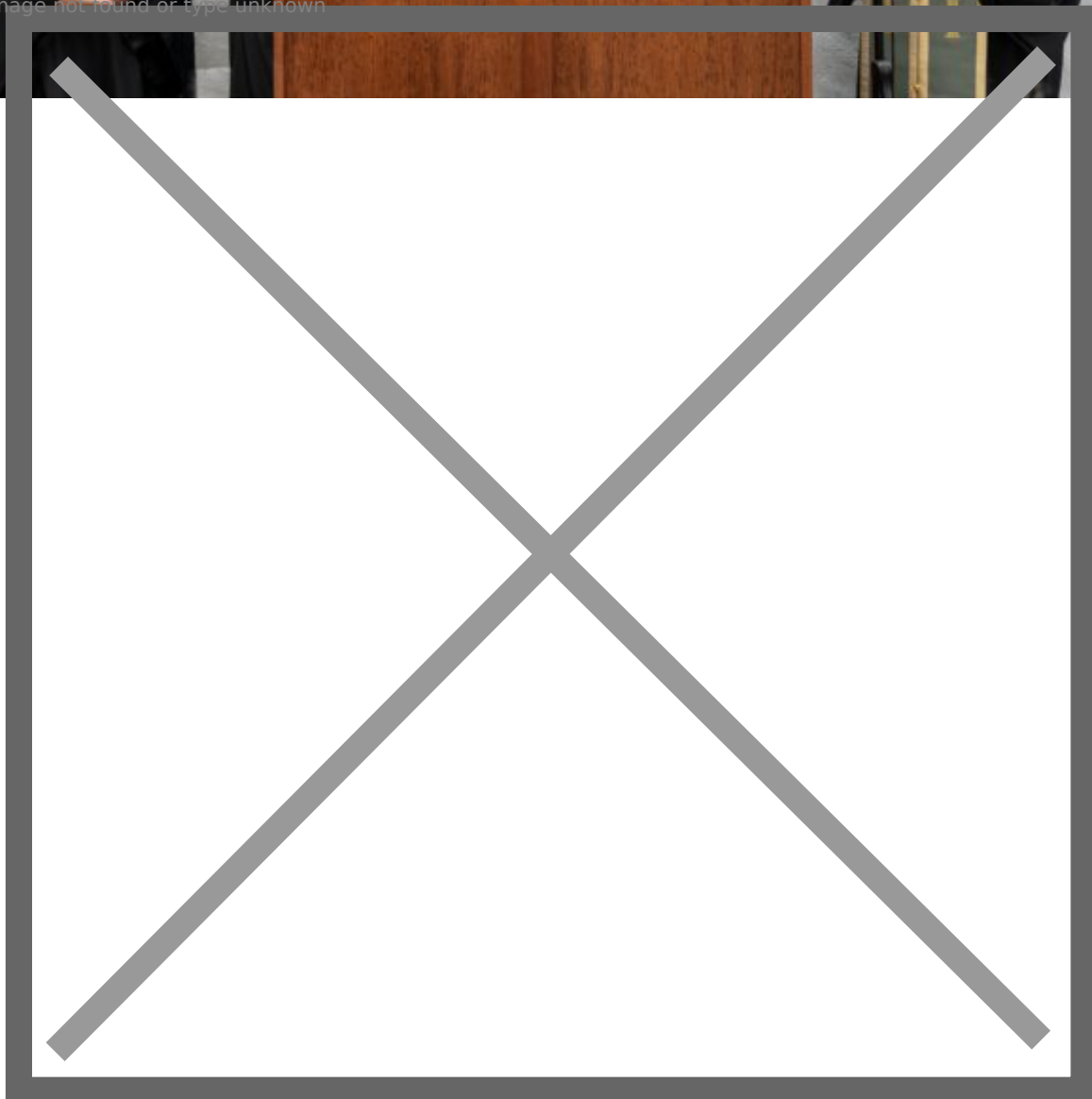




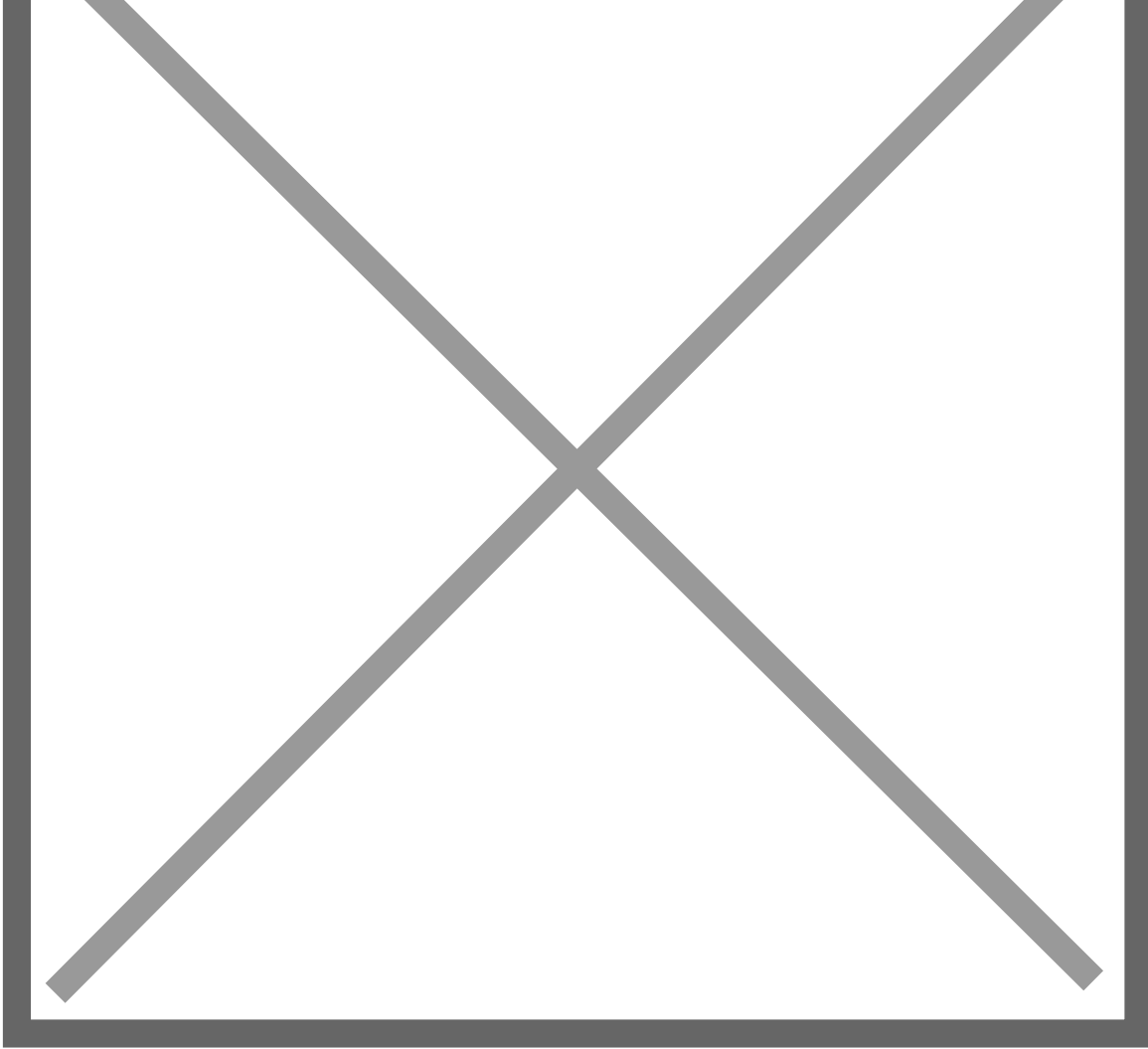


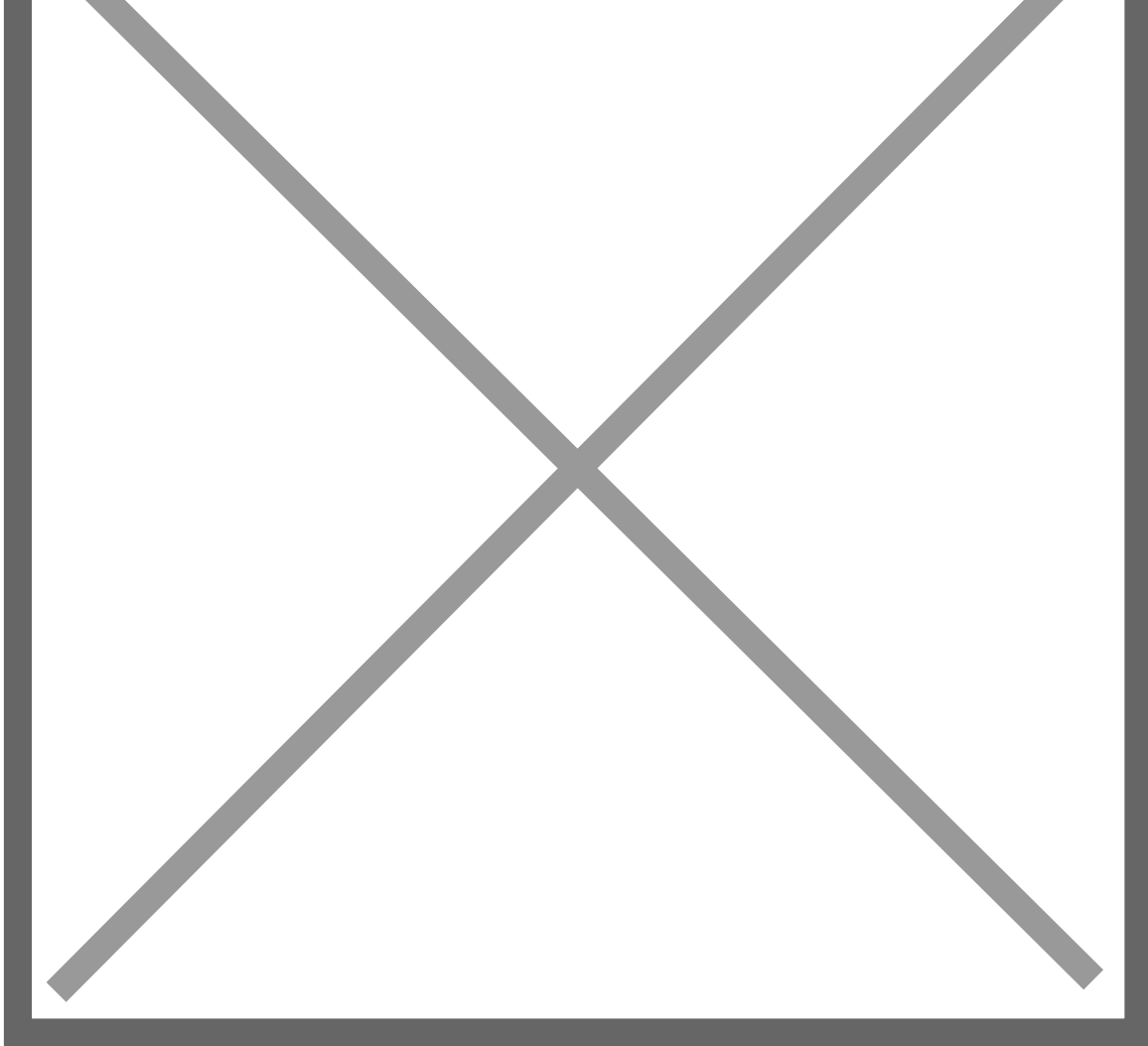


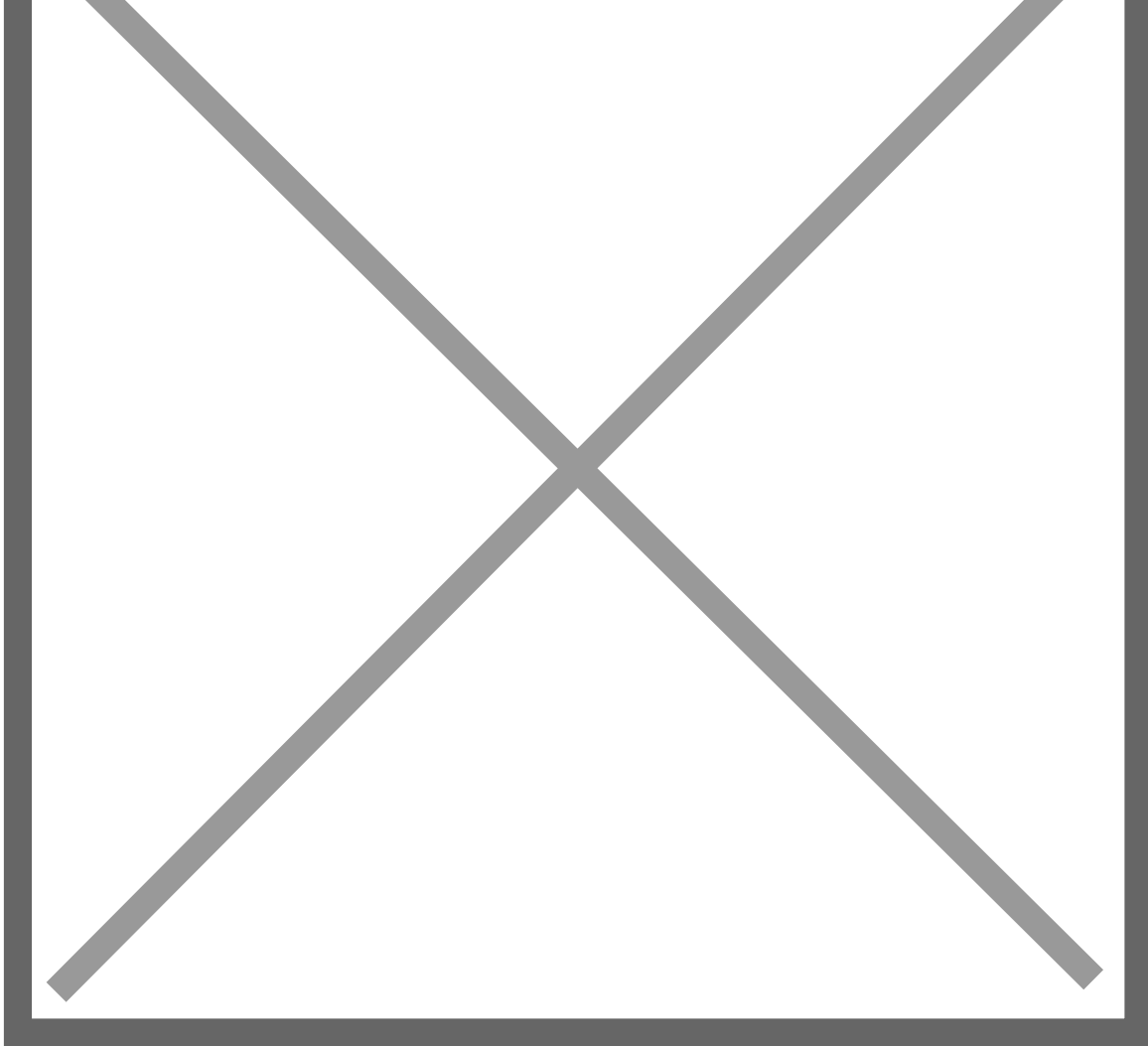
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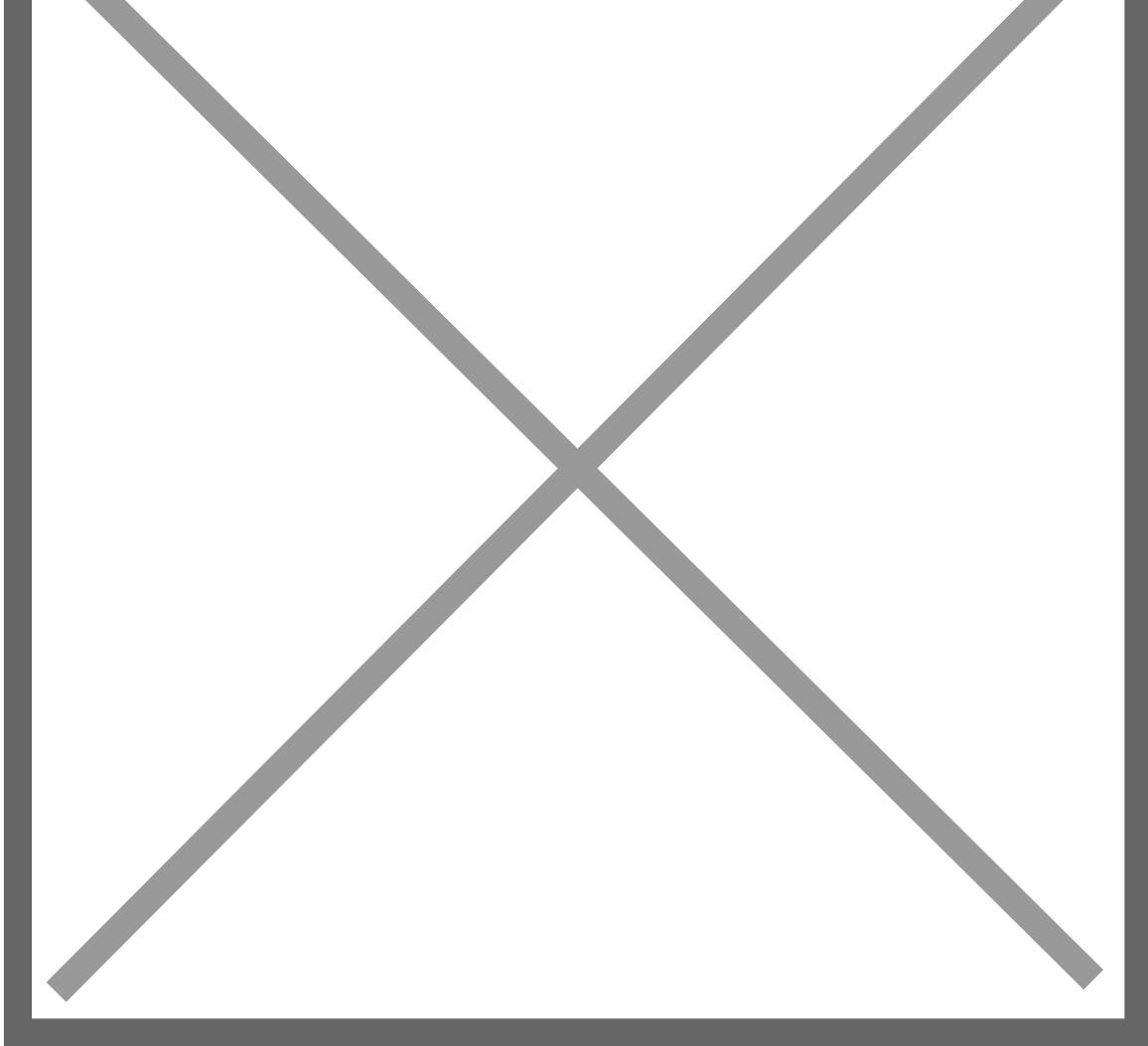


