



## ToolTrakka Bulletin

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### ToolTrakka's Backup Utility

ToolTrakka's backup utility was developed to solve the reasonably rare problem where a customer's network is so slow that it interferes with the operation of ToolTrakka. The problem is that the response to database interactions takes an inordinately long time to complete. This is disconcerting for the users and can cause loss of data if the application times out during a save process.

This problem can occur in large mine sites and construction facilities where the network servers can be a long way away from the tool store, perhaps even away from the site. It rarely occurs when the servers are located on the same site as the tool store or even in the same building.

**We strongly recommend that you don't use this utility unless you have performance problems as described above and you IT people cannot resolve them. This should be a last ditch solution.**

The usual installation configuration for ToolTrakka software is to run the application on local computers and move the data file to a network drive where it will be backed up by the IT department as a standard part of their operation. This also facilitates multi-user operation. If your network is too slow and is causing the problems that are mentioned above one solution is to move the data file back onto the local computer. This solves the slow response problem but brings problems of its own as follows...

1. The data file is now not backed up automatically
2. Multi user capability is lost

Our Backup Utility was developed to resolve these two problems. While it takes care of the first problem. Some minor issues will still remain in the second problem and these will be discussed herein.

#### **So how does it work?**

If you want to apply this solution the first thing to do is to move your data file back to the tool store PC running ToolTrakka. We recommend that the best location for this file is c:\ProgramData\RGA\ToolTrakka\7 but you can choose to place it anywhere on the local PC.

Here we are assuming that your data file is up on a server somewhere and that you are not currently running ToolTrakka as a single user application with the data file already in its

default location (ie the folder mentioned above). If you are running as a single user application simply go straight to 'Setting up the backup utility'.

To move your data file back to the local PC follow these steps...

1. Check that there is not another file in the intended location called ttdata.mdb. If there is delete it. This process will fail if a duplicate file is already in the required folder.
2. Start ToolTrakka and go to Setup|Defaults Here you will see the current location of the TTdata file. Also you will see a button marked 'Move' Click this button and you will get a 'File Open' dialog.
3. Navigate to the folder where you want the file to end up (recommended above as c:\ProgramData\RGAToolTrakka\7).
4. In the 'File Open' dialog click 'Open' (or OK whatever)

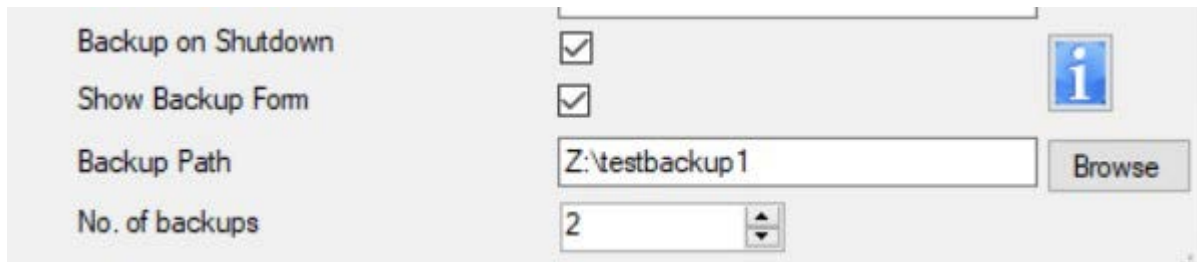
ToolTrakka will move the file from its original location and place it in the location you chose. It will also configure ToolTrakka to look for your data in this new location. You should now click the OK button on the setup form, shut down ToolTrakka to lock in the change and restart.

If everything is OK you will see the correct database file location in the status line at the bottom of the ToolTrakka window.

### Setting up the backup utility

Go to Setup|Defaults

The backup facility can be switched on and off and can be controlled by the local user. Controls have been added to the 'Setup defaults' form as below...

The image shows a screenshot of a software settings window for ToolTrakka. It contains four settings: 'Backup on Shutdown' with a checked checkbox, 'Show Backup Form' with a checked checkbox, 'Backup Path' with a text field containing 'Z:\testbackup1' and a 'Browse' button to its right, and 'No. of backups' with a spinner box set to '2'. An information icon (a blue 'i' in a square) is located in the top right corner of the dialog box.

The backup utility usually runs as ToolTrakka is shut down (usually at the end of day or shift). A menu item has also been added to the 'File' menu to allow the user to run a backup at any time

### **Backup on shutdown**

This check box switches backup on and off. With this 'off' the backup does not run either on application shutdown or from the 'File' menu. This is the default and would be the normal situation in a ToolTrakka installation that is not having performance problems as outlined above.

### **Show backup form**

The backup form comes up when ToolTrakka is being shut down (see below). This form can be prevented from displaying by checking this check box. A user may choose to do this if it is always required to run and the choice to skip is not required.

### **Backup path**

This is where the user specifies the location where the backup is to reside. This needs to be a location in a mapped drive. This is preferably a drive residing on the corporate network but it can be anywhere that the PC can reach.

