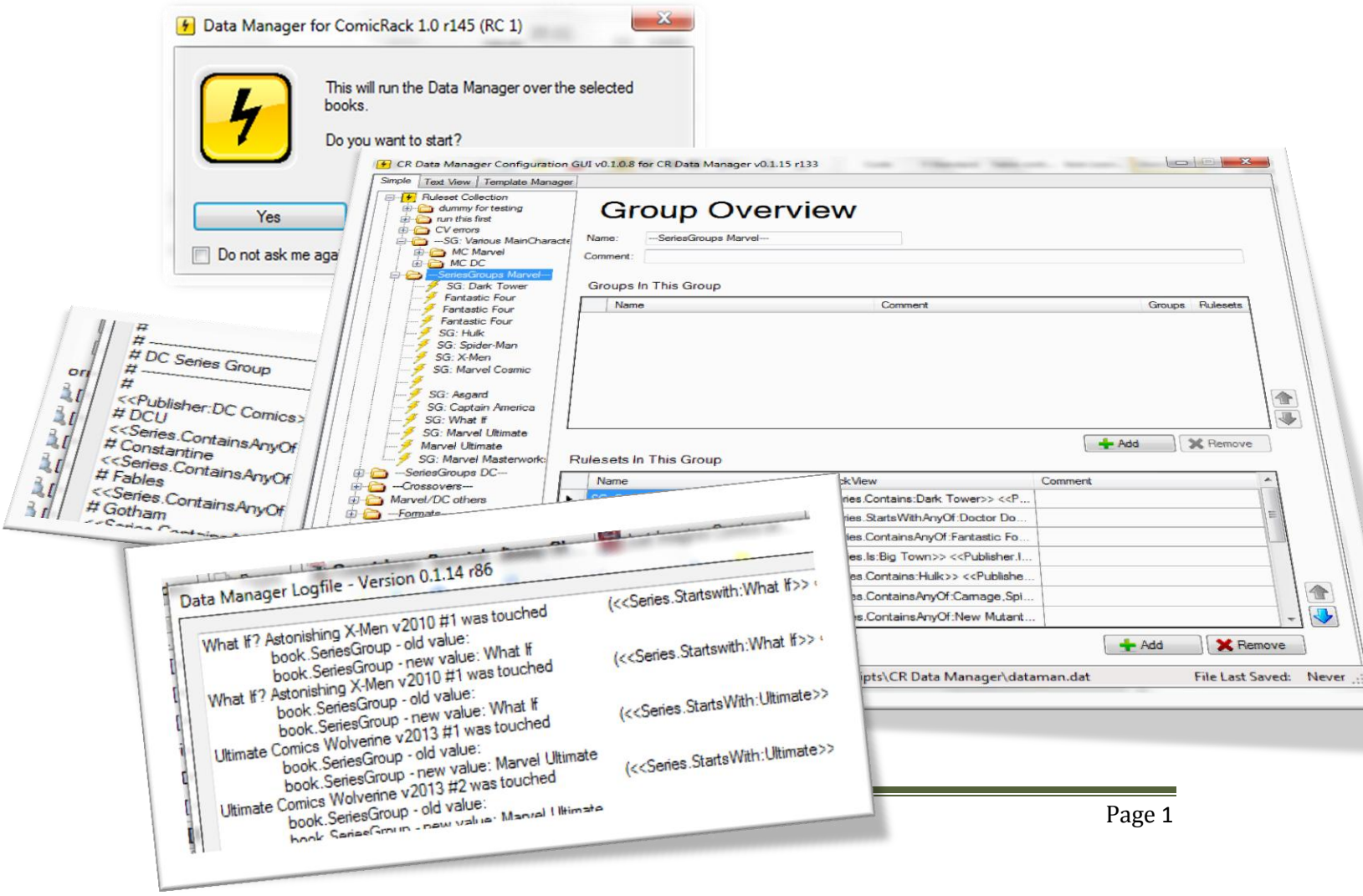
docdoom & T3KN0Gh057

Data Manager for ComicRack

The Manual v3

covering CR Data Manager up to Version 1.1



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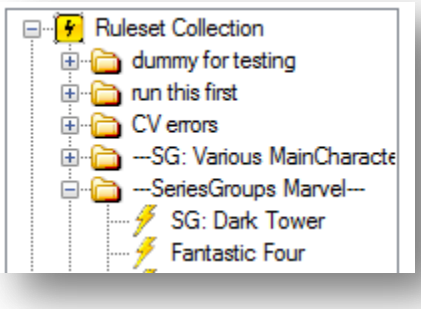
Purpose

If you are using ComicRack to organize your comic library there is sometimes the need to enter data based on rules. So you might want to set the series group to “Gotham” for all *Batman* books. Or you scraped your data from Comic Vine (using the excellent ComicVine Scraper) and discover that some of the information in the ComicVine database is not correct. So you want to set the publisher information for the first 200 issues of *Walt Disney’s Comics and Stories* to Dell instead of Boom. This plugin will complete all these tasks automatically.

Please note: The Data Manager requires that you install ComicRack version 0.9.164 or higher!

Glossary

An explanation of a few terms we will use frequently in this manual

Ruleset	A ruleset is a directive that tells the Data Manager what it shall do. A ruleset can be e.g.: `If Series is “Batman” then set SeriesGroup” to “Gotham”` A ruleset consists of rules and actions.
Rule	A rule is the “left” part of a ruleset (in this example: `If Series is “Batman”`). A Rule can consist of several conditions, e.g.: `If Series is “Batman” and Publisher is “DC Comics” and Volume Is “1940”`
Action	An action is the “right” part of a ruleset (in this example: `Set SeriesGroup to “Gotham”`). An Action can consist of several steps, e.g.: `Set SeriesGroup to “Gotham” and set MainCharacter to “Batman” and set Genre to “Superhero”`
Ruleset Collection	A ruleset collection is the collection of all your rulesets
Tree view	The tree view is the graphical display of your collection in the rule set editor. It is built similar to the Windows Explorer. This is an example for the tree view of a ruleset collection 

Installation

Download the latest version of the Data Manager from here. In ComicRack then select "Edit -> Preferences -> Scripts". Click on "Install" and select the file you just downloaded. You have to restart ComicRack afterwards.

Important: if you install the Data Manager plug-in over a previous version please **don't remove the older version** (selecting "Edit -> Preferences -> Scripts -> CR Data Manager -> Remove"). Otherwise you will lose your previous self-defined rules for the Data Manager. Just install the newer version over the old one and you will be fine.

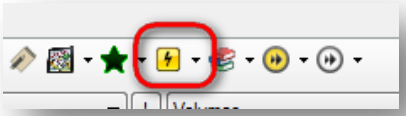
Nevertheless it is **highly recommended** that **each time before you install** the Data Manager you should first **backup the following files** in the Data Manager folder (`%appdata%\cyo\ComicRack\scripts\CR Data Manager`) to a secure place:

- **dataman.dat** – this contains your ruleset collection
- **user.ini**– this contains your rule and action templates and some settings for the Data Manager

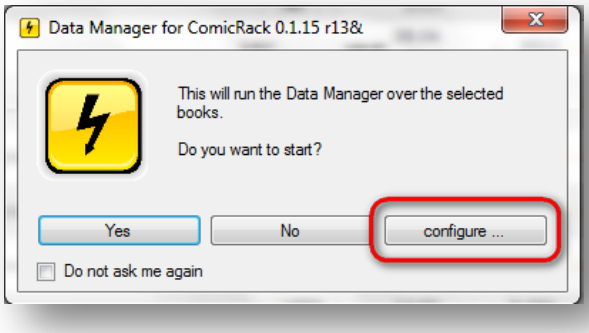
Usage

Setting up the configuration

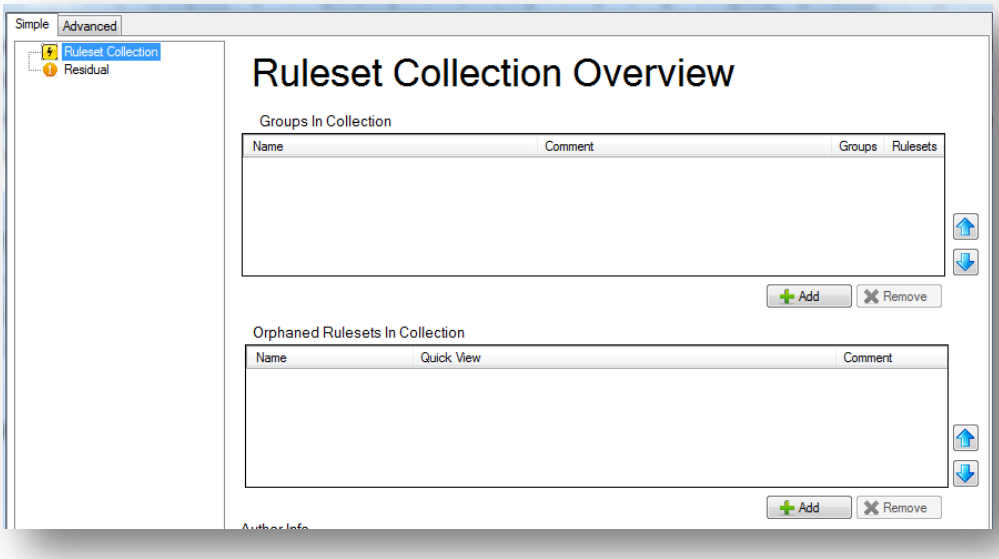
Before you run the Data Manager for the first time you have to define your rules. Start the Data Manager from the context menu in the library browser or from the toolbar in ComicRack. The icon of the Data Manager is the yellow square one with the black flash symbol inside:



When this dialog appears click on “configure …”:



If you have not used the Data Manager before you will not see any rules because you have not yet defined any:



Note: If you have used a previous version of the Data Manager your old configuration will be loaded automatically into the GUI. You don’t have to start from scratch!

In the next steps you will learn how to create some simple but powerful rules.

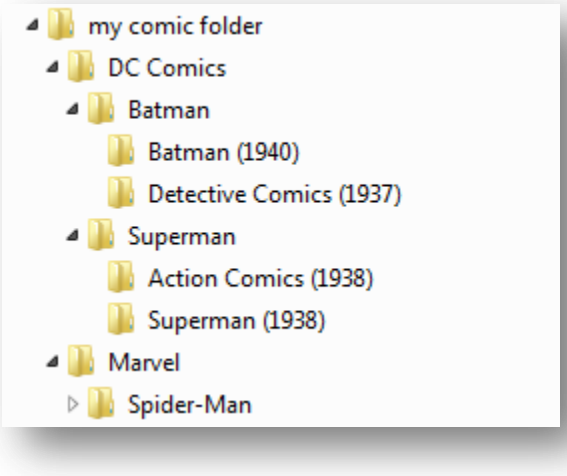
How-to: Create a few simple (but powerful) rules

Step 1: What shall your rules do?

At first step you should take a bit of time to think about what your rules should do. Some people want to correct data they scraped from the ComicVine database into their books, others might want to automate the process of preparing their books before they are moved by the Library Organizer.

Let's start with the last example: A lot of people organize their books by Series Groups. Series Groups group several series with a similar content or main character or whatever. So you might want to use a Series Group "Gotham" for all books that are more or less located in Gotham and a Series Group "Metropolis" for all the Superman books.