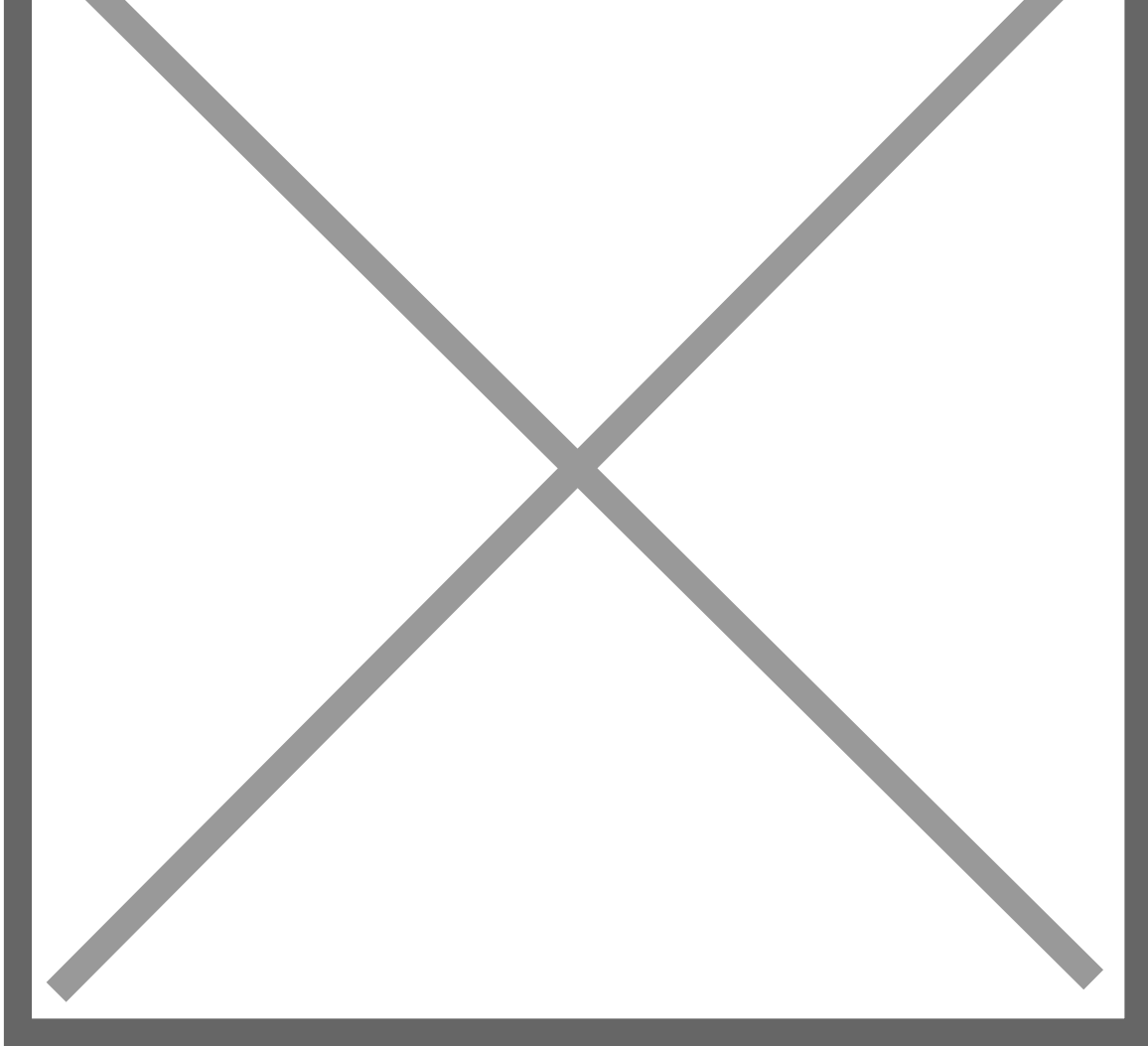


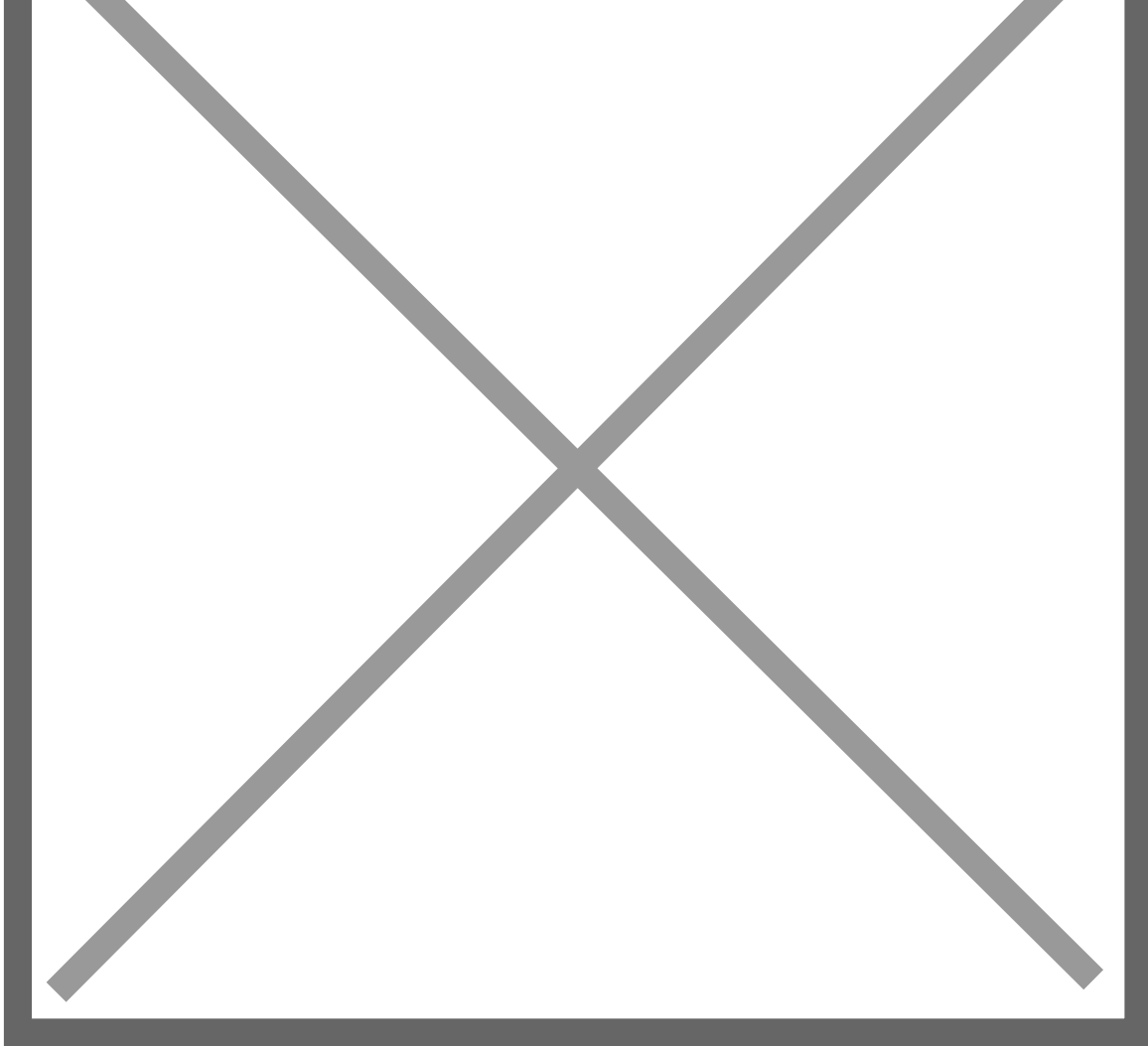


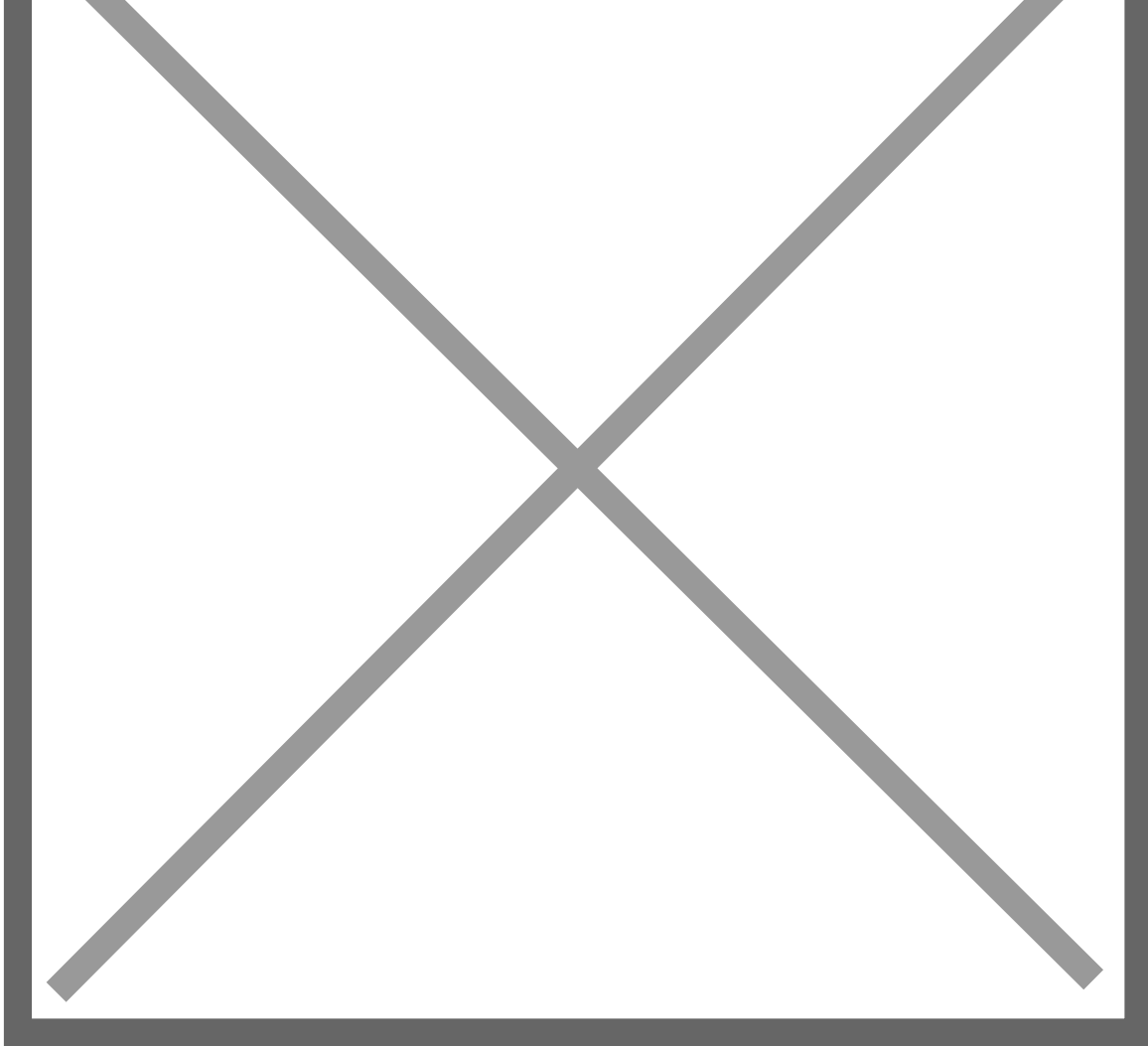


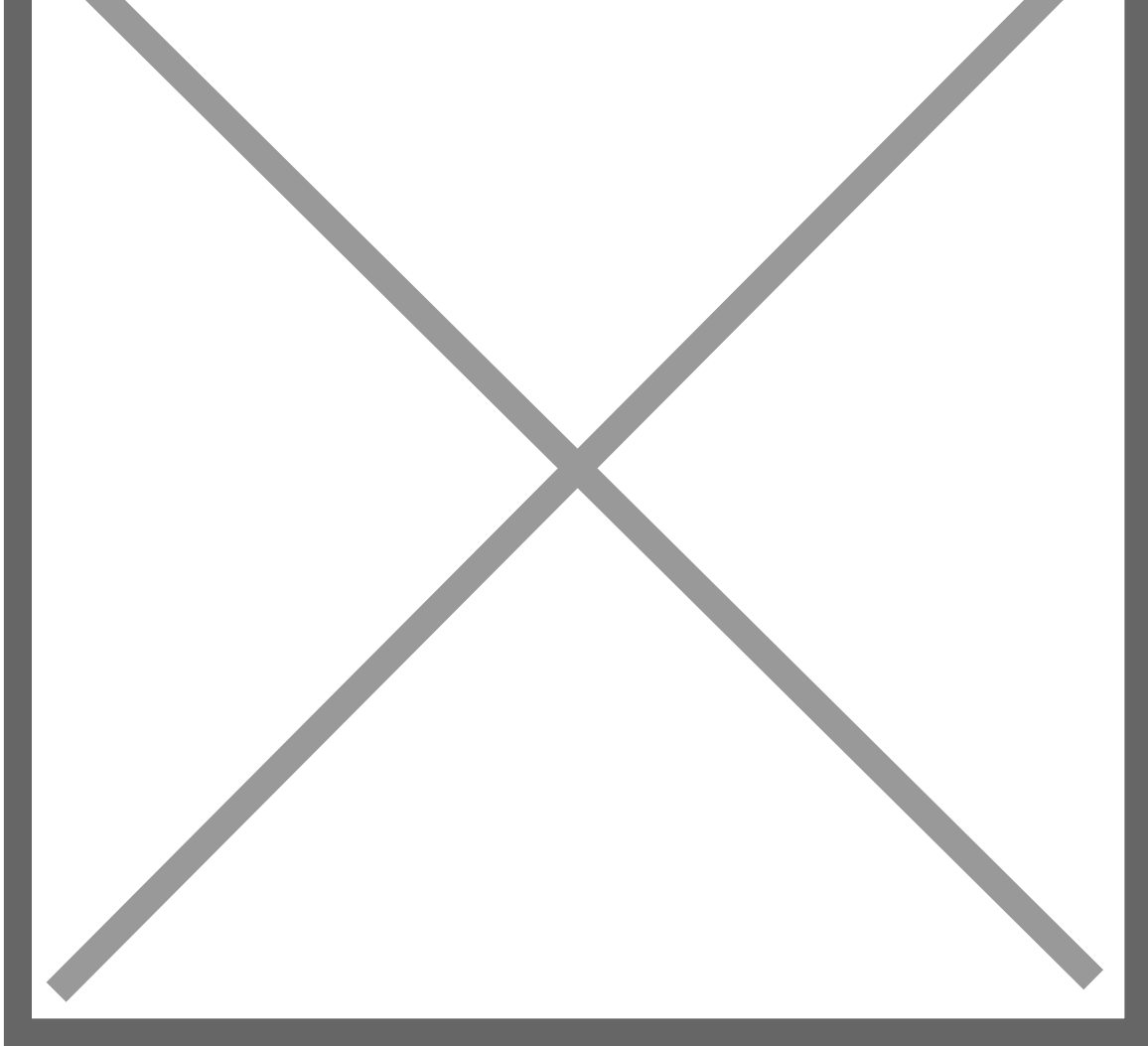




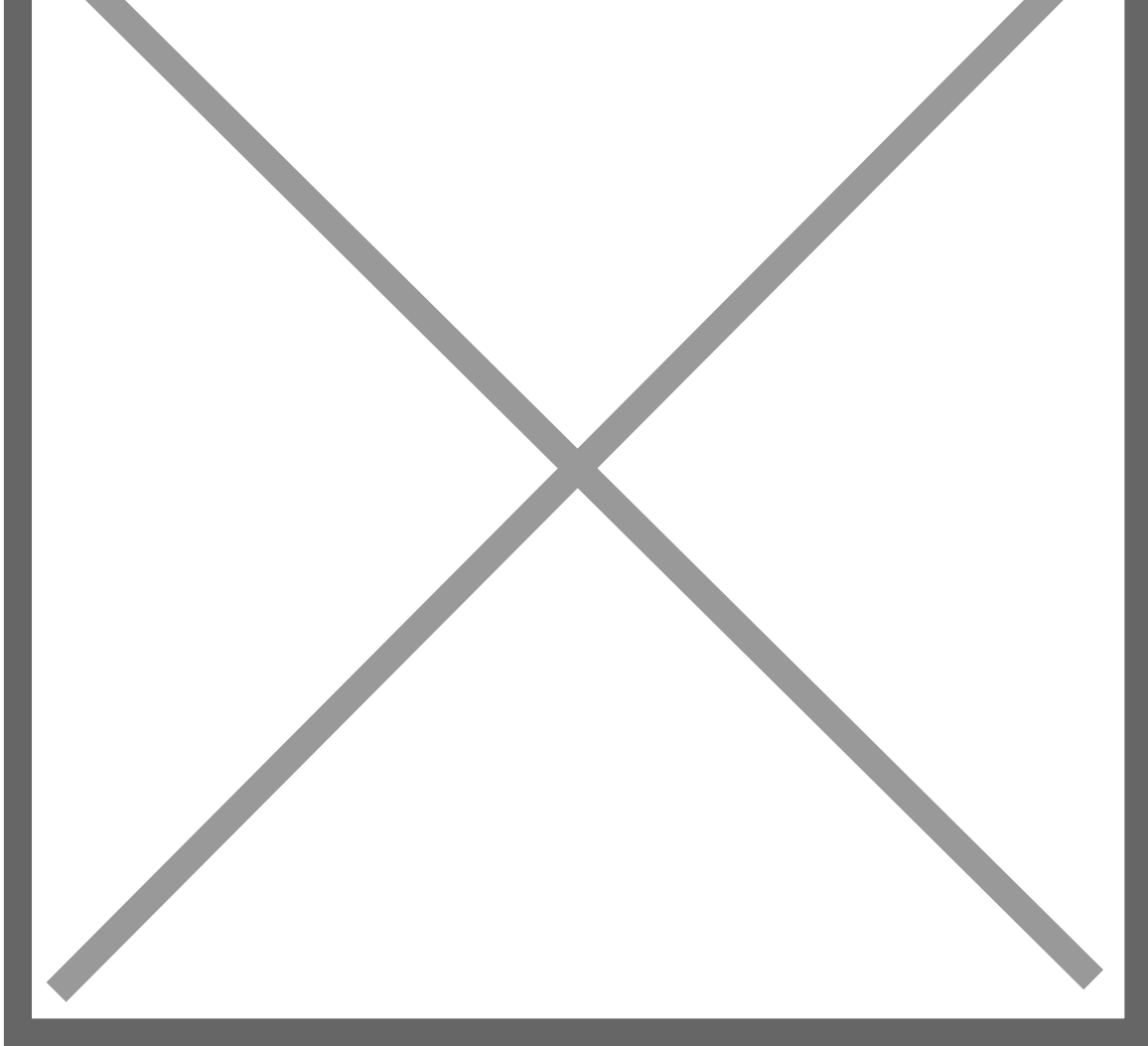


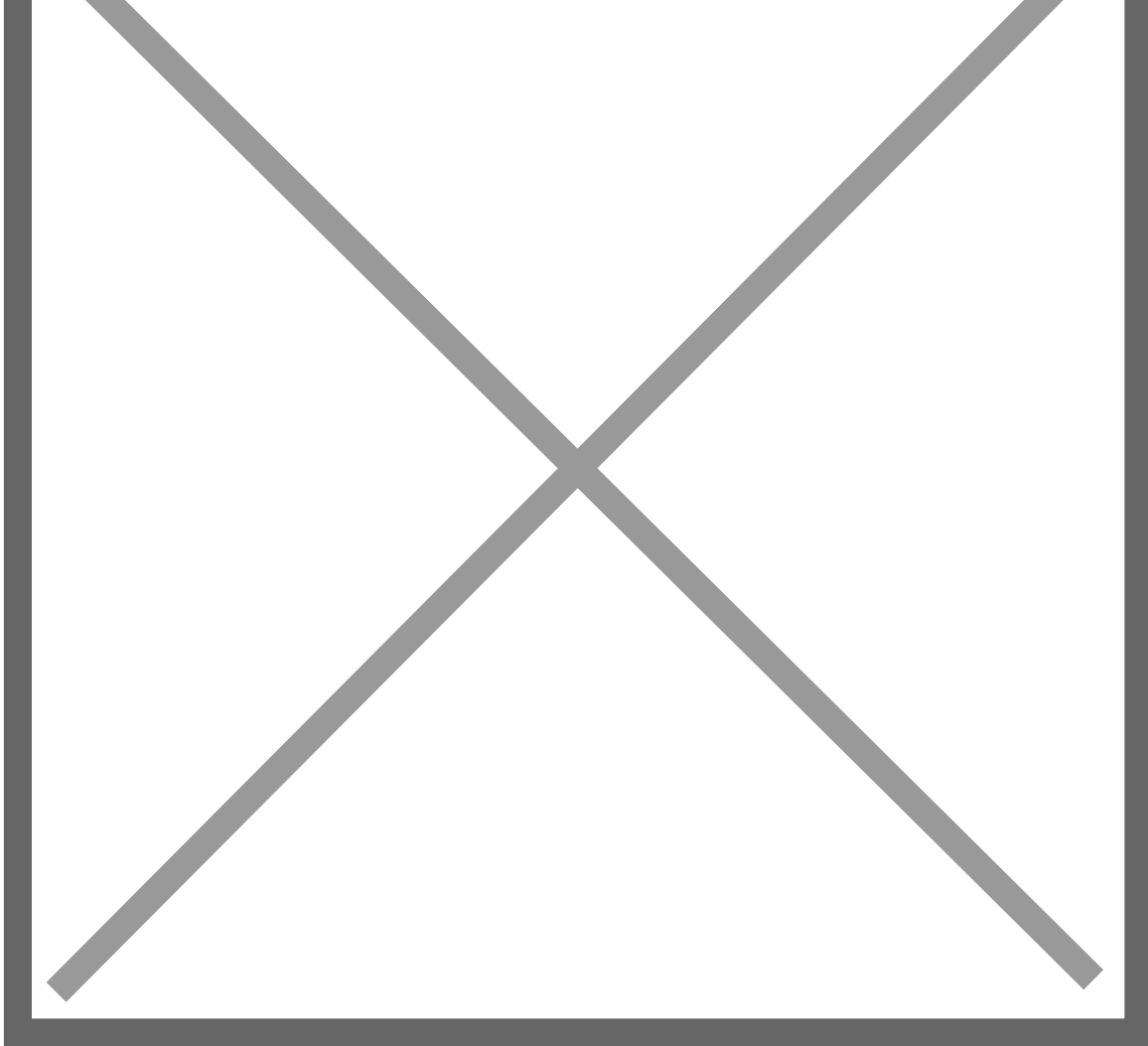




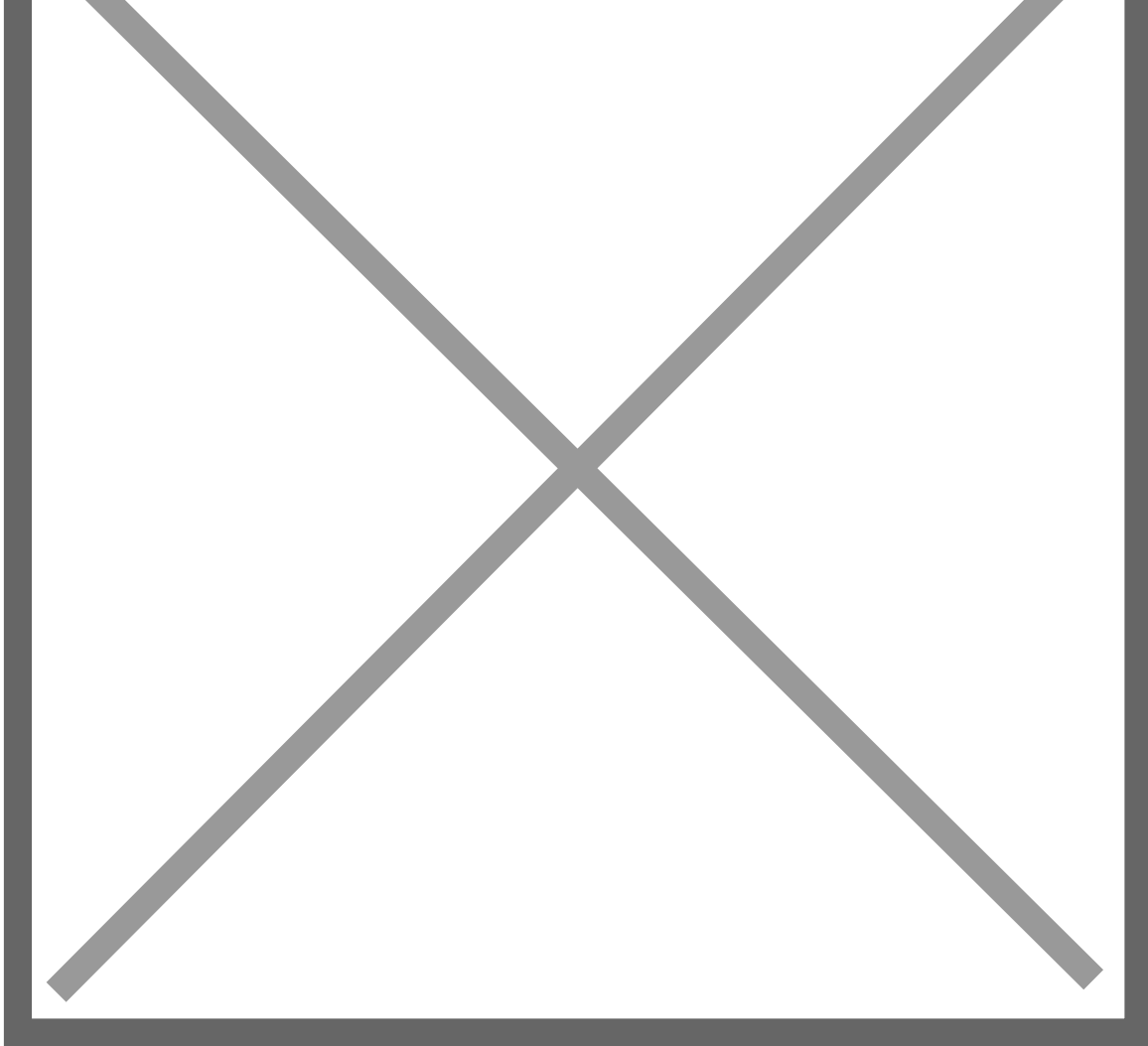


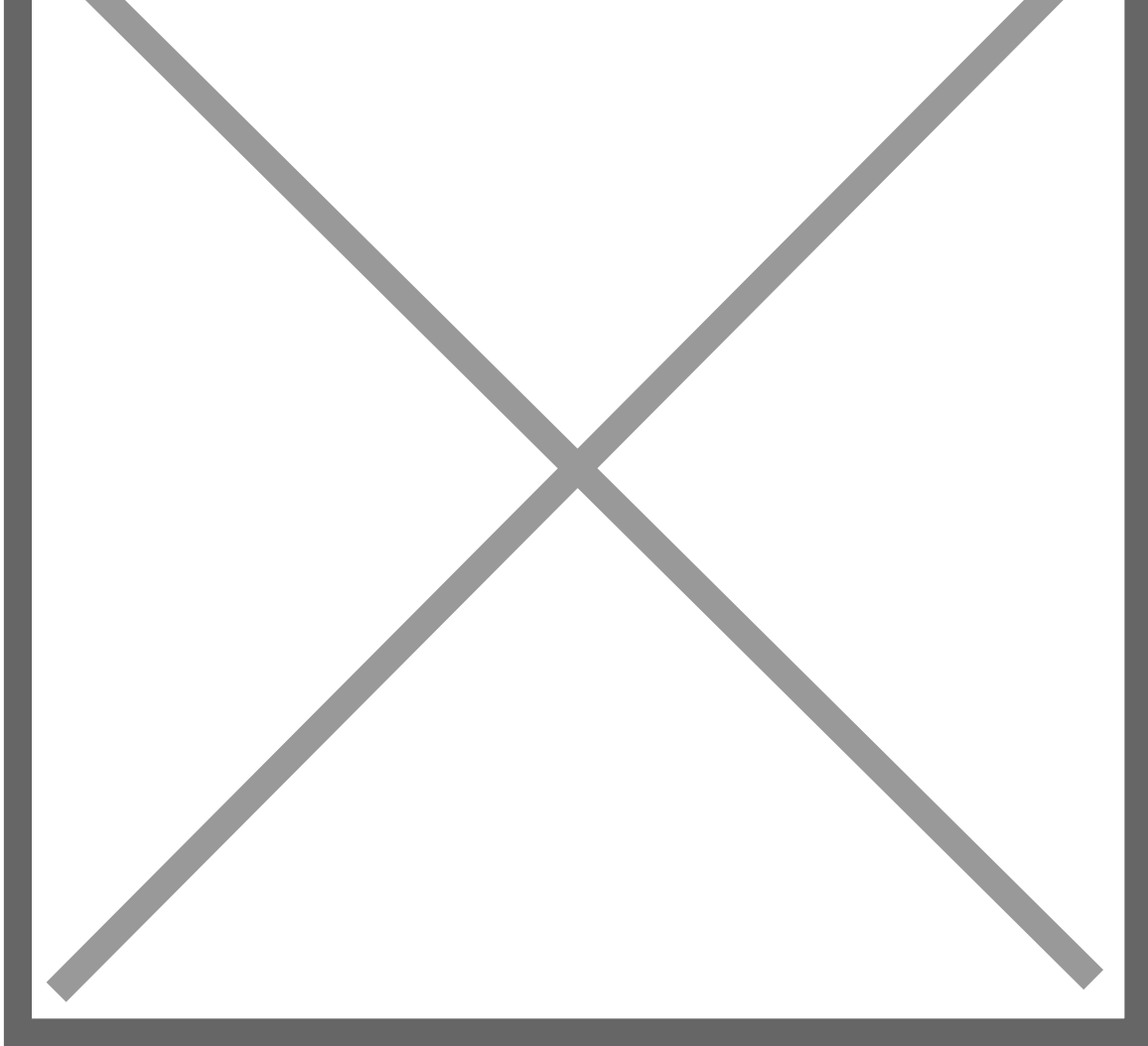


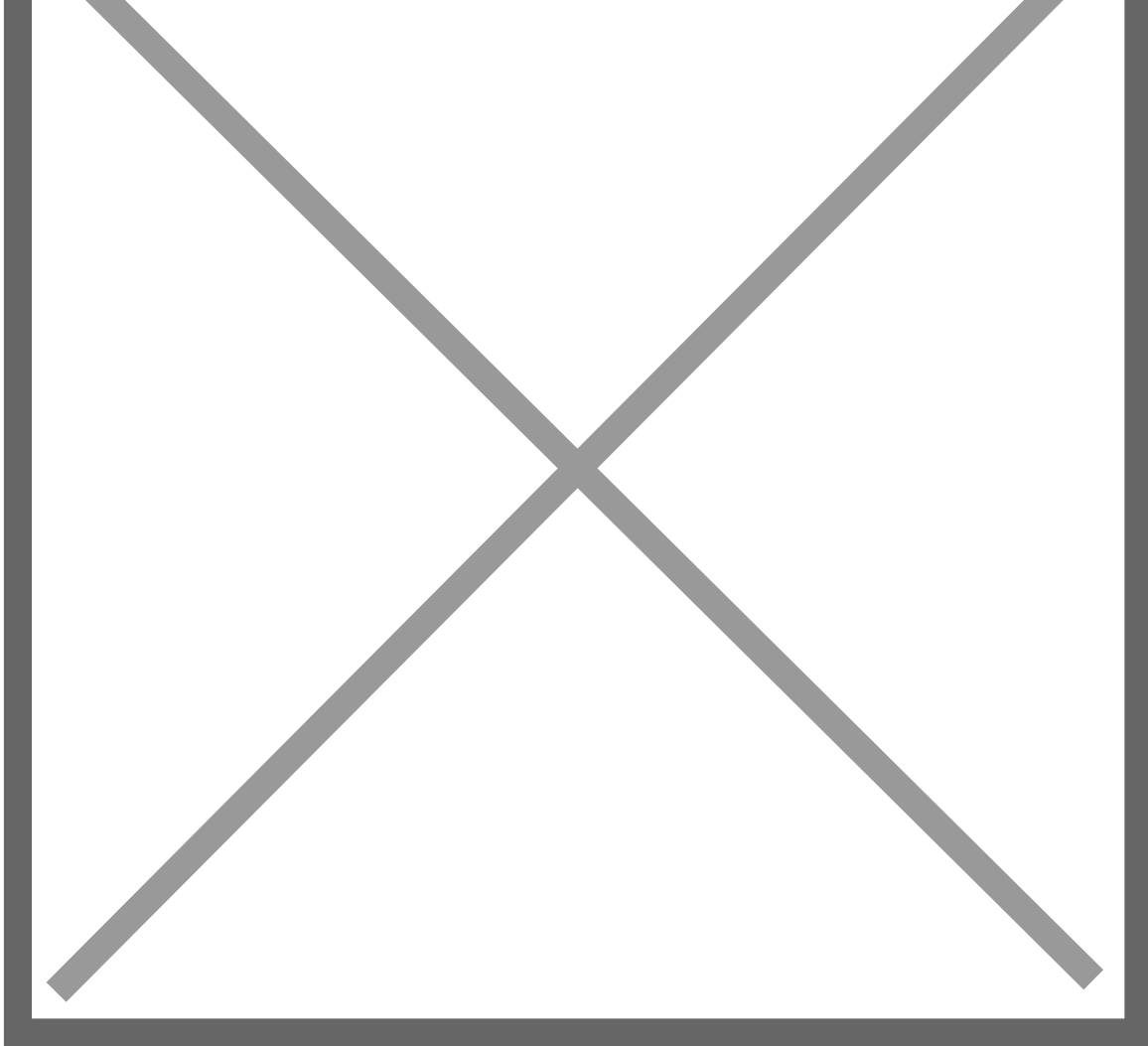


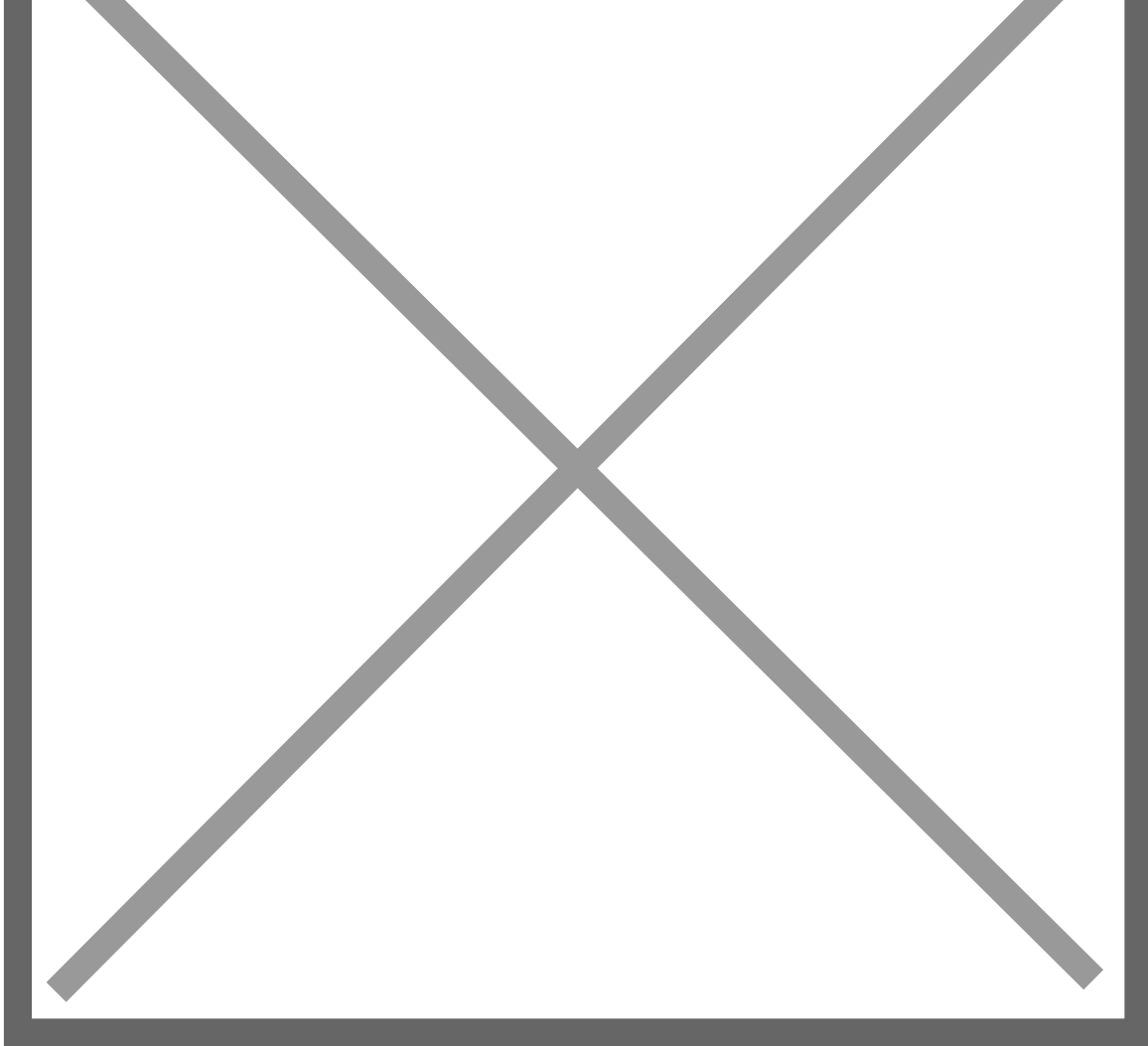


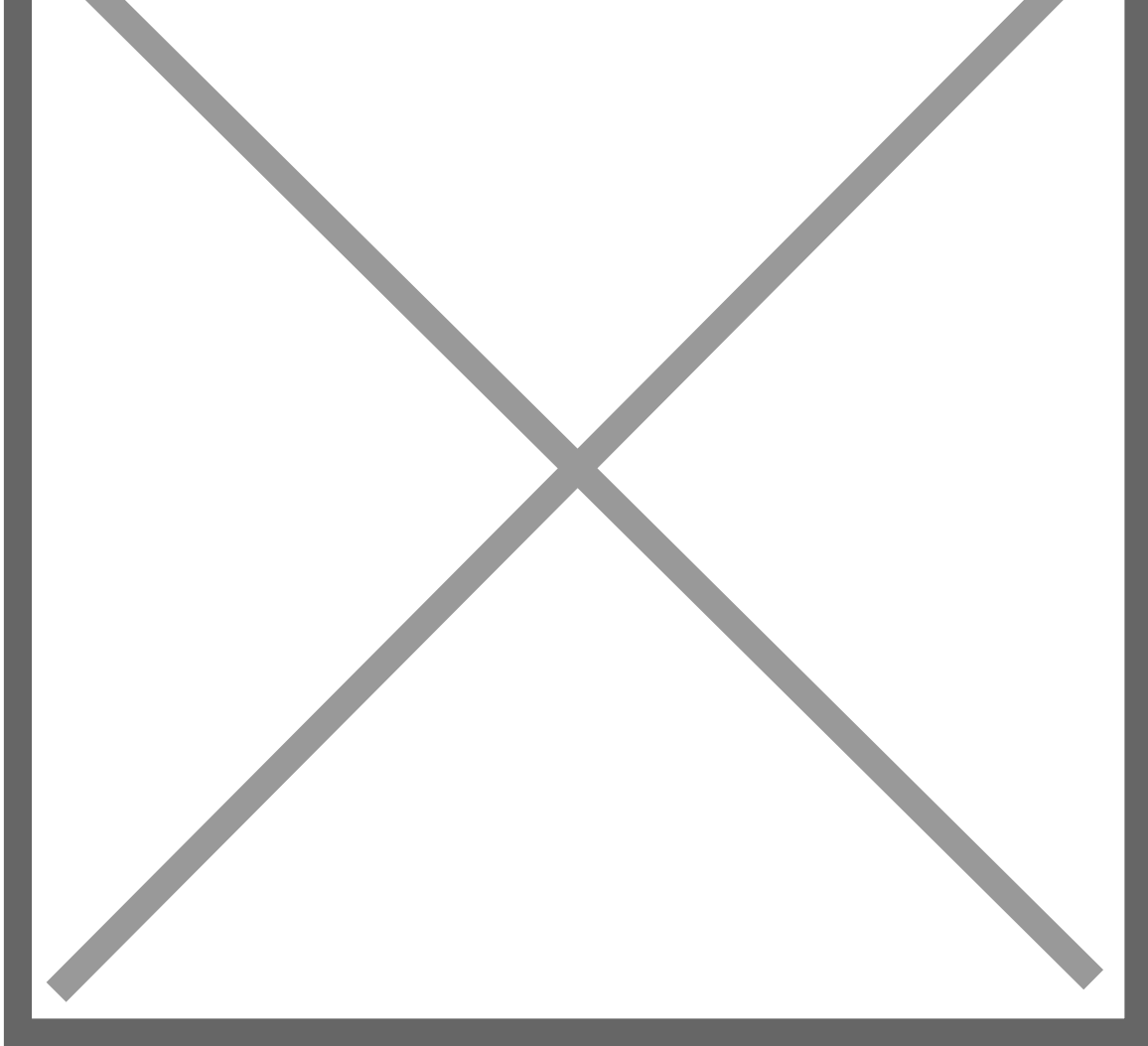


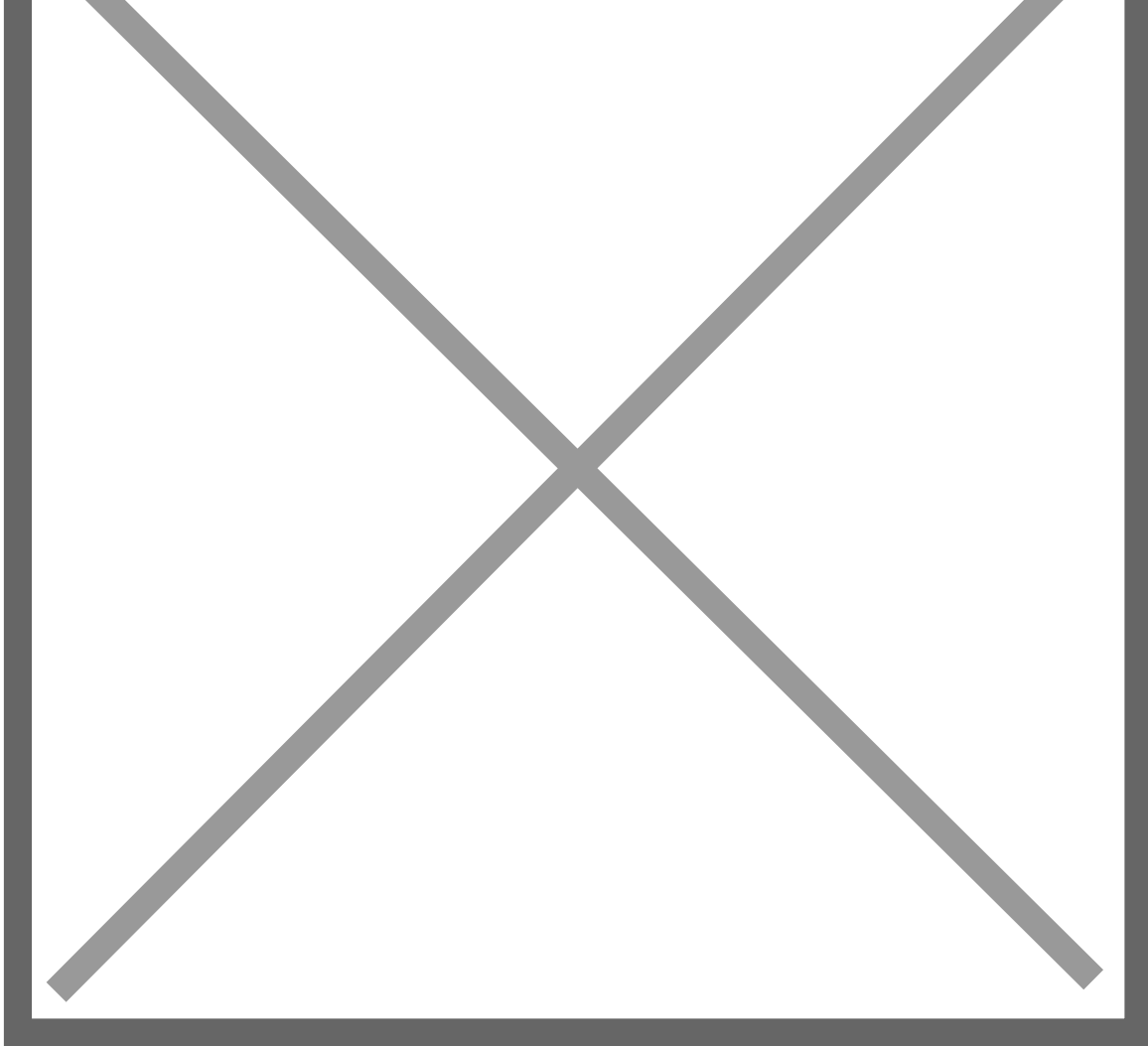