Backing up to the slow running network drive exposes the system to the low performance in copying the file that caused the problem in the first place but, at least here, this is one single action and the delayed performance is more likely to be tolerated by the user just once it the shift or day.

You can type in the path that you require or you can click the 'Browse' button and navigate to the location where you want the backup to be saved. If you type this path make sure that you do not introduce a typing error. If you enter a folder that does not point to a valid location this will be picked up when you try to save your setting and you will not be able to save until a valid folder is entered.

### **Number of Backups**

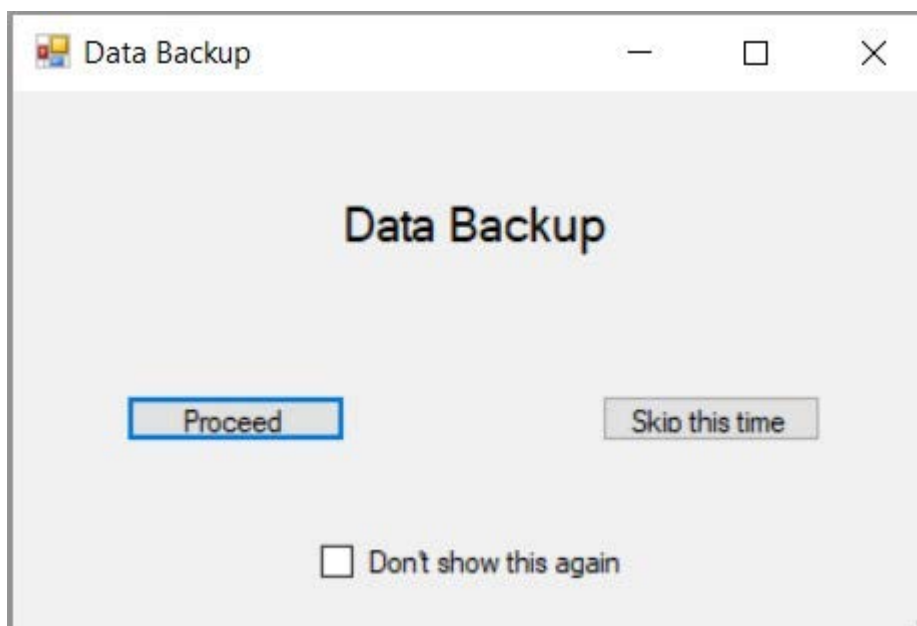
When ToolTrakka performs a backup it creates two copies of the local data file. The first is a direct copy with the same name as the original and the other is a copy that is renamed by adding today's date to the file name. You might ask why this is done. Well there are two reasons.

The direct named copy is created so that other users (eg manages etc) can still have multiuser access to ToolTrakka by connecting to this backup. With this access they can view data, run reports, look up items and do most other things except make any changes to the data. They also should keep in mind that the data they are seeing is up to 24 hours behind real time. This copy is over written by later backups to bring it to the current version.

The date stamped backup copy gets a file name such as ttdata20180305.mdb (adding today's date to the file name). If multiple backups are performed on a single day this file will also be overwritten each time. But once time passes to the next day a new file will be created with a name expressing the new date. The idea here is that, if the ToolTrakka data gets corrupted on the local machine previously captured backups will not be destroyed by backing up the corrupt data. The working data file can be restored from the previous backup (with an earlier date in the name). The default number of backups that are kept is set in this numeric list. The default is two but you can set it to any number up to five.

## Running a backup

In the normal run of business there is no need for the user to do anything to run a backup other than to shut down the application. When this occurs, and assuming that the 'Show Backup Form' setting is engaged the user is presented with a dialog box as below...



The user can instigate the backup by clicking the 'Proceed' button or abort the backup by clicking the 'Skip this time' button. If the user puts a tick in the 'Don't show this again' or the same facility is shut off in 'Setup|Defaults this form will not appear and a silent backup will be performed.

## Conclusion

While this utility is not a perfect solution to a slow running network causing poor service it does offer a reasonable solution. The local data file will provide excellent performance of the data modification functions in ToolTrakka especially that of uploading barcode scans. The backup will protect your valuable data by placing the data in a network location where your standard network backup strategy will do the rest.

Despite the localisation of the active data file to the local pc other users can still use ToolTrakka via the backed up data file. They do, however, have to remember that they cannot perform any work on their local PC that changes data and that the data they are viewing will be 24 hours out of date. They can still, however, run reports, view data and lookup information. This is not usually a major problem as the situation in a ToolTrakka installation usually boils down to a single user (eg the store man/woman or whatever)

performing all the activities with other users generally just using the application to run reports. If these users need a report to be up to date as of now they just need to wait until the end of day or the morning following to get the data they require. After all if you want a report up to the end of the month or end of the week or whatever why would you run this half way through the last day of the period?

If you have any problems with this utility please contact me at [ray.gudgeon@rga.com.au](mailto:ray.gudgeon@rga.com.au) or on 0419 274 264