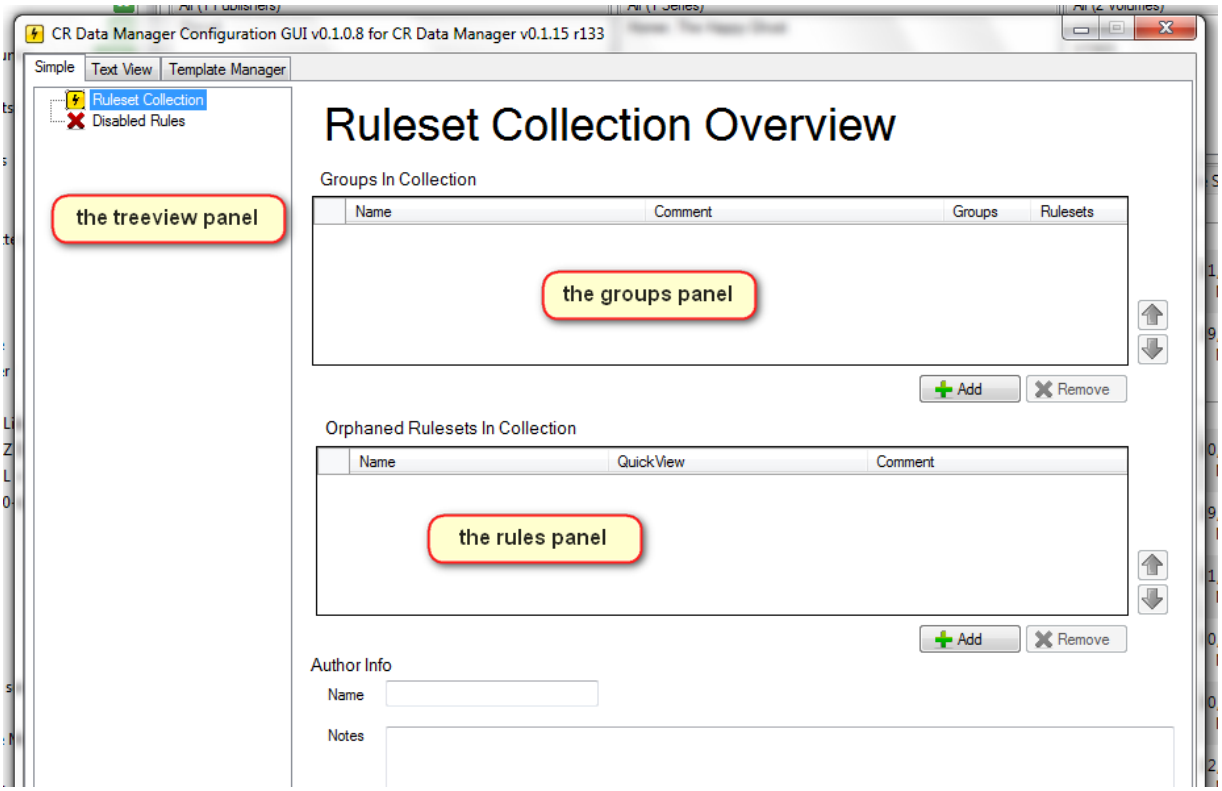
This would make it easy to later organize your books in folder structures like this:



In this example we would like to organize our books by the main character. The next step demonstrates how to prepare your rules so that your books can easily later on organized by the Library Organizer in this main character structure.

Step 2: Understanding the GUI editor window

To create your first rules open the the configuration editor via the “configure …” button as described above. You will see mainly three rather empty panels inside the editor. Let’s take a quick look at them:

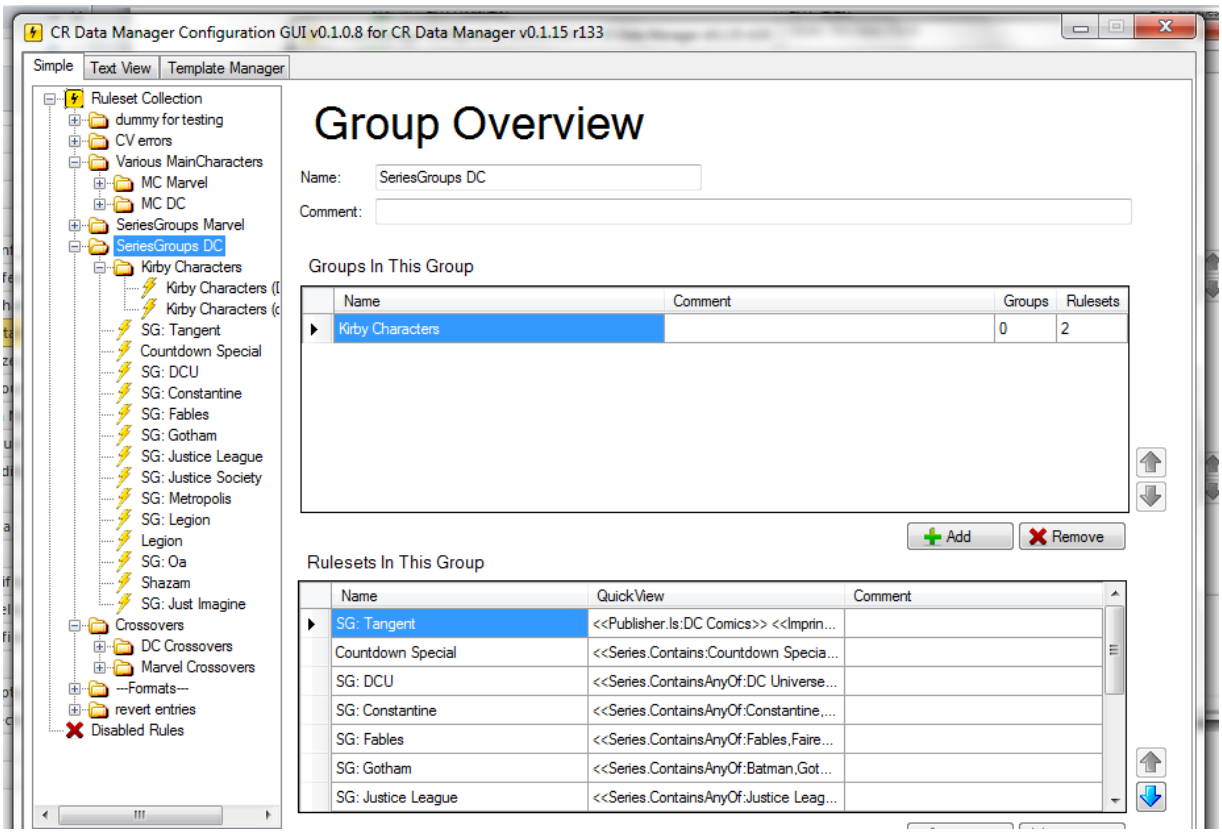


The **treeview panel** will later display the list of the rules you defined.

The **groups panel** helps you organizing your rule sets by placing them inside groups.

The **rules panel** lets you create your rules.

To give you an idea how this window looks like once you created and organized your rules see this example:



Looks quite nice and organized, doesn't it? So let's get on to the next step where you finally build your first rules.

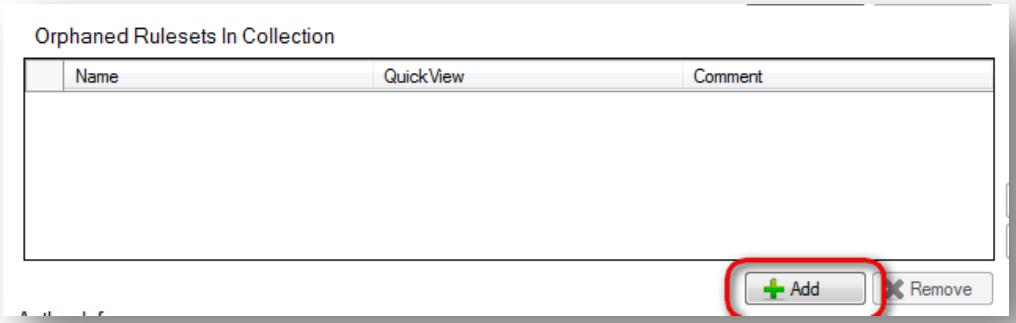
Step 3: Build your rule set

A rule set contains of two parts. Part one defines the rules or criteria the Data Manager uses to decide which books shall be treated. Part two defines the actions which Data Manager should make based on your rules.

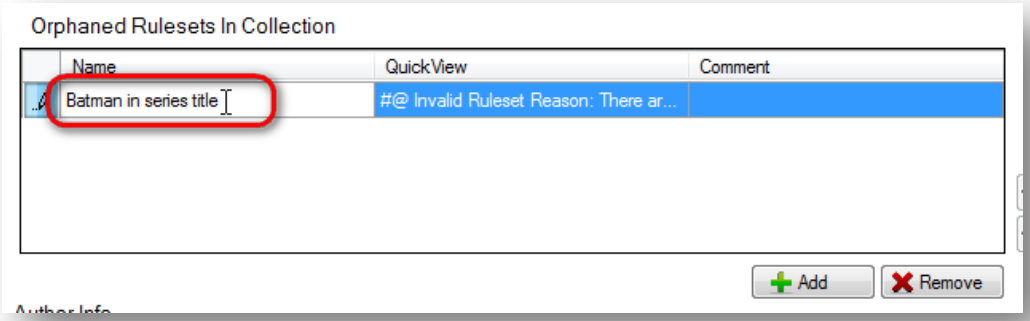
Part 1: Define the rule

Now we want to build our rules. First we want to define that all books that have “Batman” in the series title should get the entry “Batman” in ComicRack’s Main Character field.

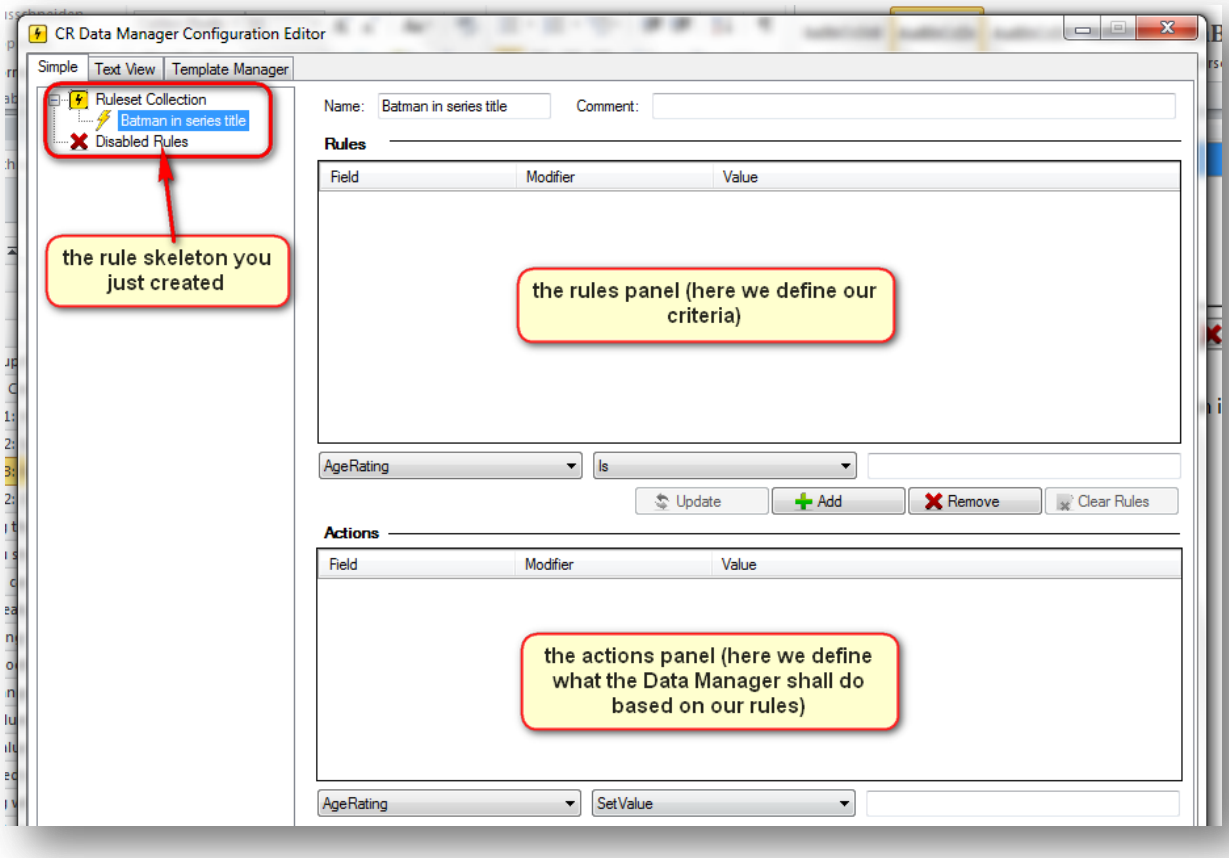
Click on the “Add” button below the rules panel:



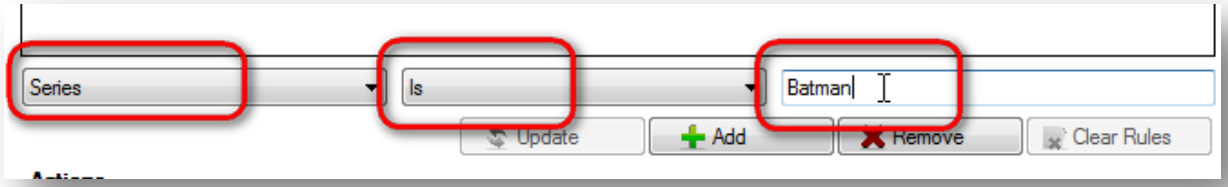
After that the skeleton of your first rule is displayed in the rules panel. Click in “Name” field and give this rule a meaningful name (that will make it later on much easier to find it):



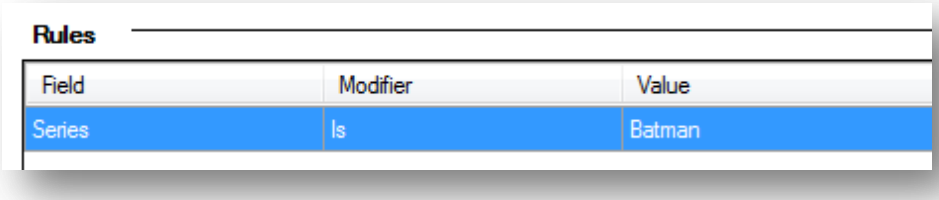
Now take a look at the treeview panel and notice that your rule is attached there. Click on it and the editor gives you the interface to finally enter your rule:



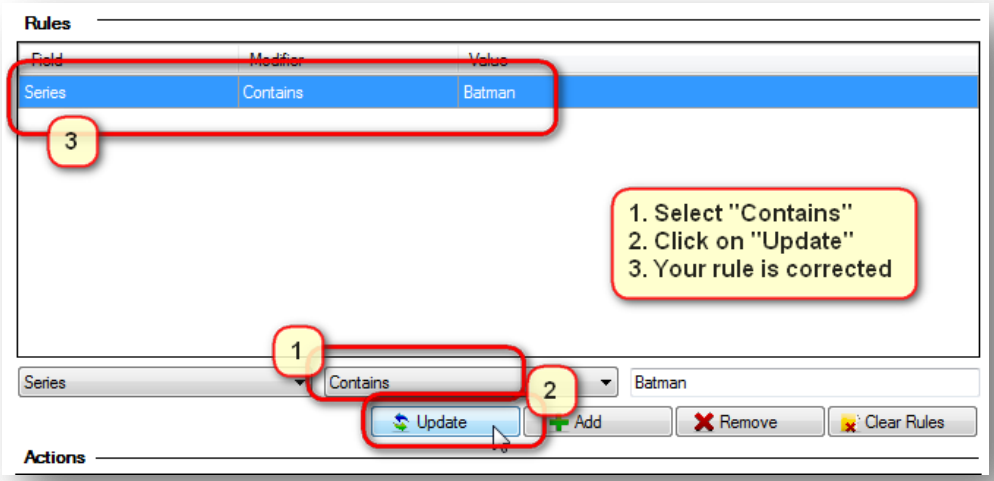
Remember: our rule shall be “all books with Batman in the Series title”. So select “Series” in the first dropdown box below the rules panel. Select the range modifier “Is” and enter “Batman” as the value. Finally click “Add”:



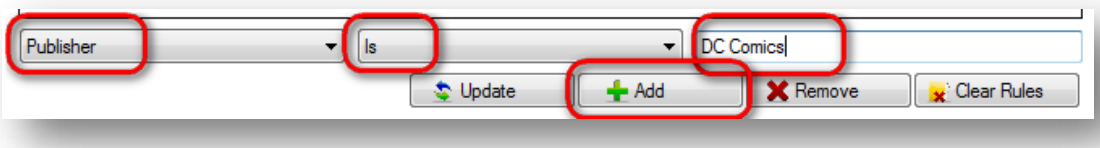
Your rule is now displayed in the rules panel:



But it seems we made a mistake: if we use the modifier “Is” this rule would only select the books where the exact series title is “Batman”, but not also “Batman: The Dark Knight”, “Batman and Robin” and so forth. In this case the range modifier “Contains” is exactly what we need. To correct that you only have to select “Contains” in the second dropdown box below the rules panel and click on “Update”:

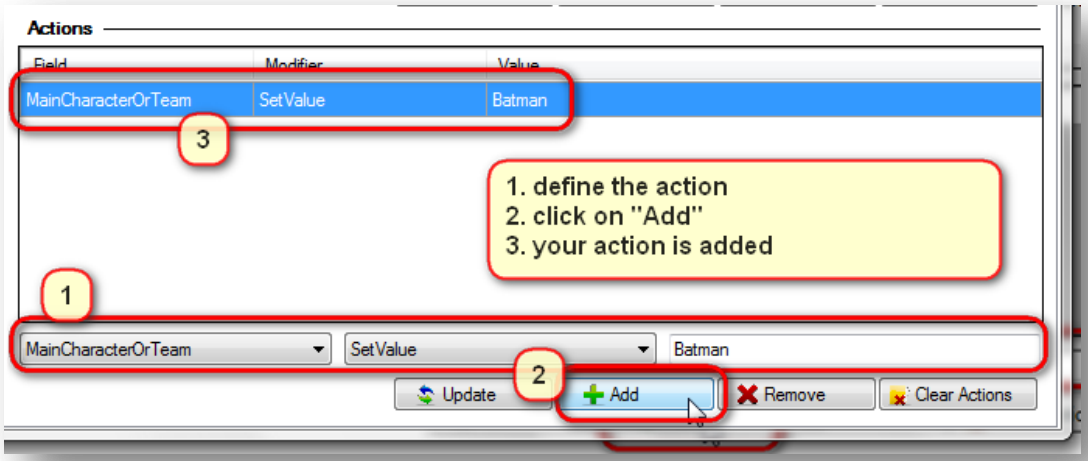


You can also add more criteria to one rule: maybe you want to be sure that **only** the Batman books should be handled by this rule that are published by DC Comics, simply select the Batman rule in the treeview and add this rule:



Part 2: Define the Action

Now we define what shall happen with these books. It is done in a similar way like we created the rule above: Below the “Actions” panel you define what value will be set (in this case “MainCharacterOrTeam” shall be set to “Batman”). Click on “Add” afterwards:



That’s all. Even with this very small rule set you could later on set the MainCharacter field for hundreds of books to “Batman” (where it fits) with one mouse click. Of course you can add hundreds of groups and thousands of rules to help you make organizing your library a lot easier.

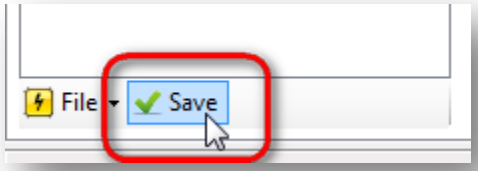
This was a very simple example but should give you an idea how to build rules with the Data Manager.

Later on in this manual all fields and modifiers are further investigated.

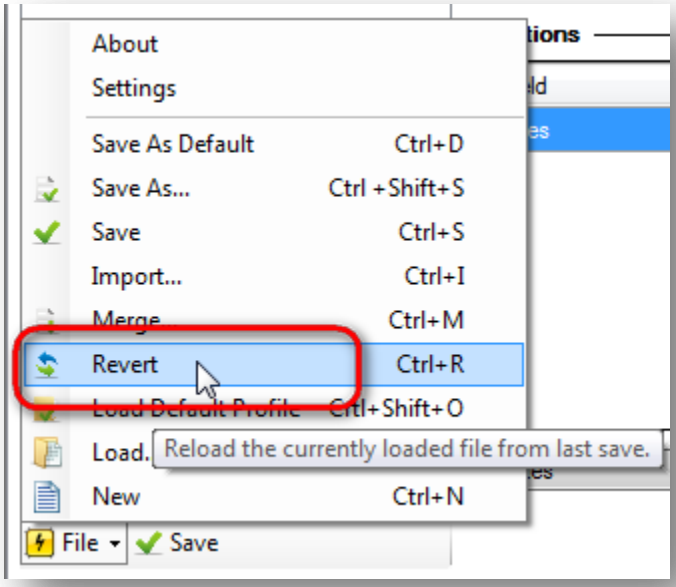
Note: To create further rulesets you do it like described above: select “Ruleset Collection” in the treeview panel, click on “Add” in the rules panel, give the rule a name and enter your criteria and actions.

Step 3: Save your hard work

Now that you have done your hard work you should save the work you've done. Click on the "Save" button below the treeview panel.

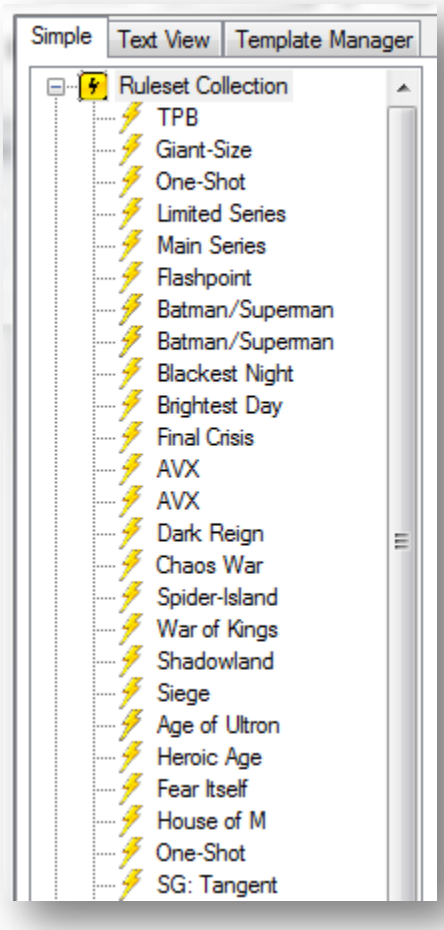


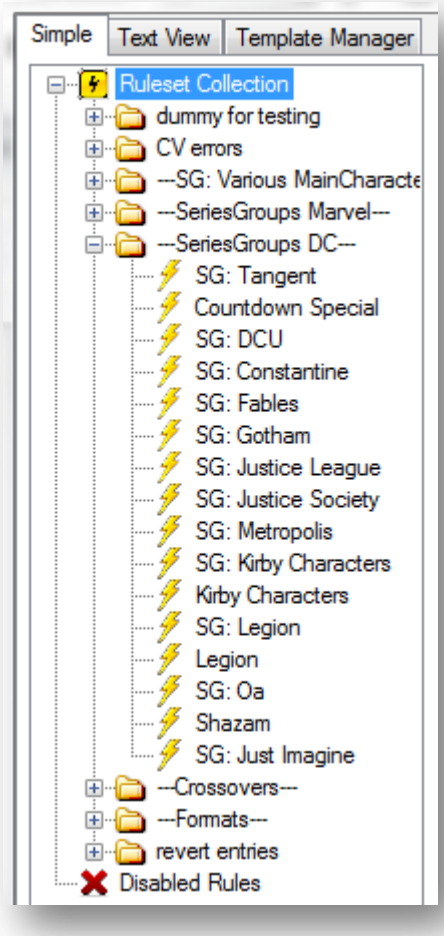
Note: If you ever notice that you made a mistake while editing your rulesets you can always revert to last saved status of your configuration by selecting the option "Revert" in the "File" menu below the treeview panel:



Step 4: Organize your rules (using groups)