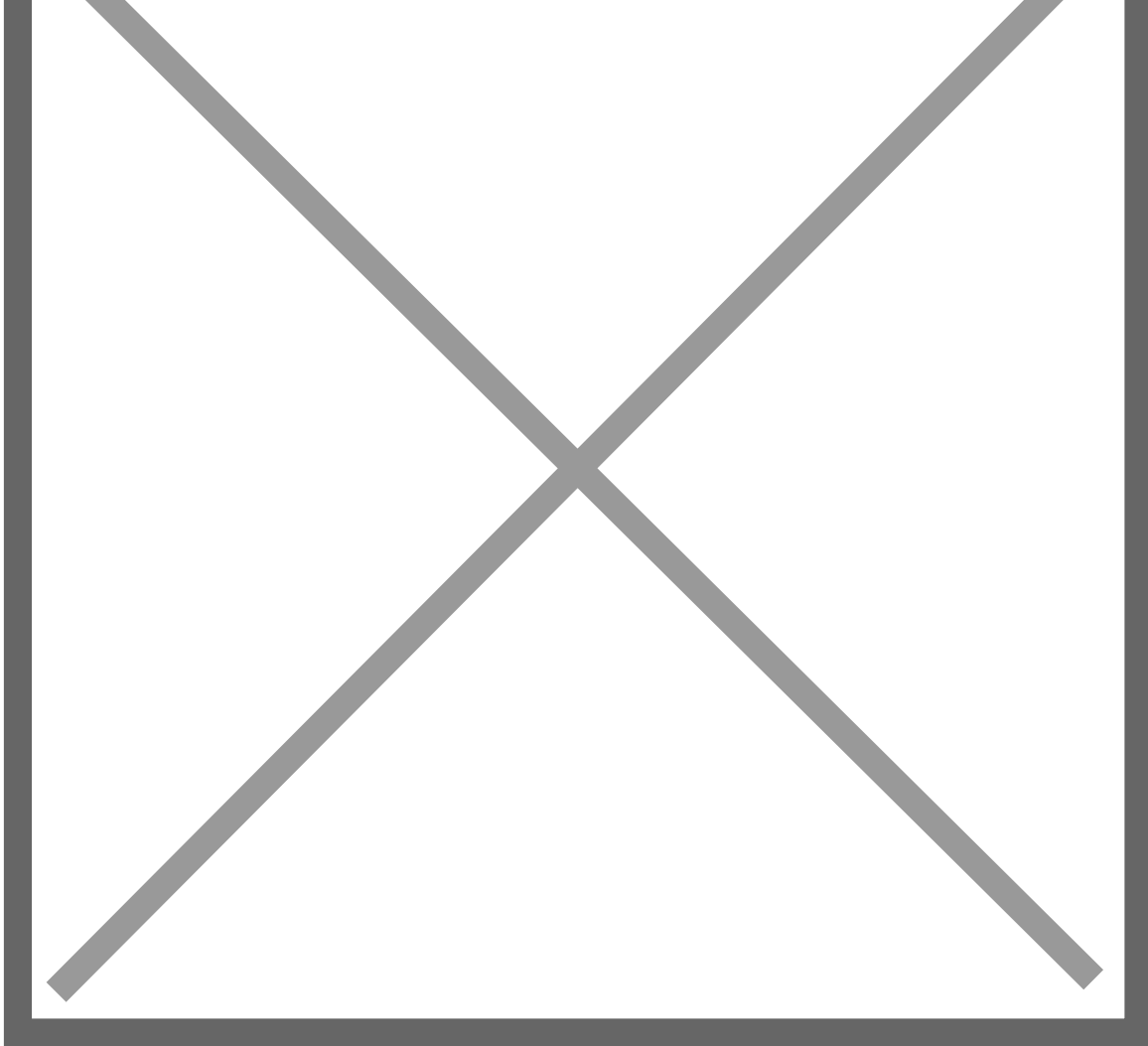


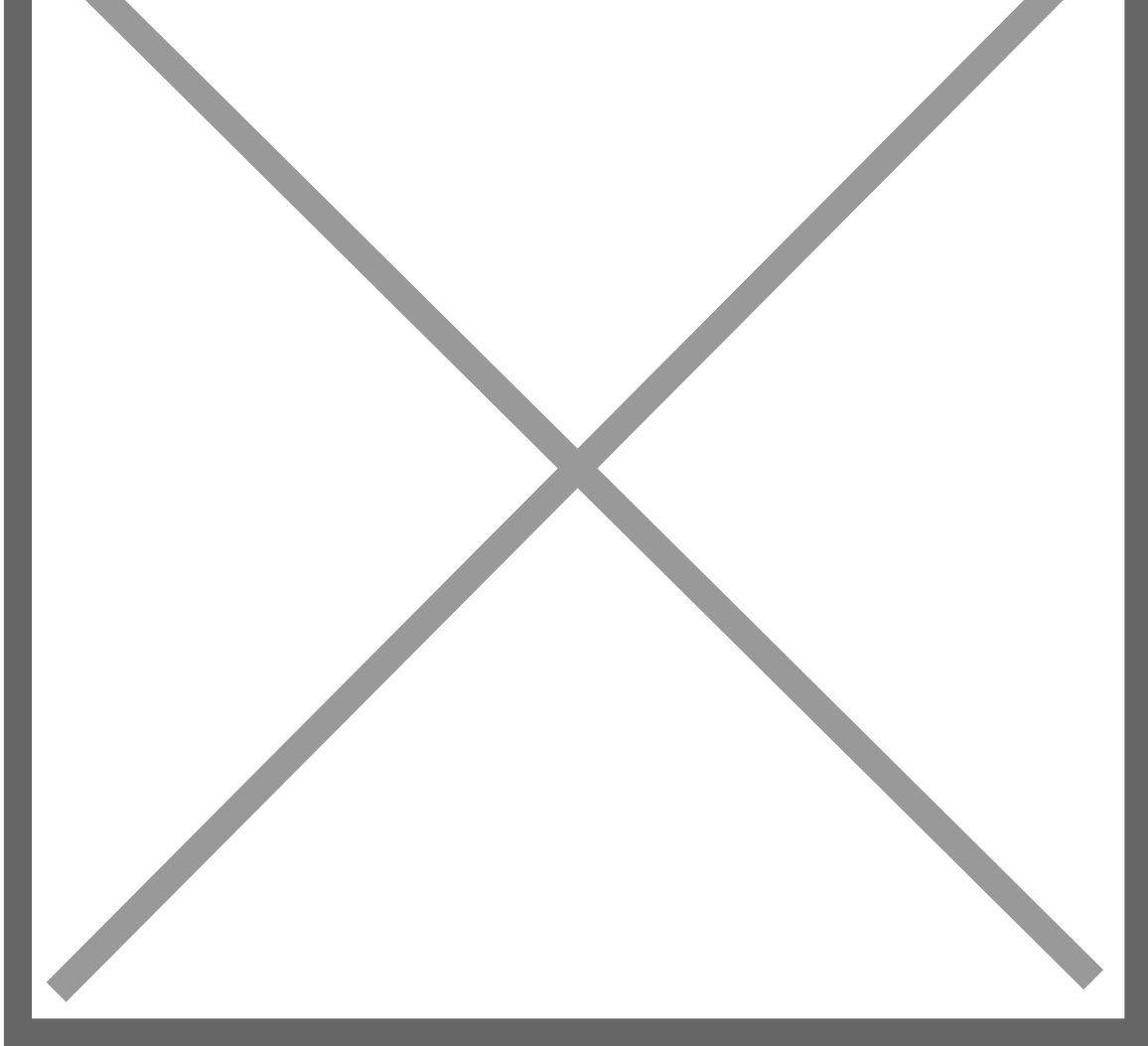


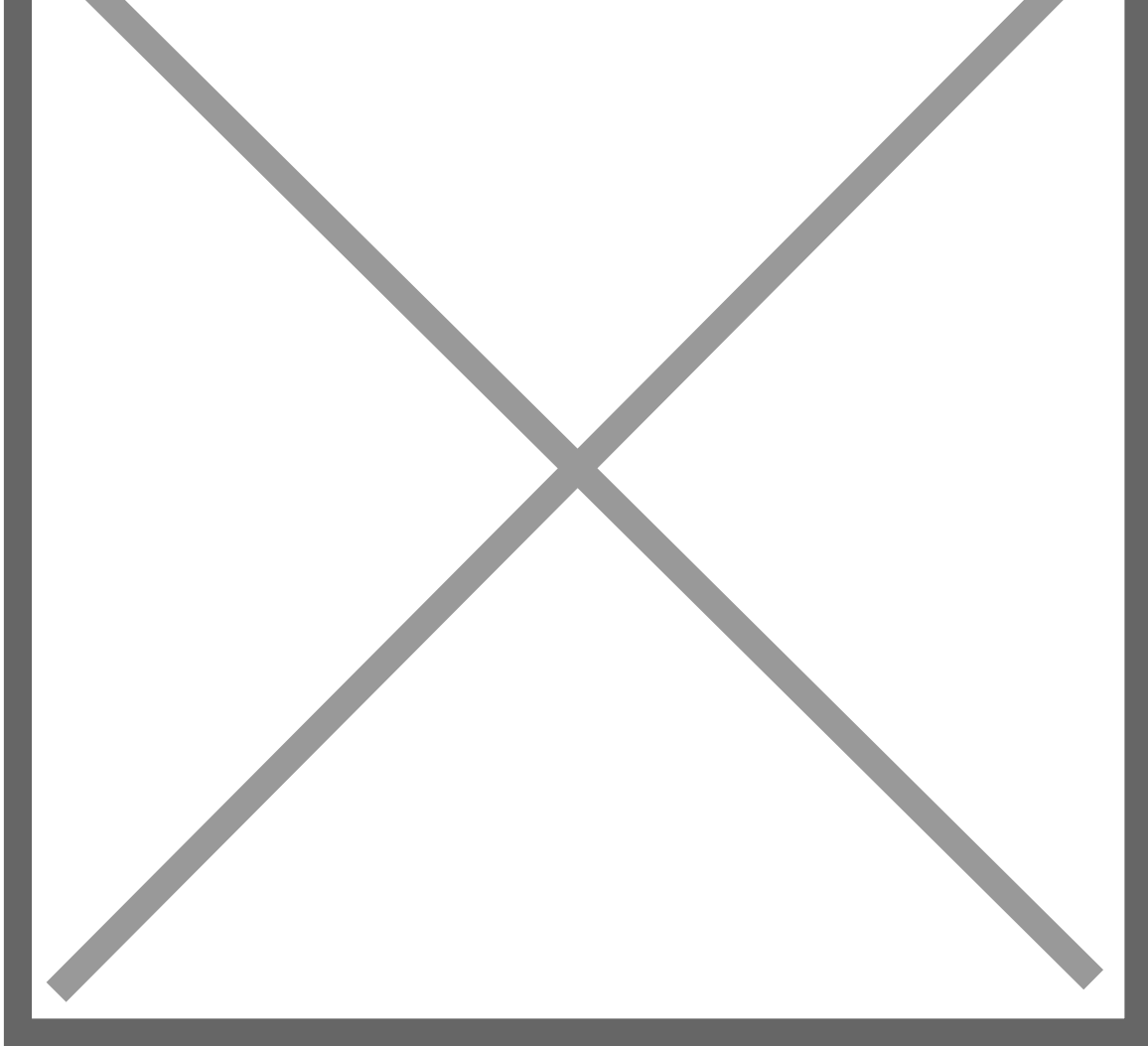


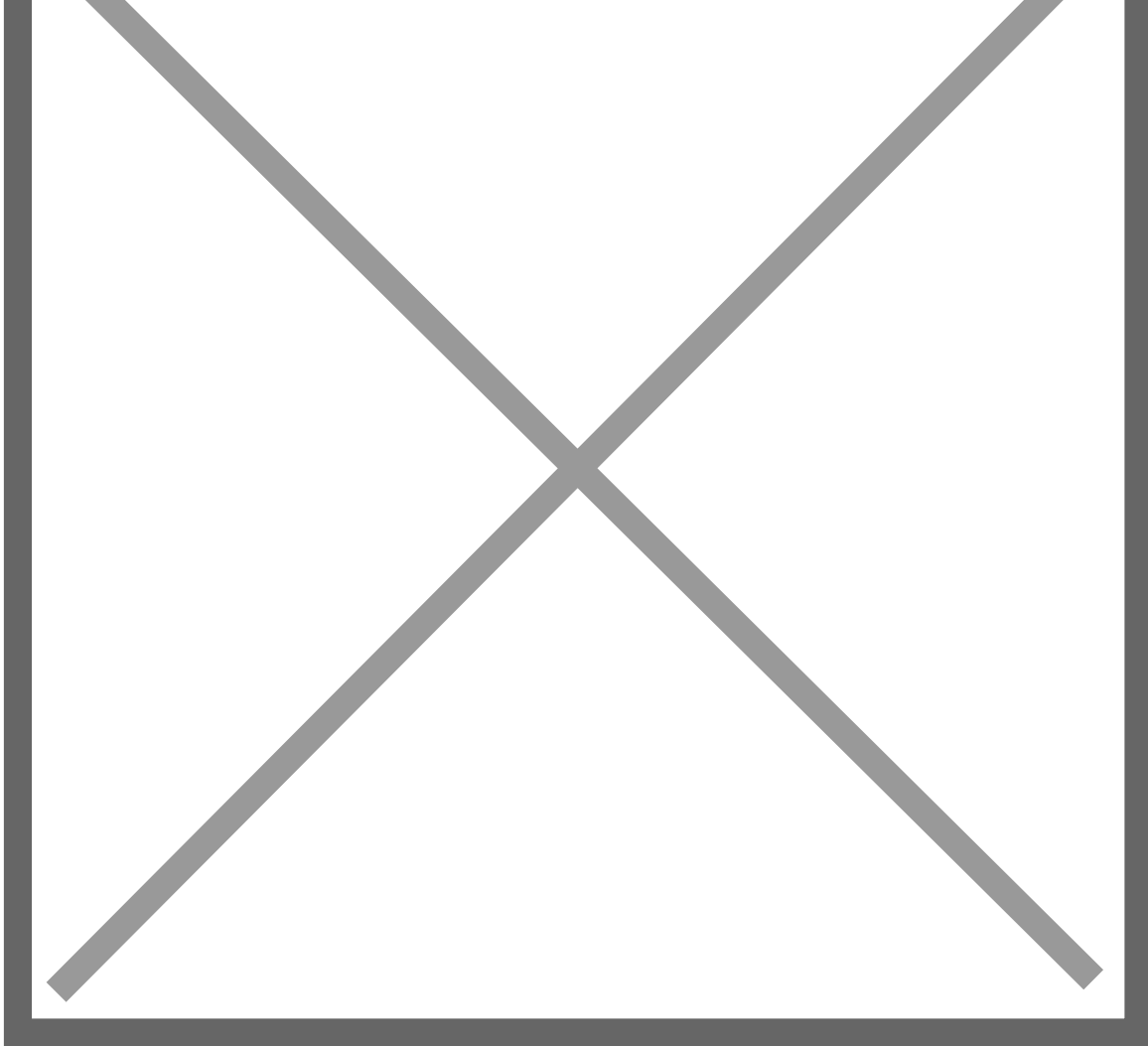


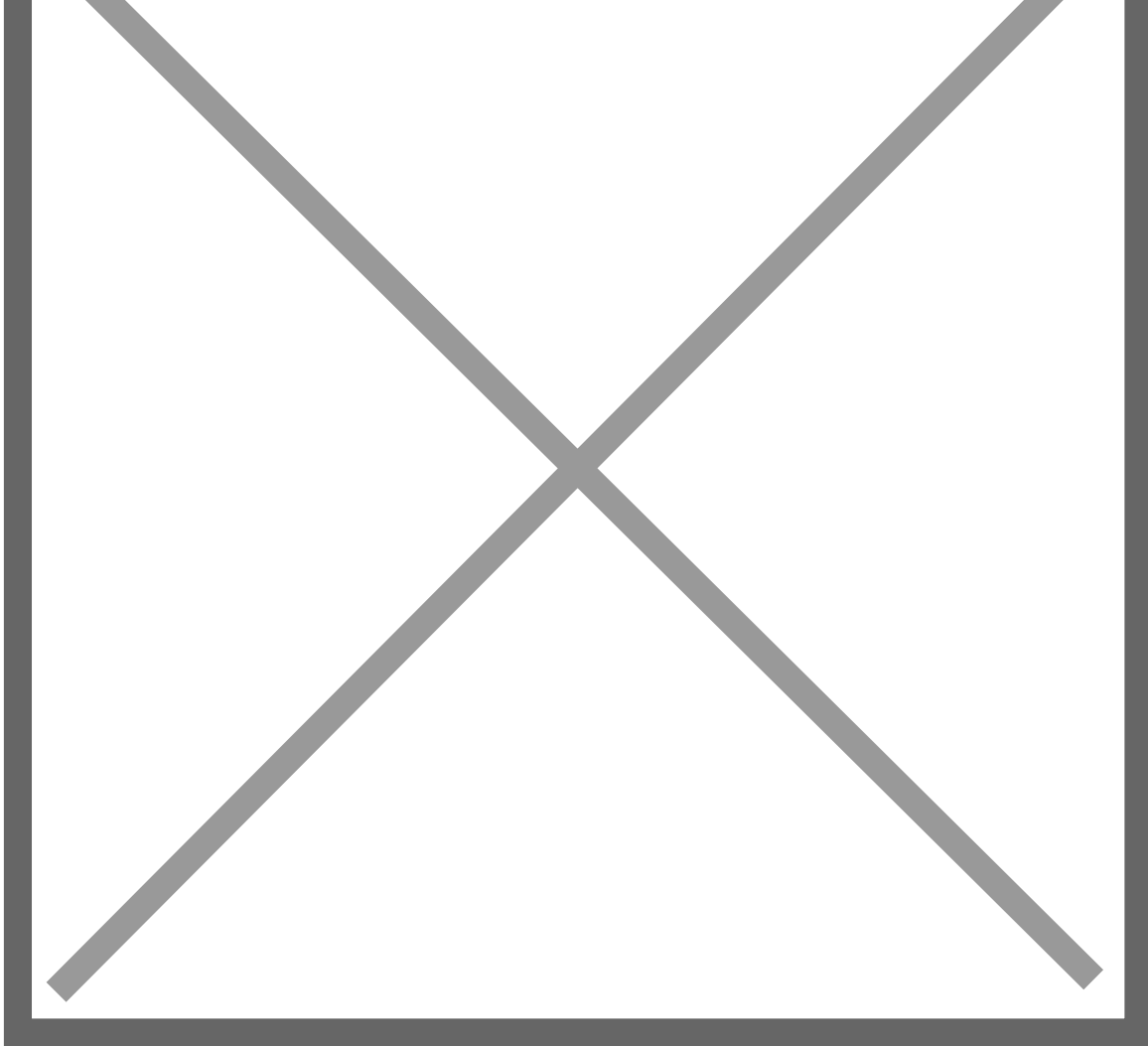


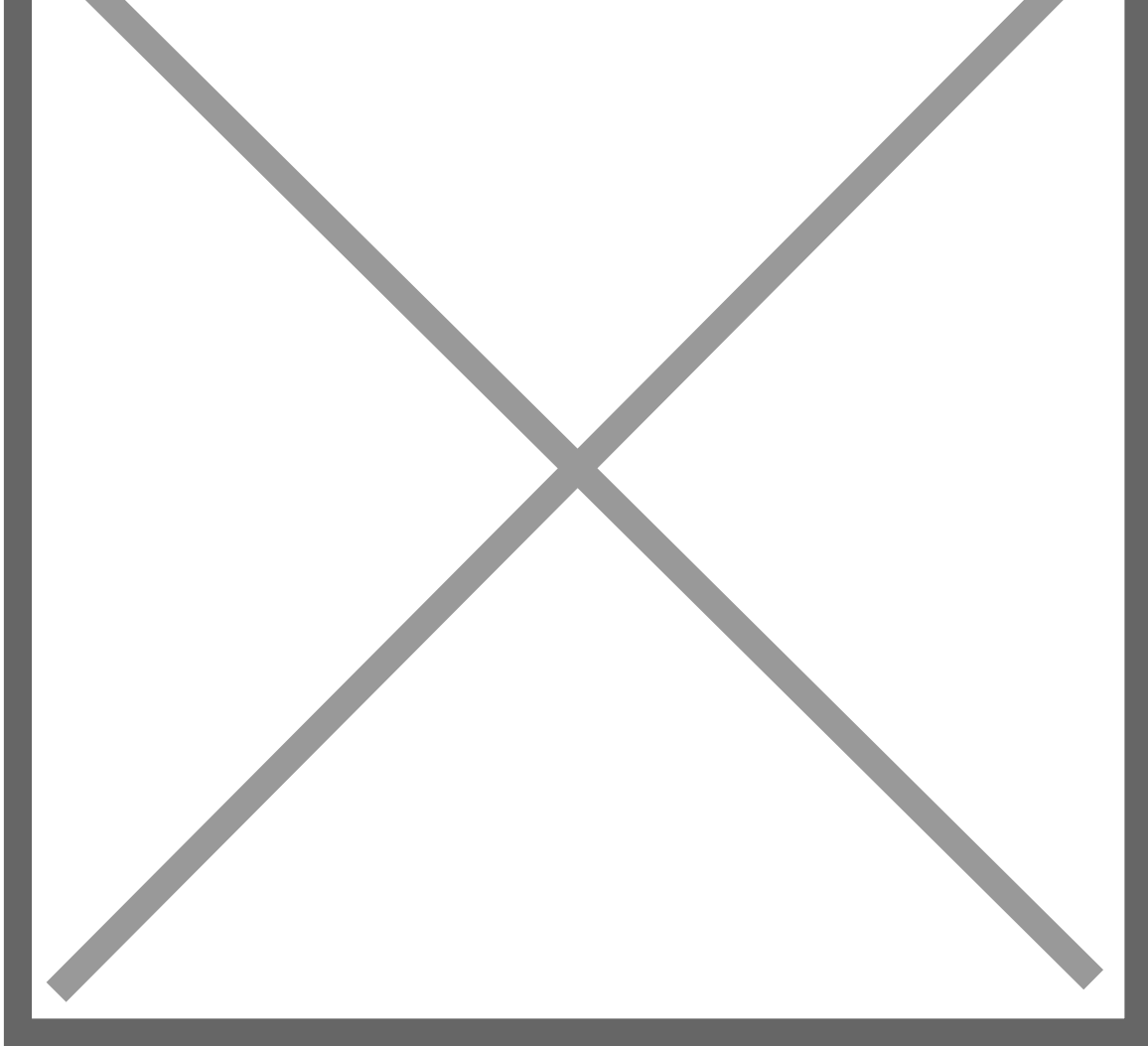


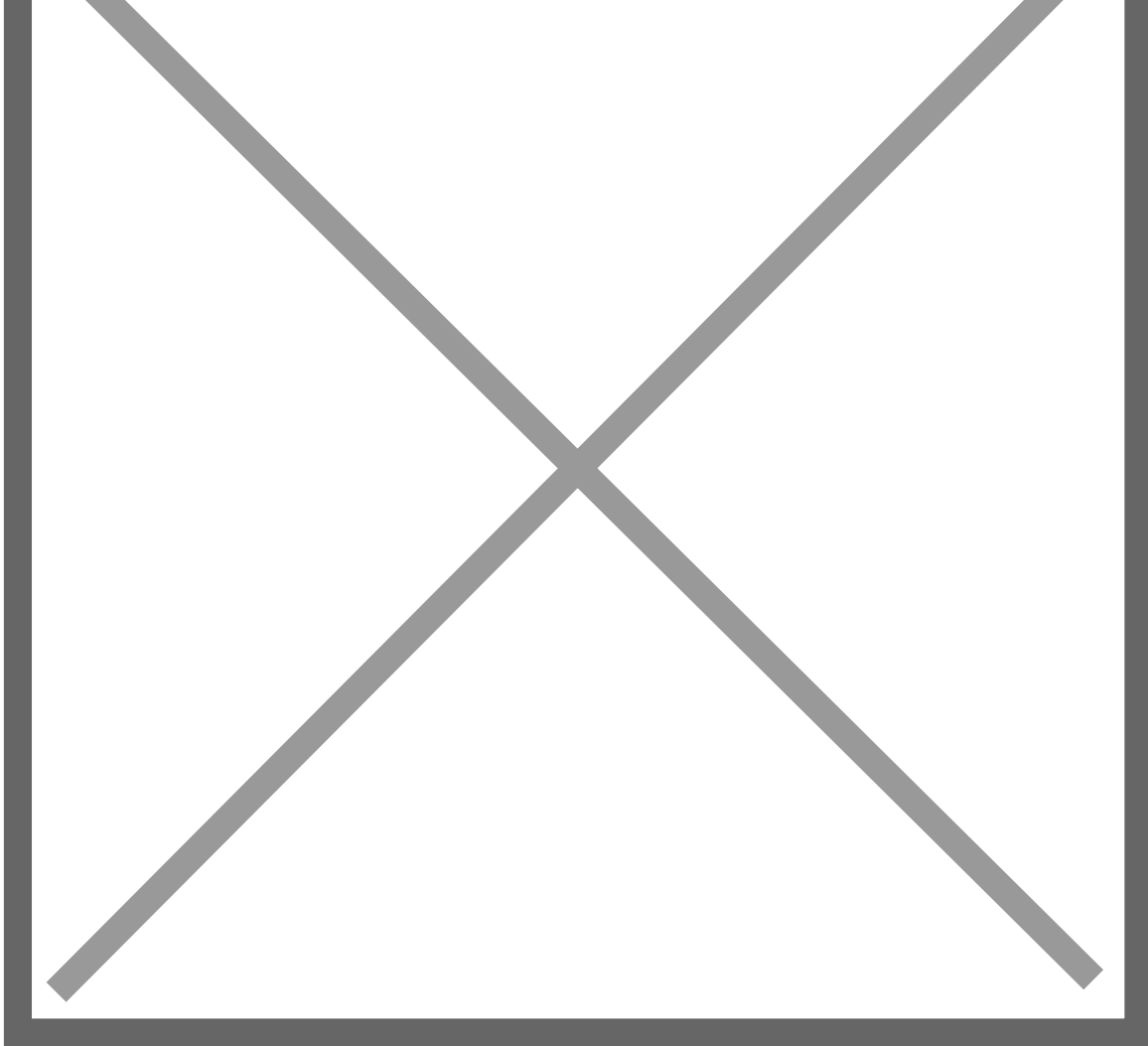


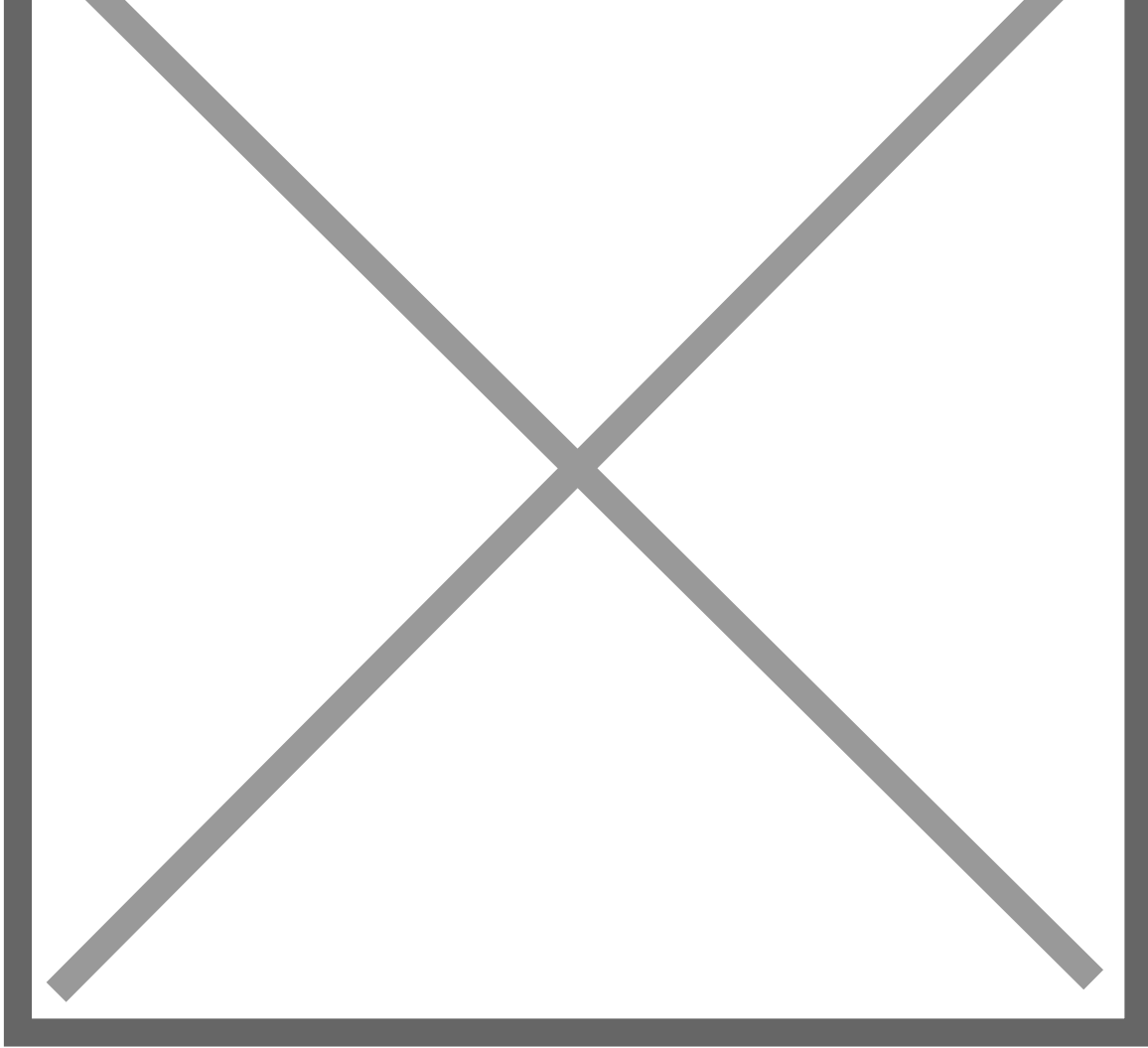


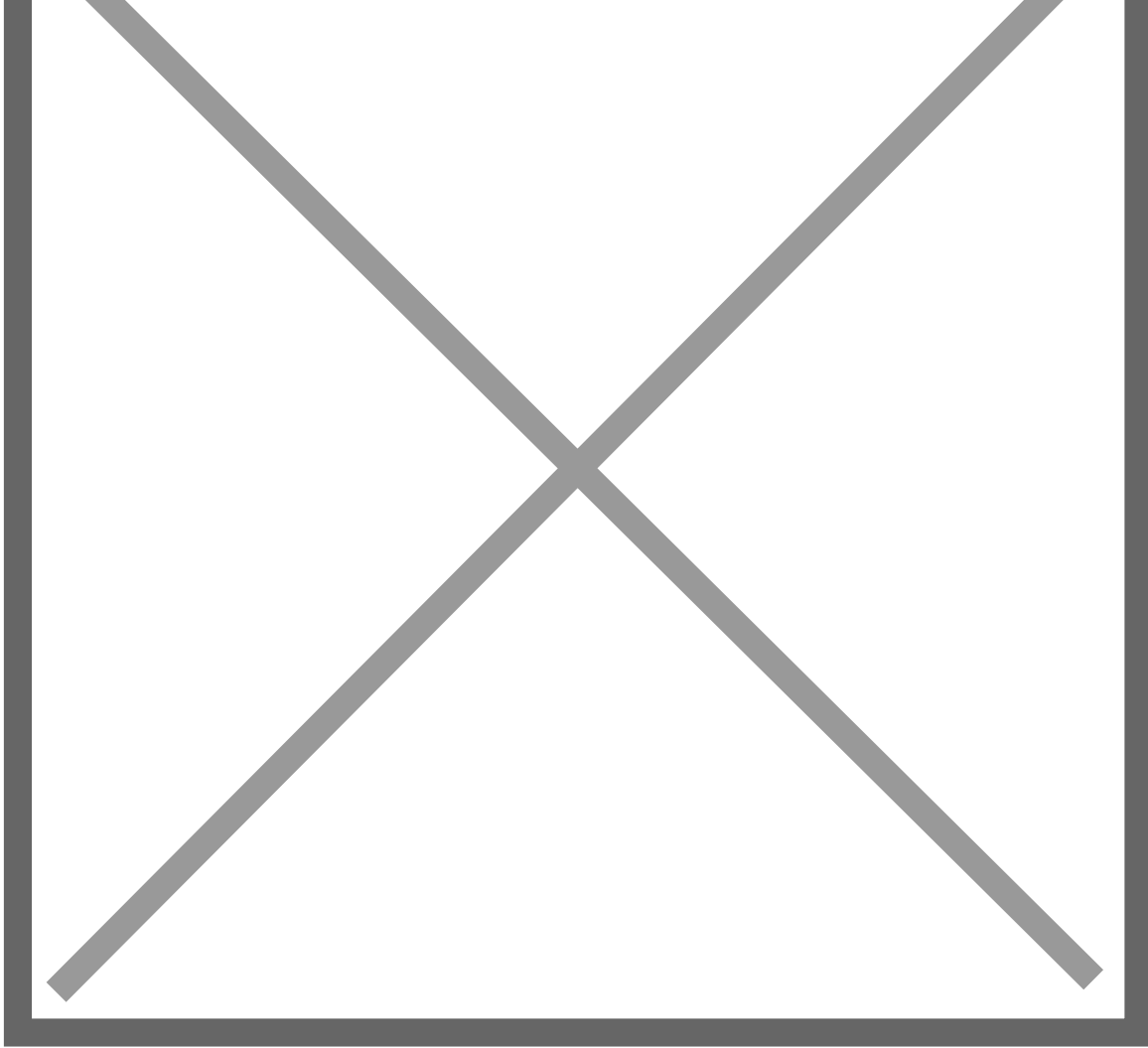


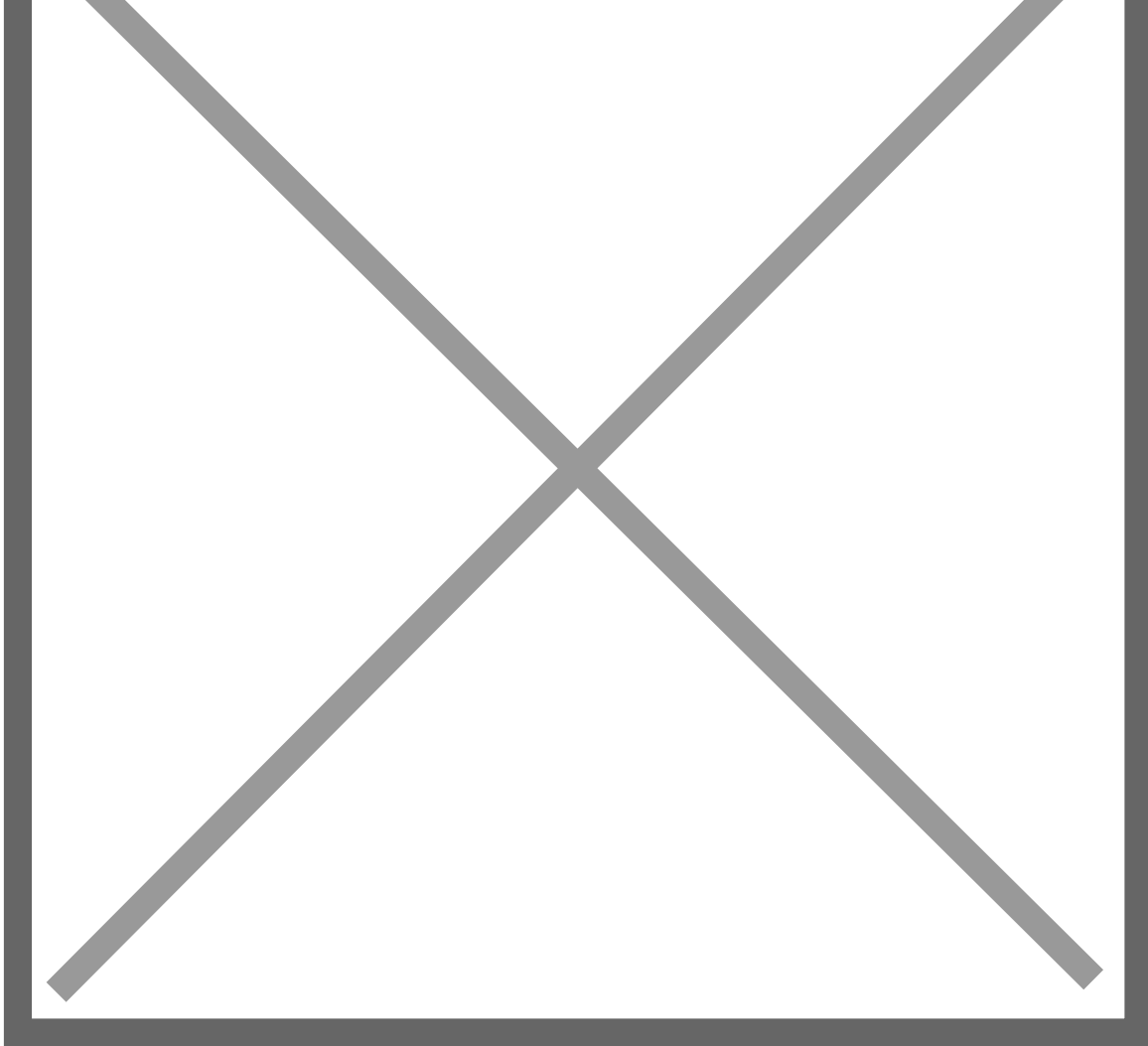


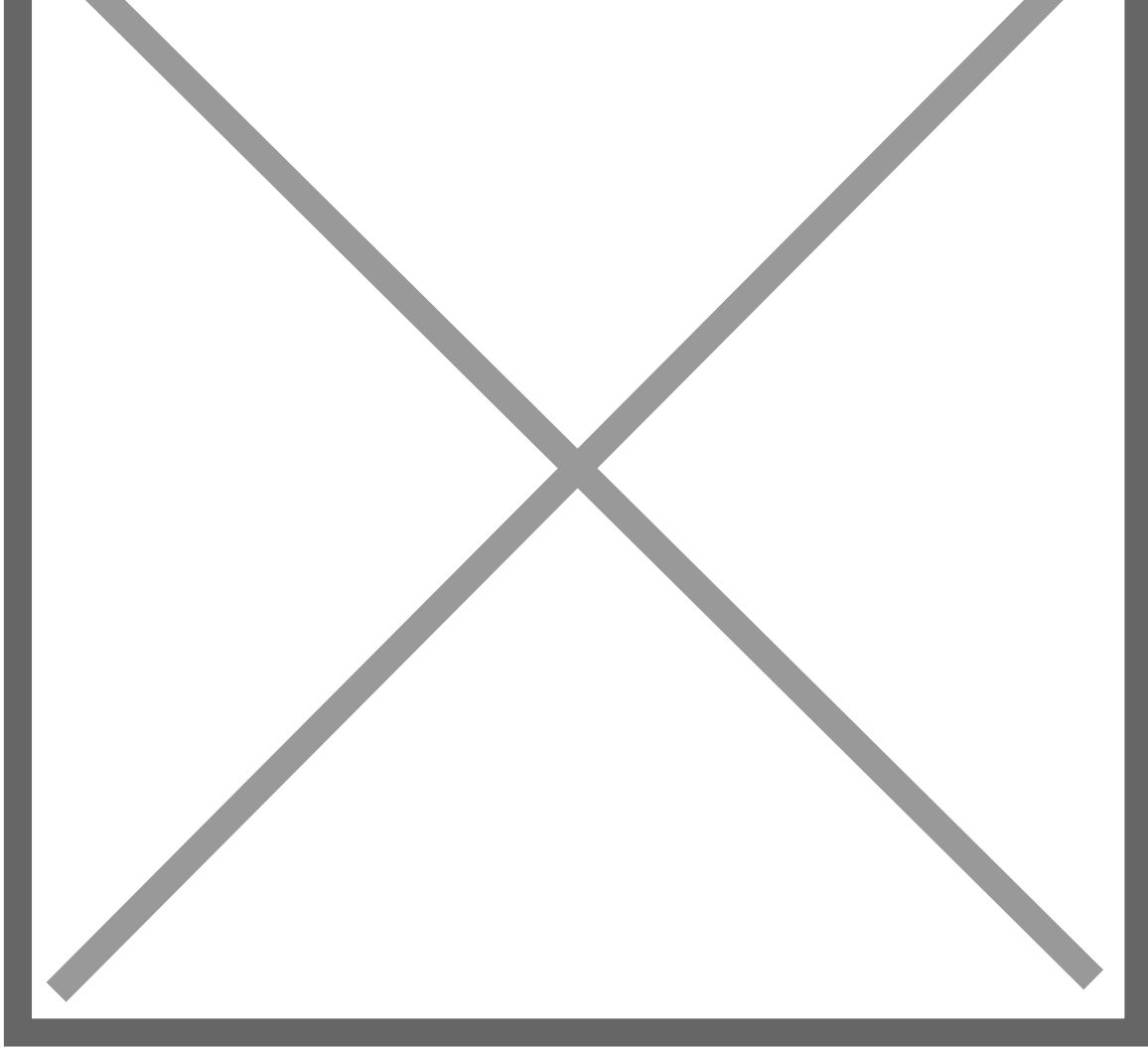


