
A Review of DataFax 3.5

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Release Status

- 3 minor releases since DFUG2001, 3.5-001 through 3.5-003
- Minor releases are incremental – each one must be applied, in order, to get to current release level

Emailed QC reports

- Anywhere that a fax number can be specified, an email address can also be specified, in the form
`mailto:email_address`
- Effect is to forward document via email to specified recipient
- Document is sent in its original format, unless that format is PostScript, in which case it is first distilled to PDF

Emailed QC reports

- Centers database accepts email address(es) in the fax number field
- DF_QCfax report will send QC reports as PDF attachments to centers if center record contains an email address
- Faxing and emailing can be intermingled, used separately, or used together

Emailed QC reports

- Delivery is assumed to have occurred (there is no standard, reliable way to confirm that an email message was delivered)
 - Refax interval/delay options ignored if only emailing
- DF_QCsent is executed based upon delivery to the first fax number/email address in the center record – we recommend putting the fax number first if fax and email are used
- Not limited to QC reports – can be used anywhere that DFsendfax participates in sending

Edit checks

- New `qcinfo()` function to obtain an attribute of a QC note
- `dfvarinfo()` function has newly added attributes that can be requested of a data field

Data Export

- DFsas has new global specifications (and command-line arguments) to filter records by CENTERS, PATIENTS, and/or VISITS.
- DFsas and DFexport.rpc can request fields relative to the last field (NF)

```
DFexport.rpc -f 7,NF-1,NF ...
```

PDF Creation

- DFpdf identifies with an asterisk, *, those images which are for secondary records
- Favors page map label for page identification and bookmark, otherwise reverts to file map label

Page Map

- Any page map label can include the notation %*n* where % is fixed and *n* is a field number from the database record
- For example, if field 9 is the date of an AE, a page map definition of
`AE dated %9`
would generate a label like
`AE dated 99/12/25`
- Length overflow (still limited at 17 chars) must be monitored by user

GhostScript

- DFgs has been re-built around release 6.52 of GhostScript
- Includes all available writer devices, including a PDF writer which offers same functionality as Acrobat Distiller

Documentation

- All documentation has been updated to 3.5-003
- Distributed with HTML and PDF formats
- Website has alternate HTML view that highlights differences in documentation since 3.5-002

Conclusion

- DataFax 3.5 has become a very stable platform for clinical trials data management
- But it has a few limitations...