

DataLoad: Help, what do I do next?!

DataLoad is used by thousands of users worldwide, but as with all software unless you know some basic principles then it can remain a mystery. This white paper outlines the options available in DataLoad to load data in to applications.

DataLoad is designed to enable all users, regardless of technical ability, to load data in to other applications. It can load data and setup in to virtually any application although it is most often used with corporate systems such as Oracle E-Business Suite. DataLoad can load data through an application's forms or directly in to the database. Loading via forms is a good approach because no technical skills are required and you use the front end intended for data entry, thus there are no support implications. However, with high data volumes or complex logic it may be necessary to load direct to the database and DataLoad can do that too. Loading the data is only part of the solution and DataLoad also includes functionality for importing and validating data and the loads can be packaged for use by other users. However, the key question remains – how do I start loading data?

The simplest loads use DataLoad Macros. These replicate user's actions such that target applications don't know whether the data is being entered by DataLoad or a "real" user. Macro loads can send data, keystrokes and mouse clicks to applications. Keystrokes can be used to enter data but they are normally used for navigation or to select functionality. For example, keystrokes may send the TAB key to move between form fields or press keys to open a menu and select a menu entry. Each row in DataLoad normally represents one record to load and consists of a mixture of data, keystrokes for navigation and, where required, mouse clicks. The load speed is controlled by DataLoad delays. These can be set globally, for example DataLoad will pause after each cell is loaded, but they are also set at specific points in a load, for example where some long running action occurs.

Macros are quick to build and work in all applications. However, they run at a fixed speed and there is no integration with the target application. These loads are significantly improved by using Load Control or Browser Control. Load Control monitors what the target application is doing and dynamically controls the load speed. Fixed delays are not required and the load runs as fast as possible but never too fast. Browser Control takes this a step further with deep integration in Internet Explorer allowing data to be injected directly in to browser fields. That maximises reliability and performance in browser-based applications.

Users of Oracle E-Business Suite's core/professional forms have another option for forms loading – Forms Playback. This creates a script that is run by Oracle Forms and results in the fastest possible loads for these forms.

While loading through forms has many advantages it is not always appropriate for frequent loading of high volumes or complex data. DataLoad Scripting provides a simple way to load data direct to all popular databases. The DataLoad script processes and loads data to the database when the load is started. This is the ultimate solution – the same familiar DataLoad front-end but with high speed database loads that can include almost any validation or data processing requirements, regardless of complexity. Thus there is DataLoad functionality to suit virtually every requirement, enabling the business need to be met while minimising the effort required to build the load.

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.