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## Using entity-based variables

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### ATTENTION

The following special conditions apply:

- Ensure EPIC Editor is not running prior to attempting the procedures in this document the first time.
- For the purposes of this document and limitations associated with DTD1.12, only the use of entity-based variables will be explained. The use of element-based variables may become available with DTD2.0.
- For the purposes of this document, with the exception of the references to Adobe Framemaker, the terminology "**entity-based variables**," "**text entities**," and "**variables**" are used interchangeably.
- Use entity-based variables for the following items in the body of a document, do not use profiling: product branding, NTP number and title.
- Entity-based variables cannot be used in headers and footers, or in place of the attributes (or the information generated by attributes) assigned the top-level publishable (e.g., mtbi, nonmtbi).
- Writers will not modify the content of any entity-based variable, writers will instead use the variables as they are configured in ECMPROD.

The purpose of this document is to explain the basics of entity-based variables, and their use. The document is broken down as follows:

- ["Introduction to entity-based variables"](#) (page 6)
- ["Preparing your computer for the use of entity-based variables"](#) (page 7)
- ["Applying entity-based variables"](#) (page 11)
  - ["Inserting entity-based variables"](#) (page 12)
  - ["Deleting entity-based variables from a publication"](#) (page 15)

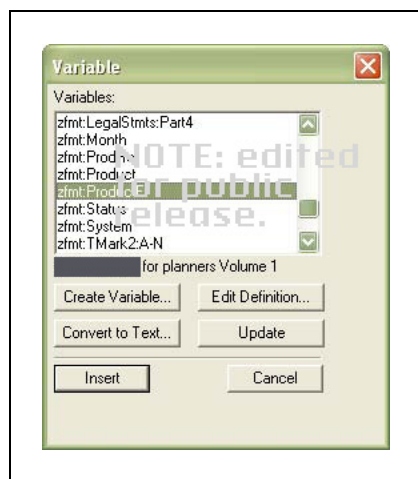
## Introduction to entity-based variables

For those familiar with Adobe Framemaker, entity-based variables in EPIC are very much like the variables used in Framemaker. One word, a string of words, numbers or any combination of words and numbers can be assigned an entity-based variable, and the variable can then be inserted throughout a document any number of times repeatedly, reproducing its assigned content. When the writer wishes to modify the content of a variable used multiple times in a document, they need only make the change to the variable itself and apply the change. In-turn, the change will be reflected everywhere the variable is used throughout a document. Not only does this process save the writer the trouble of having to copy and paste duplicated content throughout a document, it also ensures that everywhere that content is duplicated remains consistently the same when changes are made.

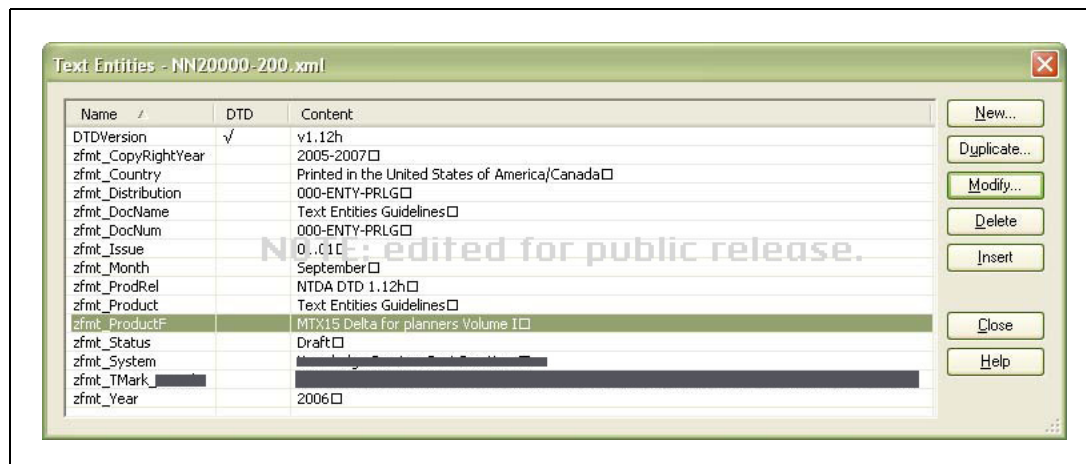
**Note:** authors must not make any modifications to the content of the variables, as this content is driven by configuration files stored in ECMPROD. Authors are only allowed to insert or remove the variables into/from their documents, as required. Should an error be noted in the content of one or more available variables, authors will inform their respective Project Manager.

