



## Distributed Data Processing

Distributed data processing allows multiple computers to be used anywhere in a fair. One computer is designated as the primary or master computer. The master computer has full access to the FairPlus! program. Up to 99 remote or slave computers can be used to enter methods, premiums, departments, divisions, classes, exhibitors, and posting information. The remote computers do not have access to the financial data.

It is important to plan how to set up the primary and remote computers before the distributed data processing utility is configured. Decide which computer is the primary computer. Only one system can be used as the primary computer. It must be designated as machine number 1. All the remote computers are set up using machine numbers 2 through 99. It is important the computer numbers be assigned and that they are not duplicated. For example, if two computers are designated as computer number 4, it causes fatal errors with the data. Also, decide on machine names for the remote computers that describe where the systems are being used. As an example, use the name "Beef Shows" for a computer being used for those shows.

A fair supervisor password needs to be established before configuring distributed data processing. See the Password Entry tip sheet for more information.



Do not restore information from another system using the Backup utility because it corrupts the data. Be sure to use only the exchange files to move data between the primary and remote computers.

### Synchronize System Dates

Distributed data processing uses time stamping to keep track of the data to be added to the primary and remote computers. Changes are marked with the time of the change.

The program uses the most current record by reviewing the time stamps when the data is loaded. In order for this to work correctly, it is important the system date and time is coordinated or synchronized between each computer. It works best to have the computers close to one another when this is done.

## Who Am I?

1. Click **Go to > Main > Who Am I?** See Figure 1.

The screenshot shows a web interface for 'Who Am I?'. On the left, there are four input fields: 'Machine Id Number' with the value '1', 'Machine Id Name' with 'Sharon', 'System Time' with '6/5/2006 1:00:44 PM', and 'Fair Name' with 'County Fair'. Below these is a note: 'Note: The Fair Name can only be set via [Goto] [Distributed Data Processing] [Setup] [Set Machine Id / Fair Name]'. At the bottom is a 'Return' button. On the right, an 'Information:' box contains text explaining machine IDs: '0' for no setup, '1' for master/main machine, and '2-98' for remote posting machines. It also mentions that all machines must have the same Fair Name for data exchange.

**Figure 1. Who Am I?**

2. Display this screen for each computer being used in distributed data processing.
3. This is a display-only screen. Compare the date and system time for each computer.



Be sure that the am or pm is correct for each computer. Data will be lost if one computer is using am and another computer is using pm.

## Change Date and System Time

1. Close the FairPlus! program.

2. Right-click the time located in the lower, right-hand corner of the Windows screen.



3. Left-click **Adjust Date/Time**. The *Date/Time Properties* window displays.
4. Make adjustments as needed.

## Setup

Add the machine ID after the system date and time are coordinated. Remember, the primary or master computer must be machine number 1. Only one system can be the primary computer. Make a note of the unique machine number and machine name for each of the remote or slave computers.

### Primary Computer Setup

1. On the primary computer, click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Setup > Set Machine ID/Fair Name**. See Figure 2.

A screenshot of a Windows dialog box titled "Set Machine Id Number and Name...". The dialog has a light blue background. On the left, there is a text input field labeled "Enter Fair Name:" with the text "County Fair" entered. In the center, there is a section titled "Machine Id..." containing two input fields: "Machine Number:" with the value "1" and "Machine Name:" with the text "Sharon" entered. On the right side, there is a "NOTE:" section with the following text: "NOTE: The main computer must be set to number '1'. Only one of the fair computers (if you are doing remote posting with multiple computers) can be set to number '1' or you will experience fatal errors. You have been warned!" Below the note is another note: "Note: After entering a Machine Id Number (or changing the number) the program will close and exit automatically. Re-enter to correctly set all menu features!". At the bottom right of the dialog is a yellow button labeled "Save / Return".

**Figure 2. Set Machine ID & Name**

2. Enter the **fair supervisor password** in the *Password* field. Press **Enter**.
3. Enter **1** in the *machine ID number* field. Press **Enter**.
4. Enter a **descriptive name** in the *Name* field. Press **Enter**.
5. Enter the **fair name**.
6. Click **Save/Return**. The program closes and updates the machine information.

### Remote Computer Setup

1. On the primary computer, click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Setup > Set Machine ID/Fair Name**.

2. Enter the **fair supervisor password** in the *Password* field. Press **Enter**.
3. Enter a number from **2** through **99** in the *machine ID number* field. Press **Enter**.
4. Enter a **descriptive name** in the *Name* field. Press **Enter**.
5. Enter the **fair name**.
6. Click **Save/Return**. The program closes and updates the machine information.



