



Jazz Styled Text Plug-in

Plugin Version 1.01

Updated 29 September, 2004

Introduction

◆ Overview

This plugin provides a mechanism to enable styled text (bold, italic, size, colour, etc) to be transferred (copied and pasted) between *FileMaker Pro 7* and other applications. There are two variants of the plugin: one for *Macintosh* and one for *Windows* operating systems.

The plugin also allows you to copy and paste styled text between *FileMaker 7* and earlier versions of *FileMaker*. On a *Macintosh* computer this works in both directions. On *Windows* you can copy styled text from earlier versions of *FileMaker Pro* and paste it into *FileMaker Pro 7*, but not the other way. This was one of the issues which delayed the initial release of the *Windows* plugin, and has remained unsolved.

◆ Shareware or Freeware

This plug-in is shareware. To allow you to test the plugin's suitability for your purpose(s) the plugin will function unregistered for twenty operations (ie *StyledClipboard* may be called 20 times). This includes use of the sample *FileMaker* file provided. After 20 operations the *StyledClipboard* function will cease to work. If you wish to continue with its use, you are obliged to register it at <http://www.jazzmedia.com.au>.

The basic user license allows the plugin to be used by a single person or installed on a single computer. If you wish to distribute this plugin with your solution there are separate licenses available on a per-product basis. Consult the web-site for more details.

Once you have received a registration serial number, you can activate your serial number using the *StyledTextRegister* function, as described below. Single-user licensees may instead use the sample *FileMaker Pro* file to activate their registration.

A single serial numbers work with both *Macintosh* and *Windows* versions.

◆ Disclaimer

The plug-in is offered "as-is", and comes with no warranty of any kind. You are responsible for determining its suitability for your particular needs, and to ensure that it performs accordingly. Please do not obtain a license for the plugin until you have so-determined the plugin's suitability and effectiveness as per your requirements.

Conventions

◆ Definitions

The word 'function' and 'command' are used interchangeably in this document. While technically there is a difference between the two, FileMaker only provides a single method of access so differentiation between the terms is not important.

◆ Calling functions

This extension makes use of the FileMaker plugin architecture. Plugin functions can only appear as part of a calculation statement, even if you do not care about the function's returned value. There are two ways to use the functions. You may use whichever suits your scripting style.

The first method is to create an *If-End If* pair of commands, with no script steps in-between. Because the body of the *If-End If* statement is empty, the return value of the function is ignored. The *StyledClipboard* function could be called this way:

```
If [StyledClipboard]
End If
```

A more compact way to achieve the same result is to create a global field called *temp* (for example) which is reserved for offloading unwanted function results. The same *StyledClipboard* function would now be called like this:

```
Set Field ["mytable::temp", StyledClipboard]
```

The latter is the method I prefer, and is the method used in the examples throughout this document.

Function Summary

◆ **StyledTextVersion**

This function takes no parameters and returns a text string describing the plugin, its registration status and the version number of the plugin. For example:

```
Set Field ["mytable::regstatus", StyledTextVersion]
```

will place a string similar to "Jazz Media Styled Text 1.00 - Registered" into the field *regstatus*. The *TextToNum* function can be used to return the version number on its own (as a decimal number), from which comparisons can be made. (For this reason the version number will contain only a single decimal point, eg. "1.21" and not "1.2.1", as has become common practise today). The following example places the numeric version in a field called *plugin version*.

```
Set Field ["mytable::plugin version", "TextToNum(StyledTextVersion)"]
```

◆ **StyledTextRegister**

This function is used to activate plugin registration. The serial number provided to registered users should be supplied to this function. For example, if the serial number supplied is "12345" you can activate your registration with the following command:

```
Set Field ["mytable::temp", StyledTextRegister(12345)]
```

Single user licenses save the registration details in a preference file, so the registration only needs to be activated once. However a registration code purchased for product distribution does not get saved to a preference file. Rather this function should be placed in a startup script, to be called every time the runtime application is started.

Even though the registration code need only be supplied once to register use for all open databases, it is recommended that a script containing the registration code is placed in the start-up script for every database file which uses this plugin (enabled in FileMaker's document preferences).

If you accidentally perform a script with a (non-empty) invalid serial number, you will need to quit and re-launch FileMaker before the correct serial number will be accepted. You can check your registration status at any time by using the *StyledTextVersion* function, described above.

◆ **StyledClipboard**

This function performs the core work of the plugin. It enables styled text to be copied and pasted between *FileMaker Pro version 7* files and other applications.

The *StyledClipboard* command takes no parameters and returns no result. Its operation is totally self-contained. The *StyledClipboard* command can be called as follows:

```
Set Field ["mytable::temp", StyledClipboard]
```

To copy styled text from another application into *FileMaker Pro 7* perform the following steps

1. copy the text from your application
2. call the *StyledClipboard* function of this *Jazz Styled Text* plugin (shown above)
3. paste the text into the desired *FileMaker Pro* field¹

To copy text from *FileMaker Pro 7* into another application:

1. copy the text from the desired field in *FileMaker Pro*
2. call the *StyledClipboard* function of this *Jazz Styled Text* plugin (shown above)
3. paste the text into your application

You may choose to use a script to simplify the process, as is done in the sample database provided. Examine the very simple scripts in this file for details.

