

# A peek inside the new ShoWorks 2020

*ShoWorks 2020 also introduces ShoWorks Passport. A free portal for exhibitors to maintain, track, and reuse entries across other fairs. The free mobile app for the iPhone and Android keeps digital 3-D versions of their awards. Better yet, the fair can send instant notifications to the exhibitor's mobile device, including the Apple Watch, letting entire divisions or classes know judging readiness and last-minute schedule changes.*



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## ShoWorks Passport

Exhibitors have long expressed a desire to create their own permanent ShoWorks account to keep year-after-year and use entries across any of the more than 1,200 fairs running ShoWorks in North America. The new ShoWorks Passport is a free service for exhibitors which allows them to curate a library of their current and historical entries all in one place. They can later reuse those entries, even in another fair or if they move up to the state fair level. Updates to these entries by the fair are visible instantaneously, allowing the exhibitor to check their status including judging results.

More impressive is how ShoWorks Passport uses artificial intelligence or “fuzzy logic” to determine the type of entry among a standardized list of 42 different universal entry types. For example, since fairs can name departments and

divisions of their own choosing, ShoWorks compares millions of entries across hundreds of fairs over several years and learns that “Junior Market Wether”, “Open Polled Dorset”, and “Open Southdown” entries are all “Lamb” entries, or “Blueberry Muffins” and “Chocolate Brownies” are both “Baked” entries, all without any intervention from the fair. Using this logic, fairs can evaluate participation trends comparatively on a regional or global scale or how an exhibitor ranks nationwide.

An exciting feature of the ShoWorks Passport app for the iPhone or Android, enables the exhibitor to view digital 3-D versions of their awards – like ribbons, belt buckles and trophies – each of which are tailored for every entry based on one of the 42 different universal entry types. For example, an exhibitor winning a grand champion “Maine Anjou Steer” will receive a virtual turquoise and gold belt buckle that has an image overlay of a steer, with the fair name and year embossed in gold on the front. They can then swipe the buckle to spin it around to see their name and division engraved on the back. Virtual ribbons work the same and are so realistic that one can almost feel the fabric. A forthcoming ability to share one’s awards room with friends and social media offers a positive reinforcement to exhibitors of this “digital age” and goes a long way in instilling pride and engagement in the fairs they so love.

A more direct benefit to the fair is how ShoWorks Passport allows the staff to notify exhibitors directly on their mobile phone (including the Apple Watch) when it's time to show, last minute schedule changes, and when entries are judged. This keeps the exhibitors in-the-know and more informed.



*Instantly notify exhibitors on their phones and Apple Watch*

Imagine a buzz on the wrist of a swine exhibitor who, with a glance, knows that swine judging for her class 8 hog is going to take place in 15-minutes at the south livestock barn! This same technology allows exhibitors to check-in their entries using their mobile device upon arrival when they walk up to a ShoWorks kiosk, saving both time and hassle of staff managed check-ins. This segues to the next part of the new upgrade – the ShoWorks iPad app.

## ShoWorks iPad App

It's been over 8 years since ShoWorks pioneered entry management on an iPad, and the innovation continues with solid enhancements in this latest release. Basic entry check-in and judging continue to be the mission of the ShoWorks iPad app, replacing the paper clipboard used by superintendents and judges of long ago. The trademark technique of swiping and dropping of ribbons and places to quickly judge entries remains the most popular feature of the app, but a new "recall" function allows a judge to pull together all 1st and 2nd place entries in a single list to assign division champions. A second tap pulls all division champions together so that overall or supreme champions can be judged. With a different tap, the user can send the list of winners or entire class sheets directly to a printer, email, or text message – allowing an announcer to almost magically deliver the results instantaneously to the public. QR (bar)coded entry tags permit the iPad camera to scan, locate, and check-in entries. This has long been supported since the original app release, however new judging modes now let the user specify custom

actions to automatically take when an entry is scanned. "Sticky Ribbon" mode, allows the user to designate a default ribbon color so that waving the iPad in front of any entry will cause that entry to be updated with that ribbon color. This means one can assign 60 blue ribbons in under one minute! A new "Sequence Place" judging mode has both forward and reverse options, which automatically assigns places in the order they are scanned (1st, 2nd, 3rd... or ... 3rd, 2nd, 1st). This is especially helpful for livestock shows that scan either RFID ear tags or the exhibitor's back tag as they leave the ring. More RFID readers are now supported in the new version including those from Allflex and the new Tru-Test wand/stick readers. Whether one wants to scan ear "EID" tags for check-in, check-out, or judging, using these devices can streamline the movement of information in real-time.



