


# THE DATA EXCHANGE

Moving Data between  
1-2-3<sup>®</sup>, dBase<sup>®</sup>,  
and Other Popular Programs



ALFRED  
POOR

---

# THE DATA EXCHANGE

MOVING DATA BETWEEN  
1-2-3<sup>®</sup>, dBASE<sup>®</sup>, AND  
OTHER POPULAR PROGRAMS

*Alfred Poor*

Dow Jones-Irwin  
Homewood, Illinois 60430

We recognize that certain terms in this book are trademarks, and we have made every effort to print these throughout the text with the capitalization and punctuation used by the holder of the trademark.

©RICHARD D. IRWIN, INC., 1990

Dow Jones-Irwin is a trademark of Dow Jones & Company, Inc.

*All rights reserved.* No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright holder.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that neither the author nor the publisher is engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

*From a Declaration of Principles jointly adopted by a Committee of the American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers.*

Sponsoring editor: Susan Glinert Stevens, Ph.D.

Project editor: Ethel Shiell

Production manager: Diane Palmer

Jacket design: Michael S. Finkelman

Compositor: Weimer Typesetting Company, Inc.

Typeface: 11/13 Century Schoolbook

Printer: The Maple-Vail Book Manufacturing Group

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Poor, Alfred E.

The data exchange : moving data between 1-2-3, dBase, and other popular programs / by Alfred Poor.

p. cm.

ISBN 1-55623-281-0

1. Data base management. I. Title.

QA76.9.D3P66 1989

005.74—dc20

89-23361

CIP

*Printed in the United States of America*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 MP 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 9

# THE DATA EXCHANGE

MOVING DATA BETWEEN  
1-2-3<sup>®</sup>, dBASE<sup>®</sup>, AND  
OTHER POPULAR PROGRAMS

*This book is dedicated to the proposition that for every problem, no matter how complex and hopeless the situation may appear, there is at least one simple solution . . . and it is usually wrong.*

# LIST OF TRADEMARKS AND PRODUCTS

---

## **PUBLISHER OR MANUFACTURER, PRODUCT**

Adobe Systems, Inc.: PostScript  
Aldus Corporation: PageMaker  
Alpha Software: Keyworks, Alpha/three  
Apple Computer: Macintosh, MacPaint, Apple II  
Ashton-Tate: MultiMate, dBASE II, dBASE III, dBASE IV  
Autodesk, Inc.: AutoCAD  
Borland International: SideKick, Paradox, Sprint  
CompuServe Information Services: CompuServe  
Computer Associates: SuperCalc4  
Creative Synergy Corporation: Good Numbers  
DAC Software, Inc.: Dac Easy, Graph + Mate  
Data General Corporation: CEOwrite  
Datastorm Technologies: Procomm Plus  
Digital Equipment Corporation: DEC DX  
Digital Research Inc.: GEM Draw, GEM Paint  
Emulation Technologies, Inc.: Xchange  
Fifth Generation Systems, Inc.: The Logical Connection  
General Parametrics, Inc.: Video Show  
Great Plains Software: Great Plains Accounting Series, Import Manager, Report Maker Plus  
Hercules Computer Technology: Hercules Graphic Card  
Hewlett-Packard Corporation: LaserJet Series II

Inset Systems, Inc.: Inset and Hijaa k  
 International Business Machines: PC, XT, AT, Personal Series 2, PS2, DisplayWrite, DisplayWriter, Personal Decision Series, Personal Editor II  
 Iomega Corporation: Bernoulli Box  
 Lifetree Software Inc.: Volkswriter  
 Lotus Development Corporation: 1-2-3, Symphony, PrintGraph, Jazz, Manuscript, Express  
 MARC Software, Inc.: WordMARC  
 MCI Mail: MCI Mail  
 Media Cybernetics: DR Halo  
 Mentor Graphics Corporation: Mentor Graphics  
 MicroPro International Corporation: WordStar  
 Microsoft: Microsoft BASIC, Microsoft WORD, Microsoft Windows, Windows Write, and Windows Paint, MultiPlan, Microsoft Mouse  
 MSC Technologies, Inc.: PC Paint  
 Osborne Computer: Osborne  
 Peachtree Software: Peachtree Complete, Peachtree Data Query II  
 Quicksoft: PC-Write  
 Samna Corporation: Samna Word  
 SBT Corporation: SBT  
 Software Arts: VisiCalc  
 Software Publishing Corporation: PFS:file, PFS:First Publisher  
 The Lasers Edge: VP/Tabs, VP/Base  
 The Source: The Source  
 Tools & Techniques Inc.: Data Junction  
 Traveling Software, Inc.: LapLink, DeskLink  
 VS Software: SLEd  
 Wang Laboratories, Inc.: Wang PC  
 WordPerfect Corporation: WordPerfect  
 Xerox: Ventura Publisher  
 XYQUEST Inc.: XyWrite  
 Z-Soft Corporation: PC Paintbrush

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

If you could see them, you would find a sizable crowd of people standing behind the pages of this book. You would see the many programmers, publicists, and product managers who supported this project by providing copies of their programs, access to their knowledge and experience, and enthusiasm for my endeavor.

