Privacy Booth Timer: User Guide

URI V⚓TES

Engineering for Democracy

Recommendations that will lead to future sustainable practices and tools utilized to overcome new and future obstacles in voting and election processes.

The idea of democracy is simple. Execution is complicated.

Purpose of Tool

URI VOTES has created a collection of specialized timers to aid in on-site data collection during elections. There are six timers available for use through Excel: BallotScannerTimer, BMDTimer, BoothTimer, CheckInArrivalTimer, CheckInTimer, and ThroughputArrivalTimer. Each of these utilizes an Excel user form to display six individual timers. Each timer provides a text box for identifiers (i.e., clothing colors, accessories) so that several voters can be tracked simultaneously. This text is not saved and is automatically cleared after an observation is stopped. Times are recorded by marking the hour, minute, and second of the start and end of an observation, allowing the user to then determine the total time of the observation. An option for undoing the last or current observation is available to allow the user to correct mistakes while tracking a voter (e.g., the person is actually dropping off lunch, the observation was stopped prematurely or too late). To assist in fast-paced data collection, shortcut keys are built-in so that observations can be started, stopped, and arrivals can be marked quickly and accurately.

The general instructions listed below detail how to download and set up all of the timers. Following the general instructions are timer-specific instructions explaining the functions of each individual timer.

General Instructions for Setting Up Timers

- Download the zip folder containing all of the timers from the Voting System Timers page on the URI VOTES website.
- Open the desired timer. A window will appear asking if you want to disable macros before opening the file. Select "Enable Macros".
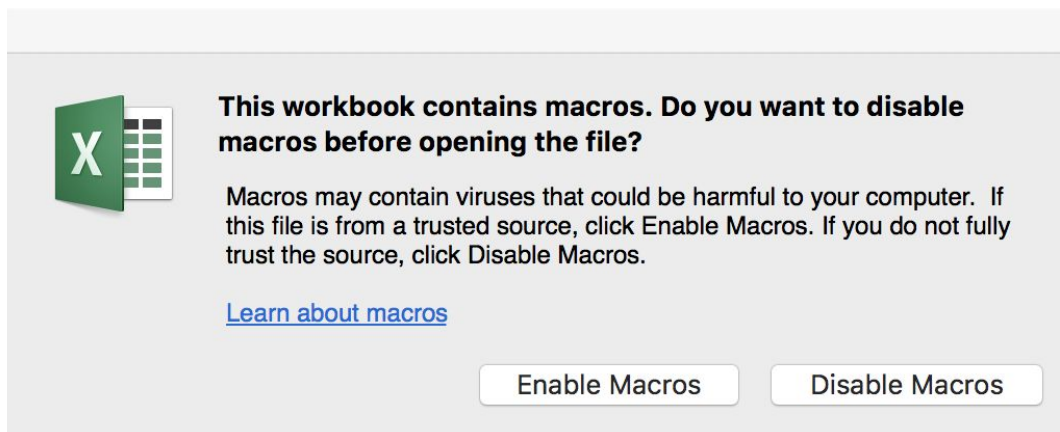

- The timer will appear as a window separate from the Excel sheet. Close the timer application window.
- Go to 'File' and click 'Save As' to select a save destination and rename the file. This will create a new file containing any data collected while saving the original timer file for future use.

- Once returned to the Excel sheet, click the 'Open Timer' or 'Show Timer' button to reopen the Timer application window.
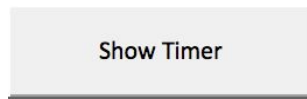

Privacy Booth Timer:

- Identify a voter that is approaching a privacy booth. In the textbox of one of the timers, type a comment into the box that describes the voter and will help in tracking the individual in the system.
  - Refrain from using any language that comments on the voter's gender, age, race, ethnicity, or physical appearance.
  - These notes are not stored in the Excel file.
  - The 'Clr' button next to the text box clears the note if needed.
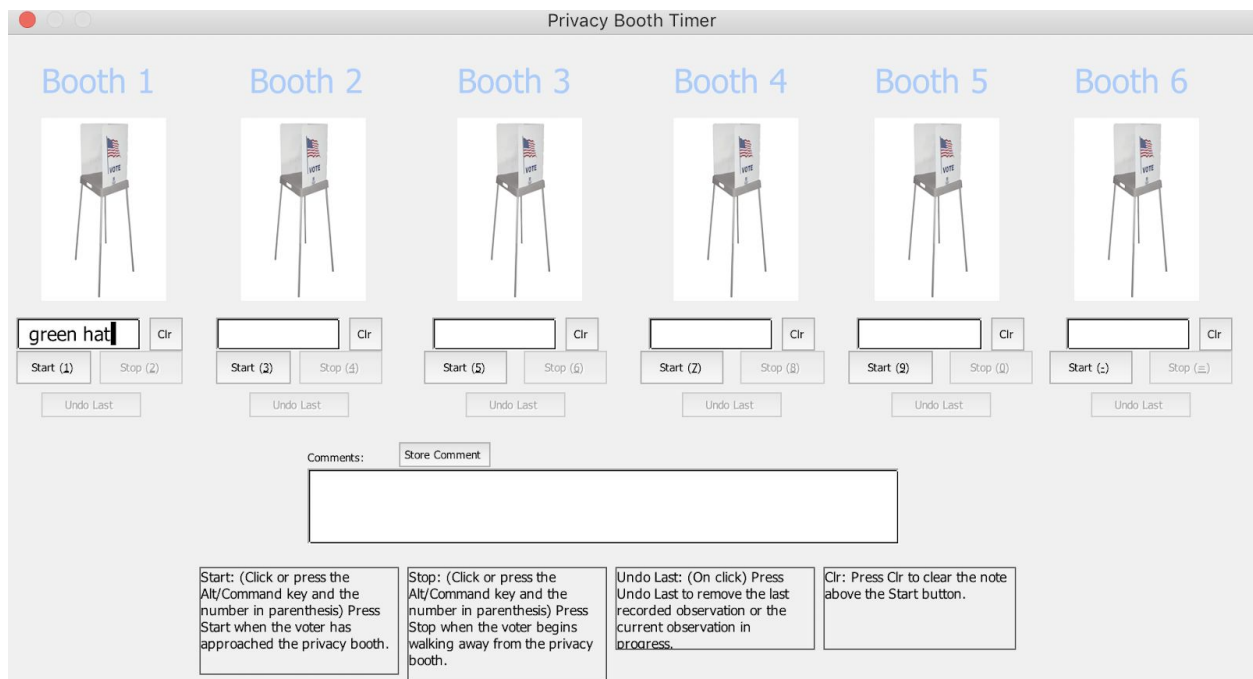
- When the voter reaches the privacy booth, either click the 'Start' button for that timer or use the shortcut keys described at the bottom of the application window. The 'Start' button will then change color (i.e., grey on a Mac computer or green on a Windows computer).
  - 'Start' creates a timestamp in the Excel file that marks the time that the voter entered the privacy booth with accuracy down to the second.
  - Ensure that there is a standardized method to marking the 'Start' of when a voter enters the privacy booth (e.g., when they begin interacting with the booth, when they first walk up to the booth).
- When the voter exits the privacy booth, either click the 'Stop' button for that timer or use the shortcut keys described at the bottom of the application window.

