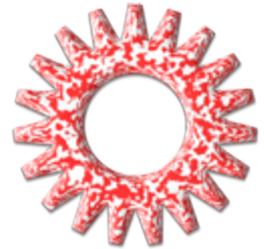
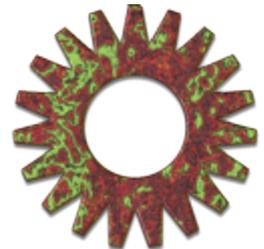


Data Merge Tool in TBS3

The Best Spinner, version 3, is a spinning tool, created by Jon Leger, that can create hundreds of articles from one seed article. One of its powerful features is the data merge tool which lets you add hundreds of pieces of different information to your articles, such as addresses, phone numbers, web site links, picture links, etc.

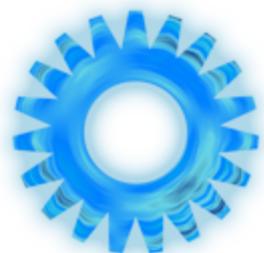


You can gather and save up all this information and then use it to populate articles you have written, so each one is targeted to an area or a niche or a special interest group of some kind.



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Data Merge Tool in TBS3

What if you could ?

- Add all your addresses for a particular business in your niche to your articles in one go?
- Add a different tip into each article from a list of hundreds?
- Target a different article each time to a particular market or to all your customers individually?
- Use the same name or pronoun the whole way through each article but change it for different spins?



Guess what? You already can!

Basics of Data Merge

The Best Spinner allows you to import text from an external file to your spun articles. The external text can be anything you like, single words, stories, links to pictures, addresses, customer names, etc. You can have several pieces of imported text in your spun documents, if you wish. Each different version of your article will use a different piece of imported data but the same version of an article will always use the same piece of imported data where you tell it to.

So, you might think of writing an article that talks about keeping pets healthy, about their exercise needs and about medicines and injections. And you might also want to include the names and addresses of a firm of vets (veterinary surgeons or animal doctors) in the area.

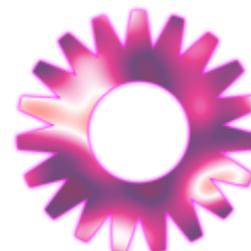
Your original article might say, "Keep your dog healthy by taking it for a walk each day and getting its annual check up at your local vet."

You could use data merge to add many, even hundreds, of addresses and telephone numbers for vet firms and produce as many different articles as there were addresses. You could think of writing lots of different articles and importing the same address database each time, to produce masses of articles covering all the local animal hospitals, several times over.

That's great, just by itself but then you might think of spinning the "animal" you talk about in your article to cover cats, rabbits and guinea pigs. But of course, you don't take any of those for walks each day and if you use synonym spinning, you might end up with random spins that advise you to walk your guinea pig and bath the goldfish. Data merge will allow you to get past all those problems quite simply.

How does The Best Spinner do this?

The Best Spinner allows you to use "Placeholder" text in your article to stand for the imported text that will be added at the end of the spinning process. This



Data Merge Tool in TBS3

placeholder text could stand for an address or a link, or a telephone number or an image, or just about anything you can think of.

Taking the original "article",

"Keep your dog healthy by taking it for a walk each day and getting its annual check up at your local vet."

you can see that you need to make sure that the "animal" mentioned should have an appropriate "action" included, such as, a walk for a dog, grooming for a cat, guinea pig and rabbit and maybe a regular water change for a goldfish. And maybe a guinea pig, a rabbit and a goldfish might not have a regular check up but might get taken to the vet if the owner had any "health worries" about their pet.

With the data merge tool, you can account for all of this correctly by using placeholder text at the appropriate place in your article. I will use PH1, PH2, etc to stand for placeholder text, but it can be anything you choose - see the box for some hints on placeholder text. I have decided to use a dog, cat, rabbit, guinea pig and goldfish as the animals, as these are among the most popular pets. A dog needs a walk: cats, guinea pigs, and rabbits need to be groomed; and goldfish need clean water. Dogs and cats should probably get an annual health check and the other animals would only visit the vet if necessary. I will now put these into a comma separated values file (csv). I find the easiest way to do this is to use a spreadsheet, such as Excel or the free one at LibreOffice. You don't have to use a spreadsheet. you can write your own csv file in Notepad, if you want. This is how the spreadsheet would look:

	A	B	C
1	PH1	PH2	PH3
2	dog	taking it for a walk each day	getting its annual check up
3	cat	grooming it every day	getting its annual check up
4	guinea pig	grooming it every day	checking out any health worries
5	rabbit	grooming it every day	checking out any health worries
6	goldfish	making sure its water is always clean	checking out any health worries

You can see that there are 3 columns headed PH1, PH2 and PH3. Under column PH1, the various animals are listed - dog, cat, etc. Each ROW - row 2, row 3, etc, refers correctly to one animal, so the dog gets taken for a walk and gets an annual check up. The cat gets groomed and an annual check up etc. When the data merge takes place, there will be one article produced for each line in the CSV file, so with 5 lines (not counting the headers, PH1, PH2, etc), there will be 5 articles.