You would also see many friends and colleagues: PC Magazine staff and free-lancers, clients, and others who live the daily struggle with computer data. You would see Bruce Brown, who worked with me on a related project in a past life. You would see my nephew Shep, who helped with the BASIC programs in Chapter 11, and my brother David, who shared advice and encouragement.

You would see Susan Glinert, my Dow Jones-Irwin editor, who offered unprecedented support without hesitation at a rather critical and spectacular point in this book's development. You would see my agent, Carol Mann, who frees me to focus on what I do best without worrying about what I do badly because she handles them so well.

And most of all, you would see my family: Bebe, Anna, and Alex. A book of any size can produce an emotional roller-coaster ride for all who are close to it, even before it becomes a small stack of pages. This effort was especially turbulent at times. Through it all, my family has been generous with their love and support, and they have been gentle with help in keeping work and home in proper perspective. The pride and love I feel about this book is but a small reflection of the pride and love my family has given to me, gifts that I treasure above all else.

**Alfred Poor**

# CONTENTS

---

INTRODUCTION	1
PART 1	
DATA BASICS	5
1 THE IMPORTANCE OF DATA	7
The Three Values of Data	7
The Importance of Back-up Procedures and Disaster Recovery Plans	9
Possible Data-Exchange Approaches	11
How to Select a Method	13
Secrets to Successful Data Transfer	14
2 THE BASICS OF DATA FILES	16
Text and Binary Files	16
The Two Most Common Text Data File Formats	20
Other Common Formats	26
PART 2	
WORKING WITH SPECIFIC PROGRAMS	39
3 MOVING DATA INTO LOTUS 1-2-3	41
The Translate Utility	41
The /File Import Options	57
/File Import with 1-2-3 Version 1A	78
4 MOVING DATA OUT OF LOTUS 1-2-3	80
Translate Revisited	81
Tips and Tricks for Text Files from 1-2-3	84
5 MOVING DATA INTO dBASE III AND IV	96
The dBASE IMPORT Command	97

	Importing Files into dBASE with APPEND	100
	What to Do When These Don't Work	113
	Skipping Records	117
6	MOVING DATA OUT OF dBASE III	119
	The dBASE Export Command	119
	Exporting dBASE Files with COPY	121
	COPY TO with Field Lists and Conditions	134
	The SET ALTERNATE Approach	138
	dBASE IV Copy To Options	144
7	MOVING DATA IN AND OUT OF POPULAR WORD-PROCESSING PROGRAMS	146
	Some General Advice on Word Processing Files	147
	WordPerfect 5.0	150
	WordStar Release 5.5	161
	MultiMate Advantage II	176
	Microsoft Word 4.0	198
	DisplayWrite 4	208
8	MOVING DATA INTO DESKTOP PUBLISHING PROGRAMS	219
	General Points about Desktop Publishing	219
	Ventura Publisher	222
	Aldus PageMaker	230
9	MOVING DATA OUT OF ACCOUNTING PROGRAMS	238
	One-Way Street	239
	DacEasy Accounting and Graph + Mate	243
	Peachtree Complete II Accounting	251
<b>PART 3</b>		
<b>DO-IT-YOURSELF SKILLS</b>		<b>261</b>
10	TIPS AND TRICKS WITH TEXT FILES	263
	Text Editors	263
	Search and Replace for Success	272
	Problems to Avoid	275
11	TRANSFORMATIONS ON YOUR OWN—A BASIC APPROACH	278
	How to Use These Programs	278
<b>PART 4</b>		
<b>HELP FROM OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>291</b>
12	DATA-FILE CONVERSION PROGRAMS	293
	Good Numbers	294

	Data Junction	298
	VP/BASE and VP/TABS	300
13	WORD-PROCESSING FILE-CONVERSION PROGRAMS	303
	Before You Leap	304
	The Software Bridge	304
	Xchange	306
14	GRAPHICS FILE-CONVERSION PROGRAMS	309
	Hijaak	310
	SLEd: The Signature/Logo Editor	311
<b>PART 5</b>		
<b>MOVING DATA FROM HERE TO THERE</b>		<b>313</b>
15	COMPUTER TO COMPUTER: MOVING DATA OVER DISTANCE	315
	Floppy Disks	315
	Beyond SneakerNet: Direct Connections	320
	Over the Phone	326
Appendix A: Glossary		329
Appendix B: ASCII Table		333
Index		336

# INTRODUCTION

---

This book contains a treasure of information. It unlocks the information stored on your personal computer (PC), and makes it available in ways that you have only dreamed were possible. In fact, this book may be almost as important to your productivity as your computer.