Reopen the program on the master computer and the slave computers. Display the *Who Am I?* screen. Confirm the date and system time are coordinated. Also, be sure the fair name is the same for all computers.

### Select Exchange Media

One of three types of media is used to exchange files: 3 ½” diskettes, zip disks, or USB flash disks. The network option is currently unavailable. The USB flash disk is the most reliable method. Complete the exchange media selection on the master computer and on all the slave computers. The USB flash disk is used to illustrate the process.



Be sure the USB flash disk is empty. With the diskette exchange method, use a new box of diskettes and plan on using two diskettes in the event one of them fails.

1. Click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Setup > Select Exchange Method**.
2. Click the **USB Flash Disk** tab.
3. Insert the USB flash drive.
4. Select the **disk drive letter**.



Use Windows Explorer to locate the USB disk drive letter. Right-click the Start button, and left-click Explore. Look for the USB Memory drive letter.

5. Click the **Test Flash Disk Now** button.
6. Click **OK** to confirm the flash disk tests OK.

## Initialize Time Stamps

Time stamps are used to establish a base time for the data so the program knows which data to add. Set time stamps for the data on the master computer and **not** on the slave computers. This ensures that fresh time stamps are available for the current fair.



Time stamps are initialized only on the master computer and are done one time only during a fair! **Do not** initialize time stamps a second time because data will be lost when it is exchanged between the master computer and the slave computers. Please contact the Communications and Technology office when it appears there are problems with the time stamps.

1. Click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Distributed Data Utilities > Initialize Time Stamps.**
2. Enter the **fair supervisor password.** Press **Enter.**
3. Click the **Initialize Time Stamps** button.

## Data Exchange File

The data exchange file is the method used to move information between computers.

1. Click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Create.** The Create Data Distribution File screen displays. See Figure 3 on page 6.
2. Click **Clear and create new file.** This is the preferred method of creating a file over appending the data to an existing file.
3. Click **All exhibitors for item entry in selected departments.**
4. Click **Build by Department.**
5. Click the **All** button to select all the departments.
6. Click **Create/Append Exchange File** button.
7. Click **Exit** when the process is completed.