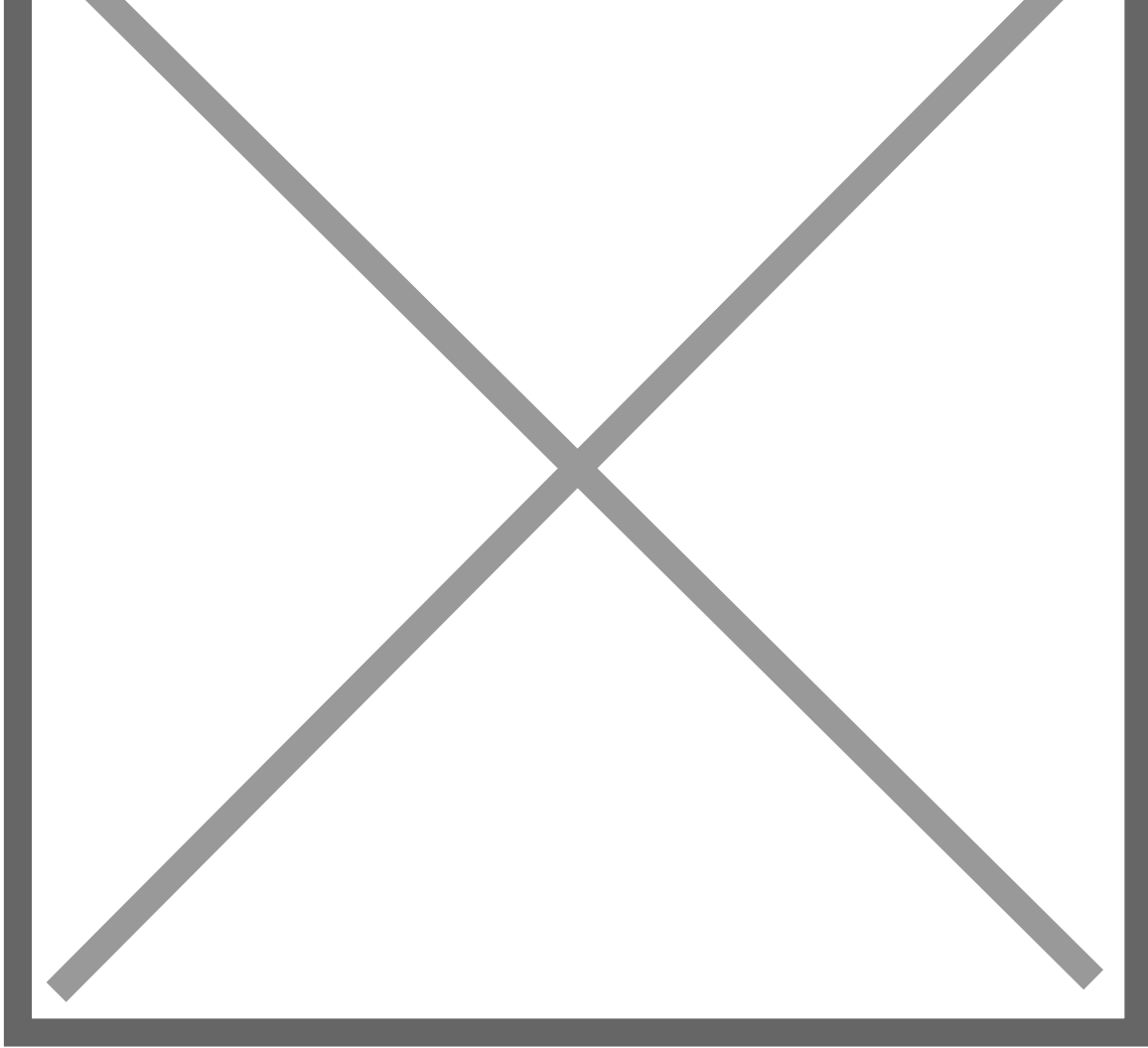


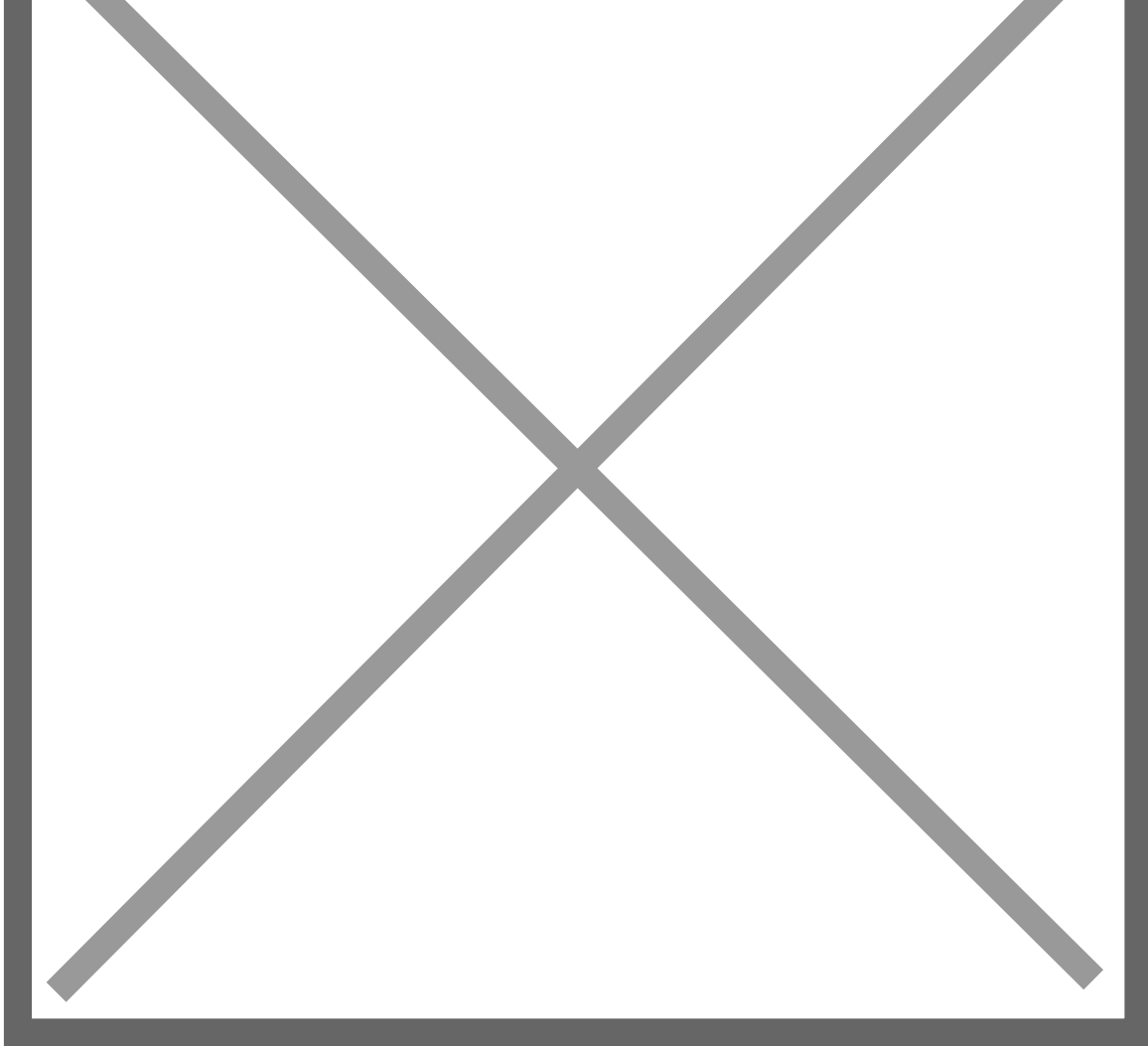


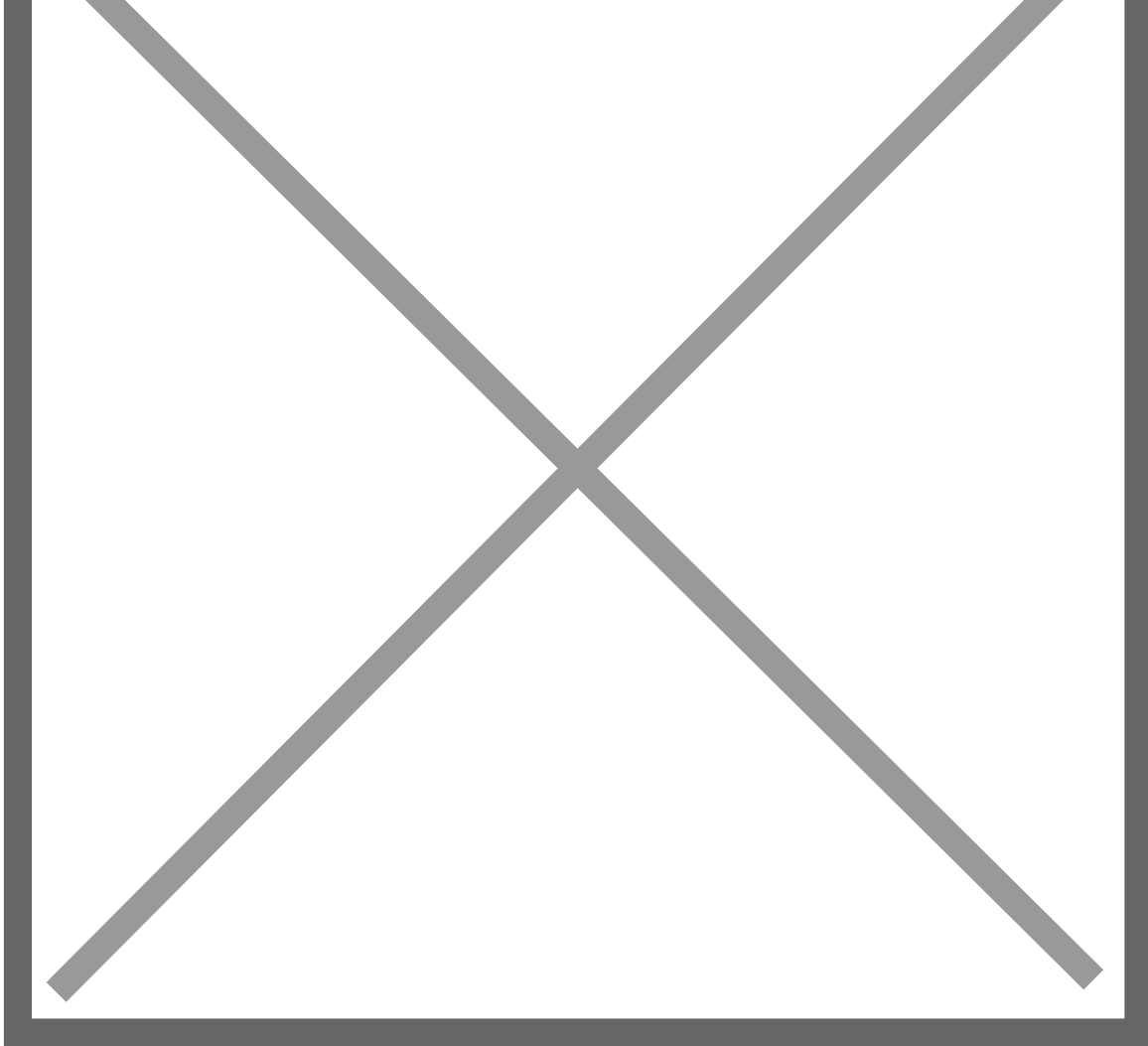


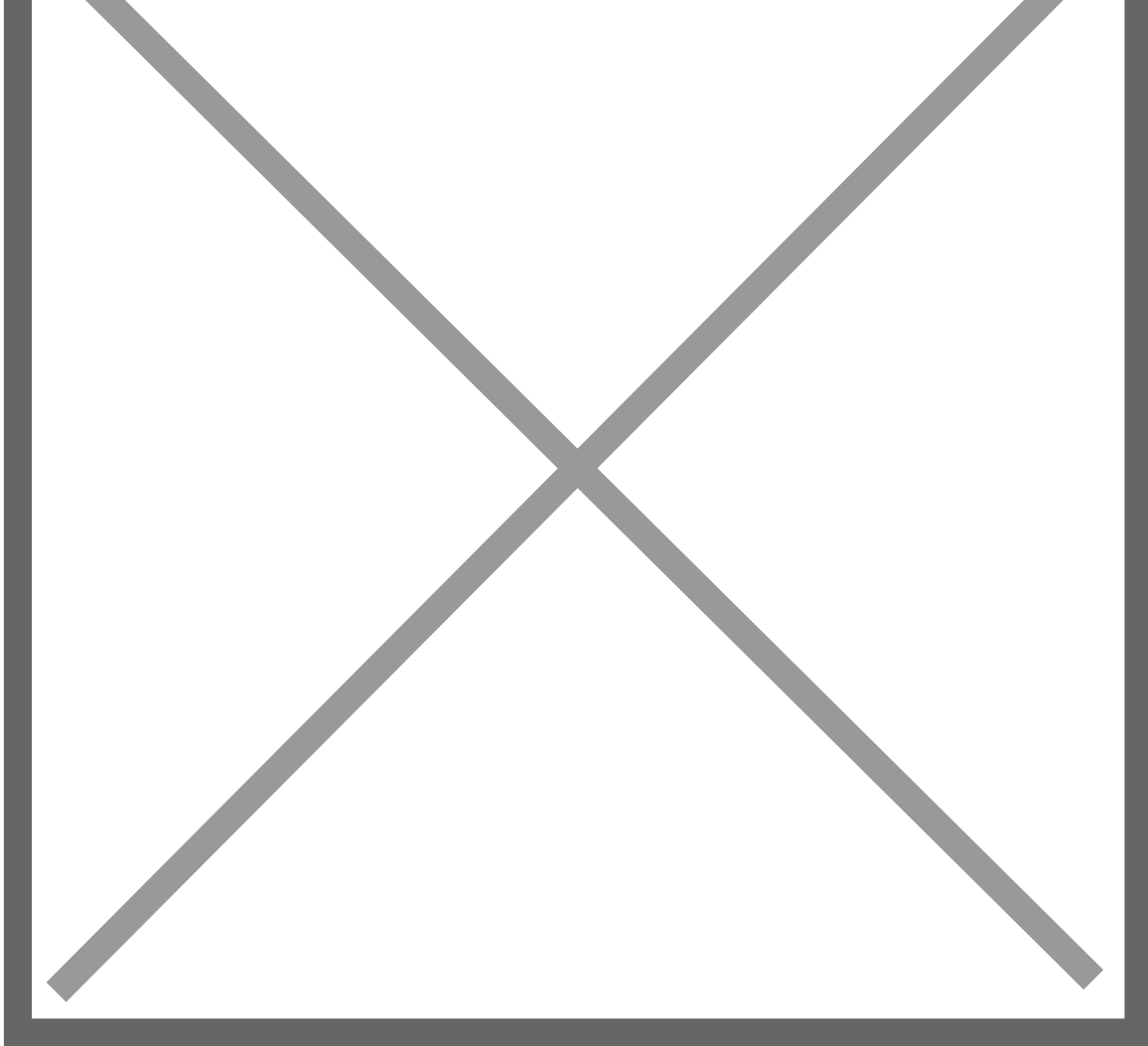


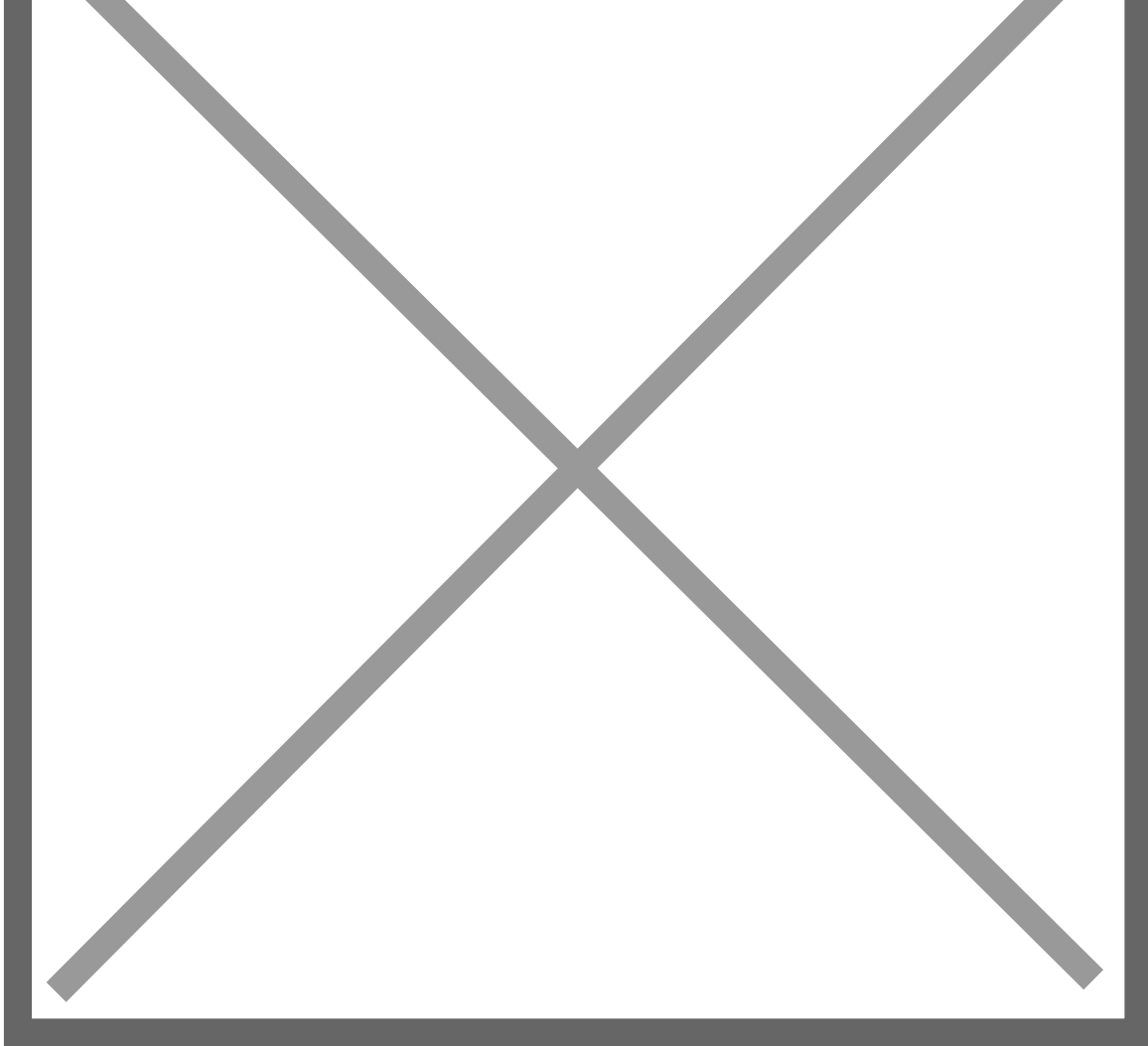


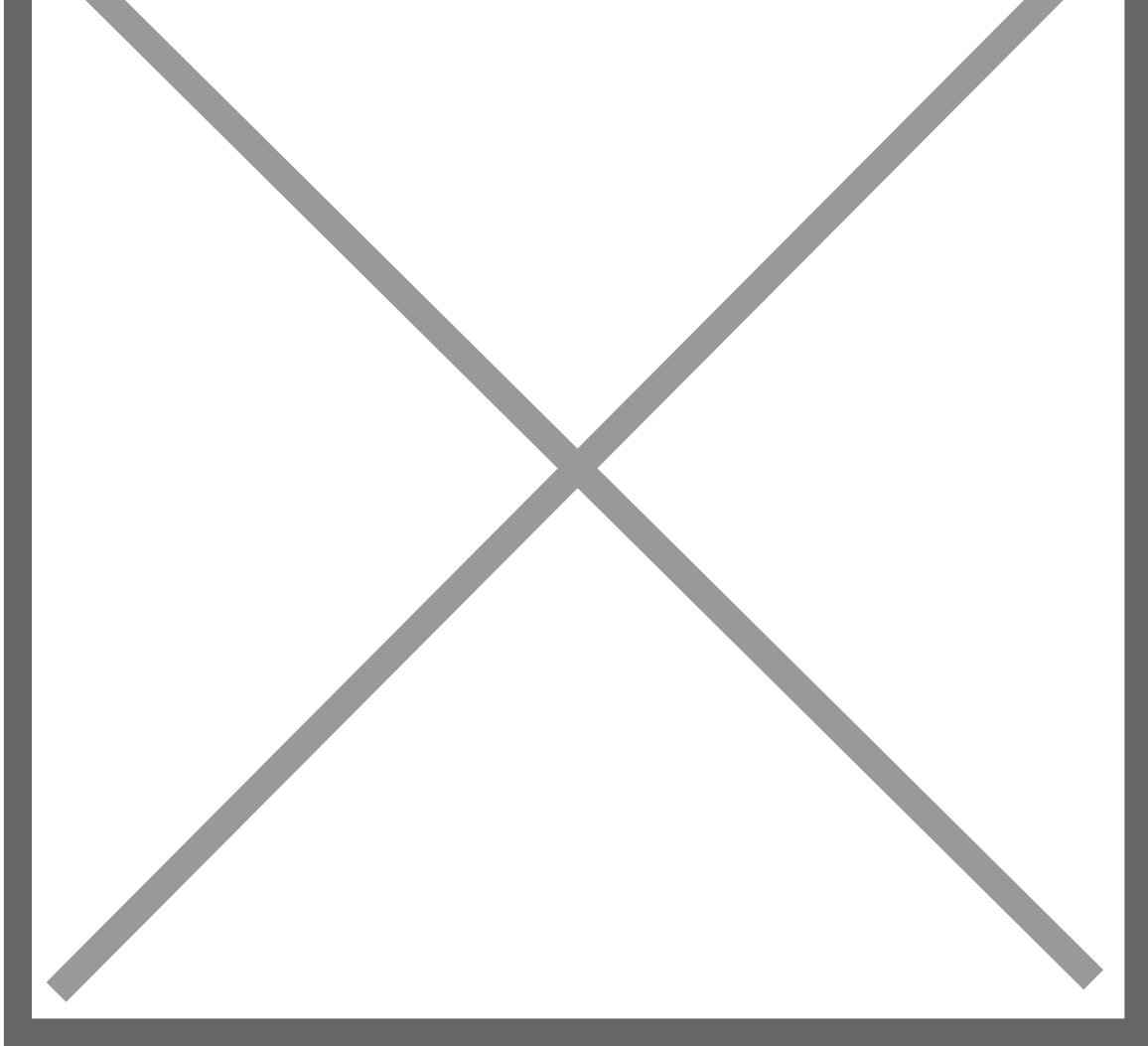


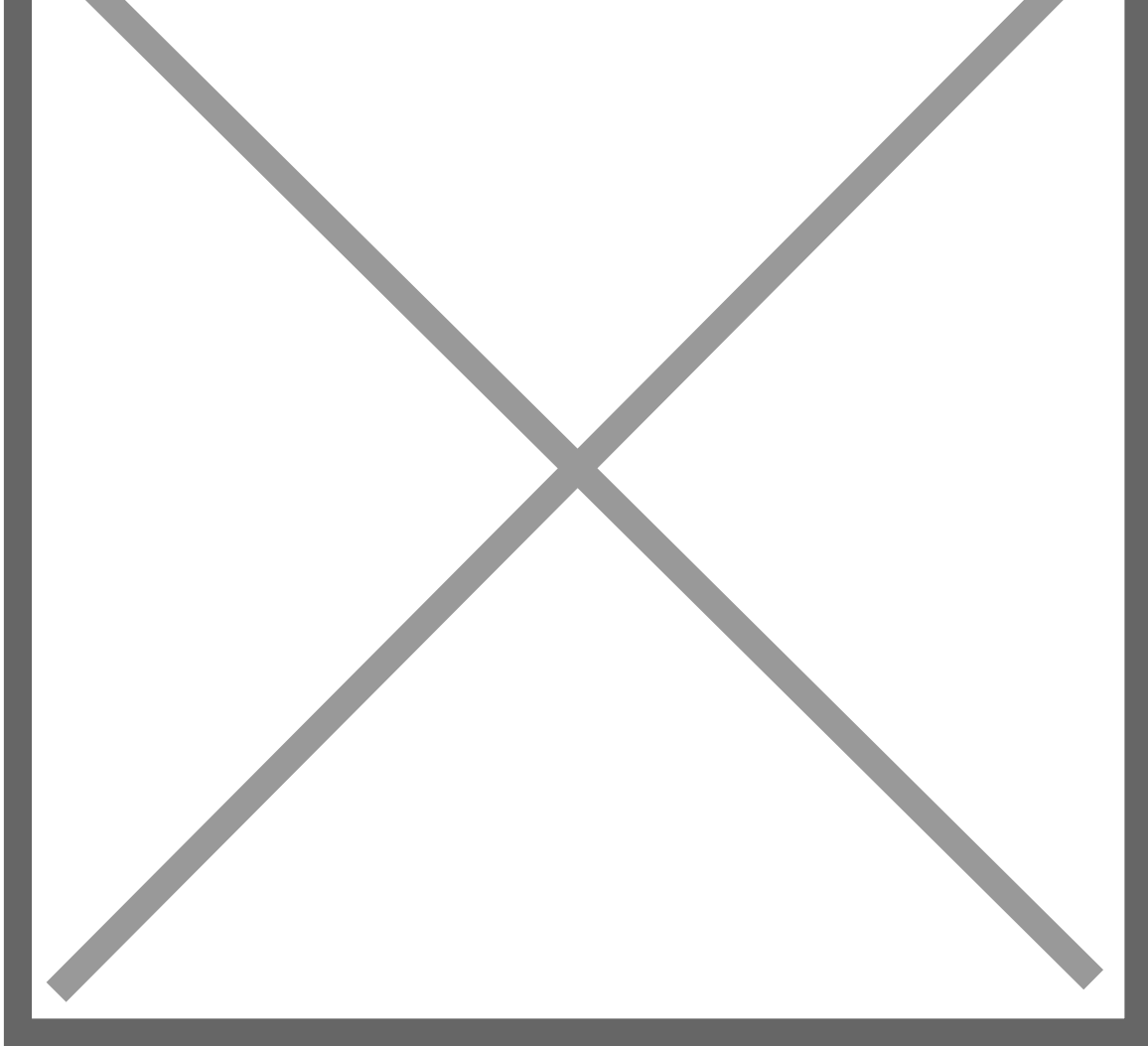


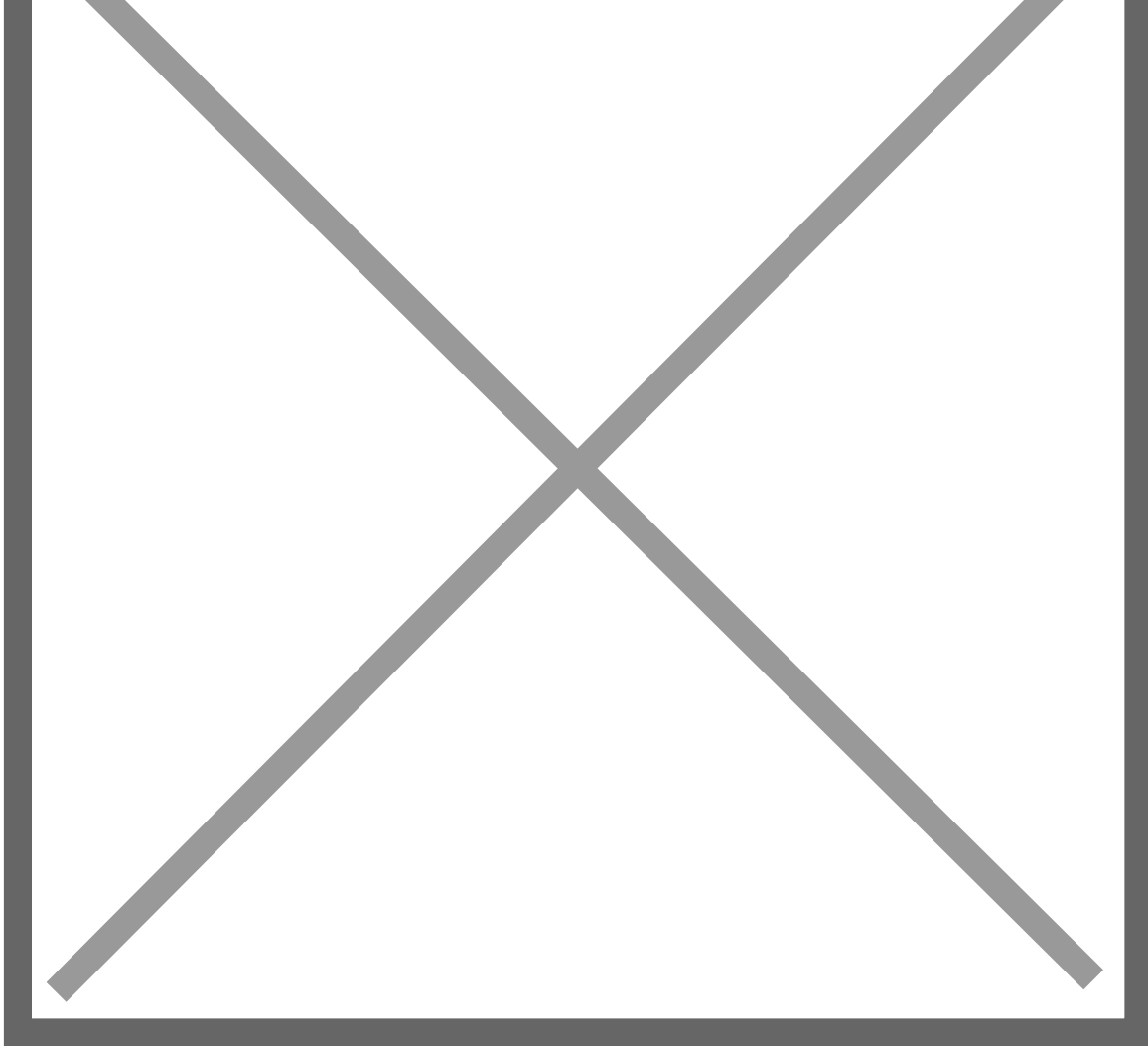


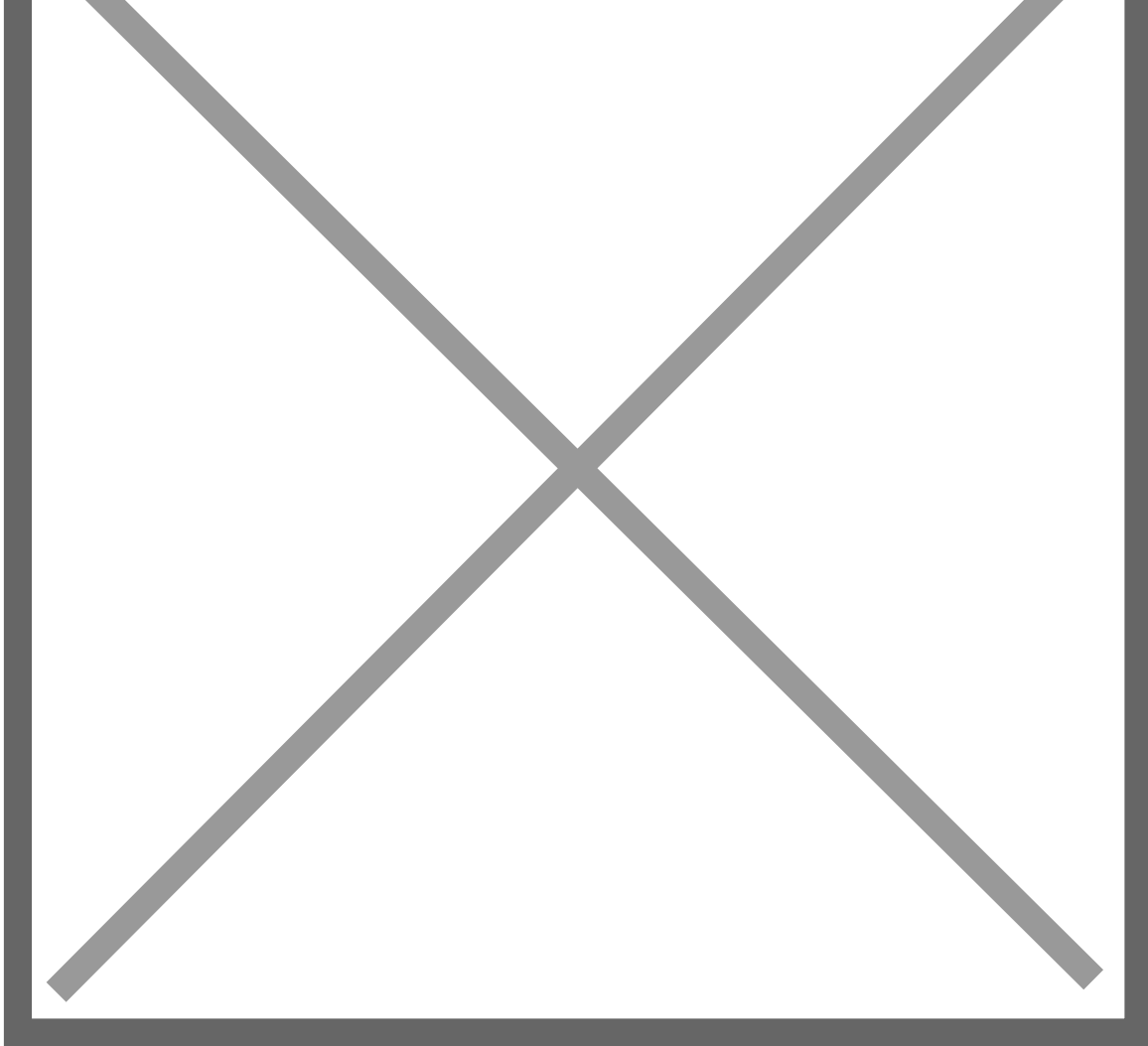


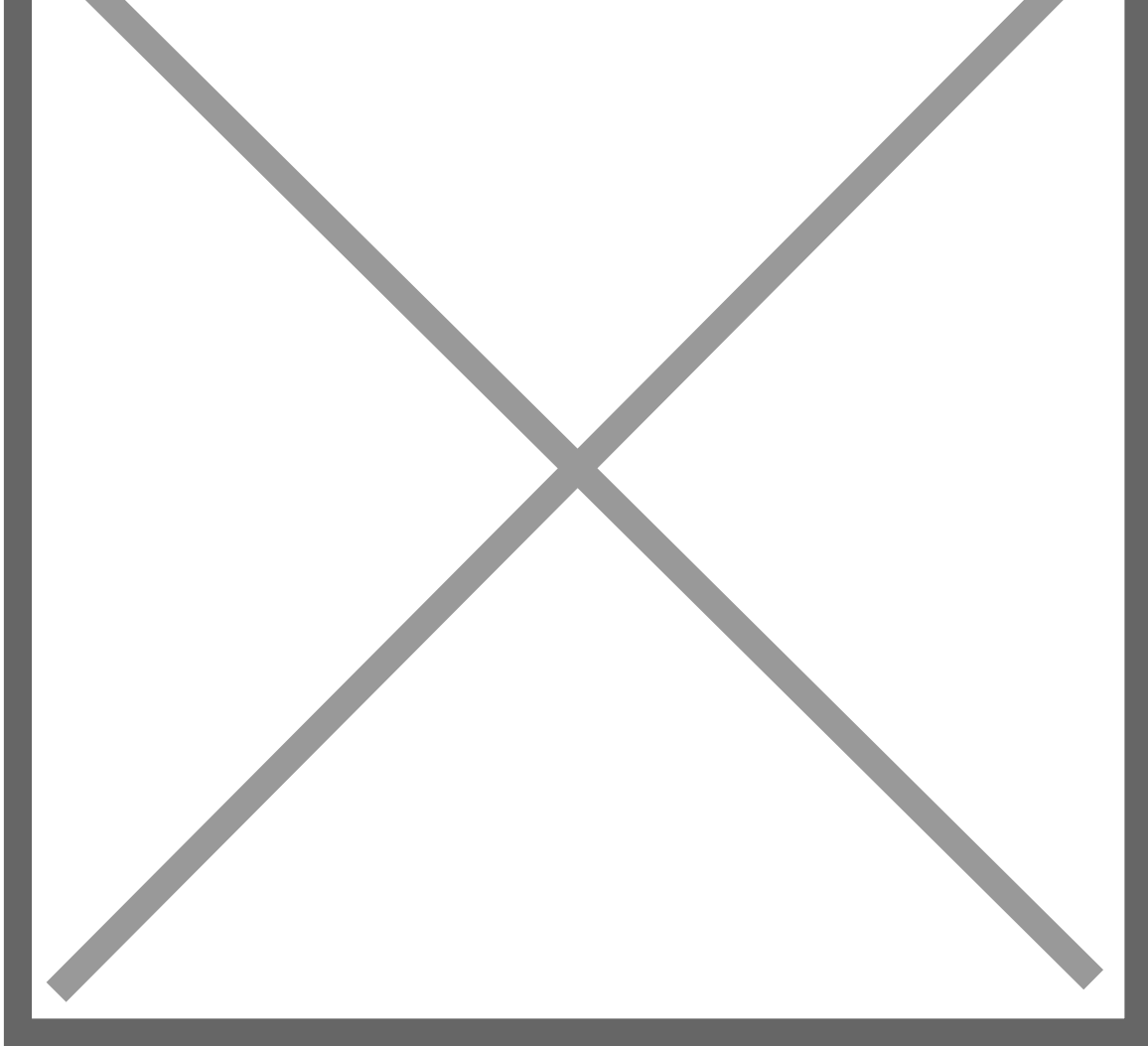












survivor pays his tribute

By MICHAEL ZEKULICH