After replacing the relevant text in the article with placeholder text, your article will look now like this:

Keep your [PH1] healthy by [PH2] and [PH3] at your local vet.

Placeholders

These are just pieces of text that "go in place of" or which "reserve a place for" some text that you want to add at a later time. They can be anything you like.

- I use **CAPITAL** letters, so I can see the placeholder text if I have to search for it and
- I make it **nonsense** text, so it doesn't get spun if I use "favourites" or "auto-select" synonyms, etc.
- I also make it **relevant**, so I know what each piece of placeholder text refers to. I might use PHPET for a pet, or PHSTORY for a story, etc.

Placeholder Brackets

When you are ready to do the data merge (this is the last part of spinning and takes place at the very end) make sure all your placeholder text is inside square brackets [and].

Data Merge Tool in TBS3

When the data merge is done, you will have 5 articles reading:

- Keep your dog healthy by taking it for a walk each day and getting its annual check up at your local vet.
- Keep your cat healthy by grooming it every day and getting its annual check up at your local vet.
- Keep your guinea pig healthy by grooming it every day and checking out any health worries at your local vet.
- Keep your rabbit healthy by grooming it every day and checking out any health worries at your local vet.
- Keep your goldfish healthy by making sure its water is always clean and checking out any health worries at your local vet



These items, such as "dog", "cat", "grooming it every day", etc are held in a comma separated value (CSV) file. You create this in Excel (or any other spreadsheet) by "Saving As" and choosing CSV as the file type in the drop down list. You can open a CSV file with Notepad (or any other text editing program) and it will look like this:

```
dogmerge.csv - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
PH1,PH2,PH3
dog,taking it for a walk each day,getting its annual check up
cat,grooming it every day,getting its annual check up
guinea pig,grooming it every day,checking out any health worries
rabbit,grooming it every day,checking out any health worries
goldfish,making sure its water is always clean,checking out any health worries
```

You will note that each row from the spreadsheet is on a separate line and that the text that was in each cell is separated from the next cell on the same row by a comma "," (but NOT at the end of the line). This is why this is called a Comma Separated Value file - CSV. You can create your own CSV file in notepad quite easily but I find it easier to create it in a spreadsheet and then save the spreadsheet "AS" a CSV file.

You may be wondering about the address for the local vet? This would be input to your spreadsheet (or direct to your CSV file) as another column - PH4. You might also add a further column - PH5 - for a telephone number and maybe another - PH6 - showing office hours. In terms of your article, these names and addresses will probably be the most important part of the article - your money earners, so you need to make the spreadsheet (or the CSV file) long enough to hold them all. If you have 100 addresses, then you will need 100 lines in your spreadsheet or csv file. You will also need to fill the other cells in the other columns, otherwise you will have blank spaces in your articles. If you don't have enough entries for "animals" to create a different one for each line, then copy them down the sheet (and remember to copy the correct actions, etc for each "animal" too.) This is easy in a spreadsheet, just select and drag.

Note on Excel

When you export a CSV file from Excel, it adds an extra line at the bottom of the file. You need to delete this before using the file. Open the CSV file with Notepad or another text editor and if the cursor can be put onto an empty line at the bottom of the file, then delete that line, so the cursor is just after the very last word in the file.

Data Merge Tool in TBS3

You can use all your placeholders at the same time in your article or sprinkle them throughout the article or use them several times. For instance, if one of your placeholders is a person's name, then you could use this several times throughout the article. Within the same spin of your article, the same name would be used.

For example, let's say that PH1 is a name (The items in the column below PH1 could then be James, Mary and Sandy). PH2 could be a pet, e.g. they could be dog, cat, hamster) PH3 is an action (so the PH3 column might contain bathed, walked, fed) and PH4 could be a time (e.g. 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm).

In your article you could have written PH1 PH3 the PH2 at PH4. That's a good PH1.