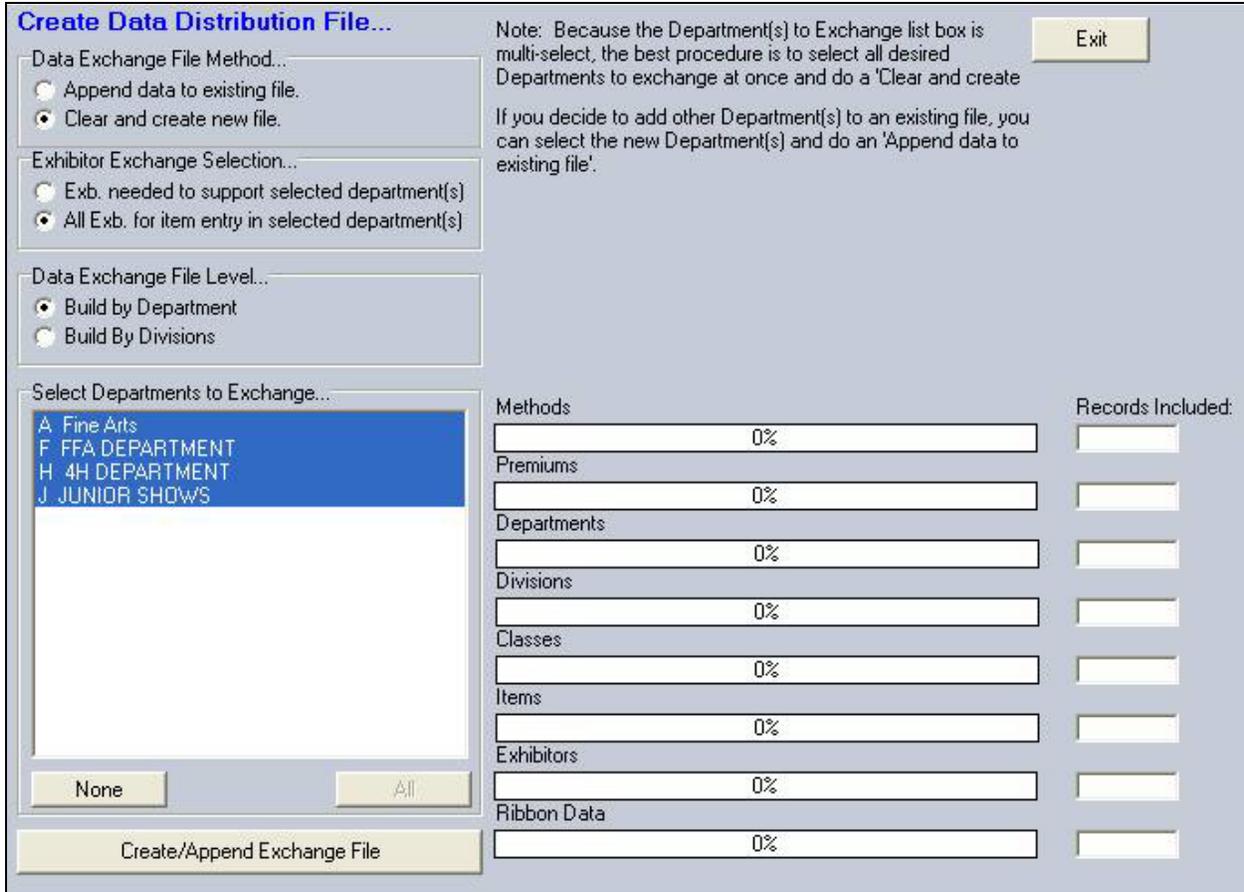


Figure 3. Create Data Distribution File

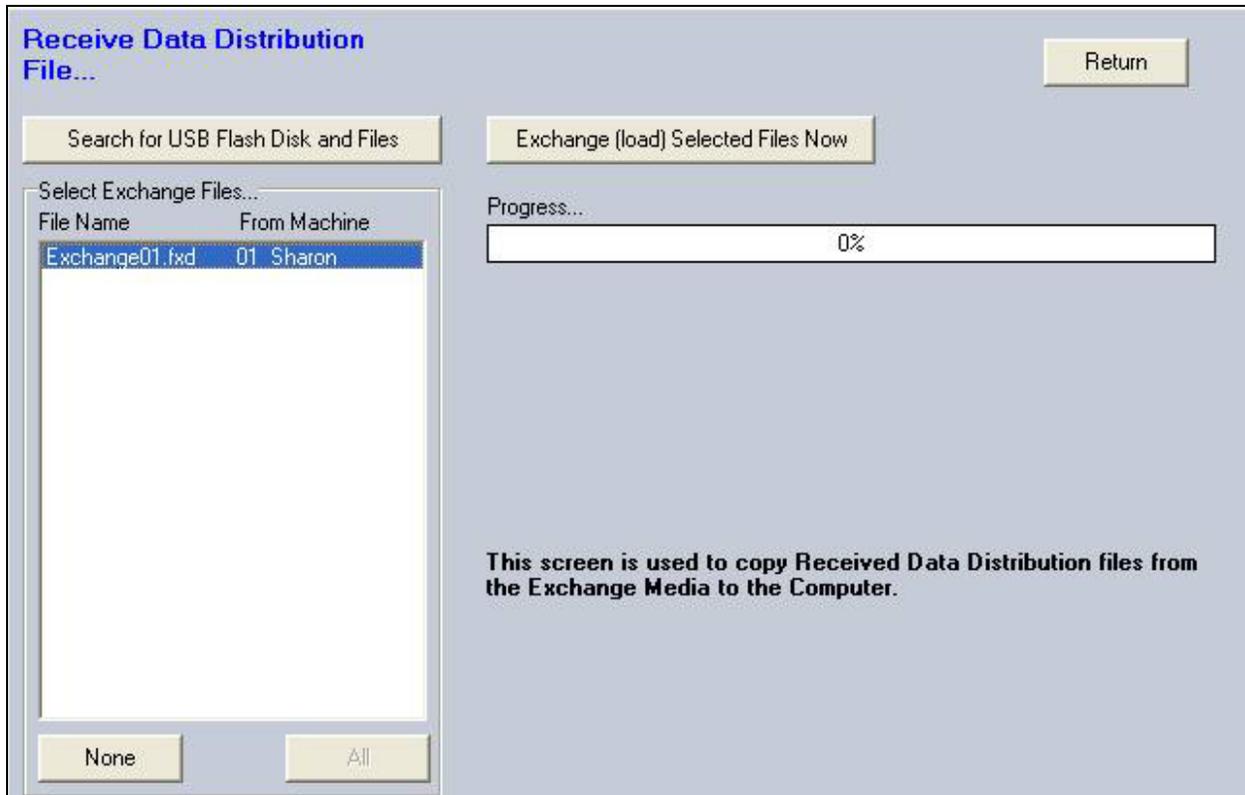
## Copy the Data Exchange File

1. Click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Exchange > Copy Files to USB Flash Disk**. The Sending Data Distribution File screen displays.
2. Insert the USB flash drive.
3. Click the **Check USB Flash Disk** button. The program searches for a valid USB flash disk. The other buttons in the section are active when the disk passes the test.
4. Click the **List Files** button to be sure the disk does not have files on it. Files display in the *Files Found* section.
5. Click the **Clear USB Flash Disk** button to delete files on the disk. The progress bar shows 100% when completed.
6. Click the **Copy Data Exchange File** button. Wait for the progress bar to show 100% and the hourglass cursor to clear. The exchange file is copied to the USB disk.