There are few tasks in the microcomputing world as frustrating as trying to move information from one program to another. As many people will tell you, if you haven't yet experienced it, it often appears faster to reenter the information rather than waste time and energy on complex conversion procedures.

Some writers refer to the *fritter factor*, which too often is responsible for lessening the productivity gains offered by computers. Nowhere is this more apparent than in data transfer. Too many products live in an egocentric universe, and they communicate with other programs only on their own rigid and limited terms.

This book is your key to unlock the apparent mysteries, to reveal the hidden pitfalls, and to uncover the undocumented tricks encountered when trying to move information between two programs.

This book is the direct result of real world experiences. As a computer user, I have frequently been stymied by data that was trapped in one application when it was needed in another application. As a consultant, I have lived through similar experiences with many clients. As a writer of software reviews for major national magazines, I have seen the best and worst of

data exchange facilities among famous and not-so-famous programs on the market.

I hope you view this book as a personal assistant, an expert data-exchange consultant who sits on your shelf—waiting to hop down and speed you past whatever roadblocks you may encounter.

## **WHO CAN USE THIS BOOK**

The primary goal of this book is to offer thorough information that any PC user can understand and use. You do not need an advanced degree in computer science to understand this material. You will not have to probe hexadecimal file dumps and master the `DEBUG` utility commands to benefit from this book.

If you use two or more programs on a PC, then you will eventually need this book. If you work with other people, if you must exchange information with them, and if you use different programs, then you need this book. If you are responsible for helping others work with their computers, then it is a safe bet that you have already encountered instances where you could use this book.

While novices will find the information accessible and useful, advanced and “power” users will also find a wealth of tips and tricks. The book does not cover the little details about binary header record fields in data files, but it goes in depth about technical matters.

## **HOW TO USE THIS BOOK**

It may be helpful to scan the book’s structure. It is designed as a working reference, so that you can dive in and get the information you need quickly—without having to wade through endless manuals, limited tutorials, or abstract theoretical discussions.

Almost every reader should read the first section. This is a basic survival course in data-file recognition. It lays the

groundwork for the following sections, and it provides a common terminology for use throughout the other sections. The next chapters cover moving data in and out of specific programs. You will find coverage of Lotus® 1–2–3®, dBASE III Plus®, word-processing programs, desktop publishing, and accounting programs.

There are many instances where your needs will not be met by the facilities offered by standard programs. The next part demonstrates techniques that you can apply safely and effectively. There are various ways to use a simple text editor to perform major transformations on data files. Also included are some simple BASIC programs that you can run to use for some operations.

Not everyone wants to be a programmer, however. That is why there is a section devoted to products available from other sources that you can use to simplify and automate the data-exchange process. This section only lists the winners, although you will find that the definition of *winner* varies depending on who you are and what you need to accomplish.

Finally, the last part covers what to do when you must move data between computers and between programs. This is strictly survival-level coverage, since PC communication is a topic that can fill volumes. In this chapter, you will learn enough to solve most of the problems, and you will learn where to go for help when the easy answers do not work.

*The Data Exchange* is an old-world bazaar; you enter through a common gate that opens onto a courtyard surrounded by stalls and small shops. Use the gateway to orient yourself and learn the language (Part 1), then go straight to the shop that interests you most or simply browse among them all—depending on your needs and interests. In any case, enjoy the trip; you will find treasures waiting around each corner.

## A NOTE TO ENGLISH TEACHERS:

I know the difference between a single datum and many data. Yet, the English language is a living, evolving creature. While I rant and rave about my usage peeves (such as the “verbifica-

tion” of the language), I also acknowledge that some errors have become so common through usage that the “correct” approach now sounds stilted to the mind’s ear. How many of you use a “floppy disc drive,” for example?

As a result, I use *data is . . .* throughout this book. The primary goal is to give the reader unobstructed access to the information. If bending the rules of proper usage makes this book more readable, then I will gladly stray from the straight and narrow.

---

## PART 1

# DATA BASICS

---

*Data Exchange* makes it easy for you to jump in and quickly find information that will make data transfer tasks faster, easier, and safer. Feel free to read this book in almost any sequence you wish, except for the first two chapters. They contain general information that is of vital importance to novice and experienced users. Even if you think you may already know most of the content, take a few minutes to skim this section.

In the next pages, you will find strategic concepts that are guides in planning a data-transfer project. You will also learn about standard data-file formats, their essential structures, and how to identify them. These two chapters provide a common vocabulary and a set of concepts that are used throughout the book.

