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August, 2004

Dear XC2 users,

This is the August edition of the XC2 newsletter informing you of updates, features that we have added to XC2 and tips on the most direct way to accomplish routine tasks. All of our Newsletters can be found at:

http://www.engsoft.com/XC2_Newsletters

If you have questions for us, please feel free to ask and I may respond in the newsletter if it seems to be of general interest.

If you do not want to continue receiving this newsletter or if there is someone else who should be receiving the newsletter, please inform us. We certainly do not want to add to the SPAM which many of us receive.

This month we’ll look at:

- Proper Database Technique
- Validate Street Names for Service Address
- Good uses for Exports
- Updating your list of Approved Assemblies
- Chris Retires

The current version of XC2 on the Website is 3.5 Build 331

Go to: http://www.engsoft.com/xc2update/

Call us at 800.761.4999 for the password, which we’ll give you if you have an in-date Tech Support contract.
Proper Database Technique

Have you ever tried to look up a record in XC2, or any other database for that matter, and you couldn’t find it even though you knew, absolutely, that it was there?

One of the things that Randy, the author of XC2, president of Engsoft Solutions and database guru, has drummed into our heads is NOT to enter more than the minimum needed when doing a search. It’s also a good idea to look for a field that contains the word that you are looking for. Here’s why:

The data in our databases gets accumulated over time, through our various energy cycles and by different data entry people, so little differences can occur. Think of the different ways that “North Main Street” could be entered;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N Main St</th>
<th>N Main St.</th>
<th>N Main Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. Main St</td>
<td>N. Main St.</td>
<td>N. Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Main St</td>
<td>No Main St.</td>
<td>No Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Main St</td>
<td>No. Main St.</td>
<td>No. Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Main St</td>
<td>North Main St.</td>
<td>North Main Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 15 different ways of entering North Main Street. Now, since we’re so smart, we instantly recognize that they’re all the same strip of pavement, but the computer is dumb as a post and it sees each one as different. So if you look up, “N Main St.” your computer will NOT find such a street if it was spelled, “N. Main St.” when it was entered.

What to do?
In the first place, read the next section, about “Validated Street Names” and get data entry rules in place to enhance data consistency.

Searches
When you search, use techniques such as looking for street names that contains “Main” and then choose No. Main St. or what ever from the list. If you’re looking for ‘Ed. McLaughlin’, you don't really know if it was spelled Ed, Ed., Eddy or Edward, so look for the field that contains “ed” and you will get all of the different spellings of Edward and perhaps a few more entries that happen to contain the letter combination “ed”.

Get in the habit of entering the minimum number of letters that will get you a manageable list from which to choose the data entry that you’re looking for. Assume that you won’t remember which way it was entered.
Street Numbers and Names

In XC2, we have given you preferences to set the way street names will be held. The Super Administrator can go to Administrator Preferences, choose Data EntryPrefs and then the Field Usage tab.

Starting at the top of the Address/Location Preferences, if none of the boxes are checked, we get the unDelimited Service Address. This is the easiest format in which to enter data, but when it comes time for searches and sorts, it’s the least convenient.

In a List View, sorting by Street is meaningless since the street number is part of the address, the sort ends up being by number.

We lose the valuable ability to find elusive by that sort. It’s easy to miss different ways of spelling the same street.

Using the Delimited Service address each successive check box will give more consistency:
Validate Street Names for Service Address

The last check box guarantees consistency of names. It’s a feature called Validated Street Names. You must use some level of Delimited Service Address to use Validated Street Names.

When entering a street name, I just type in the first few letters of a street name, such as: ‘we’ and press my tab key and I get a list of all the streets whose name begins with ‘we’ and I choose the correct one:

It’s much faster and your data will be consistent, searches will be more dependable and sorts will work.

If this is the first time a street name has been entered and it’s not on the list, just click, “Add New” and enter it.

Data Entry Consistency

Consistent data entry is essential to efficient database usage. It will save you time and aggravation, which is why we added the “Validate Street Names” preference.
**Good uses for Exports**

A user called the other day wanting a list of companies with their contact information and he wanted to put it on letterhead with a disclaimer.

We could have created the list that he wanted with Quick Reports, but we couldn’t put his letterhead or logo on it nor could we have added the disclaimer in a Quick Report, so I showed him how to do an **export to Word**.

We clicked on Tester Companies from the Home Page to get a list of all Tester Companies:

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/350)

With the List View of Tester Companies open, we chose ‘**Export**’ from the File Menu:

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/350)
What we get is the **Export Editor**: 

![Image of Export Editor window]

Choose and Insert or Append the fields that you want. Go to ‘Save as Type’ and choose the appropriate type of file. You can also choose to ‘Include Field Name Headers.’ Save your Export Script if you like (remember where you put it. One good place might be to create a folder called “Export Scripts” in your XC2_V35 folder), then click ‘Export.’

Open the file that you created in Word, highlight it all and set your tabs so that the columns line up well and type in whatever you want.
Updating your list of Approved Assemblies

Build 331 adds a new feature to update the list of assemblies in the pull-down list on the Assembly page in XC2.

Go to our Website to: http://www.engsoft.com/xc2update/
And download the XC2 BFP Models Update

Choose ‘Special Operations’ from the File Menu, then XC2 BFP Models Update.
Chris Retires!

I'm both delighted and sad to announce that having been born in the year that Germany conquered France and Poland and started bombing England, Franklin Roosevelt was president and Gone with the Wind, The Wizard of Oz and Fantasia were the movie sensations, I've reached retirement age.

I'm delighted because I can travel, hang out with my sweetheart, ride my mountain bike and basically use my time the way I choose at the moment.

I'm sad because I've enjoyed my contact with you and the crew at EngSoft. I'll miss you… but then again I probably won't dwell on it.

If you have specific issues or procedures that you wish to have discussed, let Bill know.

All the best and warm regards,

Chris Harnish
Customer Development Manager
EngSoft Solutions
(800) 761-4999
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