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COLUMNS

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Nigel Davies, 11/07/07

[RE: Converting Cells and Blocks](#)

Even though our recommended solution works, it's a bit of a drag having to export your file, reference the DWGs then re-export with "Merge to Cell" set. To make it easier, use this MicroStation VBA macro and let it to do the hard work for you...

Download the CellBlockTool.mvba* from the DOWNLOADS column. Save it to your Workspace\Standards\VBA folder. (To load a VBA project automatically, refer to Recording and playing back a macro.)

The project contains two modules, one for exporting a MicroStation cell library to a single AutoCAD block library, the other for importing a series of individual wblocks into a single cell library.

Convert the active cell library to a dwg block library

Important Note: The Advanced DWG Option "Non-Default Design Models" must be set to "Create Separate Files".

The export routine has one variable, ETC_CREATE_INDIVIDUAL_BLOCKS which controls whether you want to export all the individual blocks or just the block library.

```
ETC_CREATE_INDIVIDUAL_BLOCKS = true
```

will export the block library and will create all the cells as individual wblocks.

If it is set to anything else or undefined, only the block library will be created.

To create the block library:

1. Open the cell library you wish to convert.
2. Keyin:

```
vba run exportStart
```

3. The routine scans the folder where the active cell library is stored for any existing blocks/dwg files. If any exist that match the cells in the cell library they are deleted.
4. A "BlockLibrary" model is created in the cell library. The Model's description is updated to show the exact date and time the cells were exported. You can use this to help you manage your cells and blocks and make sure they are synchronised.
5. If the "BlockLibrary" model exists already, any existing elements are deleted.
6. Each model (cell) from the open cell library is then placed at 0,0,0. This is what will convert the cells to blocks once the file is converted to dwg.
7. The cell library is then exported to a single block library named [originalCellLibrary]_BlockLibrary.dwg.
e.g. if you are exporting Project.cel, the block library will be

DOWNLOADS

CellBlockTool.mvba

(155Kb)

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called Project_BlockLibrary.dwg

8. If ETC_CREATE_INDIVIDUAL_BLOCKS = true an individual wblock is also created from each cell.
As explained in [Converting Cells and Blocks 201](#), MicroStation adds the cell library name to all cells exported to blocks. Using this macro, these cells are automatically renamed to remove the original cell library name, making sure the cell name is identical to the block name.
9. The block library is opened and all elements are deleted leaving a clean, tidy library that only contains the block definitions.
10. The original cell library is reopened, taking you back where you started.

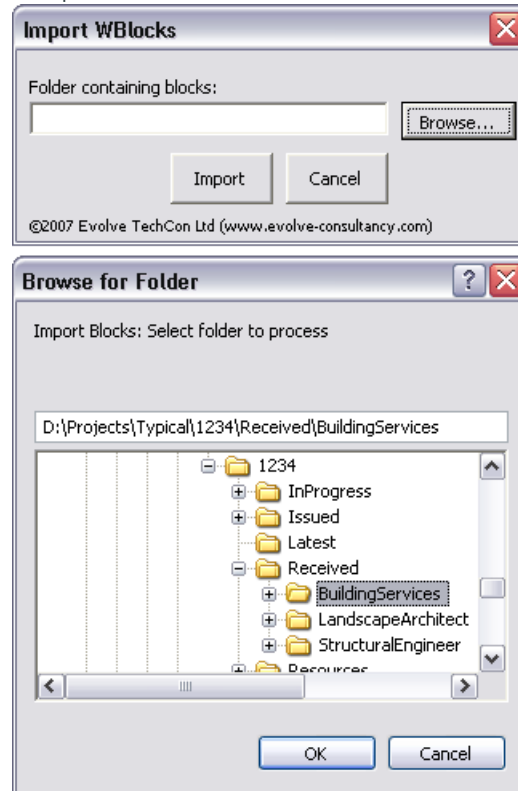
Convert a series of wblocks into a single cell library

To create a cell library from a series of blocks:

1. Move all your wblocks into a single folder.
2. Create and open a new cell library to import your blocks into.
3. Keyin:

```
vba run importStart
```

4. The Import WBlocks dialogue opens where you can specify which folder to import.



5. Once you click OK, the folder is scanned for any .dwg files - all others are ignored. Each dwg is then copied into the open cell library and the exact date and time added to the cell's description.
6. If the cell already exists it is updated by the import routine.

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