



The Maelstrom TDBOutline component

Release 1.5

Introduction

Welcome to version 1.5 of the Maelstrom TDBOutline component. **If you are upgrading from v1.0, please see WHAT'S NEW IN VERION 1.5 and INSTALLATION for important information *BEFORE* installing.**

TDBOutline is a native VCL Delphi component designed to allow the loading, navigation, and manipulation of hierarchically organized data contained in a database.

TDBOutline is a descendant of the TOutline Class, inheriting all TOutline's properties, methods and events.

TDBOutline has additional properties, methods and events that provide the following:

- o **Automatic loading** of recursively related data into the outline, preserving the hierarchic structure. One call to method LoadFromDataSet is all it takes to populate the outline with all the table data.
- o **Automatic drag & drop** facility that moves a node and all its children to be children of the dropped-on node. Dragging a node off the outline control will cause the outline to scroll, enabling drag and drop to a node not visible on the same page as the from-node. A default move confirmation message can be enabled, disabled, or overridden with your own custom message.
- o **Automatic record-pointer synchronization** -- as you navigate through the outline, TDBOutline will move the record pointer in the table to the associated record. It will even search for the appropriate index to enable FindKey synchronization.
- o **Automatic outline synchronization** -- as you navigate through the dataset, you can cause the selected outline to synchronize with the selected dataset record by calling a single method.
- o **Automatic update** of recursive field upon drag & drop -- when a node is dropped on another node, the dropped-on node's key field will be written to the dropped node's recursive field.
- o **Mass update** or cancel of drag-drop changes with a single method call.

TDBOutline can be used to display, manipulate and save the hierarchic structure of recursively related (self-referencing) data. Recursively related tables are used for many purposes, including the following:

- o Corporate personnel hierarchy
- o Genealogy (Family trees)
- o Notes/subnotes (document management)
- o GL Account structures
- o Business channel/segment structures
- o Project tasks/subtasks
- o Decision trees
- o Process flows
- o Universal Address Master files
- o PIMs

TDBOutline has proved to be a very useful tool in Maelstrom's development projects. We know there are areas requiring improvement, and they will be in the next release.

What's New in version 1.5

- o Version 1.5 has been modified to prevent the display of DataField within the node text. Resulting from this modification, the Data element of each node is now occupied with information TDBOutline needs to navigate and synchronize the DBOutline.
IMPORTANT: the attached data (pointer) of each DBOutline node is now used by TDBOutline, and should not be modified by the programmer. If modification of the attached data is required, version 1.0 should be used. Version 2.0 will include a new data element that the programmer can use. If upgrading from version 1.0, ensure that no project code modifies the attached data of the DBOutline nodes.
- o Several new methods have been added to facilitate the addition/editing of outline nodes after the initial call to LoadFromDataSet. These methods are AddDBRecord and ChangeDBRecord.
- o A new method has been added to allow the developer to synchronize the DBOutline's selected node to changes in the underlying dataset's selected record: SynchOutline.
- o A new property has been added, DataAutoUpdate, that specifies if drag-drop changes should be immediately posted to the dataset or not. In conjunction with this new property, a method has been added, UpdateDraggedNodes, that will post all un-posted drag-drop changes to the dataset. This allows the manipulation of the DBOutline's structure without changing the dataset. The modifications to the hierarchy can be saved with a call to UpdateDraggedNodes, or

abandoned with a call to LoadFromDataSet.

- o In keeping with the above change, AutoDrop has been modified to post drag-drop changes to the dataset only if DataAutoUpdate is True.
- o Improved support for TQueries has been added. DataAutoSynch will now work with a TQuery. All other functionality also works with TQuery, provided the TQuery is capable of being updated.
- o A new property has been added to prevent the display of the default error message if a cyclical drag-drop is attempted: IgnoreCyclicalDrops.
- o Improved index support has been provided. The DataAutoSynch mechanism will now maintain the initial index of the dataset, switching to an index with primary key DataField as needed, then switching back.

Installation

If upgrading from version 1.0, **make backup copies of all projects and table data** that utilize TDBOutline before starting installation. As version 1.5 utilizes a different method of synchronizing data, there is a risk of inadvertently deleting incorrect dataset records during the initial learning curve of version 1.5. Appropriate measures should be put in place to safeguard your data.