Following are comparable examples of the Framemaker **Variable** window and the EPIC Editor **Text Entities** window:

**Figure 1**  
**Framemaker Variable window**



**Figure 2**  
**EPIC Text Entities window**



**Framemaker variables vs. EPIC entity-based variables - one major difference**

Unlike the use of Framemaker variables on master pages to control the information displayed in headers, footers, and title pages, etc., EPIC entity-based variables cannot be used to maintain content in the headers and footers of publishables, nor much of the templated content on the front cover of a publishable. That information is maintained via the attributes of the top level publishable (e.g., nonmtbi, mtbi). These attributes are also used by the database for a large array of processes and they cannot be done away with. Writers needing to use entity-based variables for information like NTP numbers, titles, release numbers, etc., in the body of their documents, must continue to maintain the top level publishable attributes as well.

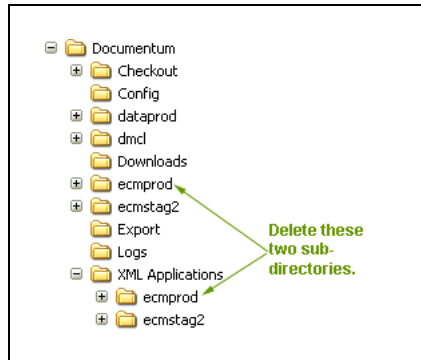
**Preparing your computer for the use of entity-based variables**

Before the writer can actually make use of entity-based variables, they must perform the following procedure:

**Preparing your computer for the use of entity-based variables**

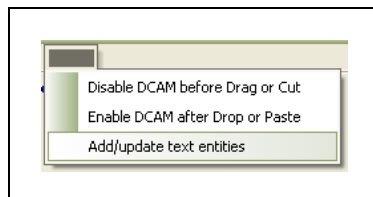
Step	Action
1	Ensure any publishables checked out of ecmprod are checked in.
2	Ensure EPIC Editor is not running.
3	Delete the following items from the Documentum directory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the <b>Documentum/ecmprod</b> subdirectory</li> <li>• the <b>Documentum/Xml Applications/ecmprod</b> subdirectory</li> </ul>

**Figure 3**  
**Documentum directory**



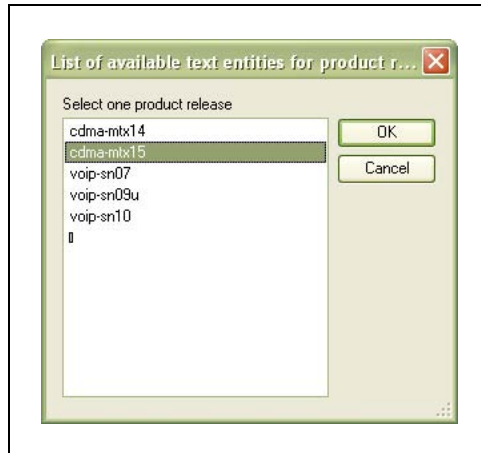
- 4 Perform the instructions in **XML Technical Bulletin 63 - Epic Editor Authoring Environment Setup Change**, available via <http://livelink-xxx.com/livelink/livelink.exe?func=ll&objid=14210741>.
- 5 Check a publishable out of ecmprod.
- 6 Run EPIC Editor.
- 7 Open the publishable checked out in Step 4.
- 8 From the main menu in EPIC Editor, select **Company**→**Add/update text entities**.