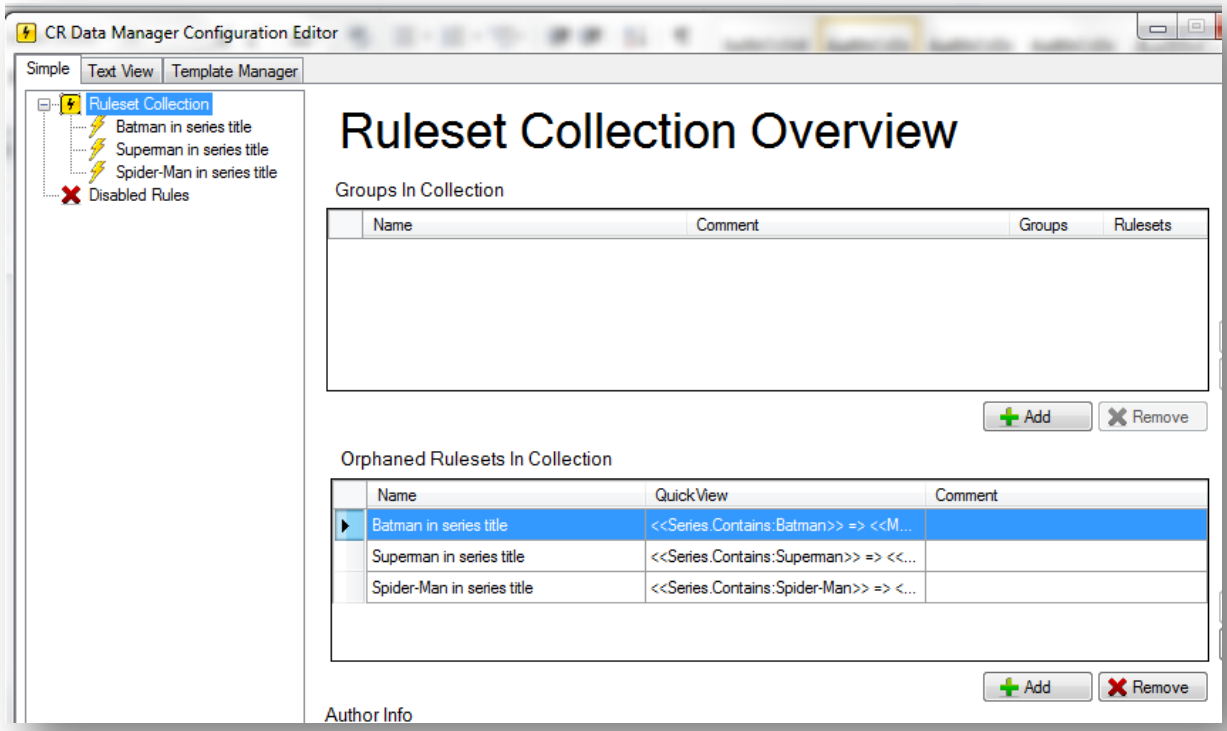
Once you created a lot of rules you will discover that it is quite hard to scroll through them to find the single rule you want to update or delete. Take a look at these two examples: the left one is quite hard to read, it is much easier to navigate and find what you are looking for in the example on the right side:



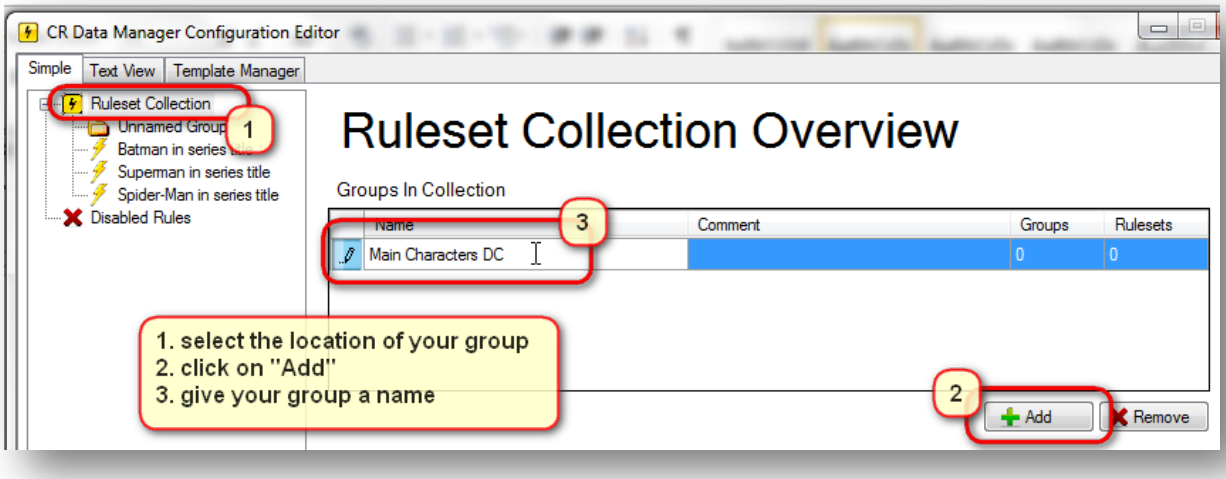


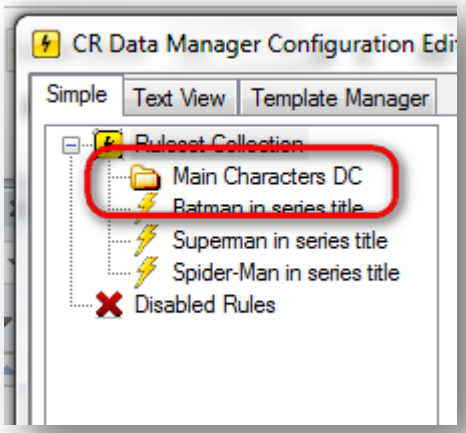
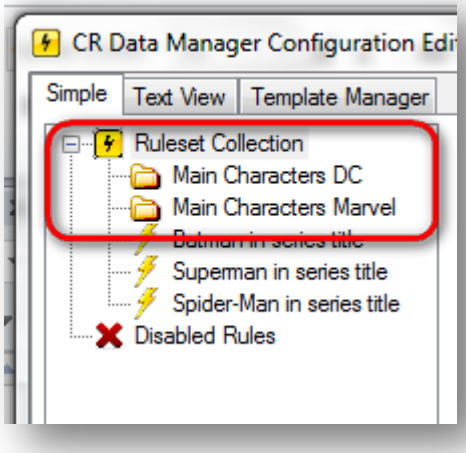
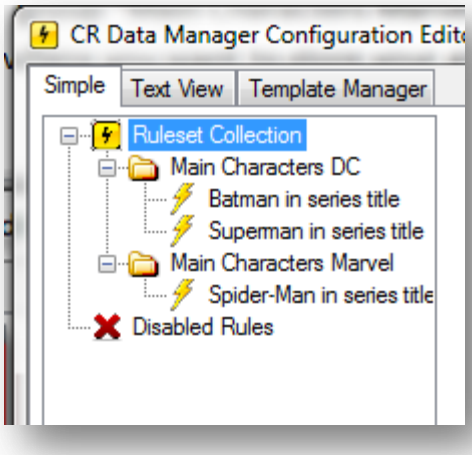
This is where groups help to organize your ruleset collection. Groups in the Data Manager are like folders in the Windows Explorer: you use them to collect items.

So we assume that you have created three rules so far and you want to organize them in the folders “Main Characters DC” and “Main Characters Marvel”:



To achieve this you first have to select the location in the treeview panel where you want to create the group. As we currently have no further groups the only location possible is “Ruleset Collection”). Click on “Ruleset Collection” in the tree view panel and then on “Add” below the groups panel:



After you have given your group a name the treeview panel should look like this:	
Repeat the steps and create another group "Main Characters Marvel". Don't forget to click on "Ruleset Collection" because that is where you want to store your group! Your treeview panel should look similar to this now:	
To move your "Batman", "Superman" and "Spider-Man" rules to the correct folder simply drag them with the mouse to that group and drop them there. Isn't it simple? Afterwards your treeview panel should look like this:	

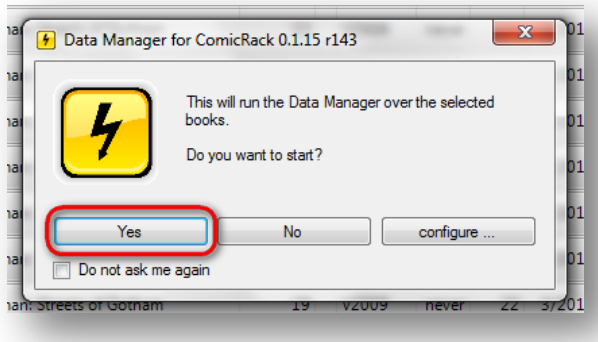
Now your rules are finished and you can let the Data Manager do its job.

Running the Data Manager

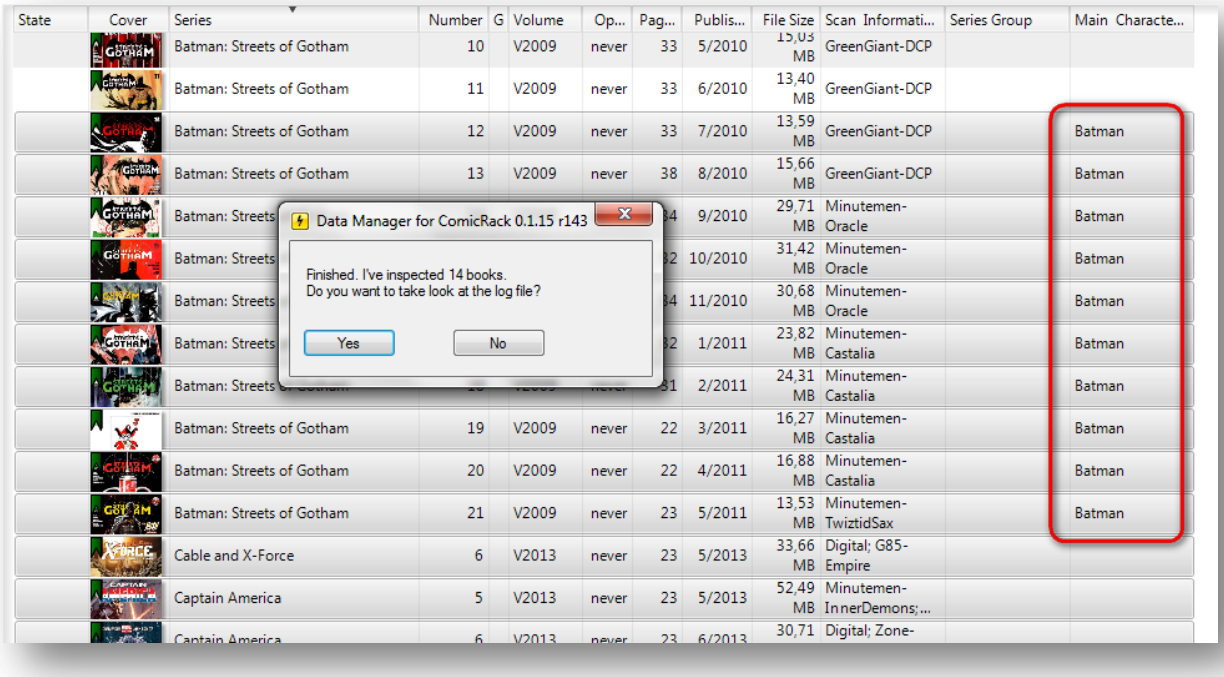
After you edited the configuration you select the books that the script should handle in the ComicRack browser. Only the books you selected will be treated by the Data Manager:

State	Cover	Series	Number	G	Volume	Op...	Pag...	Publis...	File Size	Scan Informati...	Series Group	Main Characte...
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	10		V2009	never	33	5/2010	15,03 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	11		V2009	never	33	6/2010	13,40 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	12		V2009	never	33	7/2010	13,59 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	13		V2009	never	38	8/2010	15,66 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	14		V2009	never	34	9/2010	29,71 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	15		V2009	never	32	10/2010	31,42 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	16		V2009	never	34	11/2010	30,68 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	17		V2009	never	32	1/2011	23,82 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	18		V2009	never	31	2/2011	24,31 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	19		V2009	never	22	3/2011	16,27 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	20		V2009	never	22	4/2011	16,88 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	21		V2009	never	23	5/2011	13,53 MB	Minutemen-TwiztidSax		
		Cable and X-Force	6		V2013	never	23	5/2013	33,66 MB	Digital; G85-Empire		
		Captain America	5		V2013	never	23	5/2013	52,49 MB	Minutemen-InnerDemons;...		
		Captain America	6		V2013	never	23	6/2013	30,71 MB	Digital; Zone-Empire		
		Captain America: Reborn	0		V2009	never	11	1/2009	10,17 MB	HQ		
		Captain Marvel	11		V2012	never	24	5/2013	38,21 MB	Digital; Fawkes-Empire		

Now click icon in the ComicRack toolbar (Remember? It is the square yellow symbol with a black flash):	

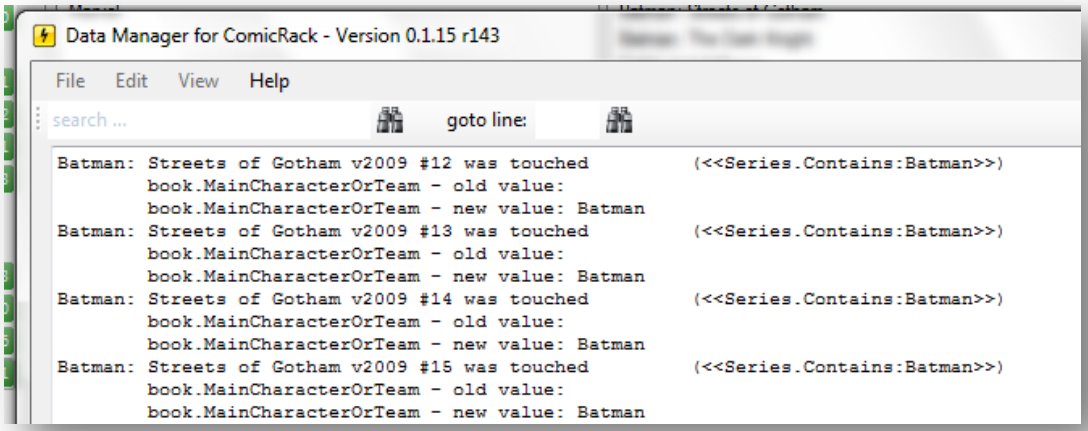
When asked if you want the Data Manager to run, click on Yes:	

Once you clicked on it the Data Manager will edit the selected books in your library according your rules configuration on the fly. This is the result; the Data Manager actually set the field “Main Character” of all the books you selected to “Batman” (where it fits!).