## Load the Data Exchange File

After copying the exchange file, take the USB flash disk to the slave computer to load the data.

1. On the remote or slave computer, click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Exchange > Copy Files from USB Flash Disk**. The *Receive Data Distribution File* screen displays. See Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Load Data Distribution File**

2. Insert the USB flash disk.
3. Click **Search for USB Flash Disk and Files**. The file name and machine description display in the *Select Exchange Files to Load* list.
4. Highlight the file.
5. Click the **Exchange (Load) Selected Files** button. The data exchange file is copied to the hard drive. The progress bar shows 100% when completed.



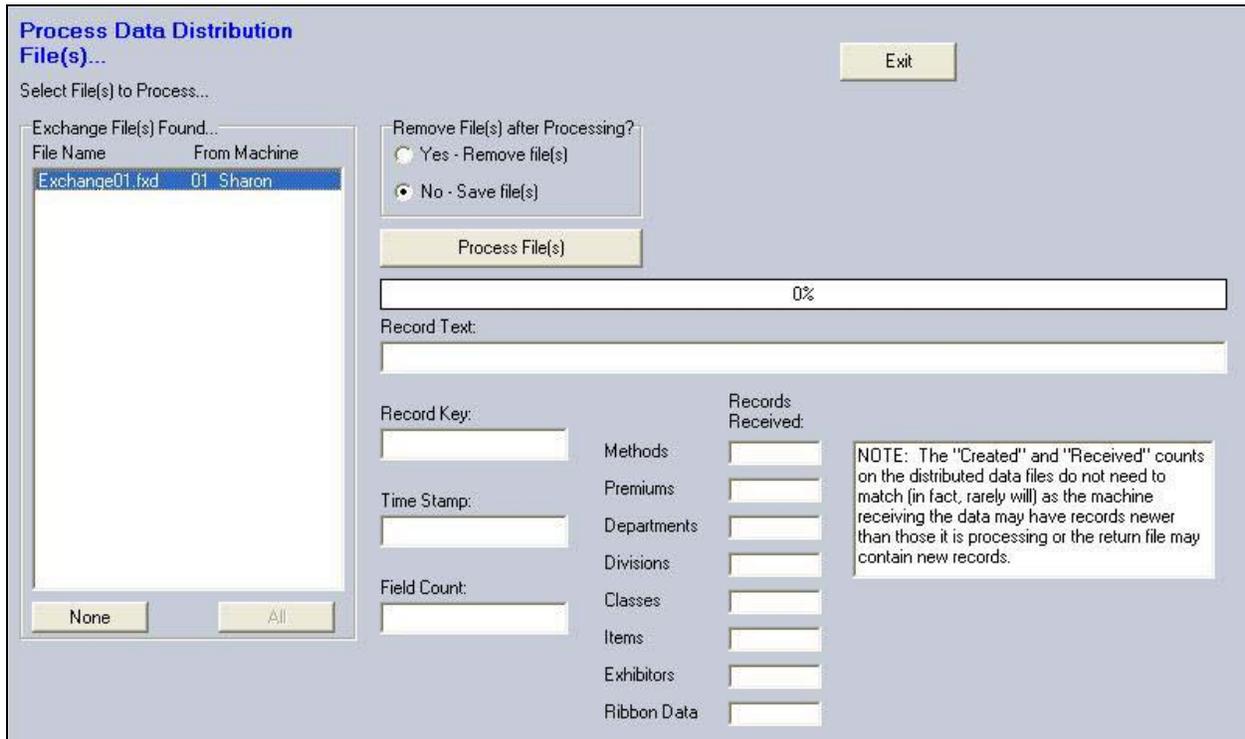
Loading the file does not add the data to the program. Be sure to process the file after it is loaded.

6. Click the **Return** button.

## Process the Data Exchange File

Processing the file actually adds the data to the program.

1. Click **Go to > Distributed Data Processing > Process**. See Figure 5.



**Figure 5. Process Exchange File**

2. Highlight the **exchange file**.
3. Click **No** to delete the file after processing.
4. Click the **Process Files** button. The progress bar displays 100% when completed.
5. Click **Exit**.
6. Click **Update Disk** on the toolbar to ensure the newly loaded data is saved to the hard drive.