CRETE: As a boy, Kalinikos Spitadakis risked his life to carry food to Australian soldiers hiding on Crete in 1941.

Yesterday, one of those soldiers showed his gratitude at a special ceremony at the 500-year-old Preveli monastery.

Head monk Kalinikos Spitadakis, now 60, beamed with pleasure as a water fountain burst into life for the first time at the monastery.

It was paid for by Geoff and Beryl Edwards, of Armadale, to mark the friendship, shelter and escape assistance provided for hundreds of allied soldiers by the monastery and the local people.

Mr Edwards, now 72, was trapped on Crete as a young soldier and he never forgot the heroism of the monks and the people of the nearby village who lived in constant fear of reprisals from the invading German troops. Twice the Germans looted the monastery.

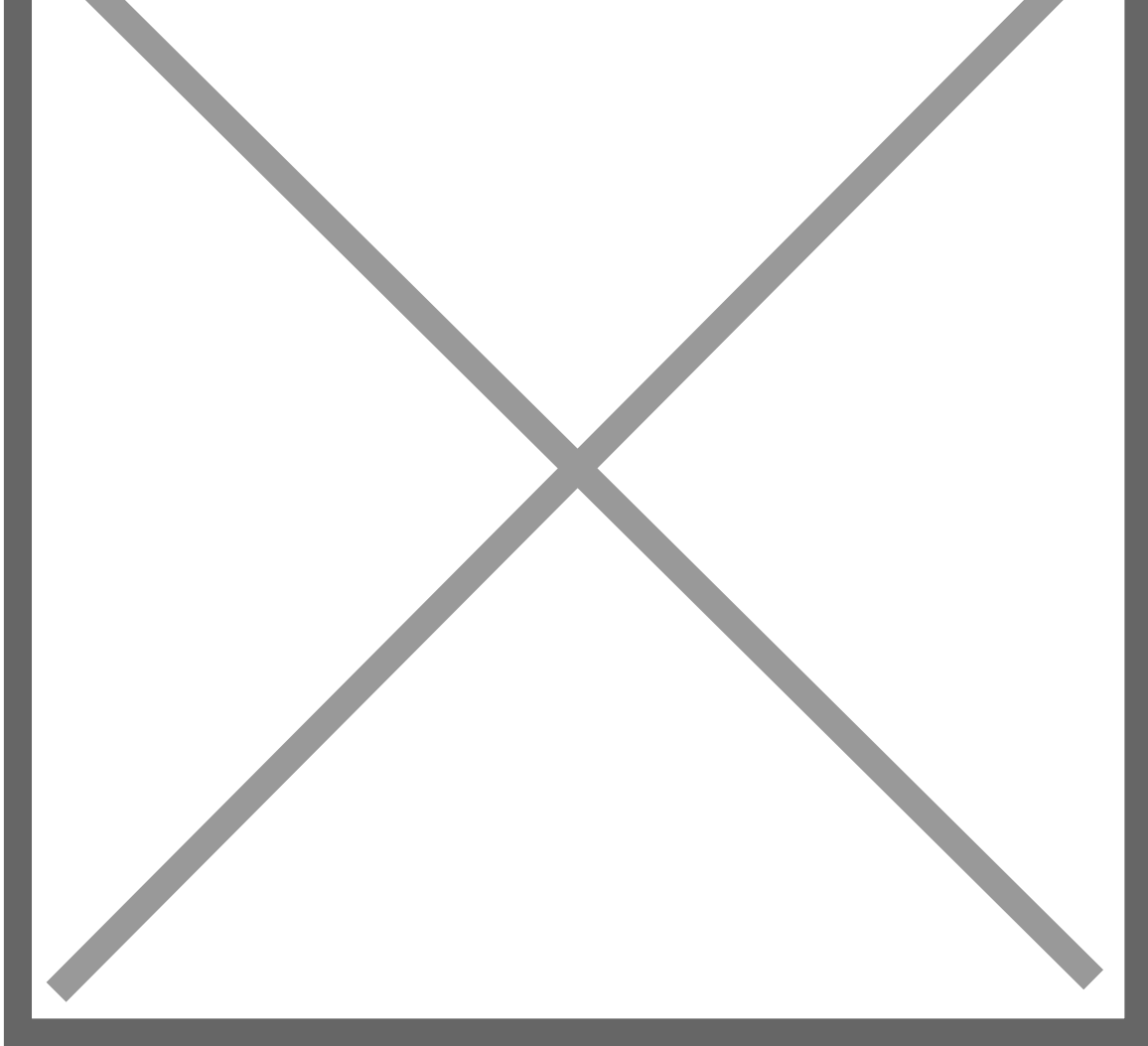
Mr Edwards raised money for the water fountain with his book, "Road to Preveli", about the war and his escape in a daring British submarine rescue off a small beach just below the monastery.

