7 Using macros

A macro is a set of actions associated with a keyboard accelerator (also called a keyboard shortcut or hot key). The macro facility in the HoTMetaL PRO Editor can be used to define your own macros. This is particularly useful when you have to carry out some repetitive task that doesn't have a built-in accelerator or command.

You can save your macros in one or more files and load them as needed.

Macros are not associated with a specific document, so any macros you load will be available for use with all documents that you edit.

Macros can be associated with text and/or elements to be inserted in a document, a single command, or a complex series of commands. Some actions that you can perform with macros are:

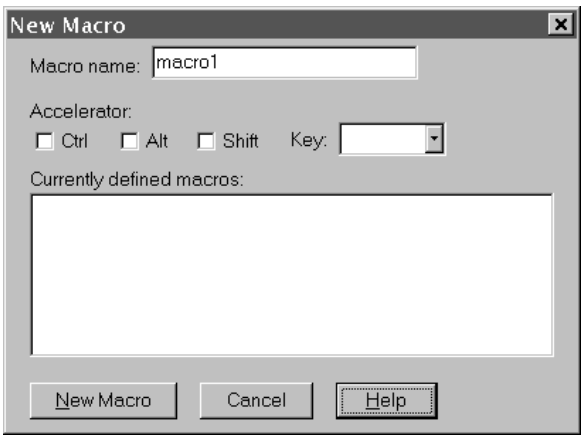
- Insert an element that doesn't have a toolbar button associated with it.
- Set an attribute or property in several elements. For example, if you wanted to set the background color to 'green' for several table cells that weren't in the same row or column, you could create a macro that set a cell's background to green, then navigate to each cell, re-running the macro each time. This would be faster than setting the background 'manually' each time.
- Insert a piece of text that is used repeatedly.
- Create a keyboard shortcut for a command that doesn't have a built-in shortcut, subject to certain *Restrictions* section (page 61).

Creating macros

To record a macro:

- Choose Record New Macro from the Tools menu or click on the ● toolbar button. This starts macro recording. The command will then toggle to Stop Recording... and the status bar will read Recording macro.
- Enter the sequence of actions that you want the macro to carry out. These actions will not only be recorded, they will also be applied to the current document as you perform them. There are some restrictions (the next page)on what can go into a macro.
- When you're finished, choose Stop Recording... in the Tools menu or click on the ■ toolbar button. This command ends the macro.

Now you will get a dialog box that lets you select a descriptive name and an accelerator for the macro. The accelerator is the sequence of keystrokes that will run the macro.



An accelerator can consist of any choice from the Key list (a letter, number, function key, or arrow key), alone or preceded by Ctrl , Alt , or Shift in any combination.

- Enter a descriptive name for the macro.
- Choose the keys for the accelerator.

- Click on New Macro .

If you re-use one of HoTMetaL PRO's built-in keyboard accelerators as a macro accelerator, its original functionality will be unavailable as long as that macro is loaded.

Restrictions on macros

A macro should be self-contained, that is, its completion must not depend on any user input at the time the macro is run, such as typing in a dialog box or making a selection from a list. Therefore, there are some sequences of actions that cannot successfully be included in a macro. As a general guideline, if a macro involves any of the commands whose name ends in '...', that command should be completed somewhere in the macro. So, for example, you can define a macro that inserts a particular element, but you cannot define a macro that simply brings up the Insert Element dialog box.

Mouse clicks in the document window are ignored during macro recording. The first time you attempt to use the mouse to change the selection, HoTMetaL PRO will beep. The second time, you will get a message saying that you should use the cursor (arrow) keys to change the selection.

In general, a macro that was recorded in one of HoTMetaL PRO Editor's three views (WYSIWYG view, Tags On view, HTML Source view) should not be played back in the other two views.

The following other actions cannot be recorded in macro:

- Setting table properties.
- The Check HTML and Check Accessibility commands.
- Insertion of ActiveX controls and Design-Time Controls (DTCs).
- Spell checking operations.

