

Retail Man POS multi-location System Setup

The new version of Retail Man of 1.80 and above has a new way of setting up the multi-location version. There are new components that have to be taken in to account and depending on the way the locations are connected, the setup will vary accordingly. This paper will not discuss the details of the hardware setup, this is left to the user to decide.

The following is a summary on how to setup Retail Man and how to exchange data between the locations:

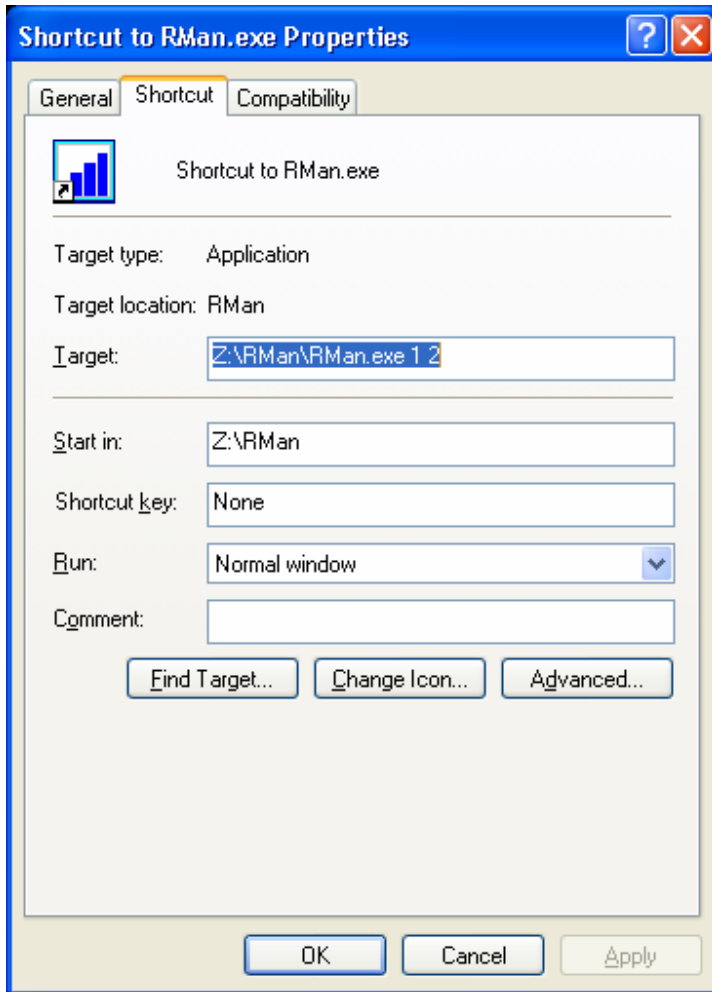
Scenario 1

Two or more locations are connected using a Virtual Private Network which is on all the time. The user must choose one of the locations to act as the Server, which will host the Retail Man folder and all its associated files, all the files will reside in a folder called RMAN, the server can be also a station with full network access to the other users on the network.

Setting up this configuration is the easiest, it also have the advantage of running all shops on line so all transactions from all locations will be saved immediately and all other locations can view the data live. To setup this configuration, run the setup program on the server, then make the server hard disk drive shareable. Make sure the VPN is properly setup and configured and the remote locations can see the server hard disk drive as a network drive (we will call it Z:\), then we will now proceed to setup the remote stations:



- 1- Create a short cut on the remote station disk-top to point to the RMan.exe on the server as shown in the following screen:



Note the text following the Rman.exe in the Target Field (called Parameters), these two figures are to assign the station number and the location number, this will be the case on all RMAN shortcuts, so the RMan shortcut have 3 options to choose the station number (1 to 99), location number (1 to 99) and a valid path to where the data resides, so we can write the above shortcut as follows:

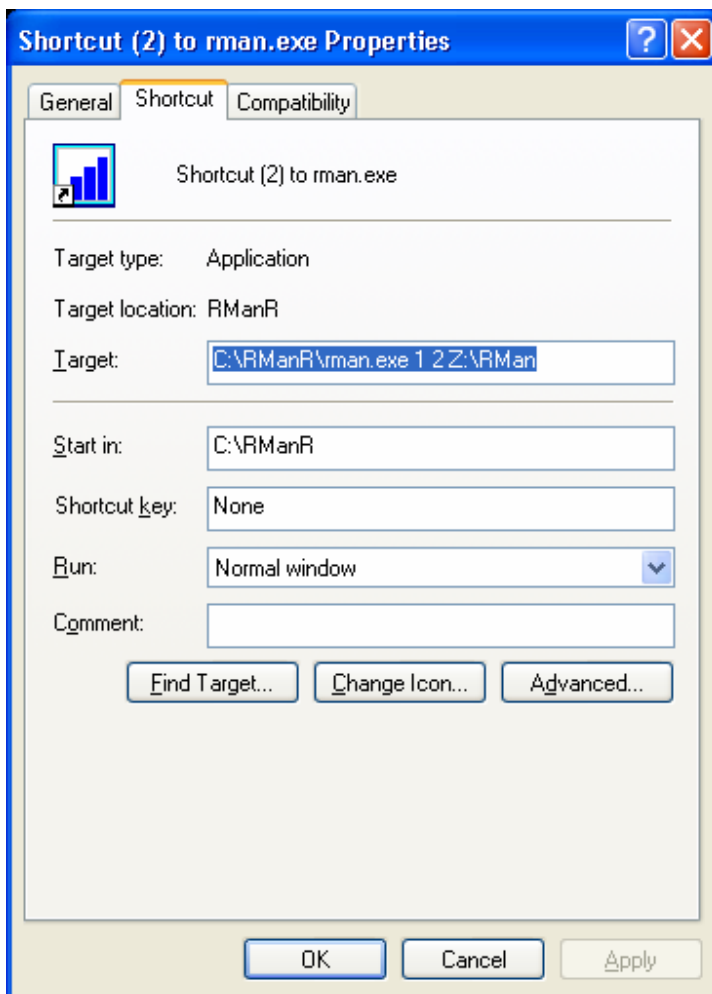
Z:\RMan\RMan.exe 1 2 Z:\RMan

If you leave the parameters blank, RMan will replace the station number with 1, location number with 1 and the default working directory as where the RMAN starts.

However, starting the RMAN program will take a while since it has to download the entire EMan.exe from the server to the remote location, so to speed up the running of the program and conserve time and data transfers, create a new folder on your local hard disk (you can name it anything, but for our example we will call it **C:\RMANR** (for RMan Remote), then we need to copy the RMan.exe file in to that folder, you may need to also copy the following support files:

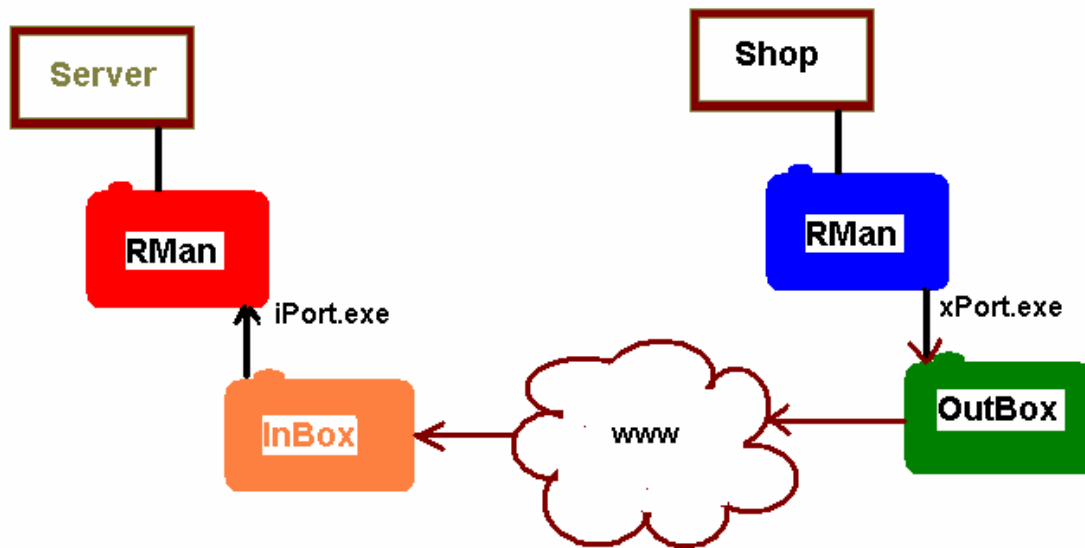
- 1 - VFP6R.DLL
- 2 - VFP6RENU.DLL
- 3 - VFP6RUN.EXE