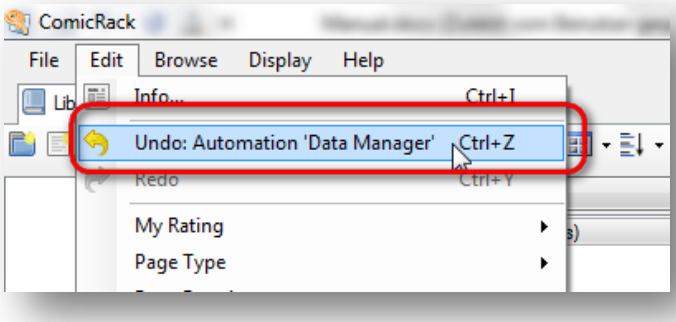
State	Cover	Series	Number	G	Volume	Op...	Pag...	Publis...	File Size	Scan Informati...	Series Group	Main Characte...
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	10		V2009	never	33	5/2010	15,03 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	11		V2009	never	33	6/2010	13,40 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	12		V2009	never	33	7/2010	13,59 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		Batman
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	13		V2009	never	38	8/2010	15,66 MB	GreenGiant-DCP		Batman
		Batman: Streets					34	9/2010	29,71 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		Batman
		Batman: Streets					32	10/2010	31,42 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		Batman
		Batman: Streets					34	11/2010	30,68 MB	Minutemen-Oracle		Batman
		Batman: Streets					32	1/2011	23,82 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		Batman
		Batman: Streets					31	2/2011	24,31 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		Batman
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	19		V2009	never	22	3/2011	16,27 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		Batman
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	20		V2009	never	22	4/2011	16,88 MB	Minutemen-Castalia		Batman
		Batman: Streets of Gotham	21		V2009	never	23	5/2011	13,53 MB	Minutemen-TwiztidSax		Batman
		Cable and X-Force	6		V2013	never	23	5/2013	33,66 MB	Digital; G85-Empire		
		Captain America	5		V2013	never	23	5/2013	52,49 MB	Minutemen-InnerDemons;...		
		Captain America	6		V2013	never	23	6/2013	30,71	Digital; Zone-		

You may click on yes to take a look at the log file which tells you what data was altered by the Data Manager. A sample log file will look like this:



The Data Manager will only modify the books you have selected in the ComicRack browser. You don't have to be afraid that it will affect your whole library (unless you have selected all books in your library, of course).

Please note: you can always roll back the modifications to your library done by this script by selecting the "Edit -> Undo" command in ComicRack after you ran the Data Manager:



Why you should run the ComicVine Scraper before the Data Manager

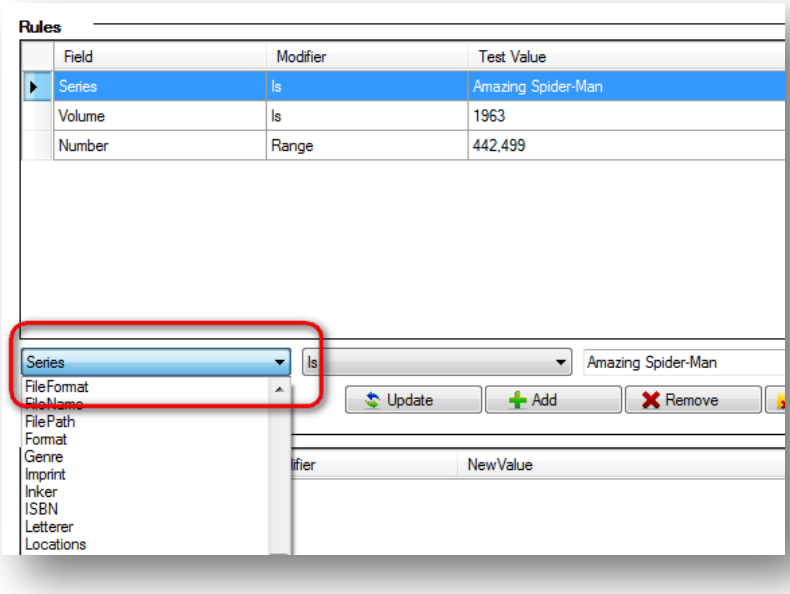
You might get unexpected results when you run the Data Manager on books that have not been scraped by the ComicVine scraper or have uncommitted values (so-called "Shadow values"). These uncommitted values will not be recognized by the Data Manager. So it is highly recommended to scrape the books first and afterwards additionally select "Automation -> Commit proposed values".

Also: if you use the Library Organizer plug-in you should run the Data Manager on your books **before** that. The Data Manager will help you a lot to set the metadata of your books to be handled by the Library Organizer properly. A good rule is to run the standard ComicRack plug-ins in this order:

1. run ComicVineScraper
2. commit proposed values
3. run Duplicates Manager / Scan Info from Filename / More Scan Info from Filename
4. **run Data Manager**
5. run Library Organizer

Which data fields can be used by the Data Manager?

To see what fields can be used by the Data Manager simply open the ruleset editor and click on the dropdown lists below “Rules” or “Actions”:



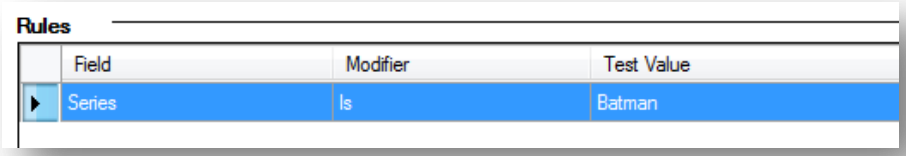
Using Custom Fields

Custom fields were implemented in ComicRack version 0.9.164. You can use these custom fields in the Data Manager rules and actions too. To use a custom field select “Custom” from the field dropdown list, enter the name of your custom field, select the modifier and enter the value to use:

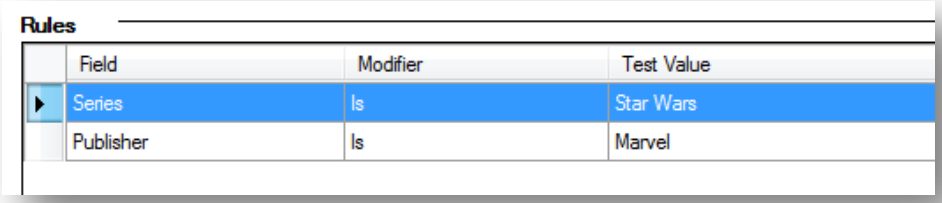
Advanced features

Combining Criteria

The simplest way to define a rule is a rule like this:



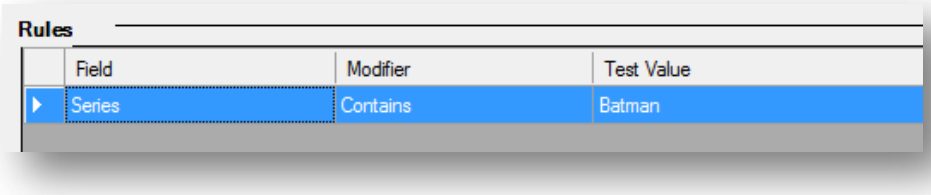
Which means: select all books where the word “Batman” is the series name. But sometimes you want to be more specific. So maybe you only want to set the series group of the “Star Wars” series to “Marvel Cosmic” if the publisher is Marvel. In this case you have to enter both criteria (Series is “Star Wars” and Publisher is “Marvel”). The complete rule would be:



Note: These criteria are always treated like combined with a logical AND operator. That means all criteria must be fulfilled for a rule to be executed.

Using Modifiers

In the previous example above we have set the series group of all issues of any series named 'Batman' to 'Gotham'. This would edit data in all books where the series is exactly 'Batman' but would ignore all series like 'Batman: The Dark Knight'. You can use modifiers to select books in a more specific way. So if you want to select all books where the word 'Batman' is somewhere in the title you would use the modifier 'Contains'. The rule

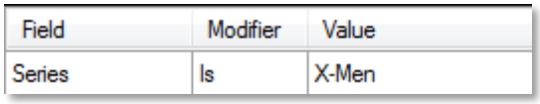
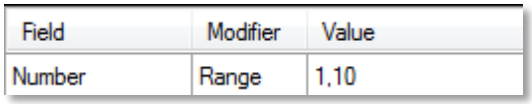
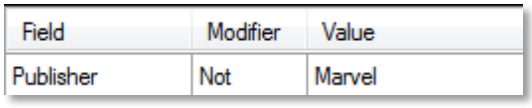


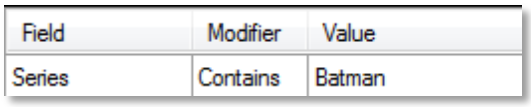
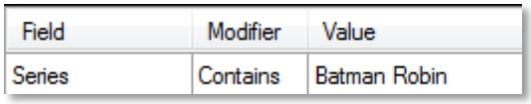
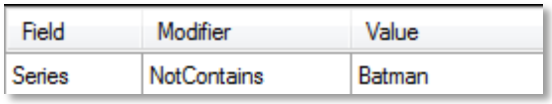
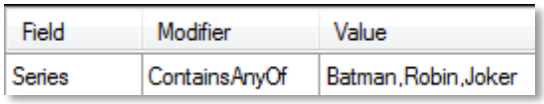
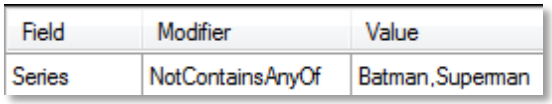
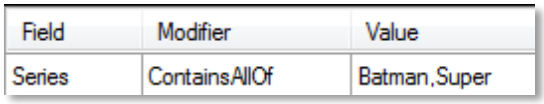
would select not only 'Batman', but also 'Batman and Robin' and 'Adventures of Batman'.

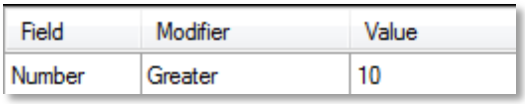
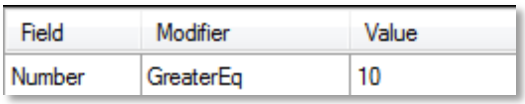
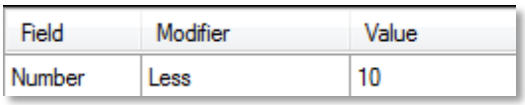
There are a lot more modifiers available than help to make your rules much more sophisticated.

