Communication Generation FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

(for more see: [Comm Gen Tips & Tricks] and [Troubleshooting])

Q Data Source Max Nbr: ***I've set up a comm gen process to work using a query as a data source, but I noticed that the results were only pulling in the first row for each id. My Max Nbr field was set to 1, so I tried blanking it out and then increasing it, but neither worked to pull in the extra rows. How should the Max Nbr field be set to retrieve all the rows?***

A (1) You can blank out the Max Nbr field.
(2) Or you can use a very large number like 99.

Q **Associating Letter Code with Report Definition:** ***I am currently trying to attach Report Definitions to some Letter Codes (at Campus Community > Communications > Set Up Communications > Standard Letter Table CS,) and while I have done this many times without any problems, some letters, when I try to save them, give me the following error message:*** **"No valid queries found in the first 300 items evaluated. Enter search criteria for better results. (14100,875)"**

A Under Report Definition, Template, take a look at your "Channels" drop-down box. Make sure it's not empty. Select a value for it: Select Printer for a letter or Email for an email.

Q **Associating Letter Code with Report Definition:** ***I am trying to link an XML publisher Report Definition to a Standard Letter definition, but the Define Comm Gen Parameters checkbox is grayed out. What do I need to have in place for that checkbox to become available?***

A Set the Letter Type to Softcopy rather than Hardcopy.

Q Associating Letter Code with Report Definition: ***Report Definitions and Letter Code (Standard Letter Table). I can't select a report definition in my standard letter table.***

A Be sure that the Data Source Type in the Report Definition setup is XMLDoc Object.

Q **Data Source - Query Name Not Appearing:** ***Why can't I see a list of my queries from the Query Name dropdown under the Custom Extract Data section on the Communication Data Source page? I need to bring additional merge fields into my data source for my letters which are coming out of the Communication Generation process.***

A1 In Query Manager, search for the table VAR_DATA_XXXX where XXXX is the admin function you're working with. This will give you a list of fields which your query must: (1) Contain, and (2) Have prompts for. They must be sourced from the tables you're using, NOT the VAR_DATA table. Once you include these prompts, you should be able to find your query. CommGen validates all queries against the Administrative Function before allowing you to use them.

A2 For a Communication Data Source, you actually need to include appropriate prompts, depending on the communication. Essentially, CommGen is going to run your query for each communication that it is generating. When it runs your query, it will use the prompts to pull data for the person/ communication for which it is generating. For a person communication, you must include at least one prompt called PERSON_ID. When you create the prompt, you name it PERSON_ID by placing PERSON_ID in the "Unique Prompt Name" field. Now, create a criterion using the prompt.

A3 The search for this area is restricted to Queries that have the correct prompts set up for the administrative function of the data source.

Q Preventing creation of Communication when Custom Query returns no rows: We are looking into setting up Communication Generation generated emails. The emails would contain both Generic Process Data and a Custom Query to create the Data Source which would contain fields from both the Generic Process and Custom Query Data. The difficulty I recall having before is that when the custom query does not return any rows, Communication Generation still creates an email, however, sections of the template are blank because no data was returned to populate the Data Source from the Custom Query.

Is there a way to prevent the creation of a Comm Gen email or letter when the custom query does not return any rows? We are aware of the ability to set parts of the Generic Process Data as 'critical data' and looking for something similar to apply to the Custom Query.

A You can include logic in your 3C process's ***pop select query*** by adding a "does not exist" condition ***subquery***. The subquery should select student with not data.

Q Multiple Rows: If multiple rows are being pulled in for one id, does that mean the rtf template file has to somehow take that into account?

A Yes, you need to have a loop in your template. [example?]

Q Comm Gen Unsuccessful/ 3C Engine Successful: I ran a 3C engine process that created 290 records for the letter code but when I ran Communication Generation, it created no communications. Looking at the table PS_COMMUNICATION, I noticed that the value for UNSUCCESSFUL was "Y" for every record but the 3C Engine process was successful with no error messages. Any suggestions for troubleshooting?

A1 One common reason for unsuccessful results is invalid required information, for example, sending emails but the email address type didn't exist.

A2 As well as UNSUCCSSFUL = 'Y', if the OUTCOME_REASON is 'C' it means Missing Critical Data as defined on your Data Source. It is usually a missing active address or email address for the person.

Q Previewing Communication: Is there any way to view the generated communication before it is completed (completed_comm='N')? Now we are able to see the communication throw the link "View Generated Communication" on the "Communication Management" page only for the completed communications.

