

DIFfersifier 3.4



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DIFfersifier

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About DIFfersifier 3.4

DIFfersifier 3.4 lets you convert HyperCard stacks to DIF, Merge, XML and tab-separated formats. DIFfersifier can also create HTML tables. DIF files are recognized by most database applications, one of them being FileMaker Pro. Merge files are readable by many but not all database applications, but it provides important advantages over the DIF format. Tab-separated text files are very useful if you are creating your own database tool and need a simple format to import data from. HTML tables can be displayed in a web browser. XML files can be used by programmers to re-create HyperCard stacks on other platforms and can be read by XML readers.

Minimum Requirements

DIFfersifier 3.4 runs on any PowerMac and Intel Mac with Mac OS X 10.3 or later. DIFfersifier may work with Mac OS X 10.1 and 10.2. DIFfersifier also runs under Windows XP and Vista and should work fine with Windows 95, 98 and NT.

DIFfersifier 3.1 runs on any PowerMac with system version 7.5.3 or later, including older versions of MacOS X. It has not been tested with earlier MacOS versions. If you are using a Macintosh, AppleScript 1.1 or later has to be installed. It is unknown whether DIFfersifier works with AppleScript 1.0. AppleScript enables a number of additional features, which are only available for MacOS (68K, PPC and X). Some older operating systems may require an older version of DIFfersifier.

DIFfersifier also runs on most Windows versions. To use DIFfersifier on a PC, you

will need at least a Pentium I with Windows 95. Although DIFfersifier might run on Windows 3.11, we strongly discourage using DIFfersifier with this version of Windows. DIFfersifier has been tested with Windows XP.

DIFfersifier 3.2 needs at least 7 MB of memory for converting small HyperCard stacks. It is recommended to reserve an additional amount of memory, equal to 1.5 times the size of the stack you are going to convert, for DIFfersifier.

Quick Start

Open DIFfersifier 3.2 by double-clicking its symbol in the Finder. Press the Select Stack button and choose a stack from the dialog that appears. Open that stack and see its information being displayed in DIFfersifier's window. Choose a background, the data of which you want to export to a DIF file. Click DIF Export and enter a filename in the dialog that appears. Now, a file will appear in the location of your choice.

In your database application, choose Import from the File menu. If you cannot find the DIF file, select All Files, DIF files, or TEXT files in the Open dialog. Select the DIF file. In the appearing window, make the appropriate combinations of available fields in your database and labels in the DIF file. Click Okay and watch the data being imported.

XML

DIFfersifier's XML features have been completed with the release of version 3.4. The XML data currently produced by DIFfersifier should be sufficient for programmers to write a utility to re-create a HyperCard file in SuperCard, MetaCard, Revolution, HyperStudio, FileMaker and other rapid application development and database development environments.

We believe that XML export could still be improved. We appreciate your suggestions regarding further development of this feature. Feel free to send your suggestions and comments to support.

What if I need more than the data?

DIFfersifier converts text data only. The data need to be in background fields of the stack to allow for proper record creation. If your stack has been designed in a way different from what DIFfersifier and other tools expect, you may be unable to extract all data from your stack. Particularly, if pictures, sounds and movies are an important part of your stack, conversion may appear to be difficult. If you encounter difficulties while converting a stack, you might want to ask Economy-x-Talk for help.

One of the services by Economy-x-Talk is the conversion of HyperCard-based software. We convert your stacks into a standalone application for the platform of your choice (Windows, Macintosh, Linux and a number of Unix flavours). Another

possibility is to have your HyperCard stack pulled apart into data, pictures, and other materials, for use in another database system. One way or another, we help you to continue using your software and the data with the hardware of tomorrow. Write to support@economy-x-talk.com for more information.

Updating from DIFfersifier 2.x to 3.x

If you already have a license for DIFfersifier 2.x, you can use this license for DIFfersifier 3.x as well. In the Plug-ins folder of DIFfersifier 2.x, you will find a file called License. Copy this file to the desktop or any other location on your hard disk. If a registration window appears when you start DIFfersifier 3.2, you will see three fields. The top field is called "License File..." and is accompanied by a button labelled "Open...". Click on the button and select your License file. Next, enter the name and password, which were sent to you together with your License file and click on "Okay". You should now see a message saying that you have correctly registered DIFfersifier. If you have a problem registering the new version, contact support.

Help! It doesn't work!

What do to if DIFfersifier doesn't work as you expected? You are expected to follow these steps before contacting support.

