

Loading Data in to Self Service Forms

Ever more applications are being migrated to a browser interface. However, browsers present challenges for the bulk entry of data. This white paper explains how DataLoad can be used to quickly and reliably load data in to browser-based applications.

DataLoad can load data in applications through their forms or directly to the underlying database. Loading in to forms is an ideal approach because this is the interface supported by the application's vendor and does not require any technical skills. However, this becomes more challenging when the forms' performance is variable or not all functionality can be accessed through keystroke short cuts. Both those issues are common in browser-based forms.

During the past 20 years the user interface for many corporate applications has changed considerably. Text-based terminals were replaced with graphical applications and those have often then migrated from PC installs to a browser-based interface. These changes have generally improved the usability and functionality of applications but this can be at the expense of data entry speed. That affects users but is an even greater problem for tools like DataLoad that automate the loading of data in to these applications.

DataLoad's Macro loads replicate a user's actions to load data in to forms. The speed of the load is controlled by a series of delays and these prevent the load running faster than the target application. Proper setup of delays at a global level and within the spreadsheet is essential for fast and reliable loads. However, where performance is variable reliability may still be an issue or delays must be set so high as to make the load very slow. DataLoad's Browser Control functionality overcomes these challenges.

Browser Control enables DataLoad to integrate with Internet Explorer ("IE"). This happens automatically and is invisible to the user. This integration allows DataLoad full access to the browser's forms where it can perform any of the actions available to users. For example, DataLoad can insert data in fields, select values from drop lists, press radio buttons and checkboxes, click on hyperlinks, and press buttons. Because DataLoad is integrated with IE those actions are very fast and completely reliable.

With Browser Control turned on DataLoad also knows what IE is doing. That enables DataLoad to send data as soon as IE is ready but wait while the browser is busy. The load speed is controlled dynamically by DataLoad and no fixed time delays are required. That means loads always run as fast as possible but never "overtake" IE. The result is very fast loads that drive IE as hard as possible but while maintaining reliability and accuracy.

Browser Control is easy to use. It is standard in DataLoad Professional V5 and works automatically once enabled by clicking just one checkbox. The Macro load's fixed time delays may then be removed and DataLoad will dynamically control load speed. Linking DataLoad's columns with the IE form fields gives further benefits, for example all navigation commands can be removed from loads. With more functionality moving to the browser-based interface, for example Supplier entry in Oracle E-Business Suite R12, Browser Control is an invaluable tool for saving time, automating data entry and maximising the accuracy of data entry.

DataLoad is unique in providing a comprehensive suite of options for loading data and config to Oracle E-Business Suite & other applications. With thousands of users in almost 100 countries it is the world's favourite data loading tool.