To setup the remote station to access the RMAN.EXE using this new configuration, all what you need to do is create a shortcut as before, but in the Target enter **C:\RMANR\RMan.exe 1 2 Z:\RMan**, this will tell the program to start RMan from the local hard disk drive, but set the default data folder to the Z:\RMan drive, you will notice the start up speed is greatly improved since the system will load the program from the local hard disk drive.



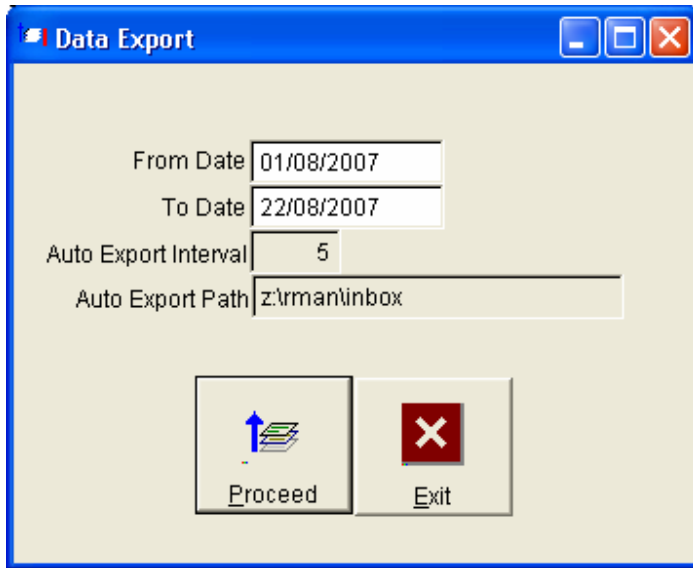
Scenario 2

The remote locations do not have a stable VPN to the server, in that case, it is better to setup RMAN on each individual location separately, if the remote location requires more than one station, then the normal multi-user setup is applicable, whereby, one system acts as the server, and the other are stations, then, just create a shortcut to the RMAN pointing to the local server.



However, this setup requires data transfers to occur to refresh the files on all locations, to accomplish that, there are extra support files that come with the system and have different uses, these files are called:

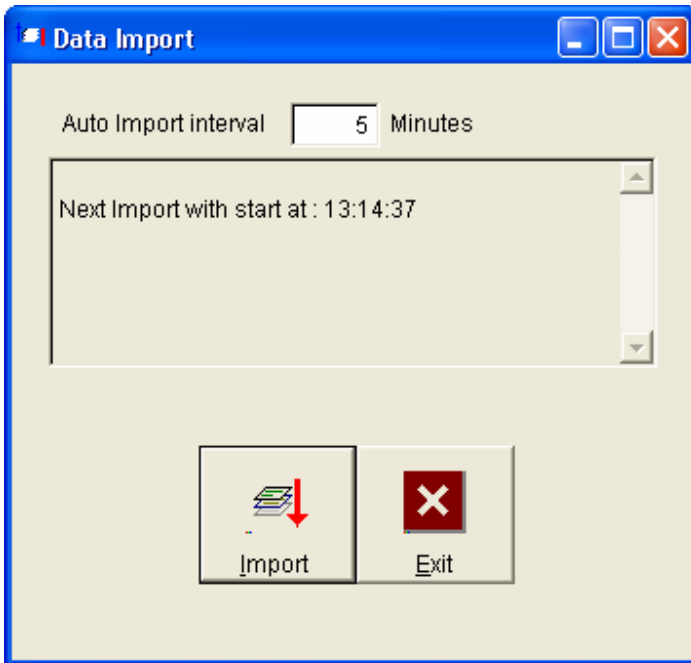
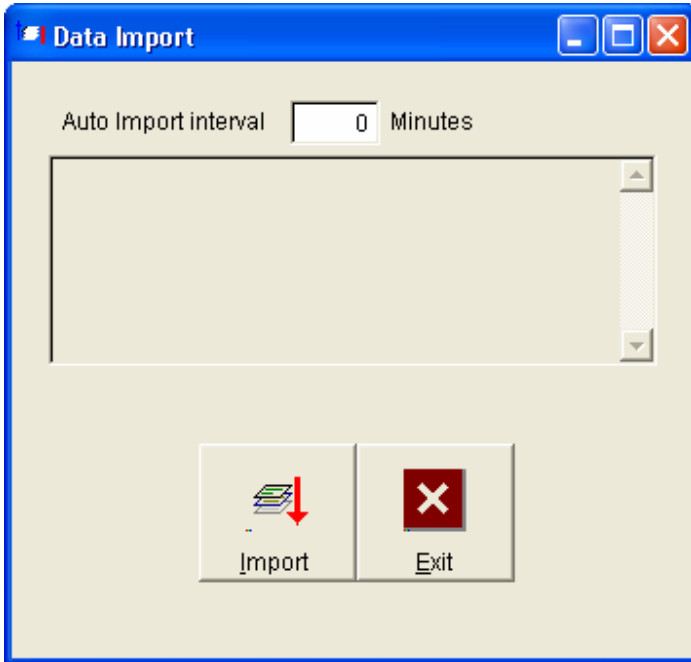
xPort.exe – This file is used to export the data from the remote locations each time it is run, it will ask for the From and To Dates, it also has two extra fields which are used to setup the local RMan.exe to export the data on regular bases.



Running xPort.exe and entering from and to dates will export the transactions that have occurred in that date range to a folder called OutBox that resides in the RMAN folder, this folder will be created automatically when xPort.exe is run. This data have to be moved to the server under a folder called InBox that resides under the RMAN folder on the server, when that data is copied to the InBox folder, the files from the OutBox must be deleted.

You can assign RMAN to perform the data transfer automatically by entering the Auto Export Interval and the Path, but this assumes you can access the server on a network drive.

iPort.exe: This file should reside in the RMAN folder on the Server, it is used on server to import the data that was saved in the InBox, you can import the data manually by keeping the Auto Import Interval to zero and clicking the Proceed button.



otherwise, you can configure it to import the data on regular intervals by assigning a value to the import interval and then leaving it to run in the background, it will then

check the InBox folder every number of assigned minutes, then if it finds any files, it will import them to the data files and delete the imported files.

It is up to you on how you want to move the files from the OutBox on the remote locations to the InBox to the server, but there are a number of ways this can be done, such as using Open-ssh, PcAnywhere, FTP, VPN, USB drives to do local copy etc., you can ask us if you are not sure, we can enquire on your situation and advice on the best possible method.

The xPort.exe and iPort.exe can be run while RMan.exe is running, but you will also need to copy additional files to synchronize the remote locations with the Server, the files that you need to copy to the remote locations from the Server are:

- 1 – STOCK.DBF
- 2 – STOCK.CDX
- 3 – STK_QTY.DBF
- 4 – STK_QTY.CDX
- 5 – DEBTORS.DBF
- 6 – DEBTORS.CDX
- 7 – STAFF.DBF

You must be aware that the server will have to take care of adding the new stock, clients and suppliers.

Also be aware to number the stations uniquely, starting from station number 1 on the server and continuing to station number 2 up to 99. this will give you more control of who did what, the same applies to the system users,

There are a couple of program **CopyStk.exe** and **GetStk.exe** that are used to copy the data from the server and can be run in either batch mode or run from windows, the program can be downloaded from www.ezisolution.com/copystk.exe

To use it, copy this file to the RMAN folder and run it from there, if you need to run it in batch mode, then you can include eight parameters to allow you to copy the needed files
Usage:

CopyStk.exe 111111 Y

The ones can be replaced by zeros to block files from being copied, so if you do not need to copy the Stk_qty.dbf and the Stk_Hist.dbf then replace the parameters with

CopyStk.exe 100111 Y

The parameters positions are:

- * 1= Stock.dbf file
- * 2= Stk_qty.dbf file
- * 3= StkHist.dbf file
- * 4= Debtors.dbf file
- * 5= Creditors.dbf file
- * 6= Staff.dbf file
- * 7= Company.dbf file
- * 8= QuickMnu.dbf file

If you run the program from Windows, it will produce the following screen:



Once the program is run, it will produce a zipped file called **NewFiles.zip**
This file needs to be copied to the stations and then run the program file called **GetStk.exe** which can be downloaded from www.ezision.com/getstk.exe and also saved in the RMan folder.