0) Before buying a license, test DIFfersifier to make sure that it does what you expect. DIFfersifier lets you convert the first 50 cards of a stack, without registering.

1) If you have a problem registering DIFfersifier, first wait until 3 days after purchasing your license. Meanwhile, mr4quake sure to read the instructions included with your license. if you still can't figure it out after three days, then contact support.

2) If you have HyperCard available, make sure to compact your stack before converting it with DIFfersifier. Resort to the HyperCard manual for more information.

3) If the software of your choice can't import the output file created by DIFfersifier, check which formats can be imported by the software. When converting your stack, make sure to select a format in DIFfersifier that is compatible with the destination platform.

4) If you are unable to save a file, make sure that the hard disk or network disk or any other media that you use are writable and that you have user sufficient permissions to write to that disk. If you are not sure of this, ask your network administrator or a friend for help.

5) If you can't select a stack in DIFfersifier's open file dialog, choose the right file format in the option menu button in the same dialog. You can also choose "All files".

Do not contact support about this problem, because this is the answer you will get.

6) If DIFfersifier doesn't respond, just wait until it does respond. Probably, DIFfersifier is just busy converting your stack and needs some time to finish the procedure.

7) If DIFfersifier skips a background, check that there aren't multiple background in your HyperCard stack. If backgrounds have the same name, you might need HyperCard to rename one background. If DIFfersifier seems to skip cards or records, again check for multiple backgrounds as there may be cards on a different background.

8) Your HyperCard stack may be corrupted. On the Download page (subject to change) of the Economy-x-Talk website, you can find the programme Split & Recover. You can try to use this utility to repair or HyperCard stack.

9) If your HyperCard stack is larger than 2 GB, you will probably be unable to copy the HyperCard stack to another computer system. In these cases, too, you may use Split&Recover to split a HyperCard stack into smaller files. Whenever you use Split&Recover, make sure to create a back-up of your stack first.

10) If you still can't get DIFfersifier to work, contact support. We will try to send you an answer within 3 business days.

More information

DIFfersifier 3.4 has on-line help. Click the ?-button to open a window with information about all features of DIFfersifier. If you have further questions, you can send an e-mail to Economy-x-Talk support. The e-mail address is: support@economy-x-talk.com. Before contacting support, read the on-line help files carefully, especially the section "Help, an error occurred!" You can also visit the DIFfersifier homepage at <http://economy-x-talk.com/differsifier.html>.

Aknowledgements

Many thanks are due to Kamnam Chandracot for extensive beta testing of the Windows version. We are also grateful for the screenshots she sent to us (which we have used to create the picture of the DIFfersifier window on the DIFfersifier homepage). John R. Vokey found an important issue in the Mac OS X version of DIFfersifier and was a great help tracking down the cause. He also submitted a screenshot (which we use on the website). Harry Whitfield helped us by testing earlier versions of DIFfersifier. There are also several anonymous beta testers. We are very grateful to all of them. The original idea of the DIF conversion utility comes from the MacWorld magazine (10/10/93).

History

3.4 Completion of the XML export feature -group names sometimes had double quotes around them in XML output, this bug has been fixed - two additional entries in the built-in documentation (Invalid XML output, problems with output files) - Navigation in the help window works much more faster and smoothly now. - number of lines of output file added to log file - selected format added to log file.

3.3 Use htmlText for html files - Check for tabs in fields if exporting to tab-delimited file.

3.2 experimental XML export has been added - Documentation has been updated - no more completely white window when DIFfersifier is opened in Mac OS X (although we can't guarantee this for all possible configurations yet)

3.1.4 Registration system has been simplified - Minor interface improvements have been made - Documentation has been updated

3.1.3 DIFfersifier is now available for MacIntel.

3.1.2 Drag and drop has been added - A few minor interface improvements have been made.

3.1.0 Choosing the Preferences menu item from the DIFfersifier menu on MacOS X discloses the additional options pane. - The many previous improvements made us decide to continue counting at 3.2.0.

3.0.2 A persistent bug that prevented the Linux version of DIFfersifier from opening stacks has finally been removed. - Minor file icon issues on MacOS X have been resolved. - In Linux, any file may be selected, using the Open File dialog. On Windows and Macintosh platforms, only readable files may be selected. However, pressing the control key on Windows or the Option key on MacOS Classic and MacOS X will allow you to select files of any type.

3.0.1 Removal of several minor bugs - addition of the Merge format.

3.0 First cross-platform version of DIFfersifier.

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