*More RFID (EID ear tag) readers are supported*

In recent years however, more and more fairs have been taking advantage of a little-known feature of the app which allows the fair to slip an iPad into a common "kiosk stand". This lets the public check themselves in, much like they do at airports and movie theaters. Club leaders can also check-in entries for anyone who has participated under that club, all at once. Changes can be made directly at the kiosk and one can then print entry tags, back tags, or receipts with those changes. More entry tag layouts have been added including those which identically match the Windows desktop version of ShoWorks.



*The iPad replaces the clipboard for check-in and judging*

A huge advantage of this native iPad app is that processing is done locally and not dependent on passing data back and forth to and from the internet, making scanning, searching, and judging of entries extremely fast, reliable and operational even without an internet connection.

## ShoWorks Online Entries

ShoWorks online entries has also been revamped in the new version. Clubs and buyers can now update their information online and buyers can both register and pay their auction bill online via ACH check or credit card. A new and customizable processing fee option allows the fair to re-coup bank charges for online transactions. Further payment improvements include assigning an optional Payment Bypass Code for select people to skip or defer the payment processes. A highly requested enhancement to online purchases has also been added which allows the fair to impose limits to fee items they sell. For example, a “per exhibitor limit” can be placed on gate passes, wrist bands, stall fees, or other individual exhibitor items. The fair can also place a “fair-wide cap” on items that they have a limited supply of.

An expanded relationship with the third-party FairVault™ now allows fairs to assign forms like W-9s, health papers, junior release, etc. to be triggered for the exhibitor to complete or upload online only when they participate in a given division. This feature only prompts them once to complete and/or sign the form and keeps it secure for later downloading by the fair. This is imperative to the security and liability that fairs now find themselves facing, as Social Security Numbers are now retained encrypted in the cloud instead of locally. With a click of a button, the fair can post financial data which matches the encrypted exhibitor information and download completed 1099s ready to submit to the IRS. An added value is that the fair is no longer held liable for mistakes, omissions, or errors in Social Security Numbers because the online W-9 form places the responsibility back on the exhibitor for providing the correct SSN along with their signature. Canadian formats are also supported, as are custom PDF and Word docx formats.

Customized themes (something long available on the desktop) are now available for both online entries and on the iPad app so that a fair can tailor the look and feel to the public.

## ShoWorks on the Desktop

Despite the benefits of online entries and a native iPad app, the heart of ShoWorks is found in the desktop program where most of the configurations and entry processing are managed. The advantage of having a local desktop program lies in the speed and customizing ability that cannot be achieved using a “web browser only” system. Fairs know all too well that the “show must go on” even when the internet chokes during

check-in, judging, or on the night of the auction, and this principal is a directive in keeping a desktop solution for entry management handy. ShoWorks, like other time-critical systems such as banks and hospitals, continues to leverage the benefits of an installed desktop program, but for those that insist on placing all of their eggs in the cloud basket, Azure virtual desktops can provide a 100% cloud-based management alternative. With preliminary testing near completion at the time of this article, using ShoWorks “completely in the cloud” is becoming a reality, though most fairs will likely find that the benefits of ShoWorks installed locally result in the most reliable and dependable route.



*A new Dashboard provides a fair-wide status at a glance*

A focus on the speed of clerking and frequently used tasks for the auction has been revisited in the new upgrade, including a new sale spreadsheet tool, group buyer assistant, and revamped sale split assistant. Many interface shortcuts have been added along with over 100 new enhancements to the user experience. The main menu dashboard now welcomes the user by displaying a graphical breakdown of entries by department and a timeline of additions and changes made in the data file so that the user immediately knows what has taken place since they have last used ShoWorks.

The takeaway from this major upgrade to ShoWorks is threefold: a focus on the exhibitor with the new ShoWorks Passport, strong enhancements to the online entries and iPad app, and new productivity tools to streamline the desktop experience. All of this is bundled up for an upgrade that is sure to please!

*—Michael Hnatt is the owner and founder of Gladstone, manufacturer of the ShoWorks software which has been providing software to fairs since 1994. For more information, visit [www.fairsoftware.com](http://www.fairsoftware.com)*