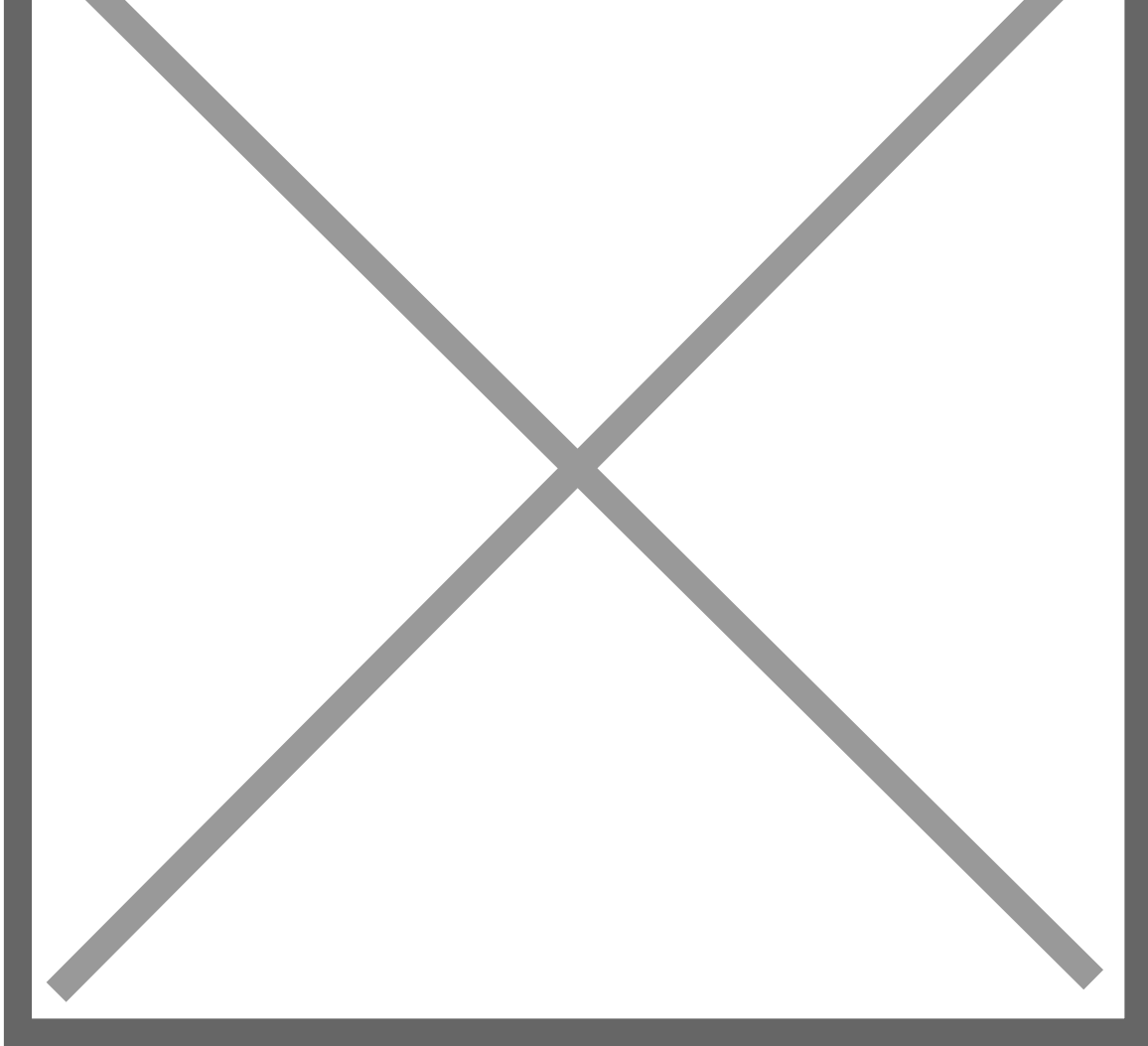
But his first acknowledgement for the help was to name property he owned at Margaret River, Prevelly. Then he and his wife donated land and built a Greek church at Prevelly, overlooking the Indian Ocean, and gave it to the Greek community.

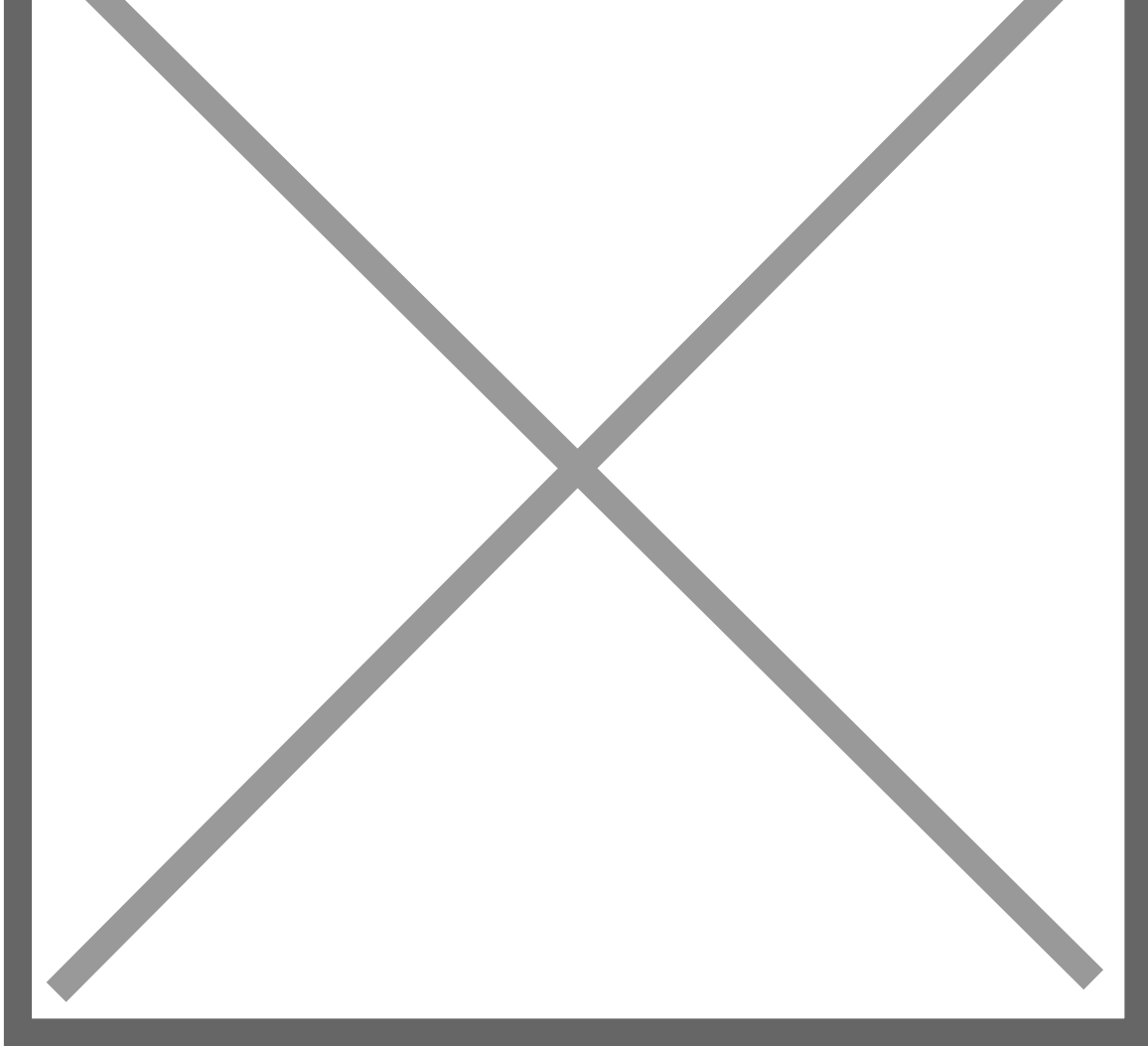
He said he would never forget what the Cretans and the monastery — a rallying point for soldiers after the Battle of Crete — had done and the fountain was his tribute.

