Database to layout program: Hello! … Can you hear me? … Hörst Du mich? … Tu m'entends? …
Hello!

??

Database to layout program: Create these boxes and place these texts and pictures.

Roger.

Roger.

Layout program to database: A user has modified your texts and moved your pictures.

Database to layout program

Layout program to database

QuarkXPress or InDesign obtain by DATAform Add-on a new menu for the import and export of DATAformTags.

The database creates a description of boxes including texts and picture paths and saves the text file in the QuarkXPress or InDesign folder, for instance.

The DATAformTags contain all necessary specifications for the creation of boxes. DATAform Add-on translates the text for the layout program and tells it what has to be done.

The layout program creates new pages and new boxes, places and formats the texts and pictures.

The database reads the DATAformTags file and processes it: It searches the corresponding records and updates them. Or it writes the imported boxes into new records.

DATAfrom Add-on creates a description of the boxes with the new texts, pictures and box specifications and saves the textfile in the QuarkXPress or InDesign folder.

The boxes, created automatically in the layout program can be changed manually as usual: The text is corrected, the pages are given a new layout.

Texts, prices or pictures are modified in the database. Changed box contents are exported as a DATAformTags file.

DATAform Add-on processes the commands: It searches the boxes to be changed in the document and transmits the new texts and picture paths to the layout program.

The QuarkXPress or InDesign document is updated. The positions and specifications of the boxes that had been modified manually are conserved.

DATAform Database publishing

DATAform Add-on. The translator for your layout program.

Developer to DATAform

Which database can work with DATAform Add-on?
Any database that is able to parse and compose a complex string. There is a special interface for the database 4D (www.4D.com) which makes communication with a DATAform Add-on very easy. For other databases than 4D the routines are included as text files and may be used as a coding example for the environment of your choice.

What must my database learn in order to communicate with QuarkXPress or InDesign?
The DATAform-4D-interface supplies the database with three new commands only to carry out all main operations: DX_Write, DX_Read and DX_Message. DX_Write transfers a box to the layout program, DX_Read reads a box exported from QuarkXPress or InDesign, DX_Message sends a command to the layout program, e.g. "IMPORT", waits for the answer and parses it for you.

How can I create a box in the layout program with my database?
Fill the DX_Array with the properties that your box shall have and call DX_Write. Then, in your layout program, you call the menu command “Import boxes” or database sends an import-command by DX_Message.

Can I create several boxes by a single step?
Certainly, as many as you want. The quantity is limited by a reasonable size of the layout document.

Can I produce complete catalogues by merely pressing a button?
Sometimes it is possible. But many catalogues are not well enough structured for it. In this case the database supplies the necessary material which has been produced in the network onto the layout page. And the designer shapes the more or less preformed objects. This flexibility is one of the outstanding features of the DATAform approach.

Can I make modifications in QuarkXPress or InDesign and write them back into the database?
Yes, of course. When exporting from the layout document you receive all specifications of boxes and their contents. The designer´s work can flow back into the database as well and be at your disposal for the next catalogue.

Are character attributes of texts conserved while importing into the database?
The DATAform Add-on offers a checkbox “Include XPressTags” and “Include InDesignTags” respectively. With this preference also all character attributes and style sheets are exported – and all modifications are conserved.In many cases a different solution is the attribution of styles to the corresponding data fields, which means the handling of text formats by the database.

What are DATAformTags, XPressTags and InDesignTags?
DATAformTags describe the entire box properties like type, position, color, angle, frame and so on.
With XPressTags and InDesignTags you define the character and paragraph specifications of a text within a box like “bold” or a paragraph style.
With DATAformTags you describe or create the box itself – the text of the box may be formated by XPressTags or InDesignTags again.

Which box specifications can be defined and which ones do I receive?
Size and position, type of box, box ID, background colour, gutter, frame and runaround specifications, box angle and skew, scale picture, box character attributes, group boxes, page and section number, text, path to picture etc. – altogether 80 specifications mostly in both directions.