If you use a toolbar button when recording a macro, note that even though a toolbar button can perform one of several actions (insert, change, split) only the action that was *actually performed* when you recorded the macro will be performed the next time you run the macro. For example, if the insertion point is inside a P element and you click on the **P** button, HoTMetaL PRO will split the P element. This action is recorded in a macro as 'split the current element', so when the macro is run, it will attempt to split the current element, even if it's not a P. (By

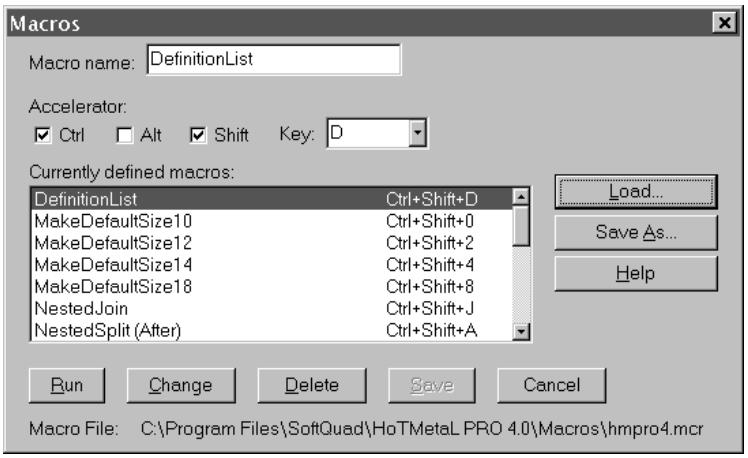
contrast, if you create markup with the Element... or Change Element... command, it will be played back in the macro exactly as you entered it.)

Running a macro

The usual way to run a macro is to type its keyboard accelerator. You can also run macros by choosing Macros... from the Tools menu. This gives you a dialog box that lists all the macros that are currently available.

To run a macro:

- Choose Macros... from the Tools menu, or click on the ▶ toolbar button. The Macros dialog appears.



- Select the appropriate macro from the list.
- Click on Run .

You can run only one macro at a time.

Changing a macro accelerator

To change the accelerator associated with a macro:

- Choose Macros... from the Tools menu. The Macros dialog appears and displays a list of currently loaded macros.
- Select the macro that you want to change.
- Choose a new accelerator using the Ctrl, Alt, and Shift check boxes and the Key list.
- Click on Change .

Deleting a macro

To delete a macro from the list of loaded macros:

- Choose Macros... in the Tools menu. This displays a dialog box with a list of currently loaded macros.
- Select the macro that you want to delete. (You can delete only one macro at a time.)
- Click on Delete .

If you delete a macro that has been loaded from a file, the macro is removed only from the list of available macros—it is not deleted from the file from which it was loaded, and can subsequently be re-loaded.

To delete a macro from a macro file:

- Delete the macro from the list of loaded macros, as described above.
- Click on Save . This saves the currently loaded macros to the file.

Saving and loading macro files

To save the currently loaded macros to a file:

- Choose Macros... from the Tools menu. This displays a dialog box with a list of currently loaded macros. The name of the current macro file (if there is one) is displayed at the bottom of the dialog box.
- Click on [Save] to save the macros to the current macro file.
- Click on [Save As...] to save the macros to another macro file.

A macro file saved in this way can later be loaded by clicking on Load....

If any macros are still unsaved when you attempt to exit HoTMetaL PRO, you will get a warning message informing you of this and giving you the opportunity to save the macros before exiting.

To load a macro file:

- Choose Macros... from the Tools menu.
- Click on [Load...] .
- Choose a macro (*.mcr*) file.

After a macro file is loaded, the previously loaded macros are unavailable. If any macros have been defined but not yet saved, these will be lost. Before the new macro file is loaded, you will receive a warning dialog giving you the opportunity to save any unsaved macros.

When you load a macro file, it becomes the default macro file and will be loaded the next time you launch HoTMetaL PRO. The default macro file for HoTMetaL PRO is *hmpro4.mcr*, located in the *macros* folder under the HoTMetaL PRO folder. See the file *readme.htm* in this folder for more information.