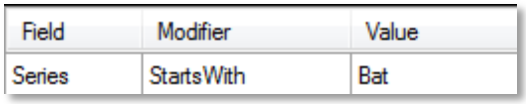
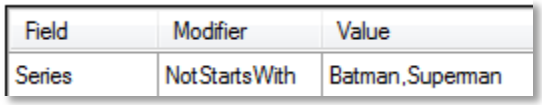
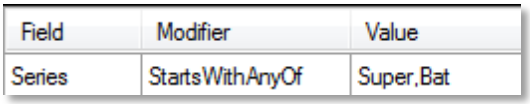
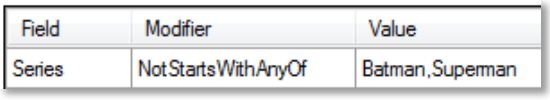
List of range modifiers in the "Rules" part of a ruleset

These are the modifier that can be used to limit the books which the Data Manager should touch:

Modifier	**Purpose**	**Example**
Is	select all books where the content of [field] is exactly like [value]	 selects all books which series is exactly "X-Men" (but not "Uncanny X-Men")
Range	select all books in a given range **(This will only work for the fields Number, AlternateNumber and numerical fields.)**	 selects all books which number is in the range from 1 to 10 (including). Minimum and maximum value must be divided by comma.
Not	select all books that would be excluded	 selects all books where the publisher is

		anything else but not 'Marvel'
Contains	select all books where the phrase is found somewhere in the field	 Selects all books where the series contains the word 'Batman'  Selects all books where the exact phrase "Batman Robin" is somewhere in the series, but not where "Batman **and** Robin" is in the series field
NotContains	Select all books where the phrase is **not** found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)**	 Selects all books where "Batman" is not found anywhere in the series.
ContainsAnyOf	Select all books where any of the values is found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)**	 Selects all books where Batman or Robin or Joker is found somewhere in the series.
NotContainsAnyOf	Select all books where any of the values is not found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)**	 Selects all books where neither "Superman" nor "Batman" is found in the series.
ContainsAllOf	Select all books where all of the values are found somewhere in the field **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by**	 Selects all books where "Batman" **and** "Super"

	commas)	are found somewhere in the series.
IsAnyOf	Select all books where the field is exactly as one value from the list	 Selects all books where the series title is exactly “Batman” or “Superman”
NotIsAnyOf	Select all books where the field is not exactly as one value from the list	 Selects all books where the exact series titles is neither “Batman” nor “Superman”
Greater	select all books where the value is greater than the phrase **(this can only be used with numerical fields)**	 Selects all books where the number is greater than 10
GreaterEq	select all books where the value is equal or greater than the phrase **(this can only be used with numerical fields)**	 selects all books where the number is equal to or greater than 10
Less	select all books where the value is less than the phrase **(this can only be used with numerical fields)**	 Selects all books where the number is less than 10
LessEq	select all books where the value is equal or greater than the phrase **(this can only be used with numerical fields)**	 selects all books where the number is equal to or less than 10

StartsWith	select all books where the value starts with the phrase **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)**	 selects all books where the series name starts with “Bat” (like Batman or Batwing)
NotStartsWith	select all books where the value does **not** starts with the phrase **(can only be used with non-numerical fields)**	 selects all books where the title does not start with “Batman” or “Superman”
StartsWithAnyOf	Select all books where the value starts with any of the given phrases **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)**	 Selects all books where the Series starts with either ”Super” or “Bat”.
NotStartsWithAnyOf	Select all books where the value does not starts with any of the given phrases **(can only be used with non-numerical fields, the list of values must be separated by commas)**	 Selects all books where the Series does **not** start with either ”Superman” or “Batman”.

Field	Modifier	Value
Series	StartsWith	Bat

Field	Modifier	Value
Series	NotStartsWith	Batman,Superman

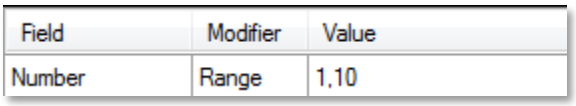
Field	Modifier	Value
Series	StartsWithAnyOf	Super,Bat

Field	Modifier	Value
Series	NotStartsWithAnyOf	Batman,Superman

Important Note: The Number field problem

As ComicVine (as does ComicRack) allows any characters in the Number field of an issue (like ½, ∞ and everything else unthinkable) it cannot be guaranteed that range modifiers like Range, Less, Greater etc. work correctly with the Number field.

If you have a simple “equal” comparison like `Number = 1AU` or `Number = XV` your rule will work as expected, but as soon you use range modifiers like Range, Less or LessEq, Greater or GreaterEq the results may be unexpected for books with “unconventional” numbers. So, if you use a rule like

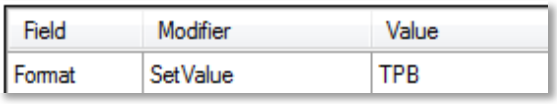
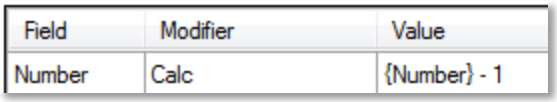
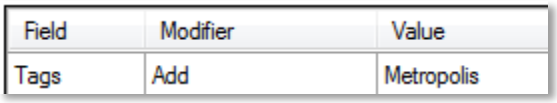


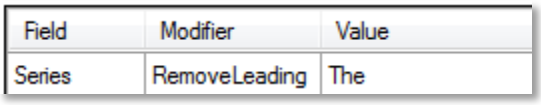
Field	Modifier	Value
Number	Range	1,10

the Data Manager will find all issues with issue number 0, 0.5, 1, 2, 3 up to 10. But it will not find the roman numeric literal V.

List of value modifiers in the "Actions" part of a ruleset

These are the modifier that can be used set new values:

Modifier	Purpose	Example
SetValue	sets the new value	 Sets the field Format to the new value "TPB"
Calc	perform calculations (see example below)	 Replaces the current number of the book with current number minus 1. **But take care if the book's number is no real numeric value (something like '∞' or '1AU' etc.). This might but must not lead to unexpected results.** For more information about the Calc modifier please read the chapter **"**Field Variables and Calculations**".**
Add	add a new value to a field of type string (including multi value fields)	 Adds the tag "Metropolis" to a book
Replace	replace a value in a field of type string (including multi value fields)	 Removes "Metropolis" from Tags and adds "Superman" instead
Remove	remove a value from a field of type string (including multi value fields)	

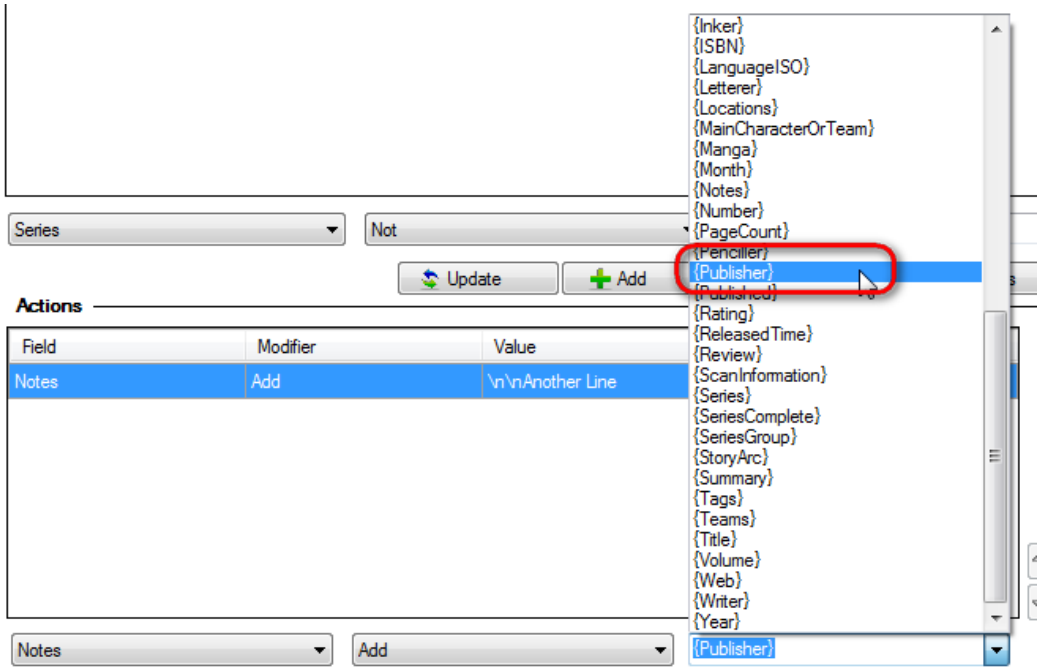
		Removes “Metropolis” from Tags
RemoveLeading	Remove a value from a the beginning of a field	 Removes a leading “The” from the series name. This way you can e.g. change the Series “The Incredible Hulk” to “Incredible Hulk”

Field Variables and Calculations

Using field variables

You can also use the content of fields to use in another field. So you may want to add the filename of the book to the Notes field.

In this case in the action panel you select “Notes” as the field and “Add” as the modifier. Now you open the dropdown menu in the value field and select “{Publisher}” from the list:



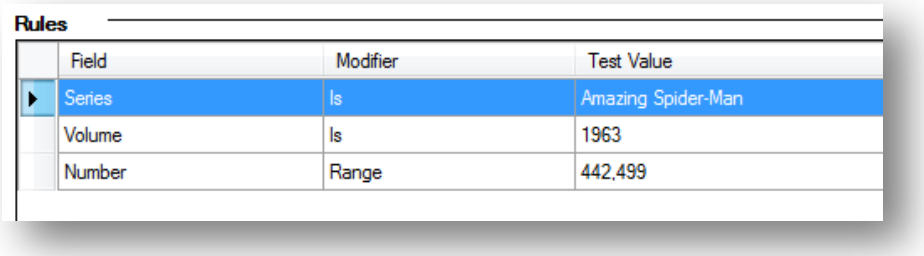
The rule => <<Notes.Add:{Publisher}>> will be added to your ruleset collection and when the Data Manager later runs over your books it will put the value of the Publisher field (“Marvel” or “DC Comics” or whatever) into the Notes field.

Calculated values

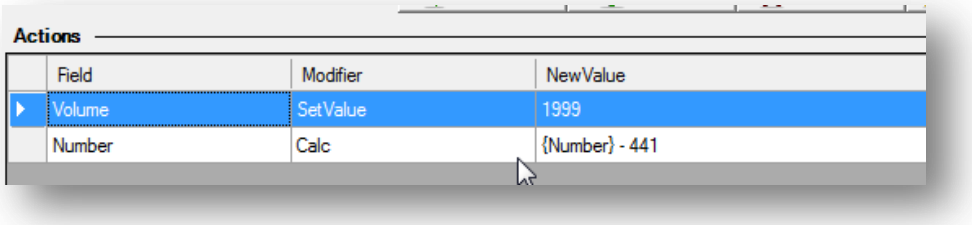
A very powerful feature of the Data Manager plugin is the use of calculated values in the “Actions” part of a ruleset.

Take this example: One of the most notorious incorrect information on ComicVine is the “integration” of the 1999 volume of Amazing Spider-Man as issues 442 to 499 into the 1963 volume. How can the DataManager help to enter the correct information into your library?