How can the database match boxes with records?
The database marks any box placed in QuarkXPress or InDesign with a specific, invisible number. Thus each box and each picture can be called by the database. It can be updated or re-imported into the database.

What happens if I update a text box and the new text does not fit in the box any more?
DATAform Add-on adjusts the box height, if desired, automatically to the new text length.

Can I import existing layout documents into the database?
Yes, but it does not always make sense. Boxes in QuarkXPress or InDesign don´t have a logical nexus; for layout programs a text and two pictures boxes do not form an entity. But a database should handle all elements of an article module as a whole. These connections have to be established in the layout document first and then you can execute the export. DATAform Add-on helps you doing this by a Auto-numbering function of selected boxes.

Can I use DATAform Add-on cross platform?
Yes. DATAform may be used fully cross platform. A DATAformTags file can be generated in one world and processed in the other one.

What picture formats does DATAform Add-on support?
All those that are supported by the layout program. You only hand over a path to a picture. The picture is loaded then in the same way as it is placed manually in QuarkXPress or InDesign.

Does DATAform Add-on use AppleEvents?
No, it doesn´t. As an add-on it directly co-operates with QuarkXPress or InDesign. The layout programs can be remote controled by DATAform´s own message interface, under MacOS, Windows and cross platform.

Can you further process and print an automatically produced document even without DATAform Add-on ?
Yes, you can. All QuarkXPress or InDesign functions are at your disposal. There is no difference to a hand-made-document.

Is DATAform Add-on a new product?
No. DATAformXTension for QuarkXPress has been existing since 1990, and it has already produced a great number of catalogues and other prepress documents.
DATAformPlugin for InDesign is shipping since 2006. It is complete porting of the approved DATAform technology.

DATAform to developer

You can extend your database with publishing functions

The DATAform functionality can be installed easily in the existing database – you add value to your system.

You can extend databases of articles to databases of catalogues

All data are entered once and used several times: as a system of information and production of catalogues, price-lists or mailings.

You can develop integrated systems

Many catalogue producers process product data and prices separately from the pre-press system. A database publishing net can receive these data, add product descriptions and layout definitions and produce or update QuarkXPress or InDesign documents even in the very last minute.

You can meet the challenges of a new market

The database publishing sector is a flourishing market with great possibilities of rationalisation. Database publishing products save a lot of time, lower costs, and sell very well.

You work with QuarkXPress or InDesign

QuarkXPress and InDesign are the actual standards in the pre-press sector. A database publishing solution has to take this into consideration.

You work with a tool which really stands the test

Our own DATAform database is based on 4D and on DATAform Add-on. It is an established database publishing solution for many uses. As a bank for new ideas a demo-version is part of the DATAform developer kit.

DATAform Add-on
DATAform Add-on is a XTension for QuarkXPress respectively a Plugin for InDesign for MacOS and Windows to connect mutually the layout program with a database for the development of a database publishing system.
DATAform database
DATAform database is a multi-user client/server or stand alone database with a connection to the QuarkXPress or InDesign layout program. The connection is established via DATAform Add-on. It´s a standard solution for many types of catalogues and a demonstration of possibilities of database publishing with DATAform Add-on. DATAform system runs on MacOS and Windows. DATAform database, DATAformXTension and DATAformPlugin are products of GASSENHUBER Systementwicklung, Regensburg, Germany.
QuarkXPress, XTension, InDesign, Plugin, Windows, Apple, Macintosh, MacOS, AppleEvents, 4D und 4th Dimension are registered trademarks of the corresponding owners.

INFOCOUPON

GASSENHUBER Systementwicklung
Wassergasse 10, D 93059 Regensburg, Germany
Telefon +49-941-54324
DATAform@gassenhuber.de

Visit our homepage
www.gassenhuber.de

Download free demo versions, fully functioning for ten starts of QuarkXPress and InDesign.

Try the "Hello World" example with DATAform Add-on.

Try out other step by step examples.

Download the complete handbook as pdf file.

Download the complete DATAform database interface.

Order DATAform Add-ons online.

DATAform® Database publishing

DATAform Add-on. The translator for your layout program.