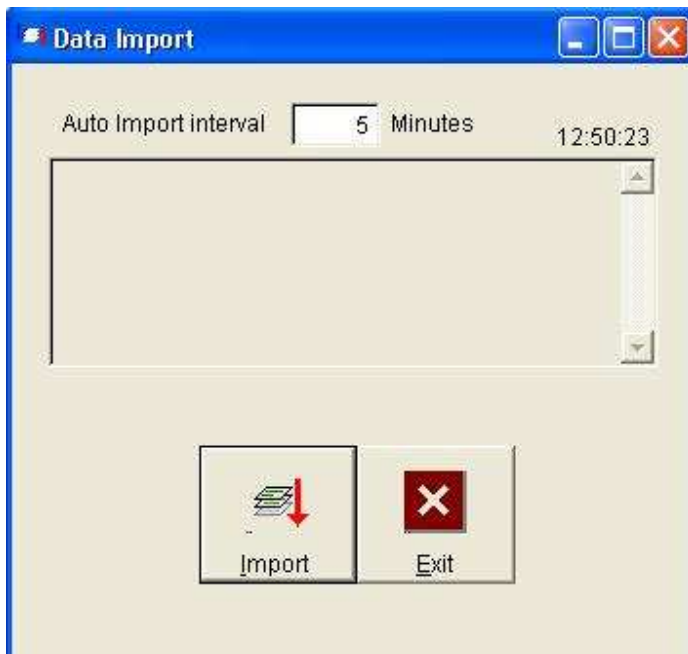
Both programs can be run with Rman active and no need to shut it down.

Implementing the Multi-Location setup

To implement the multi-location setup in each remote location, you must take the following steps:

On the Headquarter Server Side

1 – Run the program iPORT.exe and decide the import frequency of 1 minute or over. A recommended time is between 5 – 10 minutes. You can also import the data one time by keeping the time as zero and pressing the proceed button.

