

How do I create a data map to provide to PastPerfect conversion services?

Version 4

The first step in converting data from one program to another is to create a data map. A data map is typically a five column list that matches each of your current data fields to the appropriate PastPerfect field. The columns should be as follows: Your database fields, PastPerfect's fields, PastPerfect's field types, Modify, and Notes. The data map is just a text document and can be produced using any word processor or program such as Word, Excel, or WordPerfect. Before creating this map, you need to know what data is contained in each of your current data fields and also in the PastPerfect data fields.

For a complete description of all PastPerfect data fields, please print the Field Descriptions reports from the Reports menu of PastPerfect. If you do not currently have the PastPerfect program or demo on your computer, you can download these Field Description reports from our website at www.MuseumSoftware.com/downloads.htm.

PastPerfect uses separate databases for objects, photos, archives, library, contacts, dues, donations, accessions, exhibits, and loans. There is a separate report for each. Each report lists the field names, a detailed description of the data to be stored in the field, and the type and size of the field. The field name is the term at the end of the description in brackets, for example, Accession# - [accessno:c(15)], "accessno" is the field name. The type and size is listed after the field name, for example: [c(15)] indicates a character field maximum length 15 characters, while [n(10,2)] indicates a numeric field length 10 with 2 decimal places format such as #####.##; [date] indicates a date field; [datetime] indicates a field containing both date and time, and [memo] indicates an unlimited character field.

In creating your map, it is unlikely that all the fields will match up perfectly. For instance, your field may contain entries that exceed the character length of the PastPerfect field you want to use. To accommodate this problem, you should take a close look at your data to see just how many entries are too long. If it is only a few, you may be able to shorten them. If not, you will need to map the data to a longer PastPerfect field. For fields that you have in your data that don't exist in PastPerfect, you can use the custom fields (listed as "Objects Field 01" or "Field 01" on the reports). Or, you could transfer the data into the PastPerfect unlimited Description or Notes fields. Remember these unlimited fields are searchable in PastPerfect.

When transferring your data to PastPerfect, you may want to modify it slightly. For example, you may have a field for Color, which PastPerfect does not. If you decide to put this data in the Description field in PastPerfect, it would make more sense if the entry was 'Color is green' rather than just 'green'. Or, if your object id #s are of the form 98.1.21 and you want to change them to 1998.001.0021, we can make that modification. We can also combine 2 or more of your data fields into one PastPerfect field. This type of global modification can be accomplished during the transfer and should be noted in the Notes column of the data map.

Structure:

On your data map, the first column lists your database field names. The second column lists the PastPerfect field names. The third column lists the type and size of this field in PastPerfect, as explained above and found in the Field Description report. We ask you to include this type information so you recognize the type of field into which you are bringing your data. The fourth column of "Modify" indicates if you would like us to make any changes to that field during the conversion. The fifth column is for any notes, including an explanation of any modifications.

Example:

Here is an example of a data map for converting data to the version 4 PastPerfect Objects catalog:

Your database	PastPerfect	Type	Modify	Notes
Catalogno	ObjectID	c25	Yes	Add leading 0's and century to create format 1998.001.0001
Donorno	Accessno	c15	No	
Name	Objname	c40	No	
Location	Homeloc	c60	No	
Cataloged	Catdate	date	No	
Madeof	Material	c75	No	
Date	Date	c50	Yes	Change from character (January 1, 1950) to date type field (01/01/1950)
Condition	Condition	c10	No	
Description	Descrip	memo	No	
Color	Descrip	memo	Yes	Add 'Color is'

Please create separate data maps for the other types of data you will be converting, such as Photos, Archives, Library, Accessions, and Contacts. If you create the data maps it will save us the time and trouble, insuring you the best possible price and results.

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Witt, Conversions Coordinator, at our Support Office at (800)562-6080. Thank you for using PastPerfect!