Version 1 would read James bathed the dog at 1.30pm. That's a good James!

Version 2 would read Mary walked the cat at 2.30pm. That's a good Mary!

Version 3 would read Sandy fed the hamster at 3.30pm. That's a good Sandy!

Note: Rows and Columns

Items in the same ROW will be included in the same version of your article, no matter how many times you use the placeholder text. For instance, if you write, "Oh, PH1, PH1, PH1, PH1, when will you learn?" Version 1 will read "Oh, James, James, James, James, when will you learn?" Version 2 will read "Oh Mary, Mary, Mary, Mary, when will you learn?" and version 3 will read, "Oh Sandy, Sandy, Sandy, Sandy, when will you learn?"

Also, version 1 of the article will only contain text relating to "James", "bathed", "dog" and "1.30pm" no matter how many times you use the placeholder text (PH1, PH2, etc) and version 2 will use only "Mary", "walked", "cat" and "2.30pm", etc.

Items in the same column will be used in subsequent spins of the article, so they should be able to fit into your article in the same way. For instance, if you use your placeholder article in the middle of text, you need to be sure that items 1,2 and 3 can all merge in with that text in the same way.

Remember that every item in the same COLUMN has to be able to fit into the article in the same way and every item in the same ROW can all be used in the same spun version, if you want.



Spreadsheet

Items in the same ROW will be included in the same article version, no matter how many times you use the placeholder text.

Items in the same COLUMN will be used in subsequent spins of the article, so they must be able to fit into your article in the same way.

Data Merge Tool in TBS3

Let's get a real article done!

1. Open your spreadsheet program and create columns containing the information you want to be different in each version of your article, for instance a list of addresses, telephone numbers, members' names, helpful tips, etc. Head each column with the placeholder text for that column, eg PHTIPS.
2. SAVE the spreadsheet AS a CSV (comma separated value) file and close your spreadsheet program.
3. Open TBS and open or create your article in the "Article" tab;
4. Add your placeholder text to the article in the exact place you want that piece of text to be used, eg ABCD, or PH1 or PLACEHOLDER or whatever you want to use as your placeholder text. It is best to use something simple and also something that is nonsense, so it doesn't get spun as a "favourite" or seen as a synonym by TBS. But also make it relevant, eg PHADDRESS. DO NOT USE THE [and] symbols at the moment. It is best to use the text you have put as your placeholder at the top of your CSV columns, eg ABCD but DON'T include the square brackets [and] yet (TBS adds extra [and] and a "[") when spinning if you do);
5. Click on the "Identify Synonyms" button and rewrite and spin and add synonyms etc., to your heart's content;
6. Check your article reads ok in the "Spun Article" tab (apart from the placeholder text. You will NOT be able to see your total article (ie, with it including the csv text)) before the data merge;
7. Once your article is completely finished, apart from the data merge, add square brackets around your placeholder text, so it looks like [ABCD]. You can use the "Find and Replace" bar, at the left of the article pane (or near the right hand side of the icon bar on the "article" tab) to replace the temporary placeholder text, eg ABCD, with the actual placeholder text you used at the top of your column in the CSV file, surrounded by [and]. For example, if one of your columns in the the CSV file is headed PHNAME then make sure the relevant placeholder text in your **article** now reads [PHNAME]. The "Replace Token" will replace ALL instances of ABCD with [ABCD] in your article, so it's helpful to use it if your article is long, heavily spun or has many instances of placeholder text scattered through it;
8. Click on "Data Merge", click on the "Load Data from File" button and browse to your CSV file and click to add this to TBS;
9. Now click on the "Merge Data With Article" Button; This will bring up the usual dialogue box which will create a zip file or a plain text file containing spun versions of your article, including the stuff in the CSV file. You will only get as many articles as there are ROWS in the CSV file. If you have 4 rows in the CSV file, you will get 4 articles. **And you're DONE!**

Spreadsheet

Items in the same ROW will be included in the same article version, no matter how many times you use the placeholder text. They can help you use "his / her" appropriately, or give the correct phone number for a certain address, etc.

Items in the same COLUMN must all be the same type, eg addresses and must be able to fit into your text in the same way. These items will be used one after the other in subsequent spins of the article.

Note on Excel

When you export a CSV file from Excel, it adds an extra line at the bottom of the file. You need to delete this before using the file. Open the CSV file with Notepad or another text editor and if the cursor can be put onto an empty line at the bottom of the file, then delete that line, so the cursor is just after the very last word in the file.

