

MIT FileMaker User Group

Using and Combining Starter Solutions

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Three possible methods:

- Add new (external) table occurrence
 - Don't import anything
- Importing table (with schema & data)
- Importing table schema (without data)

Join two (or More) files/tables

- Contact Management plus another (e.g., Expense Report)
- Add another Table occurrence
 - external file references are italicized
- Create relationship
 - e.g., Contact ID & Employee ID

Keep existing file separate

- Drop down list
- Related value list
- Contact ID & FullName
 - Sort by 2nd field
 - Show *only* 2nd field
- Make First & Last Name related fields on Layout

Single file, multiple tables

- File...
 - Import data
 - “New table” instead of “Current table” (existing)
- Imports field definitions along with data
- Auto-enter options? No
- Automatically creates a new layout
- Now internal table occurrence
 - New relationship
 - Update fields!
 - New value list
 - Related fields
- multiple tables in a single file keeps maintaining permissions simple & easy

Import table schema

- FMP Advanced only
- Define Database
- Import...
 - Field definitions = YES
 - Data = NO
- Beware definitions relying on calculations/value lists (e.g., validation)
- Good for those commonly re-used fields:
 - Auto calculated serial number
 - Creation Date/Time/User
 - Modification Date/Time/User
- Can go back and import data if you want

The Basics

- Overall project: migrating a few dozen v5.5 files to v8.5
- My specific example: Student Programs Coordinator's Grants database(s)
 - User: Student Programs Coordinator
 - But wants to enable future access for both the Executive Director and the Assistant to the Directors
 - Names
 - Contact Info
 - Reviewer ranking/score
 - Form Letters
 - Emails

Initial analysis...

- Data
 - Mostly text fields, a few number & date fields, a few calculations
- Layouts/forms
 - Data entry and acceptance/rejection letters
- Scripts
 - Non-existent until I recently created one for e-mailing acceptance letters
- Sharing & Security
 - Initially: No password! AND Unknowingly set to multi-user! ☹

Start fresh...?

- Create New database from template
- Add necessary fields
- Import data
- re-create layouts

But what about just doing a conversion?

- Checked file with MetaDataMagic
 - Only two minor issues reported
 - And they actually were errors!
- So...
 - Corrected the problems
 - Converted the files
 - User is upgraded & happy!

Conclusions

- As always, choose best method for you & your solution!
 - Complexity vs. comfort level
- Why are you still using an unsupported version?
 - Security and new features/functionality
 - vs. resources and expertise
 - Consult DCAD!
- Conversion works for simple solutions
 - Don't be afraid to try testing it

Further Reading/Viewing

- FREE FileMaker video tutorials:
 - http://filemaker.com/products/fmp/video_tutorials.html
 - Combining Starter Solutions: Adding a new table occurrence
 - Combining Starter Solutions: Importing new data
 - Combining Starter Solutions: Importing a table schema
 - many others
- Kevin Cunningham's "Consolidating Databases" FMUG presentation (11/3/2006)
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/help/filemaker/fmug/consolidation.ppt>
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/help/filemaker/fmug/consolidate.pdf>

Thank You!

- Next FMUG meeting:
 - Friday, June 1, 2007
 - TBA

- Training classes (Bronwen J Heuer, IS&T):
 - Class Description: CPF0250c-A: FileMaker Pro: Basics
 - 05/17/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm = Class Full/Waitlist Available

 - 06/19/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm = Class Full/Waitlist Available

 - Class Description: CPF0270c-A: FileMaker Pro: Database Design
 - 05/22/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm = Class Full/Waitlist Available
 - 05/24/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm

 - Class Description: CPF0260c-A: FileMaker Pro: Designing Layouts
 - 06/26/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm = 5 Seat(s) Available
 - 06/28/2007 9:00am to 12:00pm