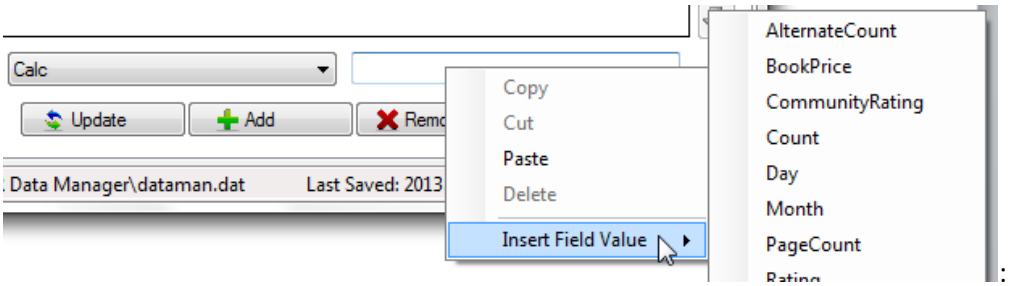
It is quite simple: First you have to select the incorrectly dated books in your library. Our rule is: select all books where the series is “Amazing Spider-Man” volume “1963” where the number is in the range from 442 to 499 (including). The rule condition would be:



Now we have to define what needs to be corrected. We want to change the volume to 1999 and correct the issue numbers to 1 (instead of 442), 2 (instead of 443) etc. This means we have to deduct exactly 441 from the original number. So this would be the “Actions” part of your rule:



When you use the Calc modifier simply right click into the value field and you can select the field you want to use in a calculation from a dropdown field list:



String "Calculations"

You can also use the Calc modifier to perform calculations based on strings. So e.g., if you want to write the Tags and the ScanInformation and some fixed string into the Notes field you will create an action like this:

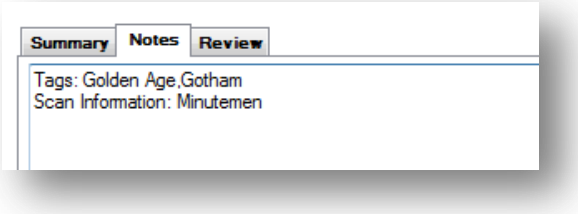
```
<<Notes.Calc:'Tags: ' + {Tags} + 'Scan Information: ' + {ScanInformation}>>
```

Please note that if you want to use fixed strings in your calculation those must be included in quotation marks.

If you want a line break between Tags and ScanInformation you can edit that action that it looks like:

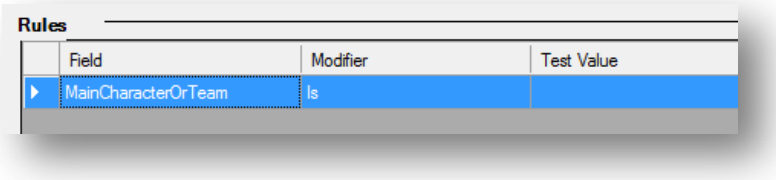
```
<<Notes.Calc:'Tags: ' + {Tags} + '\n' + 'Scan Information: ' + {ScanInformation}>>
```

'\n' will be interpreted as a line break. Once the Data Manager executed that rule on your book the result will look similar to this:



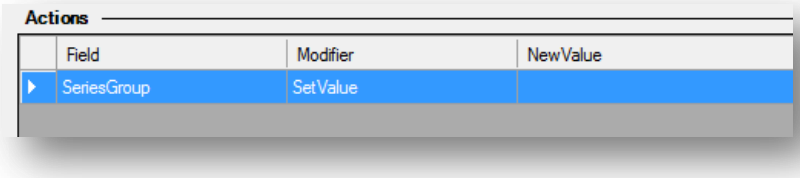
Working with empty values

The Data Manager allows the usage of empty values. You might want to use a rule to set the value of SeriesGroup to something only if the field MainCharacterOrTeam is empty. For this purpose you write this rule:



Simply leave the test value empty and the script will look only for books where the Main Character field is empty.

With the same logic you can remove values from fields. Suppose you want to remove the values from SeriesGroup you would use this in the Actions part of your ruleset:

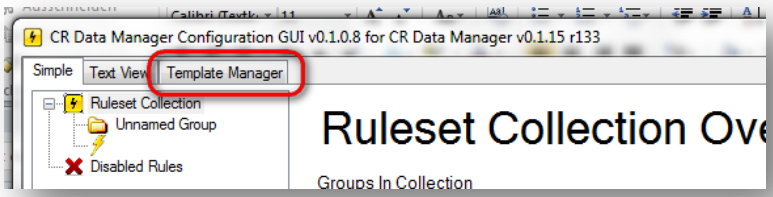


Working with Rule and Action Templates

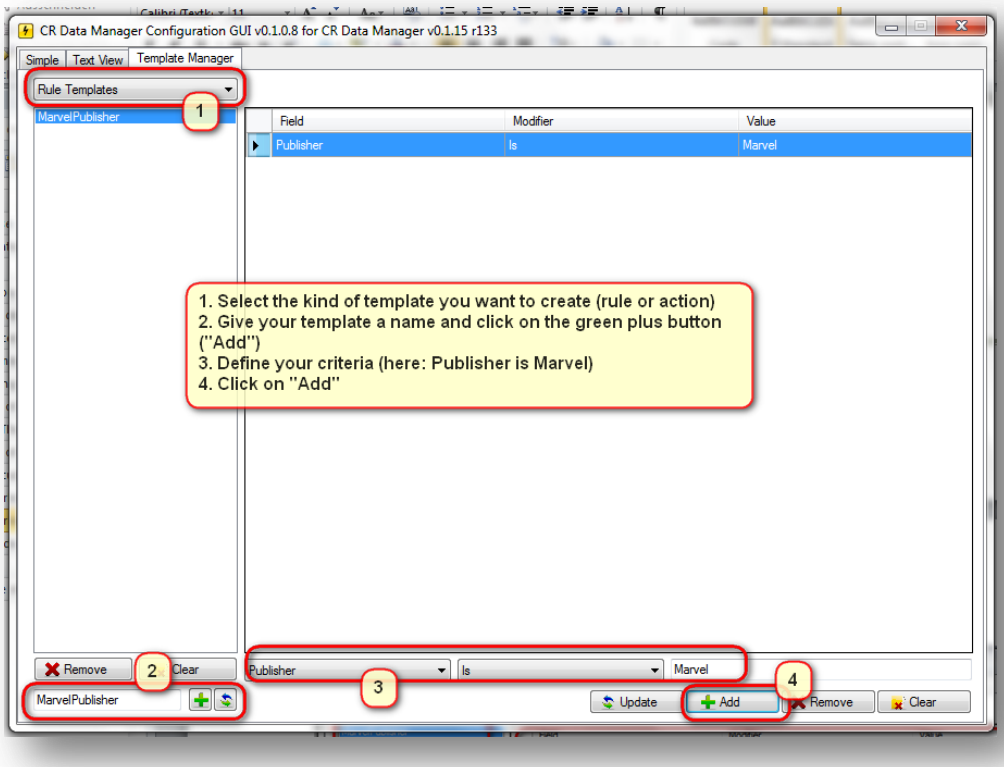
When you create your rulesets you will discover that you often have to enter very similar rules. Assume that you create a lot of rules for Marvel main characters you want to define your ruleset that way that it also contains a condition like “Publisher Is Marvel”. Instead of adding this condition each time manually you can create a template and apply this template later to any ruleset you create.

Creating a template from scratch

We create templates in the “Template Manager” tab at the top of the Configuration editor:



It is quite easy to create a reusable template: Change to the “Template Manager”, select the kind of template you want to create (in this case: a rule template), enter a name for your template and finally define the criteria in your template (here: “Publisher” is “Marvel”):

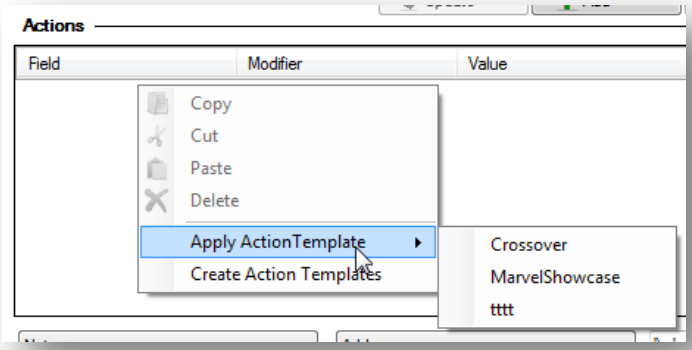


Note: in the name of templates no blanks and equal signs ('=') are allowed.

Applying a template

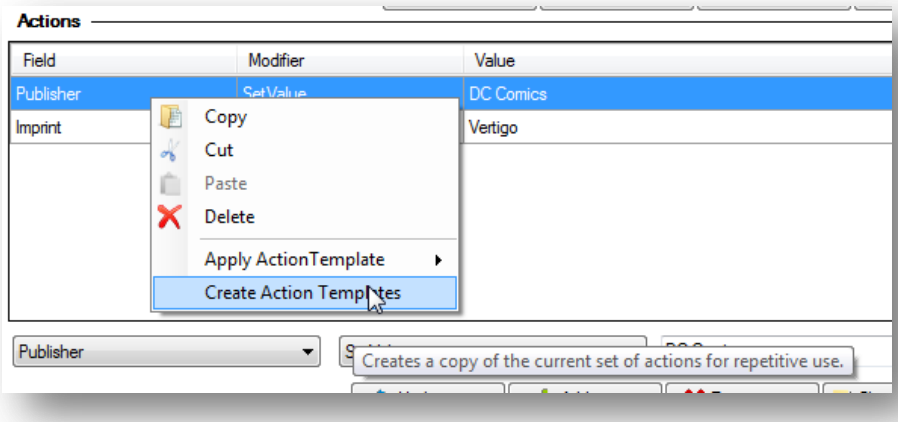
Applying your template to another rule is easy. So we assume you have a rule "Series contains Hulk" and you want to apply a template. This is done in 3 simple steps:

Select your rule in the treeview, right-click in the rule or actions panel and select "Apply Rule Template" and the template you just created. The template is immediately attached to your existing rule:



Creating a template using an existing rule or action

If you have already created a rule or action that you want to make available as a reusable template simply right click on the existing rule or action and select "Create … templates":

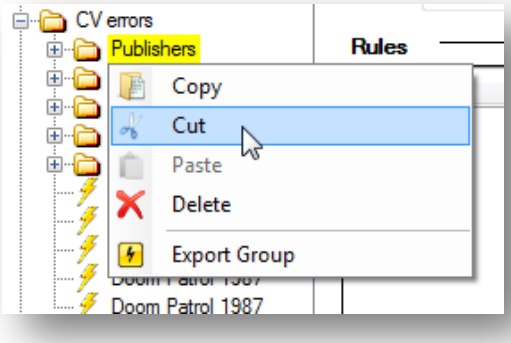


Action Templates

Action Templates are similar to Rule Templates but these work with the “Actions” part of a ruleset (remember: that is the part of a ruleset which tells the Data Manager **what** to do). Action Templates are created and applied like rules templates.

The context menu in the tree view panel

You can right-click any item in the tree view panel to open the context menu with useful operations for the item that is currently selected.



Copy: copies the selected group or ruleset to the Windows clipboard

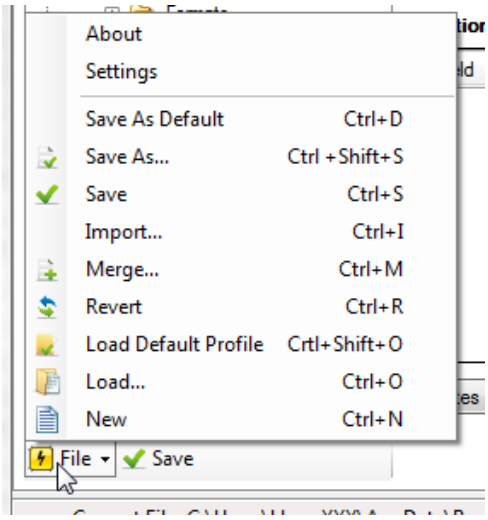
Cut: copies the selected group or ruleset to the Windows clipboard and deleted the selected item

Paste: paste the item which you just copied or cut at this position in the tree view structure

Delete: delete the currently selected group or ruleset

Export goup (only available when a group is selected): creates a new ruleset collection from the selected group. You can later import this ruleset collection or share it at the ComicRack forum. Please note that this will export *all* the groups and rulesets inside the selected group.

The File Menu



Don't be afraid of all these confusing options: if you have only one configuration (ruleset collection) the only option you will ever use here is "Save".