- ○ 'Stop' creates a timestamp in Excel marking the time that the voter exits the privacy booth.
- ○ Similarly to the start process, ensure that there is a standardized method for determining when a voter exits the privacy booth (e.g., as the voter steps away from the booth).
- ● If there is any need to remove an observation that is currently running or to remove the last observation for a timer, the 'Undo Last' button clears the last or current observation of the individual timer (e.g., when a voter leaves the privacy booth and the data collector does not click the 'Stop' button).
- ● For each additional voter that the user tracks in the system, use a timer that is not currently in use and follow the steps outlined above. Up to six voters may be tracked at any given time.
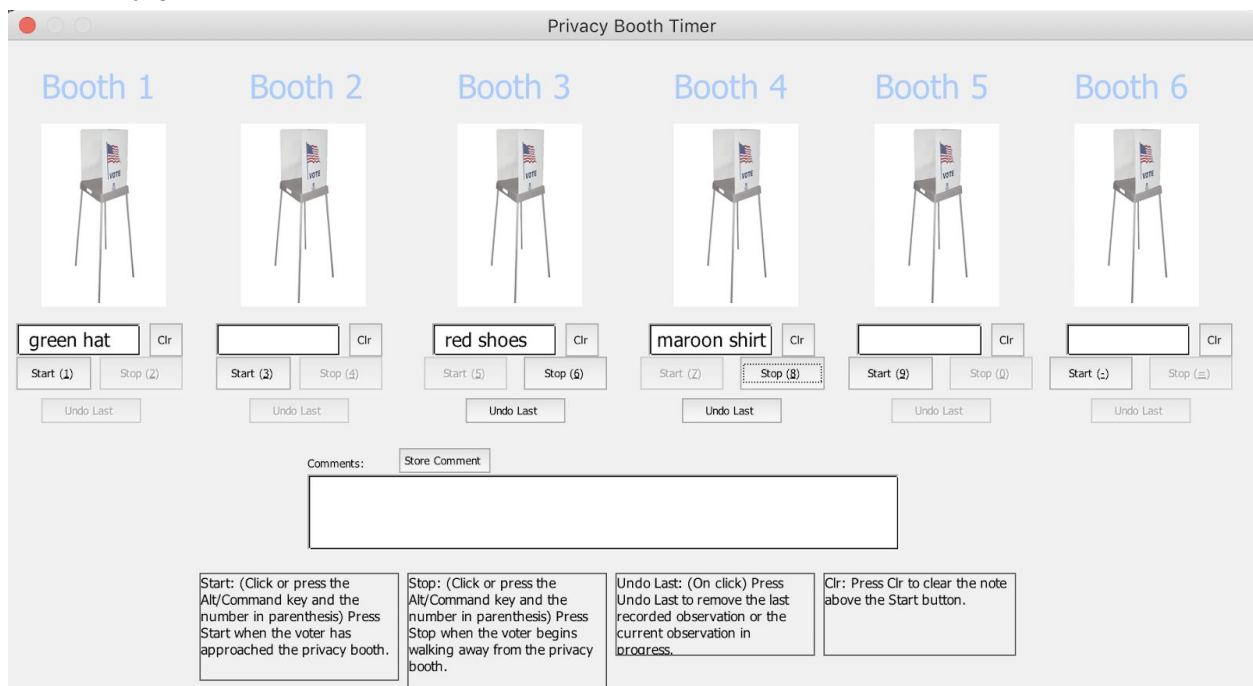
- ● To save any comments during the data collection process, insert comments in the text box at the bottom of the application window and click the 'Store Comment' button.
- ● Occasionally exit the application window and save the file (do this when no timers are actively tracking a voter).

Feedback

Please contact URIVOTES@etal.uri.edu with any questions, concerns, or feedback. The URI VOTES team will respond as quickly as possible to help resolve any problems and answer any questions.