

Library and Information Service

HOME GROWN DATABASES GUIDELINES

1 Background

The Library has been using Inmagic programs to create databases in a variety of fields according to the needs of Library and University staff. The program had been made available to the whole campus and as a result several departmental databases were developed. The DOS-based Inmagic program was replaced by DBTextWorks, which functions in a Windows environment. Older databases that had been developed in Inmagic were comfortably converted to DBTextWorks. With the purchase of WebPublisherPRO the editing environment were made accessible via the Web in 2017. The advantages of editing the records in WebPublisherPRO is that there are no licensing constraints and the records are published in real time.

2 Policy

The Inmagic WebPublisherPRO programs are maintained by the Library and made available locally as well as campus-wide for developing and maintaining databases. Training and support is given by Library Systems.

3 Procedures

- A consultation between the LS member and the person who would like to develop a database will be held to determine if the LS member will be able to assist them. (From here on the person who wants to develop the database will be referred to as the owner.)
- If the LS member is able to assist the owner in creating the database, it is the owner's responsibility to provide a structure for the database.
- The LS staff member will create report, display and query forms on the basis of the structure while working closely with the owner to determine if the different forms meet their needs.
- If the owner has an Excel file with data that match the structure that they provided it may be uploaded before the owner starts to work in the new database. Once the owner starts to work in the database future Excel files will not be uploaded and all changes must be made by hand to the database. This is to prevent the overriding of data.
- When the construction of the database is finished the owner of the database will be provided with two links. The first link will direct the users to a database that may be searched by the public. The second link provides the owner with a space where data may be entered/alterd or deleted in the database.
- The owner can also decide if the public database is hidden behind a password. The pages that the owner edits are always protected by a password.
- All the HTML pages will be developed according to a standard Library template with the prescribed University branding.
- It is the responsibility of the owner to arrange for their own web accessible storage should they like to link to documents or images. We suggest that they contact IT-services for space on the Nextcloud platform.
- Training will be provided to the owner responsible for the database. If the owner uses students training will be provided to the students as arranged by the owner of the database.
- We suggest that the owner of the database creates a guideline document which provides the type and format in which the data must be entered in each field of the structure. We find that as students get replaced staff forget how the original data was entered and the data tends to lose its consistency.
- Should the owner of the database decide that they would like to move their data to another platform an Excel/XML file with the data can be provided