The File menu below the tree view panel handles maily the loading and saving of ruleset collections:

Save as Default: saves the current ruleset collection as the default (the one that Data Manager uses when it does its job)

Save as …: saves the current ruleset collection under a different name

Save: saves the current ruleset collection

Import …: Imports another configuration file into the current configuration

Merge …: You can load another ruleset collection and merge it with the current ruleset collection

Revert: revert all modifications and return to the last saved state of the current ruleset collection

Load Default Profile: loads the default ruleset collection

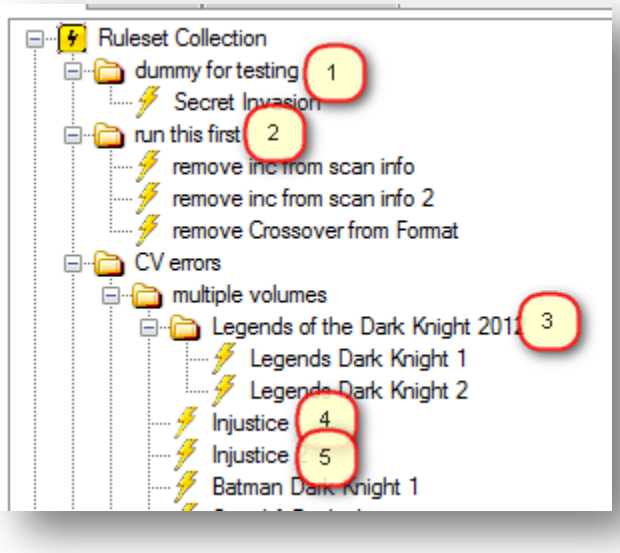
Load …: load another previously saved ruleset collection to the tree view

New: empties the tree view so you can start from scratch creating your rulesets.

Important note: it cannot be guaranteed that the files you generate via the save and export options will not be overwritten the next time you install an update of the Data Manager. So it is highly recommended that you store those files to a different location than the Data Manager directory!

About the order of rules

The Data Manager will work on your books in the exact order of rulesets as they are displayed in the tree view. See this example



Data Manager interprets this as:

Step 1: use rulesets in “dummy for testing”
Step 2: use rulesets in “run this first”
Step 3: use rulesets in “Legends of the Dark Knight 2012”
Step 4 sequ.: use orphaned rulesets in “multiple volumes”

That means that when you build your rulesets you should always be aware of the order of rules.

Maybe you have a ruleset that sets a value in your books based on the condition that the SeriesGroup field is not empty you should place all your rulesets that fill the SeriesGroup field before that. The order of your rulesets should then look like this:

1st ruleset: Set SeriesGroup to “Gotham”

2nd ruleset: Set SeriesGroup to “Metropolis”

3rd ruleset: Set SeriesGroup to “Blackest Night”

Last ruleset: If SeriesGroup is empty, then add Tag “No SeriesGroup”

Why the order of rulesets is important

Example given, you want to set all books with “Annual” to the format “Annual” and remove “Annual” from the series name. Another thing you want to achieve is to set the SeriesGroup of all Series that contain “Batman” and “Annual” to “Gotham Annuals”. The 2 rules to accomplish that would be:

```
<<Series.Contains:Annual>> => <<Series.Remove:Annual>> <<Format.SetValue:Annual>>
<<Series.ContainsAllOf:Batman,Annual>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham Annuals>>
```

If you enter these both rules in exactly this order the second rule will not be executed because you already removed “Annual” from series of all selected books. And when the second rule is reached the Data Manager will not find any books where “Annual” is in the series.

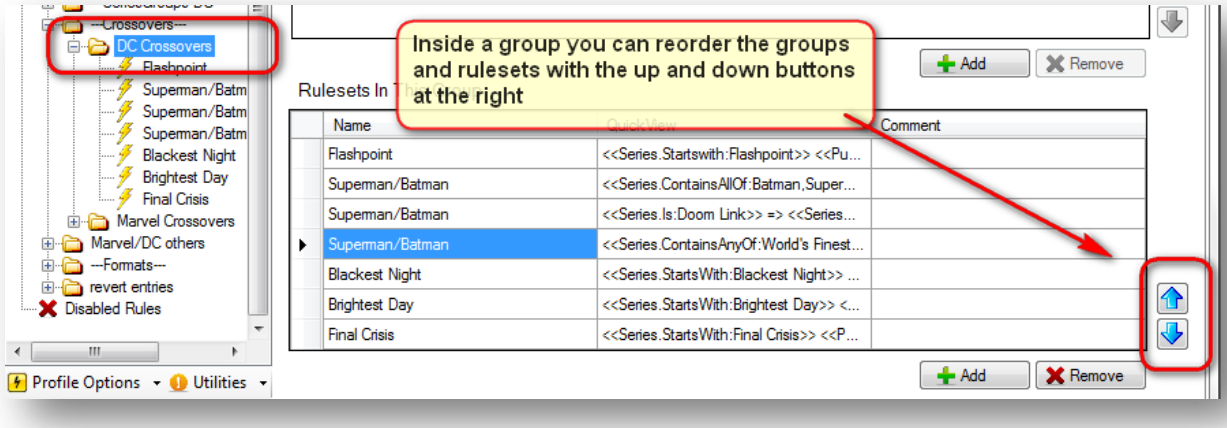
So the correct order would be:

```
<<Series.ContainsAllOf:Batman,Annual>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham Annuals>>
<<Series.Contains:Annual>> => <<Series.Remove:Annual>> <<Format.SetValue:Annual>>
```

Changing the order of your groups and rulesets

To change the order of groups and rulesets you can simply drag and drop them in the tree view to another location.

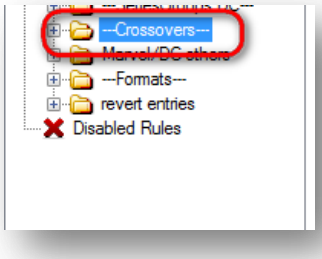
Inside a group you can reorder the groups and rules with the help of the up and down buttons at the right of the “Groups in this group” and “Rulesets in this group” panel:



The use of disabled rules

You might want the Data Manager to exclude some of your groups or rulesets because you are testing something or simply want in the next run of the Data Manager some groups or rulesets excluded. In this case you will find the “Disabled Rules” in the tree view useful because every group or ruleset you drag and drop there will not be executed the next time the Data Manager runs.

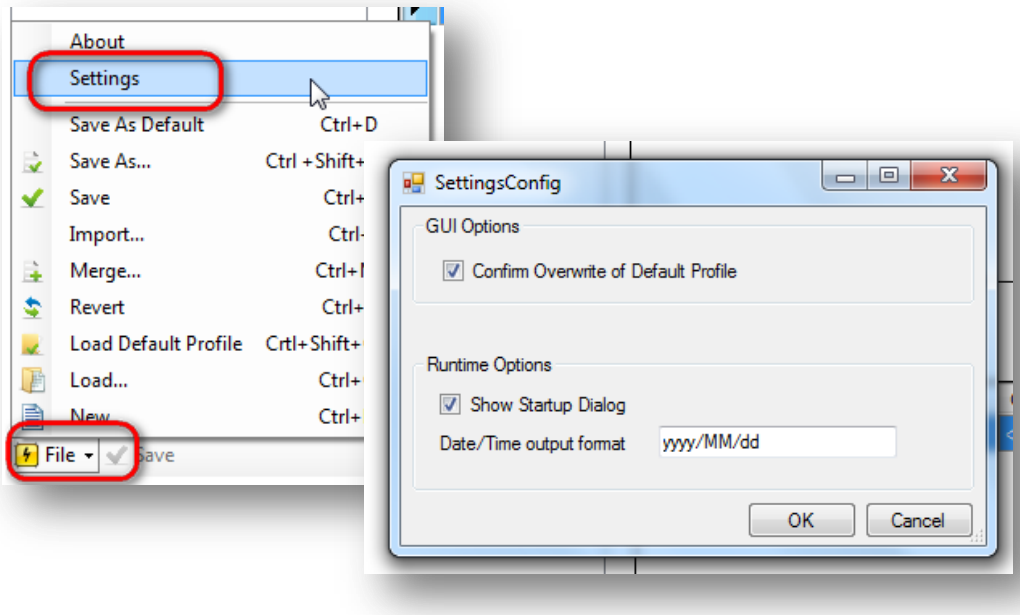
In the left example the rulesets in the group “Crossovers” will be executed. In the right example it will not:



Later on you can simply drag it back to the Ruleset Collection and it will be executed again.

The Settings Dialog

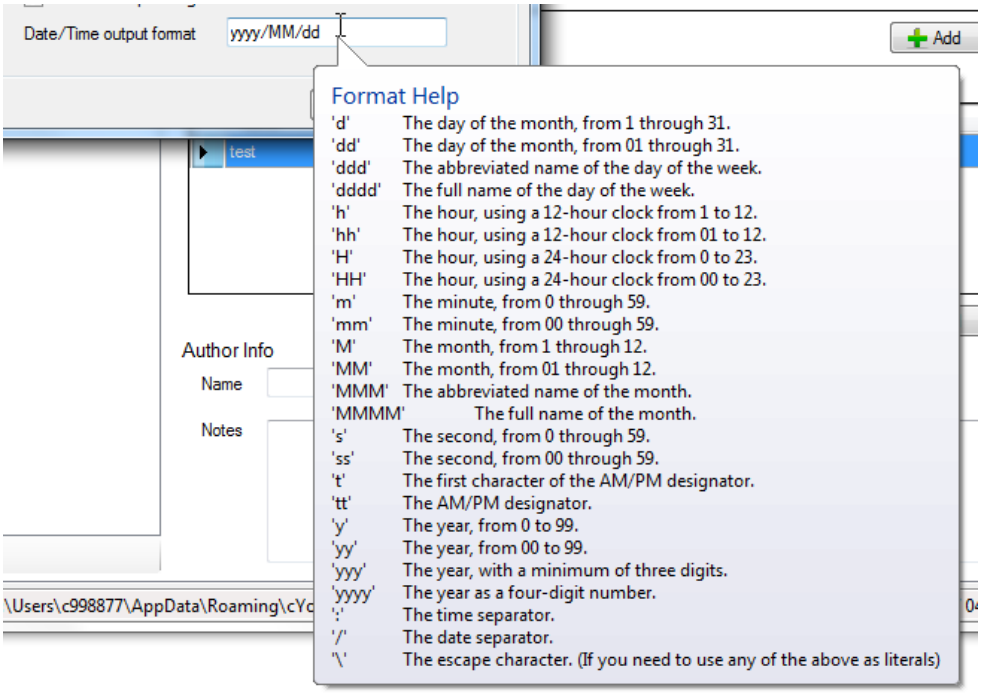
The Settings dialog lets you set some settings for the Data Manager. Select the “File -> Settings” to open it:



Confirm Overwrite of Default Profile: Every time you save the default ruleset collection to disk you are asked if you really want to overwrite the existing version by default. If you don’t want to be asked each time you can deactivate this option.

Show Startup Dialog: When you start the Data Manager via the ComicRack toolbar icon you are asked if you want to start the Data Manager or want to cancel or want to run the configuration GUI. Deactivate this option and when you start the Data Manager the next time that dialog will not open again.

Date/Time output format: When you are using a field variable to store a date to another field the format of that date will be a long format with date and time. You can define how the format should look like. A tooltip on this field in the Settings dialog displays the format options you can use:



So if you want that date values will be written in a format [Year]-[Month]-[Day] you must enter the expression “yyyy-MM-dd” into the output format field. This will format the date “March 15, 2013” to “2013-03-15”.

Performance Issues

The bigger your ruleset gets the longer it will take the Data Manager to run over your selected books. Here are some best practices how to increase the speed of the Data Manager.

Split your ruleset collections

If possible split your very large ruleset collection into two or more. You might create one for your Marvel and DC books and one for all other publishers, e.g.

Reduce the number of rulesets

It will help a lot if you reduce the number of rulesets the Data Manager has to execute. Assume you have several rulesets that set the SeriesGroup to “Gotham” like:

```
<<Series.Contains:Batman>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham>>
<<Series.Contains:Batwing>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham>>
<<Series.Contains:Robin>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham>>
<<Series.Contains:Joker>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham>>
```

These rulesets would be executed much faster if you combine them using the ContainsAnyOf modifier instead of Contains like:

```
<<Series.ContainsAnyOf:Batman,Batwing,Robin,Joker>> => <<SeriesGroup.SetValue:Gotham>>
```

Links

Discussion about the Data Manager in the ComicRack forum: http://comicrack.cyolito.com/forum/13-scripts/30963-the-cr-data-manager-enter-data-automatically-based-on-rules-0112

Downloads: http://code.google.com/p/cr-data-manager/downloads/list

Any suggestions for new features and bug reports may be posted here: http://code.google.com/p/cr-data-manager/issues/list

The Data Manager has not been created to earn a living. But if you like to honor the effort and help keeping the Data Manager alive and progressing you are kindly invited to donate a few bucks here: https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=YYDNBFQKCLAGQ

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