A The communication can only be viewed after it is completed; however, you can do an online preview mode of the first 10 recipients using the commgen run control.

Q Run Control - Job Processed? We ran a batch of online previews to verify our email contents - worked like a charm - generated 10 "live" emails (communications were not completed). When we re-ran with the same parameters, same run control, we get the message "Total number of communications processed = 0 " and, no matter WHAT we do, we cannot get the communications to generate!

A commgen job was cancelled between our runs and the run control deleted - we're thinking that something didn't get reset - but we when we run "Reset Communications" it will not accept any run control id's - is there some way we can clear out the tables and reset things? Is this, indeed, the problem? (We are in 9.0 PT 8.50)

A1 I think the problem will be that you deleted the run control that you cancelled which is why the Reset Process won't pick it up. If you view the Communications individually, is there a value in the Process Instance field at the bottom of the page? If so, this is what's stopping the process running successfully. There are then a few options:

1) Go into each of the Communications and check and uncheck the Communication Completed flag - this will clear the Process Instance on each job
2) Delete all the communications using 3C Delete, and then use the 3C Engine to put them back on
3) Get your technical people to run some SQL to clear the Process Instance on-batch

A2 The most common reason could be that the communication date does not match the date the 3C Engine was run. The second possibility is that the communication data query is not returning any rows.

Q After Upgrading to PeopleTools 8.5x, Communication Generation Produces Blank Pages in PDF: What features have changed in the Report Definition component with the delivery of PeopleTools 8.50 which impact Communication Generation? Why are the subsequent pages after the first page in the PDF blank?

A PeopleTools 8.50 delivered a new page in the report definition component entitled 'Properties' and also deprecated some features in the component. The Properties page provides greater control for formatting the PDF output. The security settings need to be set properly in order for all pages in a PDF file to merge and render in Adobe Reader or to print properly. Those settings can be set at the Report level for each report, or you may use Global Properties to set the property values. Property settings defined in the Global Properties would be in effect for all reports unless specific values are given for a report definition. Also note that the 'PDF report output may be edited' checkbox on the Output page is no longer present in PeopleTools 8.50.

This functionality has been replaced by the PDF security settings on the Properties page with the pdf-no-changing-the-document property.

To update individual report definition property settings, perform the follow steps:

1. Navigate to Reporting Tools > XML Publisher > Report Definition and enter or select name of report definition. Proceed to the Properties tab.
2. Select Property Group value of ‘PDF Security’.
3. Set two properties as follows:
    a) pdf-security = False (this property set to False controls the merge of all pages in the output and eliminates blank pages),
    b) pdf-no-changing-the-document* = <True or False, depending on needs> (This property determines whether to allow the output to be edited or changed. Setting to True would prevent the output from being edited, and False would allow changes to the output. When False is selected, it is assumed that the end user has a version of Adobe that has editing capabilities.)
    c) Click Save.

    *Note: The values you see in the default column are derived from the Global Settings. There is no need to change a setting at the report level unless you want to see a different behavior for that specific report. To make report-specific changes, you would use the settings in the prompt column.

    Important: If you are using enclosure functionality with your communications, it is essential that all report definitions associated with the primary letter code have the PDF Security set so that all the pages within the PDF output are generated properly.

To update settings for Global Properties, perform the follow steps:

1. Navigate to Reporting Tools > XML Publisher > Setup > Global Properties.
2. Select Property Group value of ‘PDF Security’.
3. Set two properties as follows: (a) pdf-security = False (this property set to False controls the merge of all pages in the output and eliminates blank pages), and (b) pdf-no-changing-the-document* = <True or False, depending on needs> (This property determines whether to allow the output to be edited or changed. Setting to True would prevent the output from being edited, and False would allow changes to the output. When False is selected, it is assumed that the end user has a version of Adobe that has editing capabilities.)
4. Click Save.

Additional details about the functionality of this page and how the settings are used may be found in the following resources:

- Enterprise PeopleTools 8.50 PeopleBook: XML Publisher for PeopleSoft Enterprise > Setting Up XML Publisher
- Oracle Business Intelligence Publisher User’s Guide, or XDOUserGuide.pdf

- (Note: This guide is available with download of the Template Builder for Word plug-in by navigating to Reporting Tools > XML Publisher > Setup > Design Helper.)

In PeopleTools 8.49 and earlier versions, in the template files section on the Template page of the report definition, there was a button which could be used to download the template. The button no longer exists in PeopleTools 8.5x. The same functionality, however, can be achieved by simply double-clicking on the template file link. You will get a standard file download dialog box which will enable you to open or save the file to a location of your choosing.