To install the TDBOutline component, copy all distributed files into a directory of your choice.

You may wish to install the following files to a component library (example: \delphi\lib).

DBOUTLN.DCU
DBOUTLN.RES

From Delphi's menu, invoke OPTIONS | INSTALL COMPONENTS and install component DBOUTLN.DCU.

The DBOutline component will appear on the Data Controls pallet.

To run the demonstration program, load and compile DEMO.DPR in Delphi.

To integrate TDBOutline's help file with Delphi, install the KWF file:

1. Make a backup of Delphi's master index file, \delphi\bin\delphi.hdx.
2. Copy file TDBOUTLI.HLP to \delphi\bin.
3. Copy file TDBOUTLI.KWF to \delphi\help
4. Run the program HELPINST (installed with Delphi).
5. Open keyword index file \delphi\bin\delphi.hdx.

6. Add keyword file \delphi\help\tdboutli.kwf.
7. Save.

Registration

The trial version of TDBOutline v1.5 is free, but will only run while Delphi is running. The commercial version, allowing royalty free run-time distribution, can be ordered for US \$39.00. See ORDER.WRI for details on how to order.

For US \$39.00 you will receive the latest version of TDBOutline and be eligible for technical support. Registration can be done directly with Maelstrom Software or through the Shareware Registration System on CompuServe.

CompuServe: SWREG ID 8635

Registered users of version 1.0 will receive a free upgrade to version 1.5. If you have not received your free upgrade, contact us at 71431.62@compuserve.com.

Please note that Maelstrom Software does not accept Credit Card Orders. If you are going to be ordering directly from Maelstrom, please refer to the ORDER.WRI file included in this archive for detailed information.

License Terms for Commercial Version 1.5

The registered commercial version 1.5 of TDBOutline may be used within one Delphi development environment only. If you require additional copies, please see ORDER.WRI.

The source to the demo project DEMO.DPR that is included in the TDBOutline Trial version may be reused, modified, and redistributed freely by registered users.

The commercial version of DBOUTLN.DCU component may not be redistributed. You may, however, freely compile and distribute any .EXE files in which DBOUTLN.DCU was used. You are entitled to unlimited, royalty-free distribution of .EXE programs developed with TDBOutline.

Technical Support

Technical support is provided to registered users through e-mail. See Contact Information for details.

We will respond to questions, bug reports, and enhancement requests as

quickly as possible.

Upgrade Policy

Maelstrom will provide interim version releases of TDBOutline to registered users free of charge. Interim version releases will typically contain bug-fixes and simple enhancements that address shortcomings. These releases will be delivered to the registered user via the same mode as the original order (e-mail or postal mail).

Full version changes will be offered to registered users at a 50% - 80% discount. The level of discount will be determined by the level of increased functionality included in the new version.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee the publication of future upgrades or predict release dates -- the resources required for future development will be allocated to TDBOutline in proportion to consumer demand for the product. Bug reports and enhancement requests are always welcome.

Maelstrom plans to release TDBOutline's source code for sale with the release of version 2.0. If TDBOutline proves not to be profitable enough to justify completion of version 2.0, the source will be offered to registered users for a nominal charge.

Disclaimer

Users of TDBOutline must accept this disclaimer of warranty:

"TDBOutline is supplied as is. The author disclaims all warranties, expressed or implied, including, without limitation, the warranties of merchantability and of fitness for any purpose. The author assumes no liability for damages, direct or consequential, which may result from the use of TDBOutline."

TDBOutline version 1.5 has been released in two editions: the Trial edition, which will only run when Delphi is running; and the commercial version, which has been shipped with this document. The above disclaimer applies to both versions.

Please feel free to share and distribute the Trial version for others to evaluate.

Upcoming Enhancements

The following enhancements are in the planning/development stages:

- o Method to load data from one-many-many... relationships. Property editor to allow the user to define these relationships.

- o Glyph & Font definition at outline levels and by dataset status code.
- o Semi-virtualization -- allow loading of much larger datasets by loading only the top two levels in LoadFromDataSet, and loading child nodes as nodes are expanded.

Please let us know of any other improvements you would like to see.

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