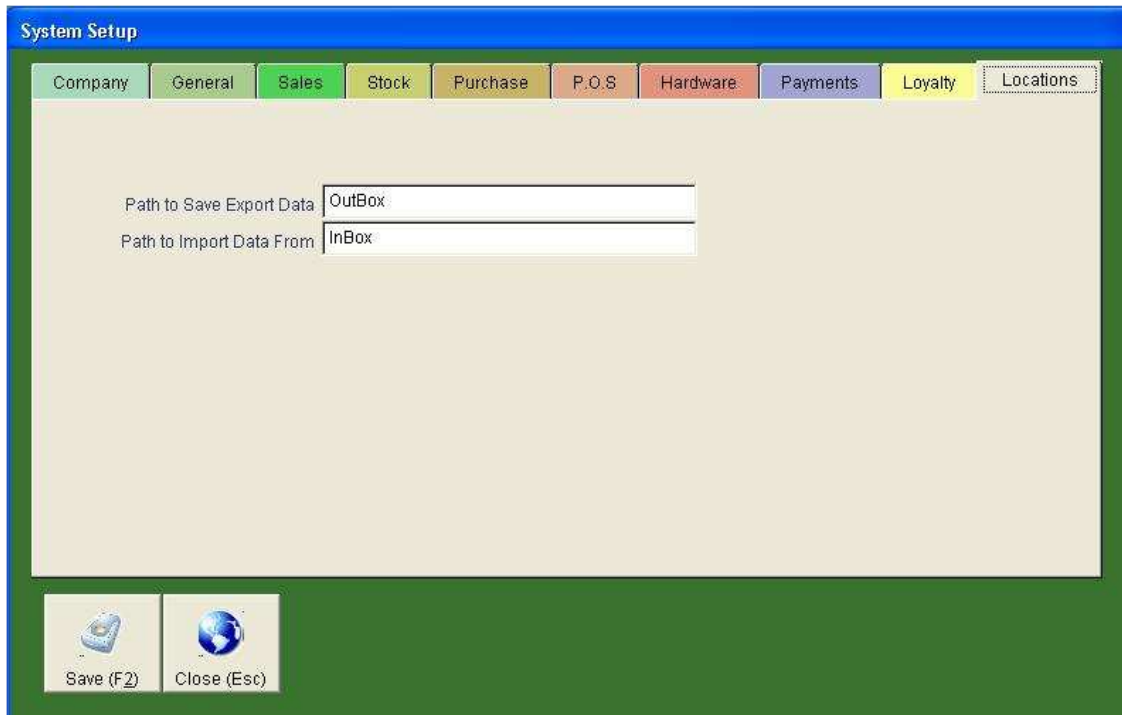


You can keep the iPort running in the background to keep importing the data as it comes in.

On the remote Locations Side

1 – Setup the data folders to receive the data to export to the headquarter

Go to MAINTENANCE > SYSTEM SETUP > Choose the LOCATIONS Tab, then in the Path to Save Export Data enter OUTBOX



The screenshot shows the 'System Setup' dialog box with the 'Locations' tab selected. The 'Path to Save Export Data' field contains 'OutBox' and the 'Path to Import Data From' field contains 'InBox'. At the bottom, there are 'Save (F2)' and 'Close (Esc)' buttons.

Company	General	Sales	Stock	Purchase	P.O.S	Hardware	Payments	Loyalty	Locations
Path to Save Export Data		OutBox							
Path to Import Data From		InBox							
Save (F2)		Close (Esc)							

Once saved, the system will now create a new file in the folder \RMAN\OUTBOX a new file for each transaction done on the system. These files under the OUTBOX need to be moved (i.e. copied to the main server \RMAN\INBOX and then deleted from the outbox folder) then once the iPORT.EXE is run on the server, it will import all the data from these files in to the RMAN data. This has to be done for all the locations, then once all the locations data is copied, you will need to send the STOCK data back to the locations so each location can see what the other locations have done, also, if there was any price changes on the server, it will be updated in the remote stores..

2 – Setup the Program xPORT.exe to move the data from the \RMAN\OUTBOX to the server \RMAN\INBOX by running the program and deciding how long you want the data transfer frequency is going to be, the default is 5 minutes.



You can leave the xPort program running in the background to keep sending the contents of the OutBox folder to the sever at the set intervals of 5 minutes.

Housekeeping Tasks

Once all of today's data has been imported, the need now is to send the stock and its associated files back to all the shops. To do that, we have to use two programs, one on the server called CopyStk.exe and other program which has to reside on the remote locations side called GetStk.exe

The CopyStk.exe can be run in either batch mode or interactive more, the batch mode is useful if you need to run the after hours.

To use it, copy this file to the RMAN folder and run it from there, you can include eight parameters to allow you to copy the needed files

Usage:

CopyStk.exe 111111 Y

The ones can be replaced by zeros to block files from being copied, so if you do not need to copy the Stk_qty.dbf and the Stk_Hist.dbf then replace the parameters with

CopyStk.exe 100111 Y

The parameters positions are:

- * 1= Stock.dbf file
- * 2= Stk_qty.dbf file
- * 3= StkHist.dbf file
- * 4= Debtors.dbf file
- * 5= Creditors.dbf file
- * 6= Staff.dbf file
- * 7= Company.dbf file
- * 8= QuickMnu.dbf file

If you run the program from Windows, it will produce the following screen:



Once the program is run, it will produce a zipped file called **NewFiles.zip**. This file needs to be copied to the stations and then run the program file called **GetStk.exe** which can be downloaded from www.ezision.com/getstk.exe and also saved in the RMan folder.

Both programs can be run with Rman active and no need to shut it down.

To copy the stock files on the remote locations, you have to copy the NewFiles.zip to the remote location, then run GetStk.exe to import the stock data.