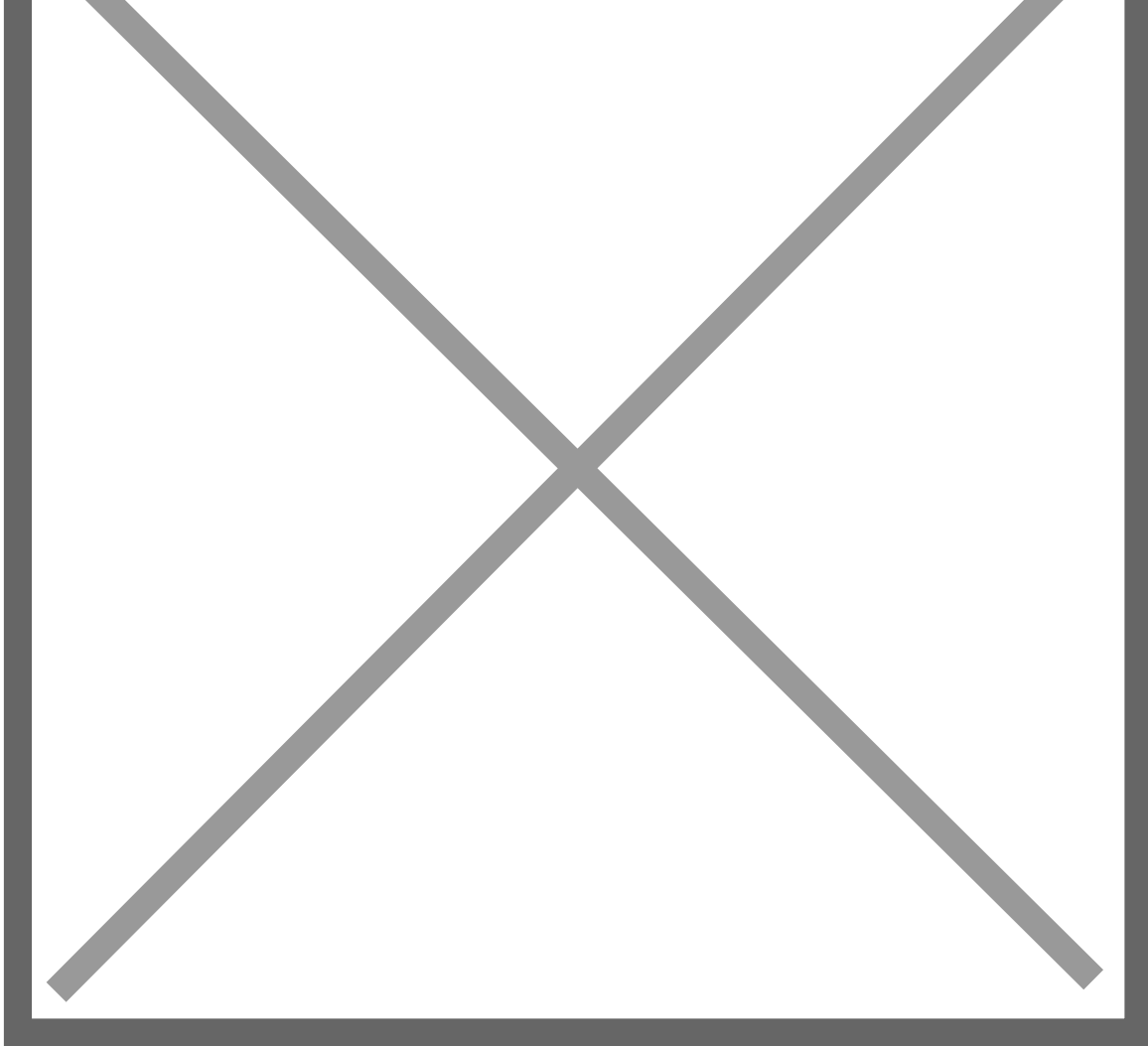


LIFETIME FRIENDSHIP: Geoff Edwards, of Armadale, is greeted by Kalinikos Spitadakis who, as a boy, aided soldiers trapped on Crete. Picture: NIC ELLIS

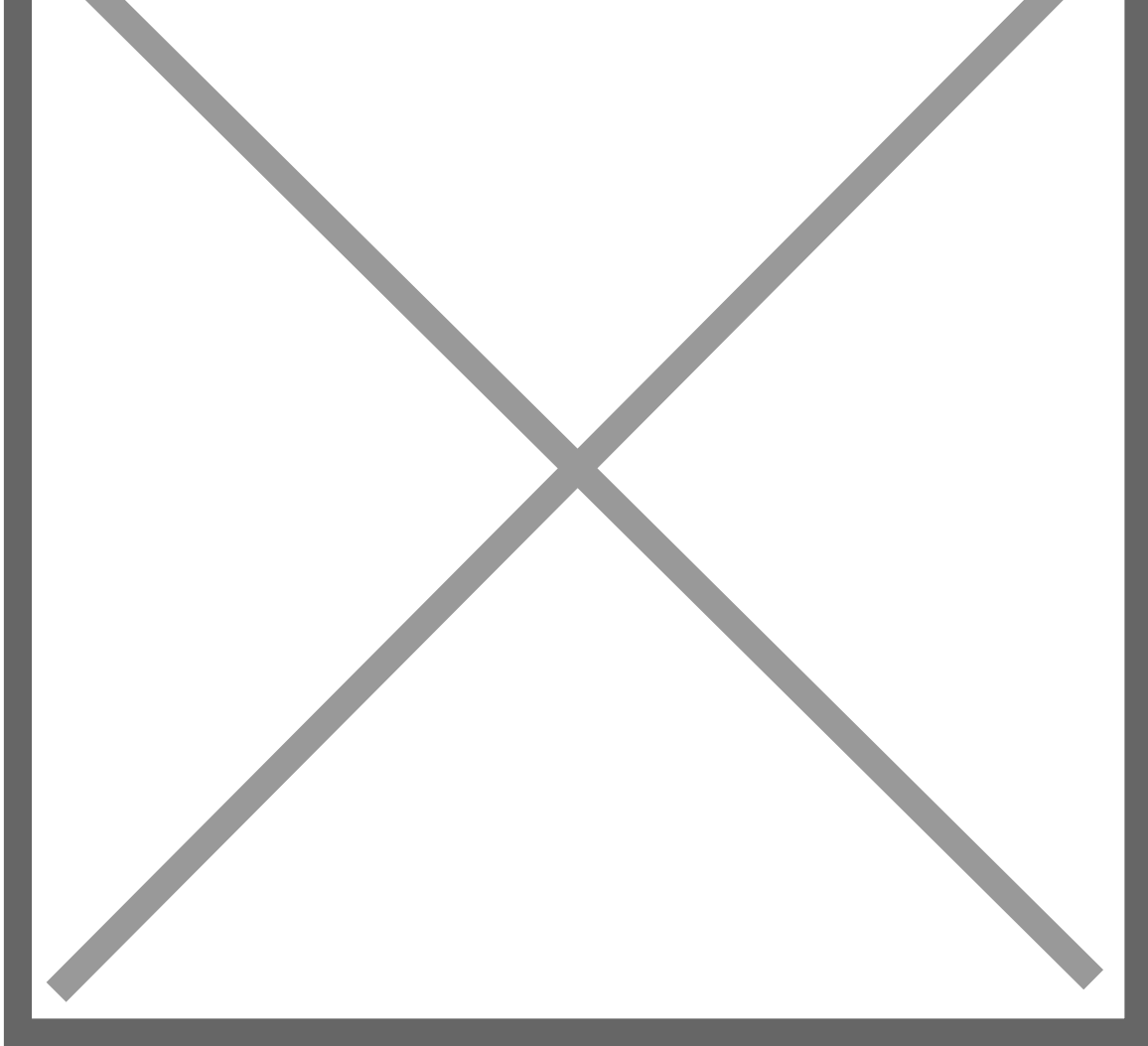


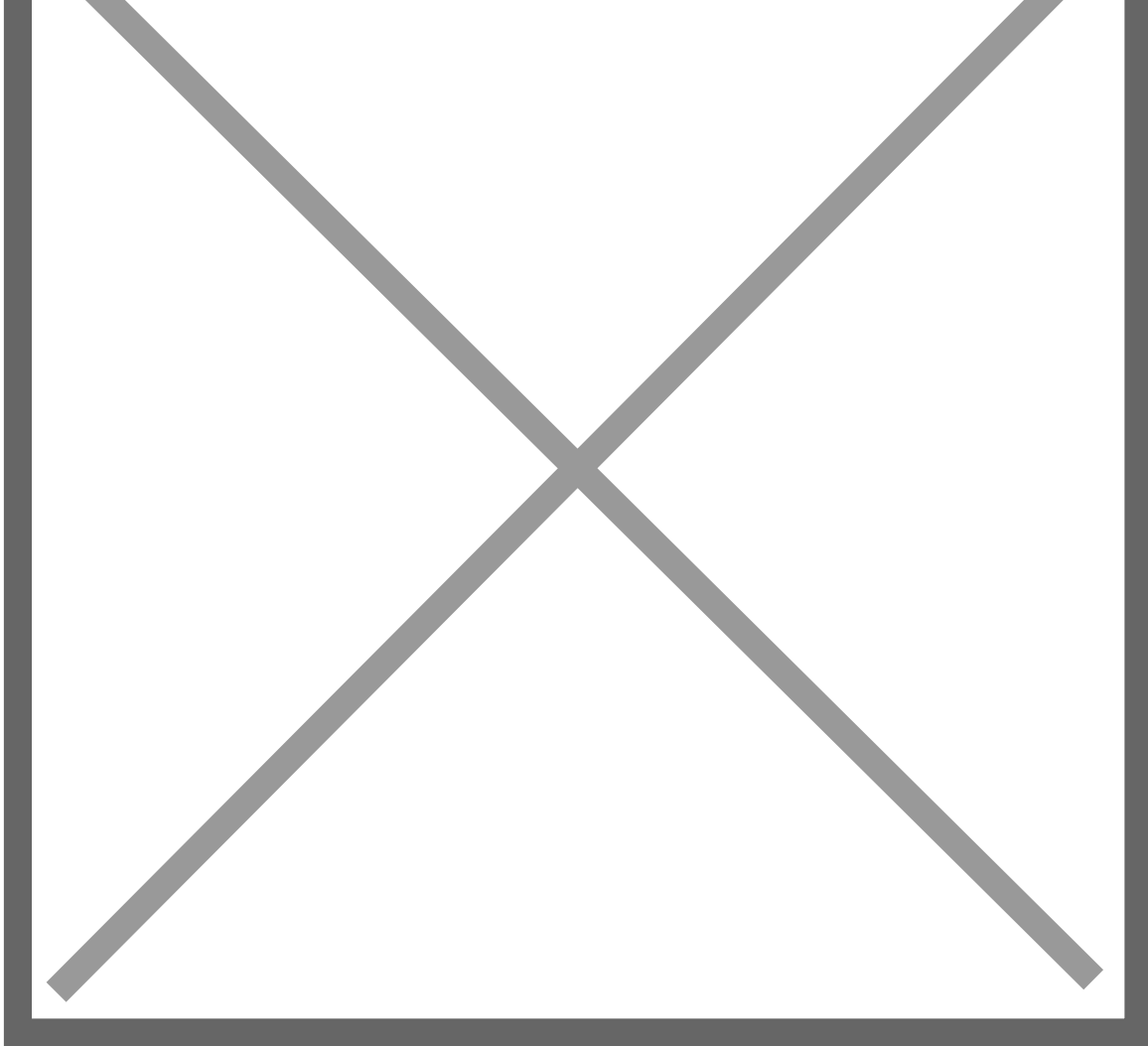




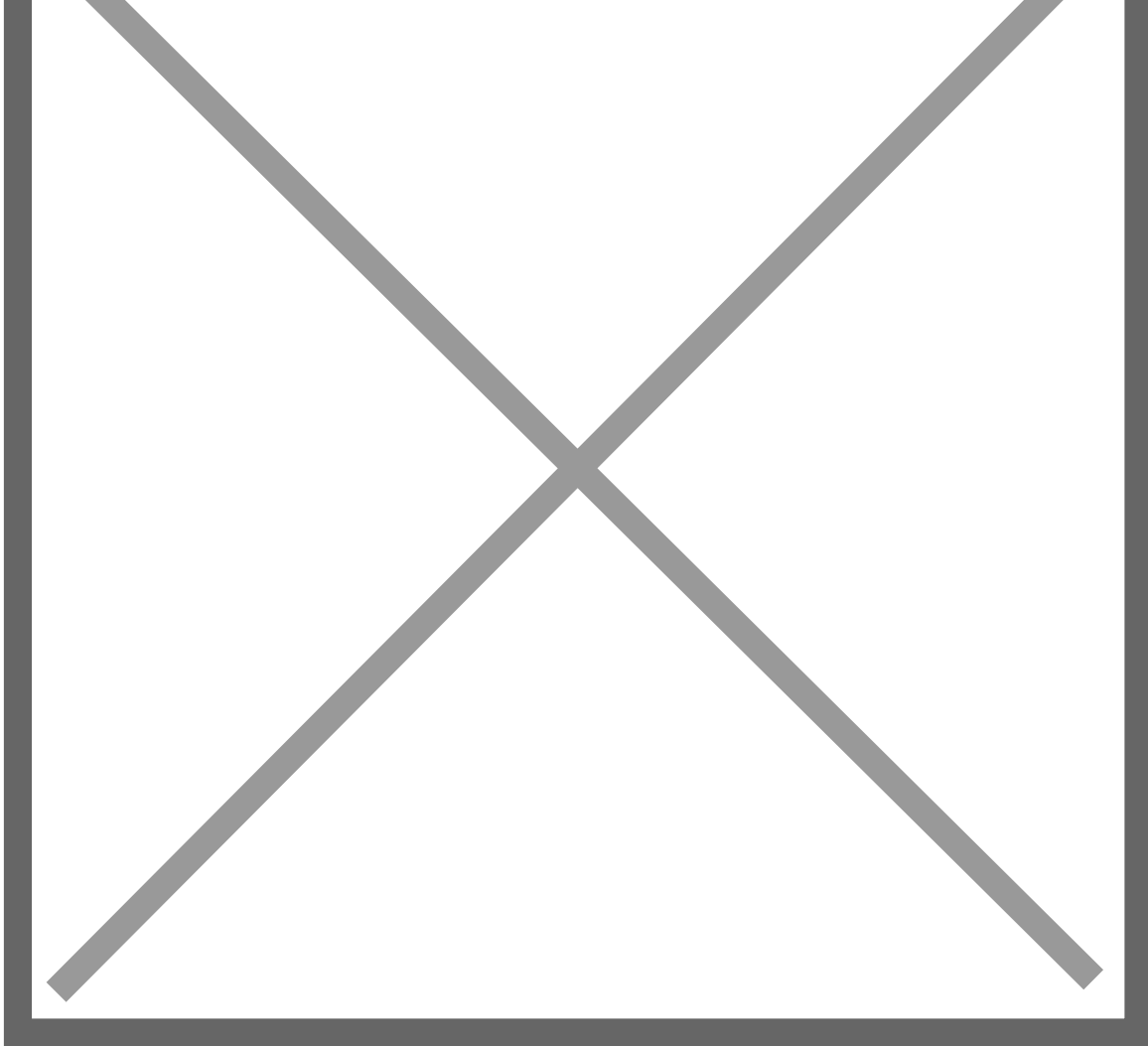












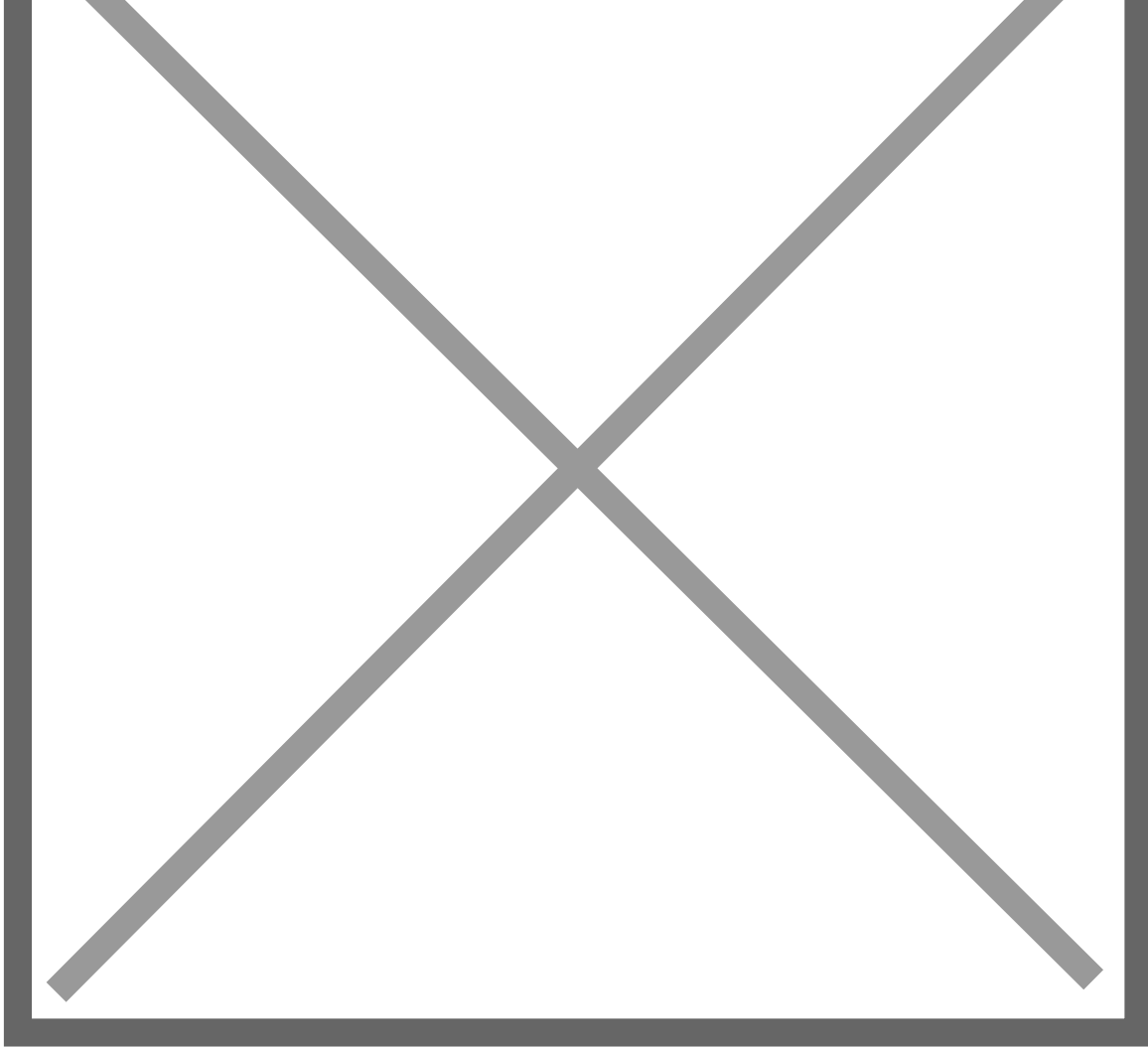
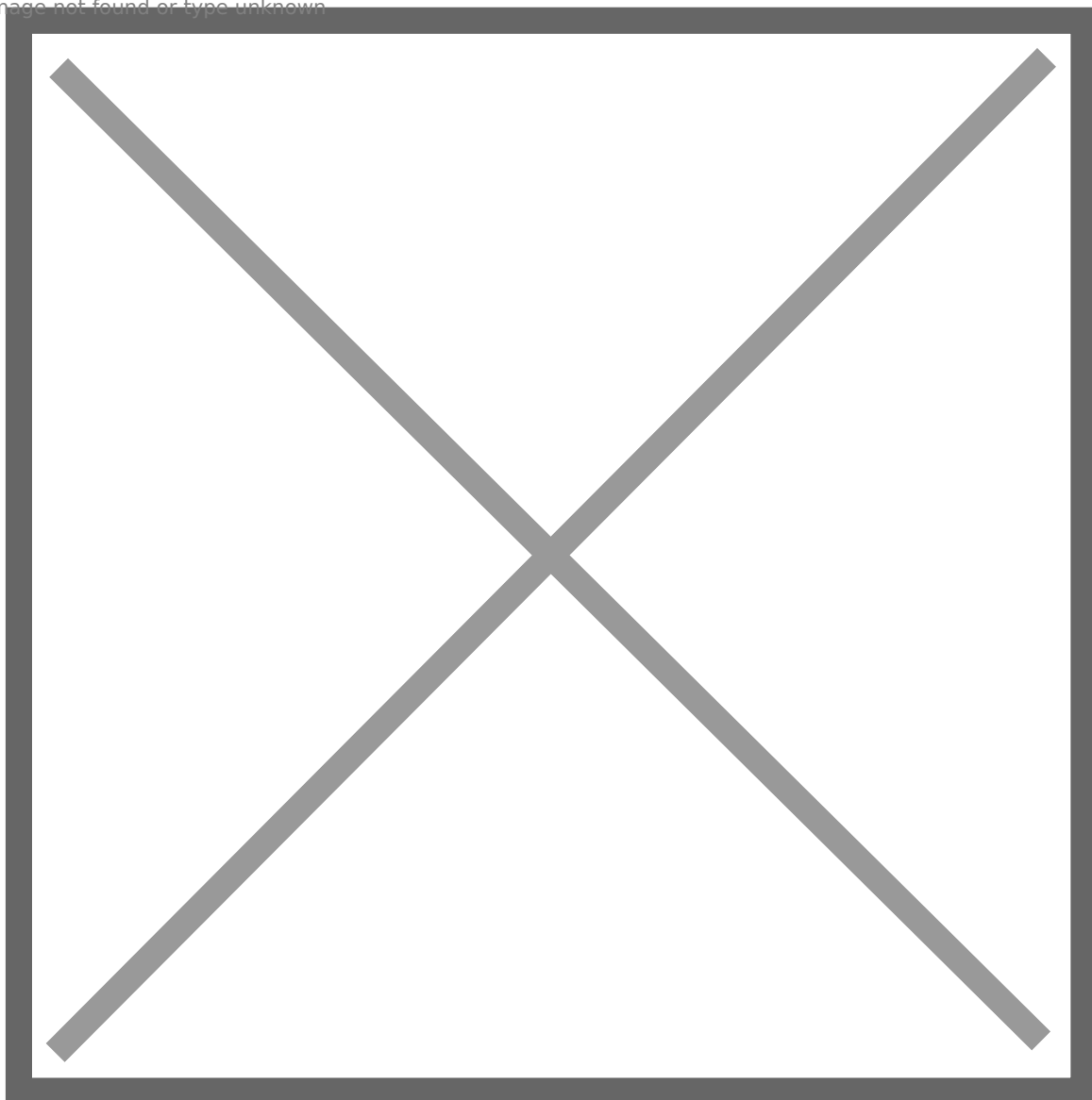


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