**Figure 4**  
**Company menu**



*The List of available text entities for product releases window opens.*

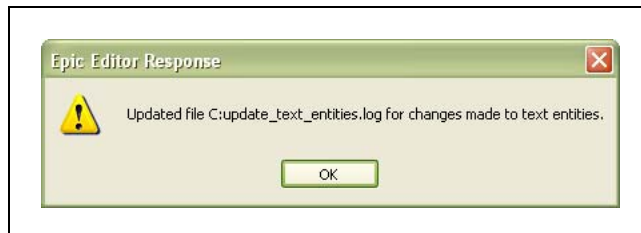
**Figure 5**  
**List of available text entities for product releases window**



- 9 Select the option that matches the assigned ntp product and release from the **List of available text entities for product releases** and click on the **OK** button.

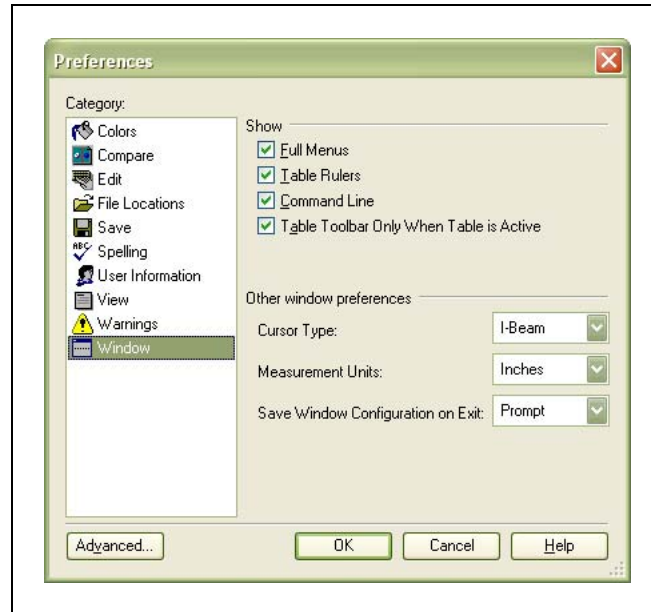
*The Epic Editor Response window opens and acknowledges the changes made to text entities, displaying the location of the `update_text_entities.log` file.*

**Figure 6**  
**Epic Editor Response window**



- 10 Click on the **OK** button.
- 11 There are several Epic Editor menus and options, such as the entity-based variables menu, that are only available if you have elected to display full menus. If the Entities menu is missing from the main menu in Epic Editor, choose **Tools**→**Preferences**, select the **Window** tab and click the check box next to **Full Menus**:

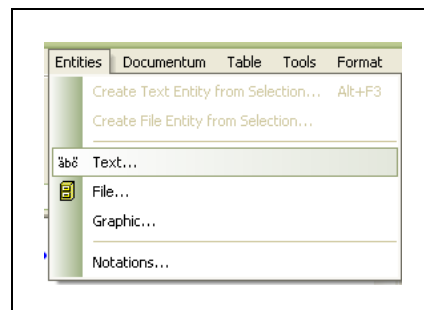
**Figure 7**  
**Epic Editor Preference window**



Click the **OK** button to exit from the **Preferences** dialog box.

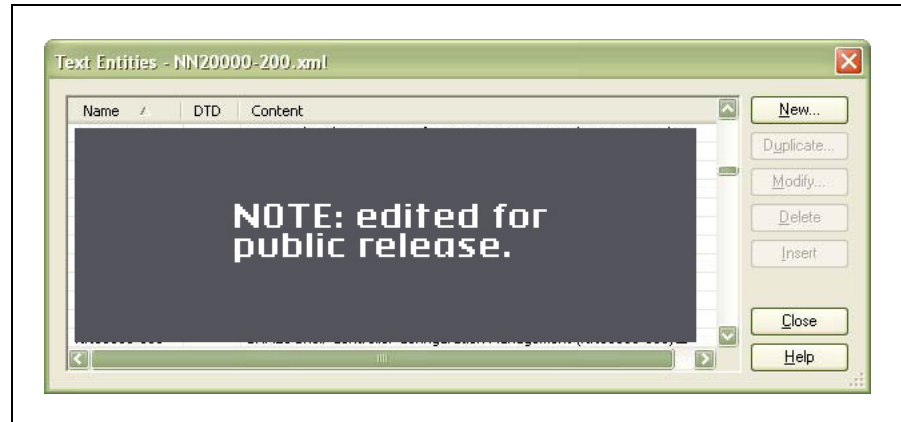
- 12 From the main menu in Epic Editor, select **Entities**→**Text**.

