
Subject: Suggestions on the use of lockfiles?

Posted by [Jonathan Greenberg](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 06:48:32 GMT

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I am having some troubles using lockfiles to do simple database read/writes without getting a database corruption (I'm trying to hack my way around buying Dataminer):

I have two or more computers running this code:

dblockname is the name of the lockfile for the database

```
while [program is still running] do begin
; Waits for the lockfile to not exist
  while (file_test(dblockname) eq 1) do begin
    wait,1
  endwhile
; Creates a lockfile
  openw,dblocklun,dblockname,/GET_LUN
  printf,dblocklun,"
  free_lun,dblocklun

[gets the database, reads and writes to it]
; Deletes the lockfile, and returns to the top of the loop
  file_delete,dblockname

endwhile
```

The problem I'm having is that from time to time (depending on the speed of the database I/O), I'm getting errors where, and this is a guess, one computer manages to check for a nonexistent lockfile at the same time as another, and so both computers break out of the loop at the same time and start fooling around with the database at the same time. At the end, whichever computer deletes the lockfile first can reenter the loop, but the 2nd computer gets an error since the file was already deleted (and the database is likely to be corrupted at this point).

Ideas? The astronomy lockfile procedures appear to be unix only, and I'm trying to design this for any platform (Windows, Mac, UNIX). Apparently I can openw the same file from two computers without error (I wish that I could override this fact). Help!

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Jonathan Greenberg
Graduate Group in Ecology, U.C. Davis
<http://www.cstars.ucdavis.edu/~jongreen>
<http://www.cstars.ucdavis.edu>
AIM: jgrn307 or jgrn3007
MSN: jgrn307@msn.com or jgrn3007@msn.com