¹ FileMaker seems to have a few anomalies when dealing with styled text. Often when you paste a new style into a field, non-styled characters (not bold or not black, etc.) take on the styles of the first or previous character already in the field. A work around is to clear the field's contents before pasting styled text into the field. Note that this is not a problem with the plugin. Copying and pasting styled text entirely within FileMaker exhibits the same behaviour.

Supported styles

While *StyledClipboard* tries to retain as much styled information as it can, there are limits to what it can transfer. The following is a summary of the styles supported by *StyledClipboard*.

Style	Support
Bold	√
Italic	√
Underline	√
Outline	√
Shadow	√
Condensed, Extended	√
Strikethrough	p
SmallCaps	p
Superscript, Subscript	p
Forced Uppercase, Lowercase, Titlecase	x
Word underline, Double underline, etc.	p
Text size	√
Font family	x
Text colour	√ (24 bit)
Font ascent, descent	x

Key: √ fully supported
p partially supported
x no support provided

A key point to note is that the font family (eg. *Times*, *Helvetica*) information is not retained. Although this information *is* present, *FileMaker Pro 7's* clipboard format has not been published. As a result *Jazz Media* has been unable to determine a method to provide this information. We hope to rectify the situation if and when the information becomes available.

Although the font family is not available, we expect that in many situations this will not be an issue. This is because for databased content the font family is rarely an important part of the information. Alternatively, perhaps the font will already be known and it can be reapplied separately.

There are other formatting issues. When pasting text into *FileMaker Pro 7*, sometimes text absent of some styles (eg. non-bold, non-coloured) takes on the style of the previous text in the field. This is an anomaly of the way *FileMaker Pro 7* handles styled text. The same behaviour can be exhibited by copying and pasting text wholly within *FileMaker Pro*. If this behaviour becomes a problem, we suggest you first clear the field of any previous information (and remove the cursor from that field) prior to pasting in new styled text information. The sample *FileMaker Pro* file provided does. Examine its scripts for details of how this is done.

How it works

When you copy text (or other media) the text is placed on an invisible *clipboard*. When you paste, text is copied from the clipboard and placed in your application. Style information is also placed on the clipboard when it is available. Style information can be written in different formats. The problem occurs (and styling is lost) when one application does not understand the styled information which another application has provided. In this case the best it can do is to paste raw text, without the styling.

When *StyledClipboard* is called, the clipboard is scanned for styled text in a range of formats. When a styled format is found, this information is used to construct styled information in multiple formats, which are then placed back on the clipboard. The formats *StyledClipboard* currently understands include *Rich Text Format*, Classic 'styl' styled text (from OS9 days), and *FileMaker Pro 7's* private clipboard structure.

Appendices

◆ Problem Solving

Other than some style limitations (see *Supported Styles*, above), the only issues we have come across relate to copying text from *FileMaker Pro* into *Microsoft Word* version 10 (part of *Office X*) on the *Macintosh*. To the best of our knowledge these problems are in *Microsoft's* software, which can be confirmed by copying and pasting text from other RTF-based applications (such as *Text Edit*) to produce identical results.

The problems encountered are, when pasting into *Word*:

- bold text looks like *Times* rather than *Helvetica*. This appears to be a font problem, as the font dialog box registers it as family *Helvetica-Bold*, styled as bold. This problem seems to have been fixed in the *Microsoft Office* 10.1.2 update.
- 10 point text ends up as 12 point. This problem has not been fixed in the latest *Microsoft Office* (10.1.5) update.

Unicode is not supported in the current version.

◆ Version History

- 1.00 Released *Macintosh* version to the public (September 2004)
- 1.01 Fixed missing apostrophes (smart quotes) and (en-)emdashs when pasting into *FileMaker Pro* from *RTF* applications (eg. *Microsoft Word*).

Windows version released (29 Sept 2004).

◆ About Jazz Media

Jazz Media is an Australian-based company, who's main business is in creating Multimedia products for clients. It specialises in CD-ROMs and dynamic web sites requiring a database back-end. Use of an in-house database engine for CD-ROMs provides extremely fast access to data, and means that clients can distribute solutions royalty free.

While creating major client projects, it has been necessary or cost-effective to develop a series of plugins for *FileMaker Pro* — either to solve specific developmental problems, or to add functionality to programs and bundled as part of the commercial products. After years of successful operation, many of these plugins have been repackaged and released to the public as shareware or freeware.

If you are in the market for standalone or web-based products with more than a few pages of information, please email john@jazzmedia.com.au. You can view many completed projects on the web site at <http://www.jazzmedia.com.au/products.html>.