**Figure 8**  
**Epic Editor main menu**



*The Text Entities window opens:*

**Figure 9**  
**Text Entities window**



- 13 Verify that the **Text Entities** window displays a default list of values for the product and release that was chosen. Work may now proceed with the use of entity-based variables.

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—End—

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## Applying entity-based variables

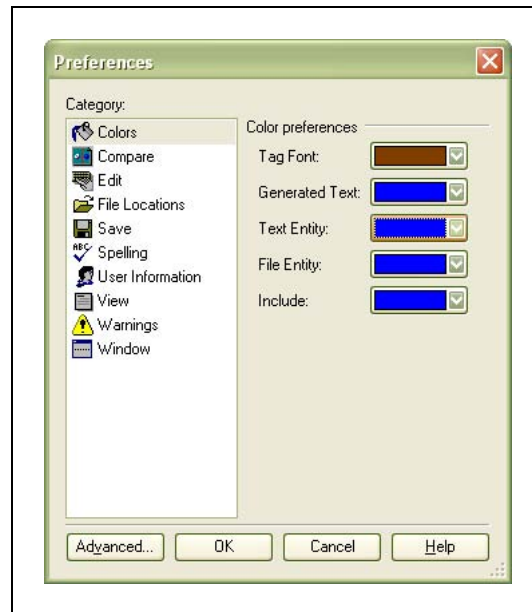
Use an entity-based variable to replace a long string of text, such as a variable named **Product**, for branding purposes (e.g., *BDF Core Manager* for the *CWidget* product line, or *GETEX* for the *ABCD* product line). Inserting the entity-based variable from a toolbar drop down list can be done more quickly than typing the text.

Contents of an entity-based variable can be viewed within a document by choosing **View**→**Text Entities**.

Entity-based variables inserted in a document can be displayed in the Epic Editor window in the following ways: as text in the document, as markup icons or displayed as the markup and text they represent. Their text color and their marker style can also be set to allow authors to locate them easily.

**Note:** To set the display color for entity-based variables, select **Tools**→**Preferences** from the main menu, choose the **Colors** category, and select the display color for **Text Entity**.

**Figure 10**  
**Preferences window**



**Note:** entity-based variables can be up to 8000 characters in length.



**CAUTION**

Entity-based variables are created as required, depending on project requirements, and usually assigned by the Project Manager responsible for a suite of NTPs after being approved by the NTDA team and KS Multi-streaming task force. If an author feels they might need a text entity that is not available yet, they should contact their Project Manager, who will in-turn forward a request to the Multi-streaming task force for evaluation.

Use the following procedure to insert an entity-based variable into a publication:

**ATTENTION**

The **Comp.→Add/update text** option should only be run once per EPIC Editor session. If work is to be performed in multiple releases of a document (e.g., SN09u, SN10), EPIC Editor should be closed and restarted before working in each release.

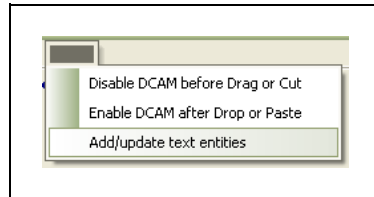
**Inserting entity-based variables**

**Step Action**

- 1 Check a publishable out of ecmprod.
- 2 Run EPIC Editor.

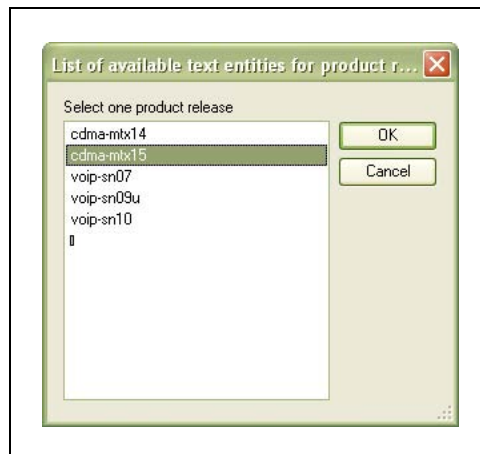
- 3 Open the publishable.
- 4 From the main menu in EPIC Editor, select **Company**→**Add/update text entities**.

**Figure 11**  
Company menu



*The List of available text entities for product releases window opens.*

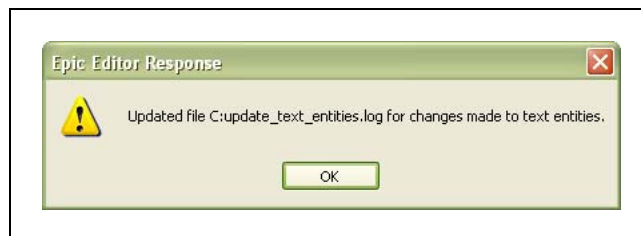
**Figure 12**  
List of available text entities for product releases window



- 5 Select the option that matches the assigned NTP product and release from the **List of available text entities for product releases** and click on the **OK** button.

*The Epic Editor Response window opens and acknowledges the changes made to text entities, displaying the location of the update\_text\_entities.log file.*

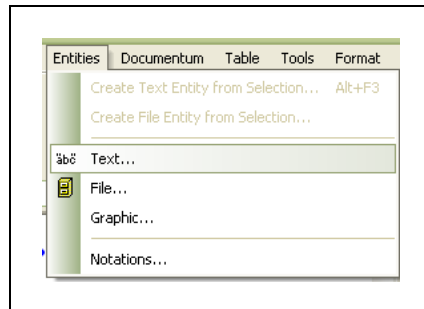
**Figure 13**  
Epic Editor Response window



- 6 Click on the **OK** button.

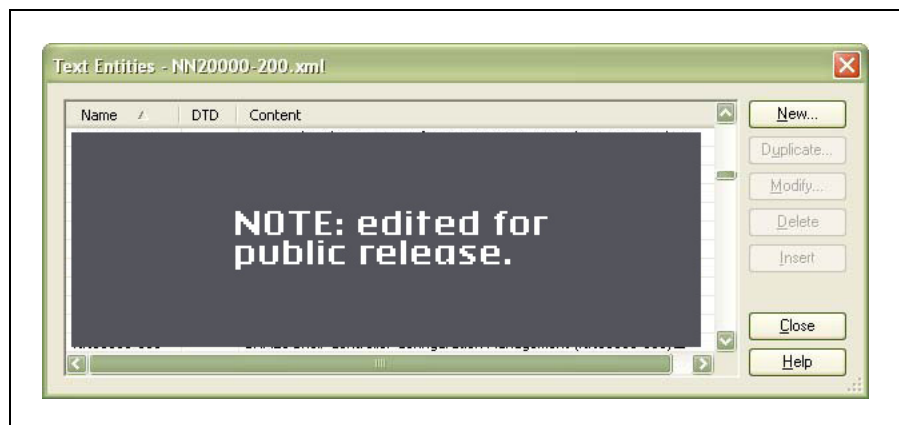
- 7 From the main menu in Epic Editor, select **Entities**→**Text**.

**Figure 14**  
**Entities menu**



*The Text Entities window opens.*

**Figure 15**  
**Text Entities window**



- 8 Place the cursor in the document where the variable is to be inserted.
- 9 Choose a variable from the list in the Text Entities window. Only variables that are in context at the insertion point will be displayed in this list.
- 10 Click on the **Insert** button. The rectangular entity markup icon appears at the cursor location, or as text, if **View** →**Text Entities** has been selected.
- 11 Repeat Steps 8-10 as often as required to insert the same or a different entity-based variable multiple places in the document.
- 12 Click on the Close button in the Text Entities window when all insertions are complete.

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—End—

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Use the following procedure to delete an entity-based variable from a publication:

### Deleting entity-based variables from a publication

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Step	Action
1	In the body of the document under development, select an entity-based variable to be deleted.
2	Press the <b>DELETE</b> key on the keyboard.
3	Repeat Steps 1-2 for each occurrence of the variable that needs to be deleted from the document.

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—End—

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